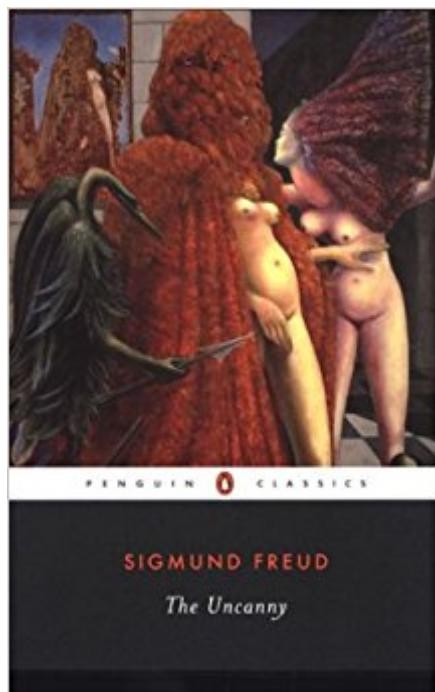


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# The Uncanny (Penguin Classics)



## **Synopsis**

Freud was fascinated by the mysteries of creativity and the imagination. The groundbreaking works that comprise *The Uncanny* present some of his most influential explorations of the mind. In these pieces Freud investigates the vivid but seemingly trivial childhood memories that often "screen" deeply uncomfortable desires; the links between literature and daydreaming; and our intensely mixed feelings about things we experience as "uncanny." Also included is Freud's celebrated study of Leonardo Da Vinci-his first exercise in psychobiography. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"[Freud] ultimately did more for our understanding of art than any other writer since Aristotle." (Lionel Trilling)

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was born in Moravia and lived in Vienna between the ages of four and eighty-two. In 1938 Hitler's invasion of Austria forced him to seek asylum in London, where he died the following year. Freud's career began with several years of brilliant work on the anatomy and

physiology of the nervous system. He was almost thirty when, after a period of study under Charcot in Paris, his interests first turned to psychology, and another ten years of clinical work in Vienna (at first in collaboration with Breuer, an older colleague) saw the birth of his creation: psychoanalysis. This began simply as a method of treating neurotic patients by investigating their minds, but it quickly grew into an accumulation of knowledge about the workings of the mind in general, whether sick or healthy. Freud was thus able to demonstrate the normal development of the sexual instinct in childhood and, largely on the basis of an examination of dreams, arrived at his fundamental discovery of the unconscious forces that influence our everyday thoughts and actions. Freud's life was uneventful, but his ideas have shaped not only many specialist disciplines, but the whole intellectual climate of the last half-century.

I'm not usually a critic of .com, having been a loyal patron since its inception and they have successfully helped resolve a few purchase problems for me over the years. But truly--if it isn't just some marketing ploy--then an editor for product descriptions needs to be much more vigilant. I bought this Kindle edition of Freud's "The Uncanny" thinking it included the other essays mentioned in the reviews. I wish I'd read before my purchase the review that cautioned the other essays are NOT included. I have several copies of this fine essay in other printed sources, so I didn't make this purchase for "The Uncanny" but for the other four essays of which I am not familiar and would have enjoyed reading. But to be clear: my gripe about the marketing practices of promoting some Kindle editions in no way impacts the essay itself, which I've read several times--being a Gothic genre enthusiasts, Freud's "The Uncanny" (1919) along with Lovecraft's "Supernatural Horror in Literature" (1927, 1935) and Radcliffe's "On the Supernatural in Poetry" (1826) form a triad which is the basis for any serious Gothic literary inquiry. In "The Uncanny" Freud alludes to Hoffman's short story "The Sandman" (1816) so it would serve one well to be familiar with that story. Freud discusses from a psychoanalytic viewpoint (of course) the feelings of dread and anxiety and he touches upon Rank's concept of The Double and reoccurring randomness that Jung would later term synchronicity. Freud discusses the etymology of the term "uncanny" and the sexual nature of repressed, forbidden impulses. Freud advances the theory of the uncanny as something eerily and frighteningly familiar and yet outside one's perception. Castration might be one such fear--but there are many such sublimated manifestations of our erotic impulses. This theme plays into the aesthetics of certain kinds of literature, namely that of the grotesque or horrific which produces an uncanny fear. "The Uncanny" is not light reading but it will stimulate your thinking. It is provocative and a fascinating read. And for anyone serious about the Gothic literary quest, it is essential.

I don't review 1/10th of the books I read, but this book has somewhat of an emotional attachment for me. My first degree is in Psychology. It was one of those "I'm trying not to pick undecided as a major so I'll take Psychology" choices. I really enjoy Psychology, but on the other hand, I have struggled with the more current forms/teaching styles/methods of universities. Freud has become an ancient relic, a dinosaur and that's why I never went into the field of Psychology. I must have been studying Psychology just before everyone started saying he was dumb, sick, perverted. I saw Freud as something different than most people. A man who studied without the internet, who used his brain not a list of statistics to make his conclusions. This book is one of his most reader-friendly books. If you decide to read it don't think of him as those negative adjectives, but instead, as a pioneer who succeeded in a time when information wasn't nearly as widely available in 2015 and one who was politically incorrect, not because he wanted to be different, but simply because he thought different and concluded differently. If you do this you'll start to understand why there's still some of us out here who believe Freud was the beginning and end of Psychoanalysis. I have read many reviews of this book and see a recurring theme of "It's too hard to understand". That's because you're reading a book by one of the greatest minds of our time. It's sad that Freud didn't have the writer in him like say a Mark Twain had or a Hemingway, but you have to be patient with Freud's books. I wouldn't consider it much different than reading some of Asimov's more obscure books. One of the things I've always taken from Freud's books is that he seems agitated with writing. Once you get over the preconceived notions and tell yourself, "This man was one of the greatest thinkers to ever live", I'm at least sure you'll understand some of it. I consider myself a Freudian, but even I don't understand some of the things he talks about. I always wondered if colleague responses to his writings being too hard to understand helped him understand the ego, ID and superego.

Freud's "The Uncanny" is one of my favorite texts because every time I read it I come out with a slightly different understanding or perspective on the subject. Up until now I only had a hard copy available, so I decided to invest in a new ebook version. Sadly, this version is filled with spelling errors, a lack of word spacings and in two instances whole lines of text being missing or cutting off without explanation. I realize that the abundance of footnotes and textual references is difficult to transcribe digitally, but come on! I'd gladly change my review to 5 stars if I could just get a corrected and complete copy of this essay.

In order to fully appreciate this essay, one should be familiar with the authors mentioned. An

invitation to the uncanny, from a familiar voice of our history.

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