

**Analysis of *The Little Thumbling*: A Multifaceted Ogre Against the Isolated French
Peasantry**

Review of Literature

Seeing *The Little Thumbling* from a peasant's view in the 17th century is similar to passing on the oral tradition of this Fairy tale before it hit the printing press. To really understand a fairy tale like this one, you need to pull back the layers of time to see the historical context when this fairy tale was a popular oral tradition. We need to explore what was the meaning behind the great threat of cannibalistic ogre in this tale. There needs to be a familiarity of what a struggling French family was like in this time and how they functioned in their society. And lastly how the petite aesthetic has such a huge significance in this book as well as the French culture that we see and know today.

Historical Context of *The Little Thumbling*

The historical context of *The Little Thumbling* is critical for understanding the plot of the fairy tale. In France at this time, peasants suffered immensely. According to Geoffrey, P. (2017) the rising taxation from the rich, the pressures from religion, the ongoing famine, plague that ravaged, and the relentless wars had put a heavy burden on the peasants. Henry, H. (1986) explains how peasants were displaced from their homes as the nobility grew richer and richer. This led them to rebelling against the oppressive institutions that led to their demise. As Geoffrey, P. (2017, para. 68) states, "...Crisis eventually demoralized even the most resilient." In this, we find humans acting monstrously.

Ogre Concept Symbolizing Hunger in Fairy Tales

Like an onion, the ogre concept in *The Little Thumbling* (and other fairy tales) has many layers and is a symbol of many different things, one of which being hunger. Henry, H. (1986) depicts that the immense hunger that peasants felt every day was a looming threat of starvation and death. The ogre can represent the insatiable hunger of the peasants, giving a physicality to

the unrelenting brutishness of hunger itself. It acts purely on instinct, which is all you can do when you are starving. Tatar, M (2018) brings to light how hunger and desperation can lead to cannibalism when there is nothing else to eat. Cannibalism can be seen in many fairy tales, and the ogre also puts into perspective how immediately someone, (especially children,) can be overpowered and eaten. Goldberg, C. (2003) explains how people can easily be overpowered by an ogre, so trickery is the best means of escape. Whether that be escaping hunger through stealing, escaping being eaten, or escaping rising taxes. Lastly, the ogre in these fairy tales can also represent the large and oppressive government that takes advantage of the peasants during famine and war. All of these concepts that form the multi-faceted ogre were commonplace in the realities of 16th and 17th century peasant families.

What French Families were like in the 17th Century

What were French families like in the 17th Century? Hardwick, J (2012) has found that French families were created out of necessity, and not always out of love. There was a dependence on each other to find enough money for the rent, the pressure to bring home enough food for their family, as well as the mutual responsibility of raising their family. French families had to deal with the effects of war and how that affected their survival. Best described by Geoffrey, P (2017, para. 3); “Virtually all French troops at home were either mutinous, because they lacked pay and food, or commanded by nobles in open defiance of the crown. Even areas that saw no fighting suffered: in Provence, the combination of plague and the highest grain prices of the century provoked almost seventy popular revolts; in Picardy, local clergy visiting their parishioners found families too weak even to answer the door because they had not eaten for several days.” These starving people began to shrink in size over time due to malnourishment, causing a new theme to arise from their suffering.

Significance of Petite aspects in French culture

The definition of petite is to have a small or trim figure. There is a significance of petite aspects in French culture. They are celebrated in clothing, style, and design, as well as literature. This created the petite aesthetic, as Bloom, R (2015) infers. But this was not always the case, as it used to be frowned upon to have a petite frame. No one wanted to be trim or small as it showed a low standing in society and that you had no wealth. This can be best described by Geoffrey, P (2017). But we see that there is a shift in attitude in *The Little Thumbling* where the physical stature of the child is insignificant compared to his wittiness in tricking the ogre. Traditions and culture tend to travel up the social ladder. What was once innovation for the peasants to cope becomes an aesthetic. This is how the petite aesthetic became desirable.

