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Elements and tropes of interest in the coming-of-age genre: *Brave, Arcane* and *Coraline*

How can we recognize a story as a coming-of-age story, and what defines this genre?

Abstract

Different elements and tropes in the coming-of-age genre affect the heroines and their course of action. This thesis aims to identify and examine the similarities and dissimilarities of this narrative. I aim to show why these tropes and element are important for the change within the heroine, in addition to how these elements are essential to make it a coming-of-age story. It is also essential to look at how different *Arcane*, *Brave* and *Coraline* utilize these components to indicate identity, as well as change and growth.

Innholdsfortegnelse

1. Introduction

This thesis aims to examine what elements and tropes are important for change withing the heroine in the coming-of-age gerne. There are a few elements already associated with the genre, however this thesis aims to explore new different concepts, as well as discussing a few already established ones. By focusing on female led stories, the tropes and elements of what is important to the protagonist can change. This is because female led stories has previously revolved around romance and marriage. When this narrative is taken away, new opportunities arise. This thesis will also aim to understand the importance these newfound components of change.

2. Chosen works

To establish a clear picture of what I will be discussing in this study, I have decided to include a short introduction of the chosen works, as it is essential to ensure comprehension of the subsequential discussion.

2.1. *Arcane*

Arcane was published in 2021, by Riot games in cooperation with Fortiche.

Arcane follows different characters, but the ones I am going to focus on are Powder (goes by Jinx) the younger sister and Violet (goes by Vi), the older sister. We see them grow up from being children to becoming young adults. We also see how their choices affect their lives, and how trauma can complicate thing. They live in a city called Zaun, which in the under the city Piltover. The citizens of Piltover are privileged and wealthy, while the citizens of Zaun struggle with violence, poverty, and drug abuse. The story mainly focus on the clash between these cities, with all the politics and conversational following.

When Jinx and Vi are children, their father figure Vander gets kidnaped by Silco, one of the shows many antiheroes. Vi and her adopted brothers decide to go after Vander but asks Powder to stay at home to keep her safe. Powder does not listen and decide to go after them with heavily explosive matter. Powder causes an explosion in order to help them, but kills the bothers, Vander and many more in the prosses. Vi and Powder gets into a heated argument, where Vi call Powder a jinx, thus Jinx was born. Jinx and Vi get separated after this, due to Vi being arrested and being put in prison on false accusations by a corrupted enforcer. This

causes the sisters to have very different perspectives on how they are coming to age. Jinx gets 'saved' by Silco, who becomes her new father figure.

2.2. *Coraline*

Coraline is a book published in 2002, and later movie adapted in 2009. For this essay, I will be focusing on the written book by Neil Gaiman. Coraline is about one young girl, who thinks her parents are boring. She later discovers a hidden world within the family's new apartment. Here she meets her other parents, copies of her real parents with button eyes. They are everything but boring, and Coraline cannot help but explore in this second world. She later realizes that the other mother has taken her real parents captive, to make Coraline stay in the other world. This forces Coraline to rise to the occasion to save her parents and defeat the evil other mother. Along the way, she meets other children that has fallen into the evil mother's trap and saves them along the way. Coraline is scared a lot of the time but remembers how her dad was *brave* to save her, and she wants to do the same for her parents; save them. Coraline gains a new appreciation for her parents and her life as is.

2.3. *Brave*

Brave is a movie released by Walt Disney pictures and produced by Pixar Animation Studios, published in 2012.

In this movie, we follow the heroine and Disney princess Merida as she is supposed to take up and follow the old family traditions. This includes finding a husband from one of the other clans, which her mother is pressuring her into. Merida however, is more interested in hunting, riding her horse and generally just living. In the contest with the clans of fighting for Merida in marriage, she decides to fight for her own hand. This causes a conflict between the mother and Merida, and Merida runs away upset. She meets a witch and gets ahold of a spell. To Merida's surprise, this spell turns her mother into a bear. Now she must figure out how to break the spell and save her mother. In doing so, Merida and her mother gets to spend time together and learns to see eye to eye. In the end, the mother daughter bond is strengthened, and they gain a new understanding for each other.

3. Background information

In this chapter, I will examine what the definition of the coming-of-age genre. This contains elements used in the genre, which are present in the chosen works. Furthermore, I will present a perspective which is unique to the chosen works, although not uncommon in female led coming-of-age stories. The coming-of-age genre is also known as the term "bildungsroman". Both term will be used in this study.

