



Image: clipping from a sketch by Arthur Rackham, 1902

GERM 4370: Modern German Literature:
Grimm Legacies
Sam Houston State University
Department of World Languages & Literatures
CRN 22366

Instructor: Dr. Ervin Malakaj (he/him pronouns)
Time: M, 4-6:50 pm (AB IV 301)
Office Hours: MWF 12-12:50 pm
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Spring 2018 | 3 Credits

Course Description & Goals

The collected folk tales of Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm have had a substantial impact on the cultural history of Germany and beyond. Deceptively simple, these short texts communicate extraordinary messages about accepted behavior or unwelcome desire. They are said to carry universal appeal, which explains their endurance across different cultures and times. This course surveys representative tales popularized by the Brothers Grimm and offers a comprehensive introduction to the literary form of the folk tale. We will consider the distinction between oral and written storytelling traditions as a starting point for a better understanding of the Grimms' collection; consider the impact of the German nationalist and other cultural backdrops for the rise of the German fairy tale; trace the prehistory of individual tales in French, Italian, and ancient contexts; discuss adaptations of the tales in 20th-century German, feminist, and popular US film and TV contexts.

Course lecture, discussion, and readings in English. No prerequisites. This course satisfies an advanced course requirement for the German minor. Should you be interested in finding out more about the minor, be in touch!

Required Texts

You must bring hard copies of these texts to class discussion. They are available through the SHSU bookstore, through online vendors, and are available through our library.

- I. *The Original Folk and Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm: The Complete First Edition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. ISBN: 9780691173221.
- II. Neil Gaiman and Chris Riddell, *The Sleeper and the Spindle*. New York: Harper, 2015. ISBN: 9780062398246.
- III. Maria Tatar. *The hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales*. 2nd Ed. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003. ISBN: 9780691114699.

Additional texts will be available in PDF format on our BlackBoard site and must be printed, read, annotated, and brought to class on the day they are discussed.

Library Research Guide

Newton Gresham Library has a research guide for our course. The guide lists library holdings on the topic of the Grimms' fairy tales and more. You can reach it here: <http://shsulibraryguides.org/grimm>.

Grade Breakdown

Attendance & Participation	20%
3 short papers	40%
Creative Project	20%
Final Presentation	20%

Grading Scale

A+ (98-100%);	A (93-97);	A- (90-92);
B+ (88-89);	B (83-87);	B- (80-82);
C+ (78-79);	C (73-77);	C- (70-72);
D+ (68-69);	D (63-67);	D- (60-62);
F (below 60).		

***Note:** You must receive a passing grade for each component to receive a passing grade in the course.

Attendance & Participation

It is not possible to succeed in this course without regularly attending class, completing the readings & assignments, and participating in discussion when in attendance. I will keep track of your contributions and will award you due credit.

If you miss one or more sessions, it will be very challenging to catch up. In extreme cases your absence will be excused and you can make up the work that you missed. This includes illness, death in the family, etc. These sorts of absences are rare and will be treated as such. Please review the SHSU Student Absence Notification Policy administered by the office of the Dean of Students.

For each unexcused absence in the course you will lose attendance and participation points, which will directly impact your grade. For every unexcused absence, your final grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade (i.e., A→A-, B+→B, etc.). You cannot receive a passing grade if you miss more than 3 classes, which is about 20% of the total class meetings. If you are going to be absent, I require that you notify me via email before class. Severe and repeated tardiness constitutes an absence.

3 Papers

You will complete three papers (min 500 words, maximum 750) in which you answer three questions related to the material we treat in our class. These papers will be descriptive and analytical. You will receive detailed instructions along with deadline and submission information as these assignments approach during the semester. You will have the chance to rewrite each essay in order to improve your written expression. Advanced students in the German Minor will complete these assignments in German.

Creative Project

The final, longer project for the course will have an extensive creative dimension. You can select to write your own fairy tale, rewrite one, write a poem, write a short story inspired by a fairy tale we read or a fairy tale component, make a film, create a graphic novel, etc. The medium for this assignment is left up to you; I simply want you to “think” about a component of the course creatively and express that thinking into something tangible. You will receive detailed information about the project as the semester progresses.

