“WHATEVER YOU DO... DON’T OPEN THE DOOR”

A GUIDE to Caryl Churchill’s THE SKRIKER

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To the Actors,

Welcome to the world of *The Skriker*! We, your dramaturgs, have assembled this packet of articles, information, stories, and pictures to aid you as you take the journey through Churchill’s modern-day fairy tale.

Like in many of her plays of social commentary, Caryl Churchill manipulates the elements of time in her telling of *The Skriker*. As the narrator of this cautionary tale, the Skriker vows to seek revenge on humans not only for forgetting the imaginary folktale creatures from their childhood, but for the past deeds humans have purposefully chosen to forget -- the years of pollution, social wrongdoing, and environmental neglect. This past, embodied by the creatures of the Underworld, haunts the present world of Lily and Josie, as well as carries a nightmarish omen for the future if we continue down the same path.

The following packet is separated into three corresponding sections: The Past, The Present, and The Future. At the beginning of each one, you will find some of our own reflections and thoughts to help you contextualize the information that follows. We hope each section allows you to discover how one affects the other, and how truly important it is that we heed the message of the Skriker. For if we don't, we will have created a world that is irreversibly poisoned and uninhabitable for both us and our offspring.

Please keep in mind that this packet is only a sampling of the information we have gathered, so please feel free to contact us anytime with questions, concerns, or anything else you may want to run by us.

A full text copy of all the fairy tales and folktales mentioned in this packet will be available in the rehearsal room for you to peruse through or to check out. Also, if any of the other sources from the packet strike your interest and you would like to read more, let us know and we can bring a copy of the book or article for you, as well as point you to further resources you may find helpful.

Finally, please be aware that throughout the packet you may find images that are particularly disturbing and unsettling. However, we felt they were important to include in order to emphasize both the shocking and damaged reality that, like as the play points out, we too often ignore.

Sincerely,

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Caryl Churchill is one of the most critically acclaimed playwrights in the English-speaking world, and perhaps the single most acclaimed female one, but she is a mystery wrapped in an enigma. In a world where serious playwrights constantly sit on panels, hold forth at academic conferences and appear on behalf of institutions like the British Council, Ms. Churchill remains a rare thing, a hugely successful playwright who lets her work speak entirely for itself.

Ms. Churchill is generally regarded with something close to awe in the London theater world for her passion, curiosity, rigor, openness to collaboration and for being, as the critic Charles Spencer wrote in The Daily Telegraph, "the least predictable of contemporary playwrights." Her elusiveness can be maddening for those trying to understand her plays, which are elliptical, provocative, shocking and increasingly pared-down; they seem to cry out for a cool authorial voice to help answer the questions they raise. But by the same token, it adds to her mystique and forces audiences, so often spoon-fed with official interpretations, to take some initiative.

Ms. Churchill stopped giving interviews some years ago, but as to her personal details, this much is known: She has been writing plays for more than 40 years. Born in London in 1938, just before World War II broke out, she spent most of her teens in Montreal, where her family moved when she was 10. In 1957, she went to Oxford and began to write plays for student productions. Four years later, she married a barrister, David Harter. She wrote even while her three sons were small, mostly short radio plays, characterized by a necessary economy of style that carries through to her current plays.

Her husband shifted to working with the poor and disadvantaged, and his sense of social responsibility mirrored hers; one of her first plays was "Owners" (1972), about (in part) the rapacity of landlords. But subjects plumbed by her subsequent plays are so multifarious as to make it impossible to pin down her work. To name just a few, she
takes on 1980's greed in "Serious Money" (1987); the steep price of women's success in "Top Girls" (1982); the brief period of revolutionary idealism in 17th-century England in "Light Shining in Buckinghamshire" (1976); the limits of playwriting as a form, and of the ability of words to express meaning, in "Blue Heart" (1997); the horror of a violent world in "Far Away" (2000).

....If Ms. Churchill's plays have one signature, it is their highly stylized conceits. The works are as creative in form as they are varied in content, as if she wants to push the boundaries each time.

Other British playwrights are known for their distinctive, consistent traits: Harold Pinter's plays are always Pinteresque; and Tom Stoppard invariably reveals himself with his erudition and clever, multi-layered wordplay. But Ms. Churchill is a constant surprise.

-- Sarah Lyall, New York Times February 18, 2009

ABOUT THE PLAY...

Caryl Churchill's The Skriker was first produced at the Royal National Theatre in London in 1994 and received mix reviews, yet was summed up to be “a strange and difficult and challenging work” (Wolf). Although Churchill often avoids answering questions that seek to pin down the meaning of her work, she does state that The Skriker is a play about damage -- "damage to nature and to people" (Wolf).

It also seems to be about what causes us to disown and neglect the future (Cousin 205). In the play, both the Underworld creatures and humans are linked by desire. Lily is as fascinated by the Skriker's magical powers as the Skriker is about the invention and workings of the TV. This desire, however, proves to be dangerous and addicting. The Underworld creatures' gluttony grows from their banquet feast to their continuous hunt for human babies to devour, just as the humans' desire for economic progress snowballs into a world set on globalization at any cost. As alluring and tempting as these things first seem to be, the Skriker presents us with a chilling cautionary tale where magic turns to horror and where our own wishes are what destroy us.

"For, though magic and stage time can be moulded into many shapes; and, as Josie finds on her return to the human world, the present can become the past; in the actual world, beyond the experiment-enabling, yet safe, space of theatre, time moves inexorably forward, and, if we do not soon alter our way of living in the world, time, and that world, will run out" (Cousin. 194).
'Playwrights don’t give answers, they ask questions,’ stated Caryl Churchill in an essay published in 1960, as she embarked upon her career as a dramatist. In the thirty or so plays she has written for stage, radio, and television since 1960, Churchill deals with some of the most difficult questions of contemporary life -- and typically concludes with these questions resolutely left unanswered. Her manner of approaching even the most intractable issues, however, tends to be playful, startling, and subversively comic rather than authoritative and confrontational. Churchill's plays are, above all, theatrical. Their theatricality energizes the process of open-ended questioning that empowers the audiences to ask further questions and seek satisfactory answers in the world outside theatre.

Churchill's continual, imaginative challenges to the conventions of the theatre she inherited distinguishes her work as much as her overt, thematically based questioning of societal conventions. A dual fascination with ideas and theatrical forms is evident throughout her plays. Churchill began with a vision of social justice and a desire for theatre that would be 'not ordinary, not safe.' In the mid-1970s, she developed an integrated socialist-feminist political analysis which has become increasingly explicit and consistent. Throughout her career, Churchill has continually experimented with form, both in terms of play, structure, and in terms of the process through which plays are created....

Churchill's work, in common with that of other feminist artists, stands at a point of intersection between the practice of her chosen art and theory concerned both with art and with society. An analysis of Churchill’s plays must, therefore, recognize the co-dependent nature of their political and aesthetic dimensions. Existing theoretical frameworks -- Marxism, feminism, or theatre criticism -- do not adequately address or integrate the aesthetic and the political. Neither do they deal with what can be seen as the production of socialist-feminist theory by the plays: Churchill's originality as a dramatist is matched by an unusual ability to perceive and analyse the basic patterns that maintain an oppressive social order. Nevertheless, in their very challenges to dramatic convention and interaction with explicit ideologies, Churchill's plays inevitably refer the audience or reader to theoretical frameworks outside the works themselves. The plays relate both to theories of theatre and drama and to socialist-feminist analyses of social systems. Some familiarity with major contributions to these two fields as preface to discussion of the ways they have been included within or reacted against in Churchill’s work, enriches understanding of the plays.