3.1. Origins for the bildungsroman

The coming-of-age genre dates back to the end of the eighteenth century (Gelinas). The Coming-of-age genre originates from Germany (Mapindani, A. & Chauke, M.T), consequently goes by the term "bildungsroman". In the eighteenth century, when the genre came to life, two traditions emerged. The first one is the classic story of a young adult going through change, emerging as mature. The other tradition is seeing the bildungsroman as a strictly German way of writing novels. Hence, holds a significant place in German literature. The scholar Sarah Graham argues that the German bildungsroman "is an intrinsically political genre that explores in various ways the relation between the cultural nation (Kulturnation) and the political state" (Graham, chapter 1). This implies that the genre was politically influenced by the conflicts and society at the time. Graham argues that the characters are developing in a changing world and are forced to reflect on the world around them (Graham).

> I would like to argue that the aspect of political involvement in the coming-of-age genre is not something lost in time. Arguably, we can see political influence in both *Brave* and *Arcane*.
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> With the frame of reference above, I want to point out *Arcane*. *Arcane* is a story which is heavily motivated by politics, both within the story and inspired from our real world. The motive of an upper class/upper city, paired together with an undercity/underclass directly mirrors our own world. This is seen both on a world basis considering the "first world" and our "developing countries", as well as within the borders of United States of America, which is one of the countries of origin of *Arcane*.
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> Another way to indicate how *Arcane* has involved politics is to look at the Drug in *Arcane* called "Shimmer". The United States has a problem with the drug Opium (Seltzer). This directly mirrors the drug in *Arcane*. The abuse and addiction are

pictured as devastating and critical, due to the effect it has on the society. The show gave "Shimmer" inhuman effects, but the addiction and consequences of addiction is the same to Opium; Constant withdrawal, damage to the body and the possibility of economic consequences.

With these issues in mind, I'd like to conclude that the Bildungsroman is still a heavily political motivated genre. However, there are works such as *Coraline* which is clearly a coming-of-age story but has no evidence of larger obvious political matter. It is possible not to include politics, but the nature of the genre makes it easy to do so.

3.2. Bildungsroman revolution

In the nineteenth century, the bildungsroman transformed into a more modern version of itself. In this version, the bildungsroman arguably follows the narrative of a crisis, which results in the protagonist change into maturity. Furthermore, Graham argues that this narrative of a crisis is the condition of a bildungsroman, due to its nature of change. In this period, reflection of oneself and the inner life of the protagonist is heavily focused. At a certain point in the plot, the "ideal outcome" is lost (Ever p. 25). The character is forced to let go of previous assumptions of the perfect outcome or ideal dreams and comes to term with the fact of what is. In this way, there is still a change happening within the protagonist. The failure forges new values in which the protagonist can come to term with.

> This narrative is used in *Arcane*. In the season finale, Jinx is questioning if it is possible for everything to be as it was when Jinx an Vi were younger. Essentially, she is wondering who she wants to be. After killing Silco on accident, she comes to terms with the fact that everything has changed. She is not able to move backwards in time and is forced to move forward.
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> The narrative of a failed "bildung" forging new values and changing the inner life is very much present in this example. I argue that while the majority of the chosen works do not follow this narrative, it is still a narrative that still exists today.

There is more than one element from the modernist bildungsroman in which we see in modern works, as well as in my chosen works. Graham mentions that the element of cooperation with an unexpected companion was a way of indulging the state in a form of a nurturing component. This was done to ensure a commitment to the social world. This narrative is one of the topics I will discuss later in this study.

3.3.   Bildungsroman today

As I have covered the history and some of the elements in the bildungsroman, I would like to further discuss what the bildungsroman features today.

The scholar Melissa Gelinas writes of the coming-of-age genre as something which have three parts for it to be considered a bildungsroman. I will therefore divide it into three parts, to make it easier to understand.

We see a young protagonist, female, or male, go through some sort of development to acquire assumed maturity. We first meet them in a younger tender form, it is not uncommon for them to be ignorant, gullible, naïve or selfish. There are multiple starting points for a journey of self-reflection and change. However, the most common beginning is meeting the protagonist in a prosses of becoming (Gelinas).