Final Presentation

During the last two weeks of the semester you will give individual presentations to the class in which you select one of the short papers you complete for the class and build it into a longer project. Your presentation will need to have an argument that you are presenting to the class, will have to have visual and/or handout accompaniment, and will need to be followed by a discussion period. This means that you have to lead discussion by proposing a number of questions that the group can pursue following your presentation. You will receive detailed information about the project as the semester progresses.

Extra Credit & The SHSU German Conversation and Culture Club

If you participate in a cultural event that somehow deals with German-speaking cultures or German cultural heritage, you can write a short paragraph describing your experience and email that paragraph to me. You can do this up to three times, which can boost your grade in class.

Cultural events include festivals, theater productions, film screenings, art exhibits, etc. There are a great number of German-themed cultural events in the Houston area, all of which qualify for this. Be in touch with questions. The easiest way for you to participate in a cultural event is by joining and regularly attending the SHSU German Conversation and Culture Club, which has been extremely successful in the last year.

We will have a regular German Conversation Hour scheduled weekly by our German Tutor. You will receive more information about this during the first week of the semester. If you attend three sessions, you can receive a boost on your homework grade.

SHSU German Studies Minor

The SHSU German Studies Minor is intended to provide students with a robust skillset revolving around German language and culture studies. The language sequence (German 1-4; GERM 1411, 1412, 2311, 2312) provides students with an introduction and extensive exposure to German language and culture. Beyond the language sequence, you only take an additional 3 courses at the advanced level. These include

- GERM 3368 German Media (where we explore film, TV series, German newspapers, blogs, etc. in German);
- GERM 3380 Modern German Culture (where we explore politics, economics, and history in German)

- GERM 4360 Modern German Literature (where we explore the fairy tales of the brothers Grimm and their international influence)

To sign up for the minor, be in touch with me! You can find the form to declare the minor here:
<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/registrar/forms-and-documents/forms-and-documents.html>

Communication

You should regularly (i.e., daily) check your official SHSU email account for important announcements about our course. You should regularly check our BlackBoard site for updates and *regularly* review the assignment due dates in the syllabus. If you send me an email, please use the standard format for addressing faculty or standards employed in professional communication. Begin an email with a salutation such as “Dear Dr. Malakaj: . . .” and close with “Best/Yours/Sincerely, . . .” In German, you can say “Lieber/Sehr geehrter Dr. Malakaj” and you can close with “Mit freundlichen Grüßen, . . .”

Technology/Food in the Classroom/Other Distractions

Unless instructed to use them, there is no need for laptops, iPads, smart phones, or any other digital devices in the classroom. These are distracting to your learning, that of your fellow students, and to me. Likewise, you should refrain from texting or other distracting communication, which includes reading materials not required for the course. Avoid bringing food into the classroom (you should eat before or after class). You should not work on assignments for another class during class.

Inclusive Course

You will effectively learn in an inclusive space that continues to challenge you intellectually. I will strive to foster such a space in the classroom and in online forums used for class. Most of all, *you* are required to contribute to the shaping of such an inclusive and intellectually stimulating setting by honoring the diverse backgrounds, statuses, and experiences of your fellow students. Please communicate to me any concerns or needs that immediately relate to your learning.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. You can find more information about the university’s academic dishonesty policy on the website of the Office of the Dean of Students:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/index.html>

You are expected to complete original work on your own in this class. If you enlist the help of others in completing your homework without prior consent of the instructor, you are breaching the academic integrity policy and will be reported to the university administration.

Accommodations

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office and to talk with me about how I can best accommodate your

learning needs. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. Note: No accommodation can be made until you register with SSD, which is located in the Lee Drain North Annex building (next to Farrington), telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786. You can find more information about the office and its services online: www.shsu.edu/dept/disability

Religious Holidays Policy

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: “a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20....” A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/861001.pdf>

Visitors in the Classroom

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor’s discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom. This policy is not intended to discourage the occasional visiting of classes by responsible persons. The visiting of a particular class should be occasional and not regular, and it should in no way constitute interference with registered members of the class or the educational process.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Semester schedule is not absolute; I will adjust it if need be to suit the needs of the class.)

