This paper is a collection of literary-based research that explores the effect of metaphorical sleep on a female character within a patriarchy. This research consults each character's struggle to live "awakened" after being able to recognize the state of oppression that their sleep enforced, with each woman's tragic ending being a return to "sleep," or suicide. This study consults four different versions of "Sleeping Beauty" as secondary material.

My project ultimately concludes that awakenings in the context of these four characters are twofold: the realization that they are unhappy, and the decision to end their lives because of it. The dark interpretation that each text offers to a seemingly innocent fairy tale demonstrates the level of oppression that faces each female character and the commonality of hopelessness that accompanies an enlightened woman in the 19th century.