The second part contain some sort of conflict. This is where the protagonist acquires new experiences to broaden his or her perspective. The protagonist is pushed out of their comfort zone, and it is common to see emotions such as fear, anger, confusion, and sadness. As Graham argued, narrative include the protagonist's sense of self, in a changing world. Which means that exposure to the world within the story is necessary, and as covered earlier, the conflict can regard politics influenced by our real world.

The third and last part, is the point where the protagonist has an "awakening" or a self-realization. This is when the protagonist reflects on resent events, what was and what will be. As mentioned earlier, this can happen after a failed attempt to pursue something, or the revelation can happen after successfully overcoming a crisis, or "the" crisis, in the story (Gelinas).

3.4.   Women in the coming-of-age genre

The classic German bildungsroman began with the story of a white male, but since then, women has challenged this conventional story line. They did this by introducing the female protagonist and exploring what the meaning of a fulfilled life meant. They started by rejecting the idea or marriage, due to the symbolic meaning of marriage, a pact between the woman and the social world and expectations. This went on to challenge the expectations by society.

Graham argues that "A Woman was valued as an object of male desire and female quest narratives were often deflected into romance and marriage".

> The quote above challenges the topics of love interests and agency. While the
> narrative of marriage is the direct problem in *Brave*, we can also see a variation of this
> quote in *Arcane*. This will be discussed in detail at a later point.

3.5. Female gaze

To understand the female gaze, we need to understand the male gaze first. The quote by Graham above describes women as an object of desire. This is directly male gaze, due to the fact that heterosexual women do not see other women as an object of desire. This is indicated in the quote itself, if we follow the narrative of female quests being deflected into marriage, then marriage would be the object of desire for women. When this was challenged by the female authors, a new lens was created. The question of "What do I (as the female protagonist) desire?" gets a whole new significance in the light of plot narrative. Graham argued that for the female protagonist the quest of self-realization was more important. Therefore, I would argue that female gaze is the desire to do and be more than the heteronormative social expectations.

3.6. Significant components

Different elements and tropes in the coming-of-age genre affect the heroines and their course of action. This thesis aims to identify and examine the similarities and dissimilarities of this narrative. I aim to show why these tropes and element are important for the change within the heroine, in addition to how these elements are essential to make it a coming-of-age story. It is also essential to look at how different *Arcane*, *Brave* and *Coraline* utilize these components to indicate identity, as well as change and growth.

As mentioned above, there are some established elements in which influence the plot of the coming-of-age story. The already established ones this study will examine, are the trope of a love interest and cooperation. Cooperation and love interest is about the relationship with the people around them, in the social world. A variant of this is the importance of a role model, or a parent/guardian. This relationship can affect the heroine greatly in different ways, which can threaten the agency of the heroine. Does the heroine really have any form of agency in the presence of these relations? This thesis also aim to clarify the importance of the parental role and the question of agency.

4. Elements and tropes of interest

In this chapter, the importance of different elements and tropes in the coming-of-age genre will be examined. The chosen works will provide examples, in which will be further discussed.

4.1. Love interest

The love interest is an element with many nuances. A love interest can affect the protagonist's course of action and challenge his or her inner life. Furthermore, the protagonist can also reject the whole concept of romance. "For much of it's history the Bildungsroman was grounded thematically and structurally in the 'naturalness' of gender polarities. A woman was valued as an object of male desire and female quest narratives where often deflected into romance or marriage" (Joannou, 2018). This is an extension of a quote used earlier in this study. While the quote establishes what used to be the narrative for female protaginists, it does not answer the question of the love interest importance today. In this chapter, the importance of the love interest will be challenged.

In *Brave*, Merida rejects the whole idea of marriage. This is different from the earlier Disney princess movies, with the princess and prince living happily ever after. *Brave* was the first of its kind, to not including a love interest while still being a Disney princess movie. "Miller contends that Edwardian feminism changed both the public perception and self-image of the unmarried woman, and, in doing so, allowed her a fuller life and more significant role in society" (Graham). As seen in the movie, Merida shows emotions like distress, anger, and frustration by the fact she is set up to get married. This is what starts the conflict in the first place. She handles the conflict on her own and by cooperating with her mother. The movie ends with Merida and her mother Elinor riding together, which can be interpreted as them reconciling their relationship. This seems a lot more important to Merida, considering when faced with a conflict where her mother's life is at stake, she stays and face the conflict.