Theories of theatre and drama generally acknowledge the primacy of Aristotle. The Aristotelian ideal is one of structural and stylistic unity based on a narrative plot that builds progressively to a climax and resolution, presenting an instructive example of character development. It is one
which has pervaded drama throughout its history. Challenges to it — e.g., romanticism or expressionism — have invariably carried the implication of protest against authoritarian power and assertion of a need for a social change. Contemporary feminist drama, in its protest against patriarchal authority and struggle to create forms of expression that affirm the subjectivity of women, tends to challenge the standards and conventions of Aristotelian drama. From a socialist-feminist standpoint, the Aristotelian ideal of traditional elites, as well as validating a phallic paradigm of creativity. Churchill rejects both the forms and underlying assumptions of Aristotelian dramaturgy, having recognized the “maleness” of the traditional structure of plays, with the conflict and building in a certain way to a climax. Her plays offer fragmentation instead of wholeness, many voices instead of one, demands for social change instead of character development, and continuing contradiction instead of resolution.

The epic theatre theories and practice of Bertolt Brecht have constituted one of the major twentieth-century challenge to Aristotelean drama. Brecht’s ideas, which have exerted a marked influence on British theatre since the late 1950s, have been incorporated into much of Churchill’s work. Churchill, like Brecht, eschews the Aristotelian evocation of pit and fear in favour of stimulating new understandings of specific social situations through ‘astonishment and wonder.’...Most important is a commonality of artistic intent: like Brecht, Churchill seeks to empower audiences against oppression rather than encourage serene acceptance of an apparently inevitable fate.

...Since [staying within the confines of epic theatre as defined by Brecht], she has continued experimenting with subject, form, and style. While Brecht has remained a clear reference point for most of Churchill’s plays, she alters epic techniques, integrates epic with other forms, and constantly seeks new modes of expression. The most recent of Churchill’s plays depart from Brechtian dramaturgy in their demand for a collective reformulation of the process through which issues or problems are identified and solutions developed. In this demand, which questions accepted meanings as well as the fundamental cultural and political structures through which meaning is produced, Churchill allies her work with the cultural disruption of such feminist experimentalists as Gertrude Stein, Megan Terry, Ntozake Shange, and Susan Griffin.

—Amelia Howe Kritzer

**For more information on Churchill and her work, please refer to:**
- The Plays of Caryl Churchill: Theatre of Empowerement. by Amelia Howe Kritzer
- Caryl Churchill: A Casebook: Edited by Phyllis R. Randall
- Thatcher’s Theatre: British Theatre and Drama in the Eighties by D. Keith Peacock
THE PAST

the ancient,

the damaged.

“They used to leave cream in sorcerer’s apprentice. Gave the brownie a pair of trousers to wear have you gone? Now they hate us and hurt hurtle faster and master. They poison me in my rivers of blood poisoning makes me arms swelter...”
THE PAST

This section will examine some of the interpretations of the Skriker, as both a form of a folktale creature or goddess, as well as the representation of the numerous kinds of damage done to world specifically Great Britain in the time that Churchill wrote the play.

Not only does the Skriker evoke thoughts of the damaged, but also of the forgotten. In our modern society, we seem to have replaced the fascination of folk tales, magic, and imagination with the obsession of technology. Our past desire for magic is now the desire for more -- more technology, quicker communication, the ability to multi-task even more. The last part of this section will seek to illustrate just how quickly this desire for technology has grown, especially in the past three decades.

This recent boom in development bears an important truth from the play -- that the ability to create does not give us the means to responsibly create. Whether in reference to the growth of technology or to the surge in teenage pregnancies, a denial of this truth could perhaps be the most damaging belief of all.

"The Skriker exudes the poison of malevolence... Thus Churchill continues to emphasize the view that villains and victims are two sides of the same coin... having been damaged, the Skriker does damage. Being frightened, she becomes frightening" (Kritzer “Systemic” 169).
The Origins of the Skriker...

While Churchill says that the Skriker comes from the “Lancashire term for ‘a shrieker, a screamer,’” she may also have her origin in several other myths and creatures (Wolf). In some parts of Britain, the name Skriker is also synonymous with the Black Dog -- an omen of imminent death (see BLACK DOG in the Glossary of Folktale Creatures). The origin of the Skriker may also come from the folkloric and pagan belief in the Crone, the final embodiment of the Triple Goddess (the Maiden, the Mother, and the Crone).

The Myth of the Crone

“The first face of the Goddess, the Maiden aspect, is the youthfulness and anticipation of life, the matrix of creation which will, when the time is ripe, produce. Whether this will be in the physical, material, mental, or spiritual depends on the directed will of the matrix.

The Mother aspect is the culmination of the matrix set in motion to create. It is the physical desire, mental will, and spiritual love that go together to create endlessly on many levels. The mental will sets the matrix in motion; the physical desire creates its form; the spiritual love sustains it.

The Crone aspect is the most frightening to many, for the Crone represents death and dissolution. There is no way that death can be avoided, for all things have a life cycle. At the end of that cycle, things being to malfunction and decay. We see this is in everything: humans, plants, animals, stars, comets, and universes. But the Crone is not the end, for everything is recycled; nothing is wasted. Forms are changed and reformed into something else” (Conway 6).
If the Crone’s purpose is to continue the cycle, the Skriker, as the representation of the damage done to the world, is no longer able to do this. Just like if we continue to damage and poison our society and environment, we will not be able to restore the cycle of life. We will be in the situation of the Skriker — feeding off temporary life sources only to delay the inevitable destruction.

“It was always possible to think whatever your personal problem, there’s always nature. Spring will return even if it’s without me. Nobody loves me but at least it’s a sunny day. This has been a comfort to people as long as they have existed. But it’s not available anymore. Sorry. Nobody loves me and the sun’s going to kill me. Spring will return and nothing will grow.” - Skriker

“The Crone aspect of the Great Goddess is the least understood and most feared of the three aspects. She has been called the Terrible Mother, the Hag, the Dark Mother, the Wise One. Because she deals with death and the end of cycles, most people tend to avoid this face of the Goddess. Black is her color...the absorber of all light, the color of darkness, where all life rests before rebirth. The Crone is winter, night, outer space, the abyss, menopause, advancement of age, wisdom, counsel, the gateway to death and reincarnation, and the Initiator into the deepest of mysteries and prophecies” (Conway 77).

“The Dark Mother is the most deeply hidden, the most difficult to understand, of the Goddess’s faces. She is unavoidable Time, the One with whom we must make our peace if we are to really grow in the greatest of spiritual depths. Jung called Her the dark side of the human psyche. Sometimes this is called the shadow self, the dark personal ‘demons’ we each have buried in the subconscious mind. Too many times we deny the past events that produced these demons, thus giving them power over our present and future. In order to heal these wounds and exorcise these demons, we need to follow the inner labyrinth to the place where the shadow self dwells. We must develop a relationship with this shadow self, the Dark Mother within, before we can empower ourselves again” (Conway 83).
A Damaged Great Britain …

(Above: Air pollution hangs over the city of London.)

“I was certainly wanting to write a play about damage -- damage to nature and damage to people, both which there’s plenty of about. To that extent, I was writing a play about England now.” - Caryl Churchill, 1994

Just as the Crone is the embodiment of the three stages of women, the Skriker can also be seen as the product of the social and ecological damage humans have inflicted upon the world and, in the case of the play, Britain specifically.

Churchill wrote the Skriker during the 1980s and 1990s which were a complicated and tumultuous time in Great Britain. The government and the citizens faced economic, political, and environmental changes and damages. In 1979, Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister of England. The country’s economy had been failing, and she made it her mission to reverse that decline. She sought for England to regain status and influence in international affairs. Thatcher’s policies supported privately owned mega-companies, threatening small businesses. She also increased taxes (during and economic recession) to decrease inflation. While this worked, the unemployment rate sky-rocketed. By 1982, over 3 million people in Britain were unemployed.