Haase D. (1993) depicts Charles Perrault's *The Little Thumbling* of respectfully communicating the French traits, values, and attitudes of the peasants without glorifying France. Due to this careful crafting of the story, we can be fully immersed in the peasant's point of view. This is very clearly laid out in this fairy tale. Why did the peasants create *The Little Thumbling* and carrying on its oral tradition? It was done to take something as bleak as starvation and put it into more concrete terms, like an ogre, for example. The peasants still find resolution and uphold their perseverance before this ogre. This is why it is so important to uphold the accuracy of fairy tales. Like how Darnton, R. (1984) was trying to infer, through all of the psychoanalysis you can interpret, these stories are solely created for entertainment. So, the French peasants could have a break from their reality (even though one can draw lines to their reality from the story). Fairy tales like *The Little Thumbling* are significant because they prove how the best art is created through restriction. It is art validating the struggle of real people. Perhaps we need more people like Darnton, to shed light on other inaccurate portrayals of fairy tales.

References

- Bloom, R. (2015). Miniature marvelous: the petit as personal aesthetic in the fairy tales of Marie Catherine d'Aulnoy. *Marvels & Tales*, 29 (2), pp 209-227.
<https://doi.org/10.13110/marveltales.29.2.0209>
- Darnton, R. (1984) The great cat massacre and other episodes in French cultural history. *New York: Basic Books*, pp 9-72
https://nmu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=cdi_proquest_ebookcentral_EBC903538&context=PC&vid=01NOMICH_INST:NMU&lang=en&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&adaptor=Primo%20Central&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,peasants%20tell%20tale%20robert%20darnton&mode=basic
- Geoffrey, P. (2017). Global crisis: war, climate change and catastrophe in the seventeenth century, *Yale University Press*. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nmich/detail.action?docID=4866247>.
- Goldberg, C. (2003). The dwarf and the giant (AT 327B) in Africa and the Middle East. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 116(461), pp 339–350. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137795>
- Haase, D. (1993). Yours, mine, or ours? Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and the ownership of fairy tales. *Merveilles & Contes*, 7(2), pp 383–402. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41390373>
- Hardwick, J. (2012). Julie Hardwick on the early modern French family. *Not Even Past*.
<https://notevenpast.org/julie-hardwick-early-modern-french-family/>
- Henry H. (1986). The conquest of poverty: the Calvinist revolt in sixteenth-century France. *Leiden: Brill*.
<https://web-p-ebshost-com.nmu.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=6bc7b66e-5b4e-439f-852c-c1ebc298da02%40redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZW9vc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=28896&db=e000xna>

Tatar, M. (2017). The classic fairy tales: texts, criticism. *W.W. Norton & Company*, pp 229-230

https://nmu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01NOMICH_INST/cga9eg/cdi_askewsholts_vle_books_9780393289794

The Little Thumbling

Fairy tales tell so much more than just a story, they are a reflection of what life was like for their storytellers. Looking at *The Little Thumbling* through the lens of Marxism, and ecocriticism, the reader is challenged to think more about how *The Little Thumbling* symbolizes the French peasants of the 16th century's struggle with famine, sickness, and the oppressive government as shown through cannibalism, the Little Thumbling himself, and through the abandoning of the children due to an oppressive government because of the environment and quality of life. Peasants crafted the fairy tales we know and love. Learning why these stories were made and understanding what it meant to these groups of people is important for appreciating these powerful stories.

The Little Thumblings story, by Charles Perrault, is featured in Tatar, M. (2017) compilation of fairy tales. *The Little Thumbling* is of a wood cutter's family, impoverished and starving. The parents of this family had regretfully decided to abandon their seven children. They couldn't watch them starve, which led to their children's abandonment in the woods. The youngest child, Little Thumbling, was frail and small, but extremely clever. Little Thumbling listened in on the parents plan to leave the children in the woods. Little Thumbling managed to lead the children back home by laying a trail of breadcrumbs so he would know the way back. As the children reached the home they watched a lord pay their father. The entire family was taken aback by this payment because they gave up hope on ever receiving it. Happily reunited, the family was fed well. As time went on, their food and money dwindled, they ran out of money once more were left destitute. The parents abandoned the children in the woods once more, but

