

SP 2017 • German 2254

Grimms' Fairy Tales & their Afterlives

W / F 2:20 – 3:40 pm

Professor Matthew Birkhold

**GE Lit course
taught in English**



In the present course, we will be trying to understand the meaning and the enduring appeal of one of Germany's greatest successes in the realm of cultural exportation—a book whose circulation figures are exceeded in Western culture only by those of the Bible, namely, **Grimms' fairy tales**.

This will mean asking a series of interlocking questions. **How** did the fairy tales come about? **What** were the aims of their compilers? How do the tales play to those aims? How do they exceed them? How do the tales tend to work structurally? What have their social and psychological effects been? How have they helped shape—and been reshaped by—popular cultures outside Germany, like popular culture in the U.S. In reckoning with these questions, we will be enlisting the help of a parade of great critics, including Vladimir Propp, Bruno Bettelheim, Erich Auerbach, and Jack Zipes.

Text

Jack Zipes, *The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm*

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