This was also the time when conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland was spilling into England and the rest of Great Britain. England had troops stationed in Northern Ireland, but suffered attacks in their own territory as well. For example, The Provisional Irish Republican Army bombed the Brighton Hotel on October 12, 1984, killing five, though their attempt on Margaret Thatcher’s life was not successful (New World Encyclopedia).
Environmental Neglect During the Thatcher Years...

In 1988, Margaret Thatcher gave a speech that acknowledged the acid rain, global warming, and ozone depletion. However, after her term was up, she expressed regret for this statement, claiming that acknowledging environmental issues hindered policy making. She reiterated that her priority was economic growth, and had never been the environment (“Margaret”).

(Left: More smog covers the city of London. The burning of fossil fuels creates this kind of smog and is also responsible for causing acid rain.)

(Below: A diagram depicts how the burning of these fuels leads to acid rain and further damage and pollution.)

The Damage Continues....

Now, in 2010, Britain is Europe’s worst emitter of nitrogen oxides. More than 50,000 people are dying up to 9 years earlier than the expected because of air pollution (Lakhani). Britain could face severe fines from the European Union, as well as be asked to explain the millions of pounds spent raising awareness about smoking, drinking, and obesity, but not air quality. The death rates from air pollution are not all that different, and generally affect people with a lower-income (Lakhani). While Great Britain has dramatically improved since the 1990’s, and Thatcher’s reign, they are still expected to fall short of EU regulations.
MODERN TECHNOLOGY TIMELINE

1873 Inspired by a Scientific American article featuring a British attempt at a typing machine, Christopher Latham Sholes creates his own: the typewriter.

1876 Alexander Graham Bell invents the first telephone telephone. Thomas Edison invents the first phonograph.

1879 The first public exhibition of “moving picture.” Thomas Edison creates the first light bulb, and the world moves out of the dark ages. Thomas Edison also creates the first electric motor, and 110 volts becomes the future from which so many of our devices take for granted today.

1885 Automobile patent granted (internal combustion engine powered): Karl Benz, first automobile put into production

1895 Diesel engine: Rudolf Diesel The first radio signals are sent. Marconi becomes the inventor of the modern day radio.

1903 Wright brothers complete first airplane flight. First movie - the first projection film with a plot is played when the 10 minute movie “The Great Train Robbery” is released.

1914 During the First World War, the British army introduces the first tanks.

1917 US troops arrive on the battlefields of Europe, where new technologies have created the bloodiest conflict in history. Armored tanks, machine guns, poisonous gas, submarines and airplanes will force military commanders to rethink traditional strategies of war.

1922 First successful test of a television broadcast using a Naval Station to broadcast.

1924 In an effort to make capital punishment more humane, the State of Nevada introduces death by gas chamber. Convicted murder Gee John takes 6 minutes to die.

1926 The first successful launch of a liquid fueled rocket.

1929 The first regularly scheduled TV Broadcast. The first public demonstration of a color TV broadcast.

1934 The US Federal Government creates the FCC (Federal Communications Commission)

1938 The first FM radio broadcast begins.

1939 The first home television debuts at Worlds Fair.

1941 Computer: Konrad Zuse***

1942 The Manhattan Project, the United States’ attempt to build the first nuclear bomb begins under the direction of J. Robert Oppenheimer.

1945 The first test of an Atomic Bomb The first Atomic Bomb is exploded on Hiroshima, Japan.
1946  The first commercial mobile phone becomes available.
1949  Cable TV is born.  CATV (Community Antenna Television) is developed in the mountains of Pennsylvania.
1951  First video tape is recorded.
      The first commercial 'general purpose' computer becomes available.
1952  Floppy disk: Yoshio Nakamatsu
      The first fusion, or hydrogen, bomb is tested by the US in the Marshall Islands. A single warhead can now be thousands of times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb.
1953  Medical ultrasonography
1956  Videotape recorder: Ampex
1960  The laser is demonstrated for the first time. Various prototype laser weapons are under development.
1961  Digital Photography: Eugene F. Lally
1968  Video game console: Ralph H. Baer
1969  Video cassette: Sony
1971  Sony sells the first VCR for $2500. E-mail: Ray Tomlinson
1973  Personal computer: Xerox PARC
      Computer graphics are used for the first time in the Motion Picture Industry when the movie "Westworld" is produced.
1974  The first Taser is built after five years of work by NASA researcher Jack Cover.
1975  Digital camera: Steven Sasson
      The first home computer is developed and sold.
      HBO begins broadcasting.
      The "Homebrew Computer Club" is started in what will one day become Silicon Valley in California.
1976  The Queen of England becomes the first "Head of State" to write an email message.
1977  Personal stereo: Andreas Pavel
      Mobile phone: Bell Labs [8]
1978  Nintendo releases its first video game.
      The first working cell phones appear in Tokyo, Japan.
1979  Walkman: Sony
1980  Compact Disc: Sony Corp, Philips Electronics [18]
1981  The first "portable" computer is developed, which would be a precursor to the laptop.
1982  Compact Disc player: Sony [288]
1983  INTERNET - Computers are using the TCP/IP computer language to communicate within the Internet network...and the 'backbone' for the internet is finally set in place.
      Microsoft announces the sale of "Windows."
1983  Color LCD television: Seiko [291] [292]
1984  DSS (Direct TV) Satellite TV goes online.
1984 The movie Terminator is released, revealing advanced computer generated graphics as a main staple in its special effects.

1989 The “WWW” is invented by Tim Berners-Lee, text only version, but allows hyperlinks.

1990 Hubble Space Telescope is launched into space.

1991 The first polymorphic virus is developed. This virus could change its code and spread making it harder to detect and remove.

1992 Plasma colour display: Fujitsu

1993 Global Positioning System: United States Department of Defense

1994 Pix Hut is one of the first company that allows users to order online, and have pizzas delivered to your home via the web.

1995 The first macros virus is detected. The MS Word macros virus becomes the most widely spread computer virus to date.

1997 The first DVD becomes available.

1998 The virus Melissa becomes infamous when it is able to be spread via email and Outlook Express.

1999 The release of the movie “The Matrix” once again steps up the computer generated graphics technology field.

Experiments with radioactive hafnium are used to argue it is possible to make a simple device that releases a massive amount of gamma rays comparable to a nuclear bomb.

2000 The “I Love You” virus wreaks havoc world-wide.

2001 Bill Gates unveils the Xbox.

Wikipedia is founded.

Napster reaches over 26 million users.

Airlines begin to implement methods of gaining Internet access while flying.

Apple introduces the iPod.

2002 Approximately 1 billion PCs have been shipped worldwide since the mid 70s, according to a study released by the consulting firm Gartner.

For the first time, a high energy laser is used to shoot down artillery fire.

2003 MySpace is founded.

2004 Google announces Gmail.

In February, Mark Zuckerberg, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes invent and introduce Facebook.

2005 YouTube is founded and comes online February 15, 2005.

2006 The blu-ray is first announced and introduced.

Toshiba releases the first HD DVD player.

Apple introduces the Macbook.

2007 Australian weapons company Metal Storm files a key patent for its gun which fires a million rounds a minute.

Apple introduces and releases the iPhone.
2007  Amazon releases the Kindle First Generation which sold out in five and a half hours.

2008  In another milestone for high-energy lasers, the Airborne Laser is fired from an aircraft for the first time. Apple releases the iPod touch.