Arcane is a rather new show, and is affected by modern conflicts and politics, such as queer relationships and feminism. There is no male love interest connected to Jinx or Vi in *Arcane*, however Vi has a female love interest. Vi and Caitlyn meets in the prison where Vi is being held under false accusations. Vi believes every enforcer, including Caitlyn, are corrupted, so the tension is high. Caitlyn decides to release Vi from prison, under the understanding that they are to find Silco. As the pair work together, they build a bond of trust and understanding

for each other. This could easily fit into the part of the quote "… female quest narratives where often deflected into romance or marriage", however, At the end of the series in an emotional loaded scene, Vi tells Caitlyn that they cannot be together, because their worlds are too different. "Topside and bottom. Oil and water. That's all there is." (Arcane, ep. 8). Therefore, rejects the possibility of a relationship, as well as the standard romantic narrative. Furthermore, Vi does not let Caitlyn affect her course of action at all. In multiple scenarios, Vi goes off to do her own thing. These two women have full agency of themselves in this relationship.

When it comes to Jinx, her view of the world is completely different. As Jinx struggle with Trauma from the past, constant anxiety and the current conflict, there is not even a mention of a love interest. To highlight how troubled Jinx is, as well as how troubled Jinx's relationship with Silco is, we can see Jinx sitting in Silco's lap. She does gestures that are rather normal in a romantic relationship, such as getting in his lap, being in his face and leaning into his body. Jinx is not a child anymore, she is a developed young adult. To put seemingly romantic gestures with Silco in this scene reveals something important: Jinx do not know how to love with healthy boundaries. To further build upon this claim, we can see Jinx become wildly jealous of Caitlyn. Jinx is seen talking to herself, trying to calm down the feeling of being replaced. She later tries to harm and kidnap Caitlyn. Jinx is Vi's sister but is threatened by Vi's love interest. This shows us that Jinx do not understand different types of love. Her view of the world is so broken, that the character of Jinx only seems able to obsess and not to love.

In *Coraline*, there is no mention of a love interest. One of the reasons for this can be the fact that Coraline iv very young, and therefore the presence of a love interest might not have the same significance as a parent or a guardian.

All these examples indicate the presence of the female gaze. While Merida rejects the whole idea of marriage, Vi touches upon the possibility of a relationship, but the desire of resolving of the conflict triumph the love interest. Furthermore, the fact that her love interest is a woman, disconnect her from the male gaze. This is not a heteronormative relationship, and Vi's agency unaffected by the relationship. As for Jinx, the symptoms of a love interest are being used as a device to highlight how troubled her relationships are. Therefore, this study concludes with the fact that there is no need for a love interest in coming-of-age genre. However, it is possible to use the love interest as a strong motive. Withing the female gaze, the love interest is more of a device used to indicate identity and influence.

4.2. Parental Role: A role model

The parental role is filled in each of the chosen works. Not necessarily by the biological parent, but at least by some sort of guardian. In this segment, we will examine the importance of the parental role.

"Daughters, because they are perceived by the mother in the terms of 'sameness', are viewed more as extensions of her. The mother's identification with her daughter will be fraught with her own ambivalence about being a woman, in a society which devalues women." (Gupta, 2022). This quote is rather interesting, because it is directly connected to the issue in the movie *Brave*. "This whole marriage is what you want. … You walk around telling me what to do, what not to do, trying to make me be like you. Well, I'm not going to be like you"(Brave, 2012).

Merida is seen struggling throughout the movie trying to figure out who she wants to be, and not give into what her mother wants her to be. We can see Elinor, Merida's mother, constantly trying to teach her how to be a "proper princess", which is Elinor's own understanding of what a proper princess is like. While their relationship already is strained because of this, it seems to only get worse after Merida in a fit of rage decides to cut a rift in her mother's tapestry, dividing her mother from the rest of the family. Elinor reacts in anger and throws Merida's bow in the lit fireplace. Considering how emotional they both get after this fight; the tapestry and the bow seems to have a significant meaning to who them both. I interpret these items and symbols are connected to their identities. Elinor's tapestry a picture of her family. Meaning that she identifies as someone connected to her family, and is her family were taken away, she would lose herself. Merida is part of her family, so to believe that Elinor sees Merida as an extension of herself would be correct. Merida's bow symbolizes what she wants to be; free and true to herself. Elinor is seen not approving of the bow: "Merida, a princess does not place her weapons on the table. … A princess should not have any weapons in my opinion." (Brave 2012). Meaning that Elinor has no space in her life for Merida's identity. Later in the movie, we see Merida taking care of her mother using the bow. Catching fish to feed her, as well as protecting her from danger. This can symbolize Merida is able to protect and take care of her family and kingdom being herself. This is initially what Elinor wants for Merida, to take care of the kingdom, but fails to see Merida doing this in her own way.

