Course title: Reading Literature with Freud
Course number: (if known)
Lecturer: Dr. Alana Sobelman
Office hours: Tuesdays 10:00-12:00
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Course objectives:
This course focuses on the relation of Freudian psychoanalysis to literature, and vice versa, by closely reading some of Sigmund Freud’s major writings related to literary works, the literary works to which Freud makes reference, and several critical works which examine Freud’s literary analyses. Upon completion of this course students will be able to do the following:

- Understand the basic principles of Freud’s major psychoanalytic theories related to literature, including the Oedipus complex, the uncanny, the repetition compulsion, the pleasure principle, and the death drive
- Understand Freud’s analyses of selected fairy tales, a short story, and one major Greek tragedy
- Understand selected critical approaches to Freudian literary analysis and be able to discuss these approaches in class and in writing
- Aptly apply Freud’s theories related to literature on other literary works of students’ choosing, and produce mid-term and final papers that reflect this application, utilize students’ understanding of at least one secondary critical source, and illustrate students’ overall comprehension of Freudian literary analysis

Course program:
This course, which will be conducted in English, is divided into three basic parts: Freud’s critical work about literature, Freud’s literary “subjects” (the works of literature themselves), and critical works pertaining to Freud’s writings about literature. Students will begin the semester by reading Freud’s texts related to two well-known fairy tales of Brothers Grimm, followed by reading Freud’s work related to E.T.A. Hoffmann’s “The Sandman,” and finally Freud’s various uses of Sophocles’s Oedipus Rex for the construction of the Oedipus Complex. Looking simultaneously at Freud’s critical works and the primary literary sources to which he makes reference, students will gain a real understanding of Freud’s method of reading for the larger goals of psychoanalysis. A midterm paper will illustrate students’ comprehension of Freud’s theories about literature and understanding of a secondary critical work about Freud’s literary readings. The final paper for the course will require students to illustrate their knowledge of Freudian literary analysis through their own analysis of a literary text of their choosing. By the end of the semester, students will have a basic understanding of some of the major themes in psychoanalysis, as well as the tools to perform psychoanalytic-literary analyses of works of literature.

Course requirements and grading:
Participation: 10%
Mid-year paper: 40%
Final paper: 50%

**Reading List:**

*Primary Readings*

Freud, Sigmund. *Interpretation of Dreams* (passages on the Oedipus complex)
--- “The Occurrence in Dreams of Material from Fairy Tales”
--- *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Part II)
--- “On the Sexual Theories of Children”
--- “From the History of an Infantile Neurosis”
Grimm, Jakob and Wilhelm. “Little Red Riding Hood”
--- “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs”
Hoffmann, E.T.A., “The Sandman”
Sophocles, *King Oedipus*

*Secondary Readings*

Bettelheim, Bruno. “Little Red Riding Hood” in *The Uses of Enchantment*
--- “Snow White” in *The Uses of Enchantment*
Brooks, Peter. “Freud’s Masterplot: A Model for Narrative” in *Reading for the Plot*
Felman, Shoshana. “Beyond Oedipus: The Specimen Story of Psychoanalysis”