this time they made sure to bring the children far out in the dark woods. This time the kids were truly lost, it soon became nightfall and a storm rolled in. Little Thumbling managed to lead their siblings to a home in the dark woods. Much to their horror, a family of ogres lived there. The ogre husband tried to eat them that night. Little Thumbling successfully outsmarted the ogre by tricking him into slaying his own children instead of Little Thumbling and his siblings. Little Thumbling then tricked the ogre, he took the ogres magical seven league boots that allow you to travel far distances instantly and he went to the ogre's wife. Little Thumbling convinced the woman that her husband was giving their treasures to him because a band of thieves threatened her husband's life if he didn't give them all his treasure. The wife hastily agreed. Little Thumbling came back with all the treasure and his struggling family rose out of poverty. Little Thumbling is now praised and loved for his uniqueness.

Environment directly affects peasant culture because the majority relies on natural resources for money. Little Thumblings' family relies on woodcutting for money, which is impacted by the environment and reliant on the economy. *The Little Thumbling* was made in 1697. The Little Ice Age was affecting all of Europe during this period of time and sets the foundation of the fairy tale. The little ice age affected agriculture and crop yields from drought and extreme cold. These events created an economic crisis from major loss of trade, and population. This global crisis tested people's loyalty to Religion, but, the most exacerbating factor on top of all the ongoing issues was war stricken all throughout the seventeenth century. Parker Geoffrey (2017, p. 256) explains, "the entire northern hemisphere experienced extreme climatic events that caused widespread famine and dislocation." as well as, "many Frenchmen, their growth stunted by famine and cold, were of shorter stature than any others on record." *The*

Little Thumbling describes how there was a year of misfortune, and that the hunger became so widespread that the family decided to get rid of their children so they wouldn't have to watch them starve. With the harsh conditions this family had to endure, Little Thumblings parents, resilient as they were, had become demoralized by the extreme suffering.

The global crisis affected France greatly, the country was poverty stricken, war ravaged, and economically unstable. The effects were devastating, the French were so severely malnourished and sickly that height became extremely stunted. English Historian Geoffrey Parker's book *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change, & Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* infers (2017, para. 53); "Families too weak even to answer the door because they had not eaten for several days." He also states, "Malnutrition often impairs the development of major organs as well as long bones, it makes children more vulnerable to both contagious and chronic diseases, which can further diminish stature." Geoffrey, P. (2017, para. 58); Sick and starving people shrinking in size causes a new theme to arise from their suffering. Little Thumbling himself symbolizes the physical traits of malnutrition, disease, and stunted growth that affected the French throughout the Seventeenth Century. The fairy tale describes in detail of Little Thumblings stature:

"To their great distress, the youngest was very sickly and did not speak a word...

The youngest boy was very small. At birth he was hardly larger than a thumb, and as a result he was called 'Little Thumbling.' (Tatar, M., 2017 p. 256)

Little Thumbling, as small as he may be, represents a vast majority of oppressed French peasants in the sixteenth century.

Famine leads to cannibalism through desperation. Henry, H. (1986) depicts that the immense hunger that peasants felt every day was a looming threat of starvation and death. The ogre is a key character in *The Little Thumbling*, because he is a decider of fate for Little Thumbling and his siblings. The ogre's hunger and cannibalization of children quoted from the fairy tale, Tatar, M. (2017 p. 259) "Far from feeling pity for them, he was already devouring them with his eyes" The ogre is a monstrous, insatiable beast. It does not only symbolize the insatiable hunger of the peasants, but also the resulting cannibalism from their desperation. The ogre gives a physicality to the unrelenting brutishness of hunger itself. It acts purely on instinct, which is all you can do when you are starving. The ogre is such an interesting part of the fairy tale because of how multifaceted he is. The ogre is not only a symbolism of hunger and desperation, but a representation of the abuse of power in a government as well.