At the end of the movie, Merida and Elinor is making a new tapestry together, featuring only the two of them. This can symbolize the new and strengthened relationship between them, their new experiences of how they overcame the big conflict of Elinor being turned into a bear. This can also mean that Elinor's identity is no longer relying on her family, considering that the rest of the family is out of the picture. Merida is still in the picture however, meaning that Elinor might still look at Merida as an extension of herself. The only issue with this, is that in the tapestry, Elinor is being pictures as a bear. I interpret this as in this story and when Elinor was a bear, she still saw Merida as a part of her. However, Elinor is no longer a bear, meaning that Elinor might have grown out of the phase of viewing Merida as an extension of herself.

"A common theme of Bildungsroman is for the son to either come to terms with his father or free himself from his grasp. Buckley's taxonomic definition lists the father as an important figure in the typical Bildungsroman, where the protagonist often loses his father by either death or alienation," (Gupta, 2022)

This quote is applicable specifically to *Arcane*. This quote discusses the father-son relationship, but it still applies to Jinx and Vi because they are not held back by any typical female protagonist expectations, such as marriage, pregnancy or simply being frail. In other words, this quote is viable due to the female gaze being present.

Our first observation of Vander is when he is fighting an enforcer in what we later learn was a rebellion in which he started. The show then heavily implies that Vi and Powders parents died in that rebellion, by showing a dead woman, which causes Jinx and Powder to react emotionally. They did not react like this to any of the other corpses. Vander then realize he is responsible for their parents' death and drops his metal gauntlets to the ground. He then picked the girls up and carried them out of the battlefield.
This can be understood as Vander letting go of his past, realizing that war does affect more people than just the ones in the battlefield. By picking up the girls, he is picking up the responsibility of them.

Vi and Vander has a typical father daughter relationship. Vander guides and teaches Vi good values and demeanor, considering what the current situation in the world. Vi does not always agree with Vander, due to her being young and inexperienced. After Vander dies, Vi understand the importance of Vander's Values, and comes to terms with him as a guardian.

Jinx and Vander did not have the same relationship as Vander and Vi. Jinx's guardian is essentially Vi, due to the fact that Vi is the one present in Jinx's life. When Vi leaves Jinx, she is "rescued" by Silco, who takes her in and view her as his daughter. Silco is seen constantly telling Jinx what to do and who she is, leaving Jinx with little to no agency.

In *Coraline*, Coraline has a strained relationship with her parents. While she do love them, she thinks they are boring. This causes Coraline to venture in to the other world, where the conflict of the narrative begins. When she is trying to resolve the conflict of saving her parents, she feels scared. This is when Coraline remembers when her father protected her from a swarm of bees. She feels the need of protecting her parents in the same way the have been protecting her, saying "I'm going back for them because they are my parents. And if they noticed I was gone I'm sure they would do the same for me." (Gaiman, p. 69). This shows the impact their actions have had on their daughter. Due to her parents being captured, Coraline has full agency of the actions.

In conclusion, the parental role has a significant role in the stories. Guidance, impact and love/hate is what this element brings to the character in development. They can turn into martyrs, as well as an unexpected companion. This element also affects the agency of the character, and therefore contributes to the resolve of the story.

4.3. The unexpected companion

As established earlier, the sudden cooperation with an unexpected companion is a well-known element in the coming-of-age genre. In this segment, we will look at the importance of the unexpected companion.

In *Brave*, we see Merida and Elinor cooperation to fix Merida's mistake. Merida knows what happened to her mother, and Elinor is forced to join Merida if she wants to become a human again. We see them together the whole movie, However, Elinor being a bear takes away a part of the control she used to have. Due to the fact that while conscious, she cannot talk. While she can influence Merida, she cannot tell her exactly what to do. This leaves Elinor in a supporting role, trying to help Merida on her way.

Coraline also have an unexpected companion. She has a black cat with no name as a helper. The cat and move freely in and out of the other world, just like Coraline can. The cat is sentient and seems to know more about the other world than Coraline does. The cat looks out

for Coraline and tries to help her at multiple points. An interesting point to notice, is the fact that the cat is doing this of free will. There is no evidence in the book of tha cat gaining anything from helping Coraline, except for the friendship they create along the way.