2009  A US government reports advocates using neuroscience to enhance soldiers’ abilities.

2010  Apple releases the iPad.

**Dates and events compiled from:**
- “How Technology Has Advanced 2000-2010”
- “The History of Technology: Computers, Communication, Electronics and Space”
- “Timeline: Weapons Technology”

**WHAT’S NEXT...?**
Apple Form Factor Evolution
1976 through 2007

This is a visual representation of most all the products Apple has launched. This image documents the ever-changing form factor and industrial design of Apple's products, not every single model number or slight change made to a previous model. -- Enjoy
The Forgotten...

In the midst of economic growth, progress and technology, the environment is often times left forgotten until we are forced to confront it. As years of neglect pass by and problems like pollution continue to worsen, many are left wondering when this day of reckoning will come -- but too few take the initiative to change their destructive habits. The Onion's article below, though satirical in nature, paints the saddening reality of most Americans attitudes towards the environment.

'How Bad For The Environment Can Throwing Away One Plastic Bottle Be?' 30 Million People Wonder

JANUARY 19, 2010 | ISSUE 46-03

A local resident discards a plastic bottle—just as he has done his whole life—with no perceivable effect on the environment.

WASHINGTON—Wishing to dispose of the empty plastic container, and failing to spot a recycling bin nearby, an estimated 30 million Americans asked themselves Monday how bad throwing away a single bottle of water could really be.

"It's fine, it's fine," thought Maine native Sheila Hodge, echoing the exact sentiments of Chicago-area resident Phillip Ragowski, recent Florida transplant Margaret Lowery, and Kansas City business owner Brian McMillan, as they tossed the polyethylene terephthalate object into an awaiting trash can. "It's just one bottle. And I'm usually pretty good about this sort of thing."

"Not a big deal," continued roughly one-tenth of the nation's population.
According to the inner monologue of millions upon millions of citizens, while not necessarily ideal, throwing away one empty bottle probably wouldn't make that much of a difference, and could even be forgiven, considering how long they had been carrying it around with them, the time that could be saved by just tossing it out right here, and the fact that they had bicycled to work once last July.

In addition, pretty much the entire states of Missouri and New Mexico calmly reassured themselves Monday that they definitely knew better than to do something like this, but admitted that hey, nobody is perfect, and at least they weren't still using those horrible aerosol cans, or just throwing garbage directly on the ground.

All agreed that disposing of what would eventually amount to 50 tons of thermoplastic polymer resin wasn't the end of the world.

"It's not like I don't care, because I do, and most of the time I don't even buy bottled water," thought Missouri school teacher Heather Delamere, the 450,000th caring and progressive individual to have done so that morning, and the 850,000th to have purchased the environmentally damaging vessel due to being thirsty, in a huge rush, and away from home. "It's really not worth beating myself up over."

"What's one little bottle in the grand scheme of things, you know?" added each and every single one of them.

Monday's plastic-bottle-related dilemma wasn't the only environmental quandary facing millions of citizens across the country. An estimated 20 million men and women wondered how wasteful leaving a single lightbulb on all night really was, while more than 40 million Americans asked themselves if anyone would actually notice if they just turned up the heat a few degrees instead of walking all the way downstairs and getting another blanket.

Likewise, had they not been so tired, and busy, and stressed, citizens making up the equivalent of three major metropolitan areas told reporters that they probably wouldn't have driven their minivans down to the corner store.

"Relax," thousands upon thousands of Americans quietly whispered to themselves as they tossed two articles of clothing into an empty washing machine and turned it on. "What are you so worried about?"
THE DAMAGE REMAINS...

Despite our negligence about the environment, the deadly facts of damage remain. Not only is Great Britain guilty of startling statistics of pollution and damage...America to this day is also one of the world’s worst offenders.

10 Startling Facts about Pollution in America...

1. 40% of America’s rivers and 46% of America’s lakes are too polluted for fishing, swimming, or aquatic life.

2. The Mississippi River – which drains the lands of nearly 40% of the continental United States – carries an estimated 1.5 million metric tons of nitrogen pollution into the Gulf of Mexico each year. The resulting dead zone in the Gulf each summer is about the size of Massachusetts.

3. 1.2 trillion gallons of untreated sewage, storm water, and industrial waste are discharged into US waters annually.

4. Polluted drinking waters are a problem for about half of the world’s population. Each year there are about 250 million cases of water-based diseases, resulting in roughly 5 to 10 million deaths.

5. Vehicle exhaust contributes roughly 60% of all carbon monoxide emissions nationwide, and up to 95% in cities.

6. Large hog farms emit hydrogen sulfide, a gas that most often causes flu-like symptoms in humans, but at high concentrations can lead to brain damage.

7. Each year, U.S. factories spew 3 million tons of toxic chemicals into the air, land, and water.

8. In the U.S. 41% of all insecticides are used on corn. Of these, 80% are used to treat a pest that could be controlled simply by rotating a different crop for just one year.

9. Every year, one American produces over 3,285 pounds of hazardous waste.

10. Americans generate 30 billion foam cups, 220 million tires, and 1.8 billion disposable diapers every year. Over 80% of items in landfills can be recycled, but they’re not.

11. Over 80% of items in landfills can be recycled, but they’re not.
Out of Sight, Out of Mind?

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch

The Great Pacific Garbage patch is a collection or marine litter trapped in a gyre in the central North Pacific Ocean about twice the size of Texas. An estimated 80% of the garbage comes from land-based sources, and 20% from ships. The plastic debris is trapped by the currents of the North Pacific Gyre and remains there in a vortex. There have been several organizations launched to attempt to cleanup what has been deemed as “the world’s largest dump”, but some fear it’s nearly an impossible feat. The accumulation of garbage is not only disgusting, but a danger; both to marine life, and to us.

“In the central North Pacific Gyre, pieces of plastic outweigh surface zooplankton by a factor of 6 to 1,’ according to a report based on Charles Moore’s research. ‘Ninety percent of Laysan albatross chick carcasses and regurgitated stomach contents contain plastics. Fish and seabirds mistake plastic for food. Plastic debris releases chemical additives and plasticizers into the ocean. Plastic also adsorbs hydrophobic pollutants like PCBs and pesticides like DDT. These pollutants bioaccumulate in the tissues of marine organisms, biomagnify up the food chain, and find their way into the foods we eat.’”

Excerpt from “Great Pacific Garbage Patch” by Tim B. Todd
Why is the world's biggest landfill in the Pacific Ocean?

In the broad expanse of the northern Pacific Ocean, there exists the North Pacific Subtropical Gyre, a slowly moving, clockwise spiral of currents created by a high-pressure system of air currents. The area is an oceanic desert, filled with tiny phytoplankton but few big fish or mammals. Due to its lack of large fish and gentle breezes, fishermen and sailors rarely travel through the gyre. But the area is filled with something besides plankton: trash, millions of pounds of it, most of it plastic. It's the largest landfill in the world, and it floats in the middle of the ocean.

The gyre has actually given birth to two large masses of ever-accumulating trash, known as the Western and Eastern Pacific Garbage Patches, sometimes collectively called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The Eastern Garbage Patch floats between Hawaii and California; scientists estimate its size as two times bigger than Texas [source: LA Times]. The Western Garbage Patch forms east of Japan and west of Hawaii. Each swirling mass of refuse is massive and collects trash from all over the world. The patches are connected by a thin 6,000-mile long current called the Subtropical Convergence Zone. Research flights showed that significant amounts of trash also accumulate in the Convergence Zone.
The garbage patches present numerous hazards to marine life, fishing and tourism. But before we discuss those, it's important to look at the role of plastic. Plastic constitutes 90 percent of all trash floating in the world's oceans [source: LA Times]. The United Nations Environment Program estimated in 2006 that every square mile of ocean hosts 46,000 pieces of floating plastic [source: UN Environment Program]. In some areas, the amount of plastic outweighs the amount of plankton by a ratio of six to one. Of the more than 200 billion pounds of plastic the world produces each year, about 10 percent ends up in the ocean [source: Greenpeace]. Seventy percent of that eventually sinks, damaging life on the ocean floor [source: Greenpeace]. The rest floats; much of it ends up in gyres and the massive garbage patches that form there, with some plastic eventually washing up on a distant shore.