The Government oppresses the peasants and isolates them from each other. Much like how the ogre seeks out the peasant children as they try to escape from his grasp. The ogre says to his wife when he finds out that they have ran away, Tatar, M. (2017, p. 261) "Fetch me my seven league boots so I can catch those boys." As the children are running, the boys see that he is catching up to them quickly. "They saw the ogre striding from one mountain to the next and stepping across rivers as though they were nothing but little brooks." Tatar, M. (2017, p. 261) People can easily be overpowered by an ogre, as well as their own government, so trickery is the best means of escaping a bad situation. Whether that be escaping hunger through stealing, avoiding being drafted into the war, escaping being eaten, or escaping rising taxes. The government took advantage of the peasants during the famine and wars that took place during

this time. The isolation of peasants happened on many levels. First, there is the isolation from each other because of the hunger and fear of cannibalism. Second, we have the isolation from the high taxes, which lead to disbursement and homelessness. Lastly, the social status and poverty of peasants separated them from the rest of the Frenchmen. As the rich become richer the divide grew greater between the social constructs.

High taxes lead to disbursement, homelessness, and abandonment. Henry, H. (1986) worked on French history to shed light on how peasants were displaced from their homes despite the nobility becoming wealthier. This led to many peasants rebelling against the oppressive institutions, ultimately leading to their demise. The pressure of religious, social, and political ideals consumed the people of France. The immense pressure of unattainable ideals led to such a violence that tore France apart. Henry, H. (1986) stresses that the history of sixteenth-century France is one of both resistance and domination. The fairy tale describes this oppression here, Tatar, M. (2017, p. 257) “the lord of the manor sent them a sum of crowns that he had owed them for a long time and that they had despaired of ever getting.” The way that peasants were oppressed by all these forces surrounding their lives created an oppression within their own group of people. Abandoning and giving up on their own relatives, children, or elderly was a common theme of these peasant’s lives.

French families were created out of necessity, and not always out of love Hardwick, J (2012). Little Thumbings familys’ struggle with child abandonment was very common in this time period as many children were left on the streets with nothing but a scrap of paper stating

their name. Hardwick, J. (2012, para. 3) states in her research on *The Early Modern French Family*:

Young couples did not talk about being in love but about wanting partners who would work hard in a shared effort to make enough money to pay their rent, buy food, and take care of their families. Mutual success in these efforts meant that spouses were able to achieve a measure of stability in a precarious world. In many marriages though, individual shortcomings and the sheer pressure of daily life led to plenty of conflict, uncertainty, or worse.

Little Thumbings family was very poor with nine people living in a small home, seven of them being children who can't contribute financially. The parents are distraught when they come to the realization that they will all starve soon. They have a difficult discussion late at night, Tatar, M. (2017, p. 256) "I can't bear to watch them die of hunger before my very eyes, I've made up my mind to take them out to the woods tomorrow and to leave them there. The struggle with child abandonment in the fairy tale is now one of the most controversial elements of the tale but during the time this was unfortunately a normal part of life with the given circumstances as inferred by Hardwick, J (2012).

Hunger is a driving force of change in French history, leading to religion and government reform through war. There were many issues with the class divide and how the power was poorly abused in France religiously, socially, and politically. It was the perfect recipe for civil unrest and violence that proceeded into the seventeenth century. The tricking of the ogre and overcoming his oppression symbolizes the fight for radical change within France. The fairy tale describes the tricking of the ogre:

“loaded down with the ogre’s entire wealth, Little Thumbling returned to his father’s house, where he was welcomed with open arms.” “After returning as a courier for some time and amassing a small fortune, Little Thumbling returned to his father’s house, where everyone was overjoyed to see him again. He saw to it that the entire family lived comfortably, buying newly created positions for his father and brothers (Tatar, M., 2017, p. 262).

The struggles as seen in *The Little Thumbling* were a buildup of hundreds of years of suffering, and the tricking of the ogre was the peoples’ hope of a better future.

