

operating in the author's mind, albeit, Freud claims, one that operates from "the deepest layer."

Later in the same book, having used psychoanalysis to explain Hamlet, Freud uses Hamlet to explain the nature of dreams. In disguising himself as a madman and adopting the license of the fool, Hamlet "was behaving just as dreams do in reality: concealing the true circumstances under a cloak of wit and unintelligibility." When we sleep, each of us adopts an "antic disposition."

Psychoanalysts trace Hamlet's sense of guilt to the relief or even satisfaction this prince of Denmark felt after his father's murder.

Quote

[Hamlet to the Ghost]

Up, thou poor ghost, while
memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond
records,
All saws of books, all forms, all
pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And my commandment all alone
shall live
within the book and volume of my
brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!



And even when the prince eventually fulfills his father's commands, things don't just magically get better. The cycles of violence and father-son kerfuffles are endlessly perpetuated in Hamlet. The whole play is like Freud ofummies, only much more fun to watch.

Conclusion

The whole play and its essence of Hamlet's promise to the ghost of his father. The prince solemnly swears here to obey the "commandment" laid down by his father. And the images Hamlet uses in this speech sure that would give an analyst a lot to interpret. There's the "book and volume of [his] brain," which is a surface onto which "records" are inscribed, and a "table" onto which "pressures" are applied. But of course, for Hamlet, fulfilling his promise to dear old dad is much easier said than done. "Pressures Past" and present continue to bear on Shakespeare's antihero. As we're pretty sure you already know, his road to the end of the play.