In the vast area of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, jellyfish and other filter feeders frequently consume or become tangled in floating trash.

Above taken from Jacob Silverman’s article, “Why is the world's biggest landfill in the Pacific Ocean?”

**Shocking Photos: Bird Bodies Full of Plastic**

by STEPHANIE ROGERS

Lighters, bottle caps, plastic bags and milk jugs. Fishing net, fishing line, zip ties, remnants of food containers. All of this and more floats in a massive vortex of trash in the Pacific Ocean – and in the stomachs of the birds who search for food amid the debris.

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is twice the size of Texas, and many of the particles of plastic contained within it are so small they can’t be scooped out of the water. But other pieces – colorful pieces that look like they might be food – get swallowed by albatross and other birds.
Photographer Chris Jordan traveled to the Midway Islands, near the center of the garbage patch, to photograph the bodies of albatross chicks that have been inadvertently killed when their confused parents fed them plastic. Jordan didn’t move a single piece of plastic – he photographed the carcasses exactly as he found them.

It will not be long before the damage we push away will soon catch up with us. How long will it be until people start consuming contaminated sea animals from these oceans on a regular basis? Will this incite us to action? How long until we have no where left to store all of our trash and we are forced to live among the piles of waste? When we will move beyond acknowledging these issues and begin to address them with the attention they deserve? The Skriker warns us time is running out, and that our damaged past will catch up with us sooner than we think...
THE PRESENT

the disconnected,
the destructive.

“The new American finds his challenge and his love in the traffic-choked streets, skies nested in smog, choking with the acids of industry, the screech of rubber and houses leashed in against one another while the townlets wither a time and die.”

-- John Steinbeck

“I’d go without food, if I could have a flower.”

-- Churchill’s A Dream Play
The purpose of this section is to introduce the historical context within which Churchill wrote the play (1980s/1990s Britain), as this will provide you with the background of the troubling conditions characters like Josie and Lily encounter on a daily basis. The policies of Margaret Thatcher, prime minister of Britain at the time, wielded a great deal of influence over young, single mothers like Lily and Josie and their ability to survive in society. Much like the state of the present, Lily and Josie are the weak and vulnerable -- those living in the damaged society of broken homes and uphill battles against the bureaucracy of government aid.

Another topic addressed in this section is Lily’s quest to protect and save her child. Though the play begins with Josie having already killed her newborn baby, Lily faces the struggles that accompany her choice to keep her child throughout the play. In the following pages you will find information about the myth of the changeling, modern day explanations of infanticide, as well as the many scary realities of motherhood.

"In killing her child -- perhaps while under the control of the Skriker -- Josie has destroyed part of the future. Some hope for the future still exists, however, in the baby to which Lily...gives birth to...

These two young women are very frail custodians of the future: hardly more than children themselves, they are alone” (Kritzer, “Systemic” 170).
The Kind and Unkind Girl

While the two worlds of the play are woven together by magic and folklore, one of the main folktales that manifests itself in both the Underworld and Lily and Josie’s world is that of the Kind and Unkind Girl (or also, Diamonds and Toads, as well as a series of other names). It is one of the most popular of all tales with versions of it found in all parts of the world (Roberts 4). There are many variations, including that of The Green Lady, but the stories generally surround two girls whose desires and actions are either rewarded or punished by magic.

“In [one version of the] story, a young girl is on her way to draw water from a well when she meets a thirsty old woman who asks her for a drink of water. The girl fetches water from the well and gives it to the old woman to drink, whereupon the old woman rewards her by making jewels and flowers fall from her mouth every time she speaks. The elder sister (or, in some versions of the story, the stepsister) then goes to the well in her turn, but she refuses to help the old woman, with the result that, when she speaks, toads jump out of her mouth.

In Churchill’s play, the old woman of the fairy story becomes the Derelict Woman, who asks Lily to hug and kiss her. When Lily does so, she discovers to her amazed delight that pound coins tumble from her mouth every time she speaks. Josie however refuses the Derelict Woman’s request and, like the Unkind Girl in the story, finds that toads leap out of her mouth.

Lily’s role as Kind Girl continues when she enters the Underworld. While Josie simply wants to have a closer knowledge of the Skriker, Lily both desires the Skriker and also
hopes to prevent it from harming any more people. The simple division of Lily and Josie into Kind and Unkind Girls is complicated however by the fact that the end results of their adventures in the Underworld are disturbingly similar....at the end of the play, Lily’s mouth becomes associated, not with flowers and jewels, but with the contaminated food that is more fearsome and dangerous than the toads Josie spewed out of her mouth after she refused the Derelict Woman’s request” (Cousin, “Owning” 198).

While most folk and fairy tales function on the just-world theory where good deeds are rewarded and bad deeds are punished, the way these stories unfold in the Skriker suggests that all glamour and good will rot away. Josie, lured into the underworld, enchanted by the dancing and festivities, later becomes a servant of the underworld, on her hands and knees scrubbing the floor in front of the Skriker. Similarly, although Lily enters the Underworld thinking she will sacrifice herself to save her baby, falls victim to the same illusion of magic that the Skriker offers and is pulled into the nightmarish future. Instead of receiving fates that correspond to their individual actions and intentions, Lily and Josie are instead both punished for the sins and damages of the collective past. In a sense, they are both heroines damned from the beginning, and perhaps are better differentiated by their view of the world (and Skriker) -- whether it is kind or unkind.

“Each of them [Josie and Lily] becomes fascinated by the Skriker...but their separate understandings of what the Skriker is are very different: Josie instinctively grasps the malevolence that results from the damage it has suffered, while Lily sees in most of its manifestations -- simply people in need of love. ...While the Skriker acts literally as a vampire toward Josie [sipping both her blood and memories of life in the upper world], it leeches emotionally on Lily, demanding love from her in each of its guises” (Cousin, “Owning” 196).

*The full versions of these tales (including The Green Lady and Diamonds and Toads) will be available to check out in the rehearsal room.*
THATCHERISM

The War Against Single Mothers

Starting in the early 1980’s, the United Kingdom, United States and other countries around the world strived to decrease inflation and increase economic growth. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher sold many state utilities to private companies. Also, huge portions of state funding were cut, including welfare. Single mothers, such as Josie and Lily, suffered particularly from these cuts. Margaret Thatcher claimed that children from single mothers are better off in religious orders that on welfare. She is quoted, “It is far better to put these children in the hands of a very good religious organisation, and the mother as well, so that they will be brought up with family values” (Keelan). Thatcher discouraged the ideas of “community” or “public well being,” and sought to replace those notions with that of “individual responsibility”. Low income families were to be thought of as lazy, and should seek their own solutions to poor healthcare and failing school systems. This left lower income families with no job security, and no other safety nets.

By 1990, England had a higher average economic growth than the other major European countries. However, they had poorer social conditions (i.e. poverty and unemployment) than the other European powers. The British government changed the legal definition of unemployed nearly thirty times in order to come up with lower figures. Between 1973-1979 the unemployment rate was 3.9%, and between 1979-1989 it was at 9.1%. The United Kingdom had not made any major policy shifts since Margaret Thatcher installed these policies.
Listed below are just some of Thatcher's political standings and policies that would have directly impacted Josie and Lily...