The petite Little Thumbling was scorned by his family because he was not as physically able as his other siblings, but now French culture celebrates pettiness (Geoffrey, P. 2017). But we see that there is a shift in attitude in *The Little Thumbling* where the physical stature of the child is insignificant compared to his wittiness in tricking the ogre. Traditions and culture tend to travel up the social ladder. What was once innovation for the peasants to cope becomes an aesthetic. This is how the petite aesthetic became desirable. The definition of petite is to have a small or trim figure. There is a significance of petite aspects in French culture. These aspects are celebrated in clothing, style, and design, as well as literature Bloom, R. (2015). This created the petite aesthetic. But this was not always the case, as it used to be frowned upon to have a petite frame. No one wanted to be trim or small as it showed a low standing in society and that you had no wealth.

Hunger is a driving force of change, it is relatable and transcends time and space. You can deduce many things from this fairy tale about what life might have been like in the sixteenth

century but I think that the story alone is enjoyable even without the context. Donald Haase's article depicts Charles Perrault's *The Little Thumbling* of respectfully communicating the French traits, values, and attitudes of the peasants without glorifying France (1993). Due to this careful crafting of the story, we can be fully immersed in the peasant's point of view. This is very clearly laid out in this fairy tale. Why did the peasants create *The Little Thumbling* and carry on its oral tradition? It was done to take something as bleak as starvation and put it into more concrete terms, like an ogre, for example. The peasants still find resolution and uphold their perseverance before this ogre. This is why it is so important to uphold the accuracy of fairy tales. Through all of the psychoanalysis you can interpret, these stories are solely created for entertainment (Darnton, R., 1984). So, the French peasants could have a break from their reality (even though one can draw lines to their reality from the story). Fairy tales like *The Little Thumbling* are significant because they prove how the best art is created through restriction. It is art validating the struggle of real people. Perhaps we need more people like Darnton, to shed light on other inaccurate portrayals of fairy tales.

Annotated Bibliography

Bloom, R. (2015). Miniature marvelous: the petit as personal aesthetic in the fairy tales of Marie Catherine d'Aulnoy. *Marvels & Tales*, 29(2), pp 209-227.

<https://doi.org/10.13110/marvelstaes.29.2.0209>

The article compares the different meanings and implications of the petite aesthetic in d'Aulnoy's stories and compares them to Perrault's. The petite aesthetic is an integral part in French culture and has a lot of historical context and meaning in literature. Specifically, how petite people or animals are dismissed or less than but these authors celebrate them instead. In this literature, the petite people, animals, or objects are integral in the fairy tale.

I thought that this article was a fun read. I unknowingly have had the petite French aesthetic unconsciously engrained. I don't know where it came from necessarily, maybe from my exposure to popular culture and movies somewhere along the way. This article made me realize how important the petite aesthetic is in a literary context as well as its importance in French culture.

This article will help the reader explore the literary aspects of the petite aesthetic of *The Little Thumb* by Perrault. I also want to take a moment to show the similarities of Perrault and d'Aulnoy, how they are both French authors who incorporate the petite aesthetic in their

literature. It is important to let the reader know how the petite aesthetic had become such an integral part of French Culture.

Darnton, R. (1984) The great cat massacre and other episodes in French cultural history. *New York:*

Basic Books, pp 9-72

https://nmu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=cdi_proquest_ebookcentral_EBC903538&context=PC&vid=01NOMICH_INST:NMU&lang=en&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&adaptor=Primo%20Central&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,peasants%20tell%20tale%20robert%20darnton&mode=basic

This article strongly advocates for oral tradition and protects the origins of fairy tales. Peasants being the true authors of these classic fairy tales. Peasants Tell Tales actively challenges authors of fairy tales. Darnton denounces many authors for their inaccurate retelling of a story. He also shines a light on who took the most care in their retelling of the oral traditions. Comparing and contrasting the tales from the oral traditions was a big part of the article.

I had a positive emotional response to this article that changed my entire perspective on Fairy Tales. Coming across this article gave me more purpose and reason to continue analyzing *The Little Thumbling*. I was at a stage in my search for sources where I wasn't finding much more on my topic. Thankfully my professor had a lecture on Peasants Tell Tales and I was able to use this source instead of a weaker one I was afraid I'd have to use.

