

**Fairy Tales**  
**GERM 550/COMP 580**  
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Fairy Tales! We all seem to know them, but do we? This genre goes back to the period of early storytelling and captures the fears and desires of the powerful and the powerless, celebrating the magic and power of forces outside of Church and State. This course will explore the genre and development of the European fairy tale based on a wide variety of texts and films, such as early oral tales from France and Italy, the collection of tales compiled by the brothers Grimms, tales by Hans Andersen and Oscar Wilde, contemporary fairy tales, as well as modern American film adaptations. The girl you see below develops in remarkable ways: from a French and 'wood-savvy' country girl, to the hapless and naïve daughter of the German middle class, from a British and fearless heroine, who seeks 'the company of wolves', and, more recently, to an American teenager caught in the brutal limitations of social alienation. We will ask how the historical and social context has shaped the form and content of these tales, how express social and psychological conflicts, how they represent children, gender and the trope of the 'happily ever after.'