UNIT 1: The Basics of Fairy Tales

By the end of this unit, students will be able to

- list defining features of fairy tales
- discuss fairy tales in the context of orality and textuality traditions from which they emerge

Week 2	Discussion	Assignment for next week's session
January 22	What is a fairy tale? Aschenputtel ohne Worte	Zipes, "The Cultural Evolution of Storytelling and Fairy Tales" (PDF); entry from Greenwood Encyclopedia
Week 3	Discussion	Assignment
January 29	Storytelling, Orality, Textuality	"The Story of Grandmother" (PDF); Charles Perrault, "Little Red Riding Hood" (PDF); Brothers Grimm, "Little Red Cap" (pg. 85-88 in collection)
Week 4	Discussion	Assignment
February 5	Evolution of Little Red	Robert Darnton, "Peasants Tell Tales" (PDF); Maria Warner, "The Old Wives' Tale" (PDF); Zohar Shavit, "The Concept of Childhood and Children's Folktales" (PDF)
Week 5	Discussion	Assignment
February 12	Who tells and why?	Aarne and Thompson, "The Types of the Folktale" (PDF); Propp, "Thirty-One Functions" (PDF); Tales # 1-3 from Volume 1 of the Grimms' Collection

UNIT 2:

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- identify, describe, and critically evaluate common and less common Grimm tales
- assess the tales in terms of the tale types and common taxonomical approaches

Week 6	Discussion	Assignment
February 19	Classification systems for tales and genealogy of tale types Paper #1 Due	Charles Perrault, "Bluebeard" (PDF); Tale # 40 and 46 from Volume 1 of the Grimms' Collection, 135-137 & 146-48; Margaret Atwood "Bluebeard's Egg" (PDF). <i>Recommended: Ex Machina, 2015 film, dir. Alex Garland.</i>
Week 7	Discussion	Assignment
February 26	Bluebeard	Maria Tatar, Chapter 1, Sex and Violence, 3-39; Tale # 8, 47, 54, pg. 26-27, 148-58, 178-81;
Week 8	Discussion	Assignment
March 5	Sex and Violence in the Grimms' Tales	Maria Tatar, Chapter 2, Fact and Fantasy, pg. 39-58; Gilbert & Gubar, "Snow White

		and her Wicked Stepmother" (PDF); Giambattista Basile, "The Young Slave" (PDF); Tale # 53, pg. 170-78
Week 9	Discussion	Assignment
March 12	No class! Spring Break!	
Week 10	Discussion	Assignment
March 19	Snow White	Zipes, "The Americanization of the Grimms' Folk and Fairy Tale" (PDF); <i>Brothers Grimm</i> (2005, dir. Terry Gilliam) (you can find the film on popular streaming sites)

UNIT 3:

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- recount a comparative framework examining German/European/US adaptations of tales
- discuss the tales comparatively in historic terms relating to media praxes enabling cultural transfer

Week 11	Discussion	Assignment
March 26	Americanization of Grimms' Tales Paper #2 Due	Tatar, Chapter 6, From Nags to Witches, pg. 137-156; Gaiman, <i>Sleeper and the Spindle</i> (entire book)
Week 12	Discussion	Assignment
April 2	Graphic Novel adaptations	Tatar, Chapter 7, Taming the Beast, pg. 156-179; "The Poison Mushroom" (PDF); Ruth Klüger, excerpts from <i>Still Alive</i> (PDF); NRA's fairy tale adaptations (PDF)
Week 13	Discussion	Assignment
April 9	Multidirectional Ideologies and Fairy Tales	Zipes, "Fairy Tale Collisions, or the Explosion of the Genre" (PDF); Anderson, "The Little Mermaid" (PDF)
Week 14	Discussion	Assignment
April 16	European Fairy Tale Traditions	Tatar, Epilogue, pg. 179-195

UNIT 4:

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- synthesize complex ideas about fairy tale as a genre and express it in the format of the presentation

Week 15	Discussion	Assignment
April 23	Closing discussion Paper #3 Due	
Week 16	Discussion	Assignment
April 30	Presentations	