**Youth Unemployment & Opposition of Minimum Wage...**

As mentioned above, youth unemployment (youth defined as those between the ages of 16 and 25) was up to 50% in many areas of Britain during the Thatcher years. Only a small minority of youth were able to attend university and even many trade schools had to shut down making it near impossible for young people to have any opportunity at gaining marketable skills. Thatcher also opposed minimum wage and at during her years in office, there was no set wage nor sufficient protective policies in place for those lucky enough to be employed (McPartlan). Quite frankly, during the time that Churchill wrote *The Skriker* (during the Thatcher years), the youth were the most marginalized group in Great Britain. Needless to say, the 1980s in Britain were years filled with many youth riots desperately seeking to have their voices heard and interests represented.

**“Care in the Community”...**

A 1989 act that aimed to cut down government spending on mental institutions and elderly care facilities as Thatcher firmly believed that the “state should be an enabler rather than a provider of care” (Langan 59). As a result of this policy, many mental institutions and asylums were shut down and later made into new housing developments for the rich to invest in. It is possible that the mental institution Josie resides in at the beginning of the play was eventually shut down. This act also contributed to other housing policies that made it extremely difficult for those of lower economic status to find affordable housing.

**“The Community Charge”...**

A 1987 proposed poll tax that would establish a flat rate tax on residents where everyone, despite their income and finances would pay the same amount of money for this tax. If implemented, it would blatantly favor the rich, and further marginalize those of a lower economic status who were already struggling with skyrocketing poverty and unemployment rates (McPartlan).

**The Youth Fight Back....**

Many were outraged by the threat of implementing the Community Charge poll tax, which would mean “enormous bills for the poor and overcrowded, and big discounts for the rich” (McPartlan). People began frequently protested and many youth demonstrations were held that opposed Thatcher and her policies. Many protesters were arrested, tried in court, and then promptly jailed. However, on March 31, 1990, over 250,000 people gathered in a peaceful demonstration in fierce opposition to the proposed poll tax. To this day, this fight against the poll tax was “the biggest act of civil disobedience in British history” (McPartlan). Ultimately, this bill was never passed, and Thatcher’s support and power slowly began to decline from this point forward.
"...the unconditional supply of social benefits to those who were thought incapable of coping undermined the incentive to work and undercut the family unit. It promoted habits of idleness and delinquency. It permitted single-parenthood to become a financially sustainable, alternative way of life... [this] dependency culture weakened society as a whole."

"I think we've been through a period where too many people have been given to understand that if they have a problem, it's the government's job to cope with it. 'I have a problem, I'll get a grant.' 'I'm homeless, the government must house me.' They're casting their problem on society. And you know, there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families. And no government can do anything except through people, and people must look to themselves first. It's our duty to look after ourselves and then, also, to look after our neighbour. People have got the entitlements too much in mind, without the obligations. There's no such thing as entitlement, unless someone has first met an obligation."

---- Thatcher talking to Women’s Own Magazine (October 31, 1987)

*Thatcher’s policies, though perhaps well-intended for her political goals, made large assumptions about one’s access to “home” and “family.” For young people, especially runaways like Josie and Lily – “home” was not an option. Most likely the product of broken homes and struggling parents, they have been left to fend for themselves. How are they to create a “home” or fulfill the necessary “obligations” when denied access to the skills and training that would enable them to do so? Josie and Lily, by no fault of their own, are condemned to carry the burden of these unjust policies and ultimately perpetuate the cycle of damage.*
The Myth of the Changeling

The myth of the changeling began in Western Europe during the Middle ages. Legend has it that some mythical creatures (such as fairies, elves, and trolls) often swapped their own offspring with a human baby. Though in some cases, these creatures chose not to leave their offspring, but rather a senile old fairy, or an enchanted inanimate object, such as a log of wood. Changelings could be identified when they showed unpleasant qualities, or qualities different from human babies. Such traits were thought to be large vocabularies, vicious tempers, enormous appetites, or general unpleasantness. In Northern Scotland, children were usually suspected of being changelings if they started to waste away. Changelings supposedly had physical deformities, like crooked backs or lame hands. They were also said to be incredibly intelligent, and fairy changelings often play incredible music, without ever having been taught. In Scotland this is particularly true with the bagpipes.

Changeling Tests...

To discover whether or not the baby was a changeling, the baby would be held over a fire. If the baby was a changeling, it would curse and disappear up the chimney (Gregor 8). Children were often abandoned outside at night, as the parents believed the fairy parents would come claim the child. Yet another brutal way was to toss a changeling into a ravine or river. If it was indeed a changeling, it would bounce up and scamper away before drowning.

There were more humane ways to test if a child was a changeling. Tricking it into speaking, usually by astonishing it, was often thought to work. Brewing stew or beer in an eggshell, or carrying water in egg shells, and acting
as though it were very heavy could trick the child into saying something like, “In my long life, I have never seen anything like that” (Scott 121).

The swap was thought to be prevented by hanging iron or a crucifix over the child’s crib, as fairies were supposedly afraid of these. Draping the father’s clothes over the child while they slept was also a way to prevent fairies from switching the child. While human children were assumed to be taken to act as servants to the fairies, another possibility is that human children were considered beautiful, and taken out of a desire to possess that beauty and youth. Children who were exceptionally beautiful, or who had not yet been baptized were more likely to be swapped with fairies.

The Fate of Changeling Children...

In Northern England and Scotland, stories tell of the changeling babies growing sick and discontented -- usually only living for a few years, and often never into their teens. Other stories say they eventually wander off to rejoin the fairy world. If they do grow old, they cease to become human, and were thought of as oafs and therefore disowned by society. Human children living in the fairy world constantly pined for their human families and eventually were thought to wither away and die from grief.
The Stolen Child
by WB Yeats

Where dips the rocky highland
Of Sleuth Wood in the lake,
There lies a leafy island
Where flapping herons wake
The drowsy water rats;
There we've hid our faery vats,
    Full of berrys
And of reddest stolen cherries.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wave of moonlight glosses
The dim gray sands with light,
    Far off by furthest Rosses
We foot it all the night,
Weaving olden dances
Mingling hands and mingling glances
Till the moon has taken flight;
    To and fro we leap
And chase the frothy bubbles,
While the world is full of troubles
    And anxious in its sleep.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Where the wandering water gushes
From the hills above Glen-Car,
    In pools among the rushes
That scarce could bathe a star,
We seek for slumbering trout
    And whispering in their ears
Give them unquiet dreams;
    Leaning softly out
From ferns that drop their tears
Over the young streams.
Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.

Away with us he's going,
The solemn-eyed:
He'll hear no more the lowing
Of the calves on the warm hillside
Or the kettle on the hob
Sing peace into his breast,
Or see the brown mice bob
Round and round the oatmeal chest.
For he comes, the human child,
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than he can understand.

**Fact and Fiction...**

Grimm's fairy tales have detailed accounts of atrocities being committed against children, because they were thought to be changelings. While these are in the context of fairy tales, records prove that the Grimm brothers were not exaggerating. There are accounts of children being drowned, beaten, dangled over fires, and abandoned. In the fairy tales the changeling child disappears, or a band of fairies comes to claim their child, and return the human baby.

