

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910777688003321
Autore	Lawson Lewis A.
Titolo	A Gorgon's Mask : The Mother in Thomas Mann's Fiction // Lewis A. Lawson
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Leiden; ; Boston : , : BRILL, , 2005
ISBN	94-012-0182-X 1-4175-9119-6
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (438 p.)
Collana	Psychoanalysis and Culture ; ; 12
Disciplina	838.912
Soggetti	Medicine in Literature Mothers in literature Mothers - psychology
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Acknowledgements -- I. Introduction -- II. Early Works -- III. The Magic Mountain -- IV. Mann meets Freud -- V. Joseph and His Brothers -- The Beloved Returns : Lotte in Weimar -- The Transposed Heads -- Joseph the Provider -- VI. Doctor Faustus -- VII. The Holy Sinner -- Confessions of Felix Krull: Confidence Man -- The Black Swan -- Confessions of Felix Krull: Confidence Man -- VIII. Conclusion -- Bibliography.
Sommario/riassunto	The thesis of A Gorgon's mask: The Mother in Thomas Mann's Fiction depends upon three psychoanalytic concepts: Freud's early work on the relationship between the infant and its mother and on the psychology of artistic creation, Annie Reich's analysis of the grotesque-comic sublimation, and Edmund Bergler's analysis of writer's block. Mann's crisis of sexual anxiety in late adolescence is presented as the defining moment for his entire artistic life. In the throes of that crisis he included a sketch of a female as Gorgon in a book that would not escape his mother's notice. But to defend himself from being overcome by the Gorgon-mother's stare he employed the grotesque-comic sublimation, hiding the mother figure behind fictional characters physically attractive but psychologically repellent, all the while couching his fiction in an ironic tone that evoked humor, however

lacking in humor the subtext might be. In this manner he could deny to himself that the mother figure always lurked in his work, and by that denial deny that he was a victim of oral regression. For, as Edmund Bergler argues, the creative writer who acknowledges his oral dependency will inevitably succumb to writer's block. Mann's late work reveals that his defense against the Gorgon is crumbling. In *Doctor Faustus* Mann portrays Adrian Leverkühn as, ultimately, the victim of oral regression; but the fact that Mann was able to complete the novel, despite severe physical illness and psychological distress, demonstrates that he himself was still holding writer's block at bay. In *Confessions of Felix Krull: Confidence Man*, a narrative that he had abandoned forty years before, Mann was finally forced to acknowledge that he was depleted of creative vitality, but not of his capacity for irony, brilliantly couching the victorious return of the repressed in ambiguity. This study will be of interest to general readers who enjoy Mann's narrative art, to students of Mann's work, especially its psychological and mythological aspects, and to students of the psychology of artistic creativity.