Using this article will drive home my thesis and will spread a connecting web over all of my topics in the paper. I want to use this source as a way to show why people should analyze fairy tales. I am planning to use a quote from the article in my conclusion as a way to validate my research. I am very excited about using this source as it holds a lot of weight towards my research.

Geoffrey, P. (2017). Global crisis: war, climate change and catastrophe in the seventeenth century, *Yale University Press*. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nmich/detail.action?docID=4866247>.

This article is an in-depth analysis of the global crisis in the seventeenth century. It describes how climate change affected agriculture and crop yields, which lead to disease and malnutrition within the masses. These events created an economic crisis from major loss of trade, and population. This global crisis tested people's loyalty to their religion. The most exacerbating factor on top of all the ongoing issues was war stricken all throughout the seventeenth century.

I enjoyed reading this article because it gave me more insight and perspective on what the French common folk were up against in the seventeenth century. In *The Little Thumbling* it describes how the parents have to abandon their children multiple times due to poverty. I now have a better grasp on how the family became so poor. During this time in France the country was torn apart by war. The taxes were incredibly high because of the failing economy, and the only people who were enjoying their lives were the upper class because they did not have to pay taxes. Shortly after the parents abandon the children in the woods, a lord comes to the parents' home giving them payment for a service that had been completed a very long time ago. I now have a better understanding of how desperate these parents were and why they had to make the decision to abandon their children. I also have a better understanding of Little Thumbling himself and how he symbolizes the physical traits of malnutrition, disease, and stunted growth that affected the French greatly in the seventeenth century.

In my paper I am going to use this source to give insight on the seventeenth century, when the book was written. The global crisis during that century affected France greatly, the country was poverty stricken, war ravaged, and economically unstable. It was so bad that the French were malnourished and sick that growth was extremely stunted in this century. I am going to use these points to describe why *The Little Thumbling* is directly correlated to the global crisis that lead to the historical events in seventeenth century France.

Goldberg, C. (2003). The dwarf and the giant (AT 327B) in Africa and the Middle East. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 116(461), pp 339–350. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4137795>

The article shows how the tricking of the ogre and stealing something from them has significant ties to legend and myth. This happens in Greek mythology. It also occurs in another French fairy tale, *The Bee and The Orange Tree*. Japan has legends similar to the ogre as well as Western Asia, and Africa.

I didn't realize how significant the tricking of the ogre concept was to legend and myth, but as I read the article I learned that it goes as far back as Greek Mythology. I thought that was interesting. When I read the article, I concluded that no matter what culture you're in, people have the same fears of their children being hurt. Children are smart and capable, especially when they are in pressing situations.

I can use this article to show how certain concepts of *The Little Thumbling* have existed in the past, and how it has been used across the world. I want to describe my thoughts on the article, how no matter what culture or time in history you live in, parents have the same fears of

their children being hurt. I like how the ogre concept shows how vulnerable children can be to danger but also how they are smart thinkers as well, they can act fast when they need to.

Haase, D. (1993). Yours, mine, or ours? Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and the ownership of fairy tales. *Merveilles & Contes*, 7(2), pp 383–402. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41390373>

This article describes how different authors have a lot of responsibility and power and control when they turn oral tradition into literary tradition. It can change the entire story itself. The article goes on to explain how when an oral tradition is represented inaccurately or unacceptably it amounts to sacrilege. These oral traditions deserve to be taken very seriously because they hold cultural significance and rewriting them for a personal agenda is disgraceful. I enjoyed this article because it made me question the accuracy of fairy tales I have read growing up.

This article helped me understand how different authors have different ways about interpreting a story. The Grimm Brothers and Perrault have different ways they retell a story and I thought that was interesting to know because for the longest time the Grimm Brothers did not put their own perspective on their fairy tales. I thought they were the original stories. Reading this article helped me understand that there are different motives or inspiration behind interpreting oral traditions.

This article will show how Charles Perrault's Fairy Tales had been remastered respectfully, representing their original oral tradition and where it came from. I want to explain how Perrault's fairy tales are not nationalistic like the Grimm Brothers, that there was no need to celebrate national identity like how they did. Perrault simply communicated the French traits, values, and attitudes without glorifying France itself.