Arcane has an interesting twist at this trope. In one hand, we have Caitlyn and Vi who's relationship is both motivated by love, but also by them helping each other. The relationship is very much like the ones from *Brave* and *Coraline*, where they both gain something from this cooperation. However, on the other hand, we have Jinx with no companion at all; or so it seems. Jinx has her role figure Silco but is mostly seen alone. However, in her mind she is not alone. Jinx is traumatized, and therefore sees and hear thing that is not actually there. She can hear and see her dead father figure Vander, as well as her two adopted brothers. This is all in Jinx's imagination, so to call it an unexpected companion can be correct due to the "unexpected", but for "companion" she is only talking to herself in reality. The question of agency will be studied at a later point.

In conclusion, all the companions have a significant meaning. In some cases, they encourage the protagonist to do what is right, such as in *Coraline* and *Brave*. In other cases, the protagonist learns from the companion, such as in *Arcane* with Vi and Caitlyn. The companion can serve multiple purposes but is essentially there to help the protagonist awaken.

4.4. The question of agency

Through all the previous topics, there has been mentioning of agency. This is because agency is arguably the most important element in the coming-of-age genre. The coming-of-age genre is about developing and self-realization. For the character to successfully acquire an awakening, there must be some sort of consequences involved. In this segment we will study the importance of agency for the development of the protagonist.

As discussed above, Merida rejected the whole idea of marriage. She had the agency to be able to reject the idea of marriage, but not the authority to reject the actual marriage. which is what caused her to go to the which and use the spell on her mother. After seeing the consequences of her own action, she accepts the fact that she has to get married. Her mother however, had also seen the consequences of her own actions, and decided to let Merida know that she can get married whenever she feels ready. This whole situation is a question of who has the authority to decide what, and Merida and Elinor fights for this authority constantly.

However, because Elinor was turned into a bear, she had to let Merida control the situation. Essentially, Merida learn about responsibility and consequences. This would not be possible without the agency Merida refuse to give up.

Again, *Arcane* has a new perspective with interesting elements. Vi has full authority of herself. She was let out of prison by the understanding that she where to help Caitlyn find Silco, which was something she wanted to do for herself as well. She also used this opportunely to find Jinx but did not tell Caitlyn about this. Throughout the narrative, she is constantly seen doing what she believes is right, even though it is breaking the laws or is impractical.

Jinx on the other side, does not have full agency. Most of the time, she listens to what Silco tells her to do. However, when she is action on her own instincts, someone always end up dead. An example of this is when she decides to do after Vi and Vander, even though Vi told her to say behind. Another example is when she has captured Vi, Caitlyn and Silco, and she decides to shoot Silco and killing him because he had Vi at gunpoint. The consequences of these actions lay heavily on Jinx, causing her to choose to be Jinx in the end. Her choice of becoming Jinx is essentially her awakening in this story.

Coraline is a child, and therefore is probably not that familiar with the prospect of making her own choices. However, when her parents are captured, she takes her fate in her own hands, and decides to go after her parents even though it puts her own life at stake. In this situation, with her parents being missing and the other mother is evil, she has full agency and authority over herself. As mentioned above, she was influenced by her parents to go after them, because she knew that they would be looking for her if she went missing. She says what she wants to the evil other mother, "You're sick, … Sick and evil and weird" (Gaiman, p. 91). When she finally is able to save her parents, she is content with the fact that they are a little boring, because she knows that she is able to do *brave* things on her own.

All of these examples show the importance of agency in the coming-of-age genre. The protagonist needs to be able to make choices and face the consequences of their actions, in order to achieve the awakening connected to the genre. While women historically have been put under men and been expected to listen to what the man has to say, modern coming-of-age stories show a strong female protagonist capable of choosing her own course of action.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that some elements are more important than others in order to achieve the coming-of-age awakening. This makes these elements important to the genre, and are essential in the chosen works of *Arcane*, *Brave* and *Coraline*. The element of the love interest is no longer needed for the female coming-of-age story, due to the rise of the female gaze.

> As mentioned previously, the female gaze asks the question of "what do I desire?" after the trope of love interest is taken away. The heroine now stands before the new challenge of finding a new different purpose.

However, Element such as the parental role, Cooperation and agency stays crucial for the development of the character, and therefore vital for the genre.

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