Hardwick, J. (2012). Julie Hardwick on the early modern French family. *Not Even Past*.

<https://notevenpast.org/julie-hardwick-early-modern-french-family/>

This article explains how marriage was a necessity for French families in the 17th Century in order to survive and afford to live. There was so much uncertainty and hardship in France that living alone was not an option. People would get married not always out of love, but more often because they needed each other to survive. Everyone in the household had to earn their keep, and therefore many children were abandoned or aborted. In fact, this was so commonplace to disown the children that there aren't even complete records of just how many abandoned children there were. The children were only identified by the scraps of paper in their hands stating who they were.

I thought this article was relatable to the present day, as it is pretty uncommon to see someone living on their own with how expensive everything is. Wages do not reflect the market, and poverty is inching its way into the lives of many who otherwise would have been stable. We see many young people now living in houses with 4-6 others, and friends owning property together in order to afford the payments—even on a small parcel of land. There is also the existing crisis that we see with the foster care system, which leads to many children being lost in a different way.

I am going to use this source to give better insight on how the entire family depended on each other, and how their big family put them into such financial burden. I found this article to be particularly compelling, as it shows that though we continue in time, some things remain the

same. Also, it is good to learn about these experiences in the past, to help acknowledge and shape our present and future.

Henry H. (1986). *The conquest of poverty: the Calvinist revolt in sixteenth-century France*.

Leiden: Brill.

<https://web-p-ebshost-com.nmu.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=6bc7b66e-5b4e-439f-852c-c1ebc298da02%40redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZW9vc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=28896&db=e000xna>

This article is about the pressure of religious, social, and political ideals. The immense pressure of unattainable ideals leads to violence that tore France apart in the end of the sixteenth century. This article details the Reformation, and the new religion of Calvinism, and their religious war with the Protestants and Catholics. There were also social issues, such as the exposing the clergy of the catholic church and the Huguenot revolt, demonstrating that everyone was opposed to the greed of the clergy, whether they identified as Catholic, Protestant, or Calvinist. The high taxation also posed a political issue. The poor were being heavily taxed, whereas the upper class were exempt, causing a greater divide.

I thought the article was informative, but unfortunately, very dry. Thankfully, it gave me a better idea of what was going on with France's government and institutions. There were so many issues with the class divide and how the power was so poorly abused in France religiously, socially, and politically. It was the perfect recipe for civil unrest and violence that proceeded into the seventeenth century.

I am going to use this source as a foundation of historical context that lead up to the 17th century. This article shows how France has been struggling for a long time within its government and its institutions. That affected the societal issues and political unrest among the common folk in France that they were subjected to throughout the seventeenth Century.

Tatar, M. (2017). *The classic fairy tales: texts, criticism*. *W.W. Norton & Company*, pp 229-230

https://nmu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01NOMICH_INST/cga9eg/cdi_askewsholts_vlebooks_9780393289794

This book is an amalgamation of classic fairy tales with summaries and criticisms by Maria Tatar. It is the foundation and primary source of my research paper. Reading *The Little Thumbling* section helped me solidify my research focus on fairy tales. Thankfully reading more than just my chosen topic helped me truly analyze fairy tales and understand what the common struggles people dealt with in certain time periods.

I enjoyed reading *The Classic Fairy Tales* book because of the nostalgic ties that fairy tales have to my childhood. Growing up I was surrounded by fairy tales and immersing myself in their magical wondrous worlds. *The Little Thumbling* was not one I had heard of until reading this book, and had piqued my interest in a new unknown magical world. I am excited about this new-found addition to my knowledge on fairy tales and as an adult am now able to analyze this fairy tale beyond the evil and heroic roles.

The Little Thumbling text and criticism catapulted the beginnings of my research paper. Using this story will be a challenge for me because it is my first time hearing of *The Little Thumbling*. Reading the story piques my interest because it hasn't changed much from the oral

tradition. Writing about something that very well could be close to what peasants in the 16-1700's were telling their families and friends is such a unique opportunity.