Unfortunately, when a child was actually suspected of being a changeling, they were usually driven away or killed, with no evidence that a “real” baby was ever returned. In 1826, a four-year-old boy in Ireland was unable to speak or stand. Anne Roche, townswomen who believed him to be a changeling dunked him three times in the river to cleanse him of the fairy. On the third time he went under, he drowned. Anne Roche was acquitted for murder. However, the Grimm’s tales do suggest that parents with a changeling sought advice from many different members of society, before inflicting harm on their child. Severe violence, while common, was not necessarily the first course of action (Ashliman). There are references to the changeling child’s physical disability, along with a ravenous appetite. Since changeling children do not age the way human children do, they remain constantly hungry and dependent on their parents. A peasant family in pre-industrial Europe couldn’t normally afford to
feed a mouth that couldn’t work. The myth of the changing, in many ways, helped people justify infanticide (Ashliman).

**A Modern Explanation...**

The changeling myth was also likely created to explain birth defects and developmental disabilities that people at the time had no name for yet. Defects such as autism or Down syndrome, often have symptoms that match descriptions of changelings. Symptoms of autism include poor social interaction, delay in learning to speak, or repetition of phrases, as well as mental retardation. Children with Down syndrome suffer from intellectual disability, stunted grown, and different facial features. Many of these symptoms generally correspond with descriptions of changelings. Sickly infants, or infants who do not thrive as well as others, and need extra care, could be thought of as subhuman, without any form of medical information.

**Infanticide Today...**

Today, infanticide is defined as the act of killing an infant, and is split into two categories: Neonaticide (the act of killing a new newborn less than 24 hours old) and Filicide (the act of a killing a child older than 24 hours).

Great Britain’s Infanticide Act (established in 1922 and expanded in 1938) which abolished the death penalty for women who murder their children as a result of a mental imbalance (such as postpartum disorders) caused by the birth. The law is only applicable if the child is less than one year old.

While the U.S. currently has no such legislation, its cases of infanticide have followed Britain’s precedent of leniency. Even in some of the most shocking and recent cases of infanticide in the United States, the defendants have, at worse, received life in prison, but far more often are able to plead not guilty by reason of insanity (often due to postpartum depression or psychosis) and spend time in a mental institution before release.
THE BABY BLUES?

THE AFTERMATH OF CHILDBIRTH AND WHAT IT MAY MEAN FOR NEW MOTHERS

Postpartum Disorders

Postpartum mood disorders are extremely common, and have a huge range of severity. Women have the highest chance of suffering from mental illness after giving birth, than any other time in their life (Levy). Up to 80% of mothers experience something called the baby blues. Women experiencing the baby blues go through mild depression up to a year after giving birth. Women can experience mood swings, lack of sleep, anxiety, loss of appetite, and difficulty concentrating. These symptoms usually manifest within three or four days, and often don’t last longer than two or three weeks. The most widely accepted cause of the baby blues is the severe change in hormone levels. Once the hormones level out, the baby blues fade away. Beyond lots of rest, no other treatment is necessary. Unfortunately, these symptoms can be more severe, and can go on much longer. This goes beyond the baby blues, and is known as postpartum depression.

Postpartum depression manifests within 6 months of the delivery. Symptoms of postpartum depression are similar to the baby blues and depression. Postpartum depression includes negative thoughts towards the infant, worrying about hurting the infant (being paralyzed for its safety), feelings of worthlessness and guilt, along with thoughts of death or suicide. While the change in hormone levels is a large part of these symptoms, other factors influence the onset of postpartum depression.

Stress in one of the main inducers of postpartum depression. Anything that contributes to anxiety about the birth of the baby can play a role. Women who have previously suffered from postpartum depression are more likely to find
that it worsens with each child they have. Previous histories of depression or mental illness severely increase chances. Young mothers often battle more against postpartum depression. Mothers with lower incomes, who worry about the survival of the child, are also more likely to suffer from postpartum depression. One of the largest contributing factors is support for the mother. Women who are in an unhealthy place with the baby’s father, or if the father is absent, have a greater risk of postpartum depression, as do mothers who have little support from their family and friends. Women with PPD may have negative or violent thoughts towards the baby, but they will realize these thoughts are wrong. Women who are afraid to reach out for help when they experience these feelings have the potential to inflict harm on themselves or attempt suicide. PPD is treated much like depression, through counseling, therapy, and medication if necessary (Levy).

**Postpartum Psychosis**

Very rarely, some women experience postpartum psychosis, in which they cannot distinguish right from wrong regarding their thoughts towards the baby. Only about one in every five hundred mothers actually experience postpartum psychosis. With 4.1 million births in the USA, on average, this translates to about 4,100 women a year. However rare the condition may be, the symptoms are extremely dangerous. Postpartum psychosis has many elements of depression and postpartum depression, but shares symptoms with more grave illnesses, such as schizophrenia. Women with postpartum psychosis suffer from paranoia and hallucinations, and they are unable to distinguish reality from visions, and right from wrong. Dr Ralph Wittenburg, who runs a screening process for postpartum disorders in Washington D.C. says, “Postpartum psychosis is condition in which the person loses touch with reality. Mothers hear voices, see things and feel an irrational guilt that they've somehow done something wrong, he says. Without treatment, women may try to hurt themselves or those around them” (Levy).

**A Victim’s Story**

Shelley Ash, of San Jose California, now spends her time educating women on postpartum psychosis, after having suffered from it herself. Ash said that she knew something was wrong right away. During the delivery she felt she was watching the birth from above. She said she felt sick and terrified. The nurses told her it would pass, but the feeling lingered even after she took the baby home. She continued to suffer from extreme symptoms of depression, but Ash didn’t tell
anyone, afraid they would take her son away. Ash recalls watching David Letterman drop watermelons on his show. Ash says, “But that turned into my son. I kept imagining how it would be to drop him out of his bedroom window and he would go splat on the pavement below and shatter into a million pieces.” After this, she went into the bathroom and took an overdose of painkillers. Fortunately her husband came home and rushed her to the hospital. Ash spent a few days there, and 18 months on anti-psychotic, anti-depressant and anti-anxiety medication. Ash’s son is now healthy, and Ash went back and got a graduate degree in public health to educate other women on the risks of postpartum diseases. Ash gave birth in the mid 1990’s and never came across any information on PPD or PPP (Silberner).

**The Causes and Explanations of Postpartum Psychosis**

Postpartum psychosis is the most common cause of infanticide. 67% of women who kill their children are mentally ill. The greatest cause of neonaticide (killing of a child under 24 hours old) is unwanted pregnancy. In cases of filicide, psychosis is the greatest cause, but there are different forms of that psychosis, as well as other causes.

The most common reason behind filicide is an “altruistic” belief, and it’s often accompanied by an attempt at suicide. 38% of filicides are committed for this reason, or to “relieve suffering” 11% (Levy). Mother’s see their children as an extension of themselves, and they do not want to abandon their children in a cruel world. Mothers may be projecting their suffering onto the child, or there may be a full psychotic merger, where they cannot distinguish between themselves and the child (Levy). These mothers believe they are doing the right thing, and when tried in court are most often found not guilty by insanity. It must be proven that these mothers were not aware that their actions were wrong.

21% of filicides are due to acute psychosis. This category includes hallucinations, epilepsy, and delirium. There is an example in 1927 an “epileptic mother who put her baby on the fire and the kettle in the cradle.” She was probably suffering from psychomotor epilepsy. Doctor Mark Levy also reports of a women in a neuropsychiatric state who wandered aimlessly through a room with one breast bare, and her infant held out at arms length. Levy stated that she was oblivious to whether she was holding or dropping her child (Levy). Had Shelley Ash murdered her son, she would fall under this category.
Stacking the Odds Against Teen Moms

Pregnancy, childbirth, and caring for a newborn present an enormous amount of stress and struggles even for the most prepared of couples. For young, single parents without support systems, the financial cost, health risks, and emotional changes of pregnancy and childbirth can be almost unbearable.

- Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school (only one-third receive a high school diploma) and more likely to end up on welfare. Nearly 80% of unmarried teen mothers end up on welfare.
- Teens are least likely of all maternal age groups to get early and regular prenatal care.
- A teenage mother is at greater risk than women over age 20 for pregnancy complications such as premature labor, anemia, high blood pressure.
- The children of teenage mothers have lower birth weights, are more likely to perform poorly in school, and are at a greater risk of abuse and neglect.
- Babies of teenage mothers are more likely to die in the first year of life than babies of women in their 20s and 30s.
- The sons of teen mothers are 13% more likely to end up in prison while teen daughters are 22% more likely to become teen mothers themselves.

Facts and statistics from The March of Dime's 2009 Teenage Pregnancy Fact Sheet as well as from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (NCPTP)'s Facts and Stats sheet.
http://www.marchofdimes.com/professionals/14332_1159.asp#head1_mothershealth

- A Cycle of Depression and Violence? According to recent studies, women “who were themselves aggressive as teens were [found] more likely to get depressed during pregnancy” (Bryner). It was also found that “teens born to mothers that were depressed during pregnancy were four times more likely than others to show violent [but not deviant behaviors like shoplifting, etc.] behaviors by age 16” (Bryner). The study’s findings held true even when other factors like a mother’s anxiety/depression, health habits, smoking/drinking prior to pregnancy were taken into account. Scientists are still trying to find out what the link may be (Bryner).
Bearing the Financial Burden of a Baby....

While pregnancy itself can be expensive if one adds up the cost of prenatal care and doctor appointments leading up childbirth, the real financial costs set in once the baby is born. Below is the average estimated cost of a baby’s first year.

**On-going Costs**
- Occasional childcare ($100/month) x 12 months
- Disposable Diapers ($72/month) x 12 months
- Wipes ($20/month) x 12 months
- Formula ($105/month) x 6 months
- Solid foods ($57/month) x 6 months
- Clothing ($59/month) x 12 months
- Medicine ($23/month) x 12 months
- Toiletries ($21/month) x 12 months
- Toys/Books/Media ($35/month) x 12 months

Subtotal of On-going costs: $4,932

**One-Time Costs**
- Gear $417
car seat, stroller, diaper bags, etc.
- Activity Equipment $90
play mat, bouncy seat, etc.
- Nursery $823
crib, changing table, bedding, crib mattress, baby monitor, etc.
- Feeding $411
bottles, high chair, bibs, breast-feeding equipment, formula, etc.
- Bathing/Grooming $49
infant bathtub, washcloths, baby nail clippers, etc.
- Other $196
child-proofing supplies, safety gates, diaper pails, pacifiers, etc.

Subtotal of One-time Costs: $1,986

**GRAND TOTAL: $6,918**

*prices collected through BabyCenter.com’s Baby Budget Calculator*
The Fear and Anxiety of Childbirth...

No matter what one’s opinion or personal experience may be, pregnancy and childbirth are a terrifying and jarring reality that all women grapple with at one point in their lives. While some women only experience a little anxiety of such things, others suffer from tokophobia -- the fear of childbirth (both the physical and emotional pain). Some sufferers have been quoted saying, “the truth is that the very thought of having something almost alien-like growing inside me is disgusting” (Albertella). Even women who do not suffer from such phobias and anxieties recognize that during pregnancy one’s body completely transforms. There is something foreign growing within and one’s body no longer becomes one’s own.

Reflections on Pregnancy & Childbirth...

“In achieving the depersonalization of childbirth and at the same time solving the problem of pain, our society may have lost more than it has gained. We are left with the physical husk; the transcending significance has been drained away. In doing so, we have reached the goal which is perhaps implicit in all highly developed technological cultures, mechanized control of the human body and the complete obliteration of all disturbing sensations.”

-- Sheila Kitzinger, Women as Mothers

“Childbirth provided the drama I craved, the thrill of peeking over the primal edge of creation, the rush of the unexpected.”

-- Peggy Vincent, Baby Catcher

“Pregnancy demonstrates the deterministic character of woman’s sexuality. Every pregnant woman has body and self taken over by a chthonian force beyond her control. In the welcome pregnancy, this is a happy sacrifice. But in the unwanted one, initiated by rape or misadventure, it is a horror. Such unfortunate women look directly into nature’s heart of darkness. For a fetus is a benign tumor, a vampire who steals in order to live. The so-called miracle of birth is nature getting her own way.”

-- Camille Paglia, Sexual Personae
THE FUTURE

the nightmare,

the destroyed.

“‘Am I in fairylanded?’ she wandered.
‘No,’ said the old crony, ‘This is the real world.’”
THE FUTURE

This section is meant to explore the nightmarish reality Lily enters at the end of the play when the Skriker forces her to confront her great granddaughter. What will our world look like if we continue to carelessly destroy the environment? The dead babies and lost children throughout the play are the representation of the future destroyed – will we learn from their warnings? Will we realize too late, like Lily, that things are not what they seem?

Although Lily steps up to sacrifice herself for the good of the future, the play tells us Lily is not enough. She crumbles to dust, just like our world will, if we do not take a united stand soon.

As you read through the following section, carefully consider whether this future world is a place you could raise a child.

"The damage, furthermore, has encompassed personal, social, and environmental fields. It extends from the underworld of the opening monologue into the future generations of the concluding scene" (Rayner 207).
NATURE'S REVENGE?

“Have you noticed the large number of meteorological phenomena lately? Earthquakes. Volcanoes. Drought. Apocalyptic meteorological phenomena. The increase of sickness. It was always possible to think that whatever your personal problem, there’s always nature. Spring will return even if it’s without me. Nobody loves me but at least it’s a sunny day. This has been a comfort to people as long as they’ve existed. But it’s not available anymore. Sorry. Nobody loves me and the sun is going to kill me. Spring will return and nothing will grow.”

Monday, 15 May, 2000, 11:04 GMT 12:04 UK

Disasters blamed on pollution

The face of hunger: Act of nature, or of humans?
By environment correspondent Alex Kirby

Climate-related catastrophes in poor countries are likely to spiral out of control unless action is taken to tackle global warming, a leading British charity has warned.

The United Kingdom churches' development agency, Christian Aid, says in the next 20 years, up to 75% of the world's people, most of them in poor countries, could be at risk from droughts or floods.
It says the cost of so-called "natural" catastrophes, triggered by climate change, could be £6,500bn.

And it urges developed countries to make big cuts in their emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

Malcolm Rodgers of Christian Aid said: "Nine of the past 11 catastrophes to which we have responded have been caused by extreme weather conditions.

"Country after country is being devastated by these so-called natural disasters, and we and others are simply picking up the pieces.

"The terrible irony is that the poorest countries are suffering, and we believe this is because of pollution by the wealthiest."

Christian Aid has won the endorsement of several prominent supporters for its report.

Julian Salt, of the Loss Prevention Council, which advises the UK insurance industry, said: "The oceans have warmed, and they are going to get warmer.

"The world is already locked into a spiral of catastrophe. We have to get used to the idea that the costs of prevention will be less than the costs of coping with disasters."

**Altered nature**

Another of the report's backers is the MP John Gummer, who was environment secretary in the last Conservative government.

Mr Gummer told BBC News Online: "That figure of £6.5 trillion for the possible costs is breath-taking. But it's absolutely true.

"We talk of natural disasters, or acts of God, but they're the acts of human beings. We've changed nature.

"I want to see the Kyoto Protocol, the international agreement on tackling climate change, built up so that we cut greenhouse emissions very substantially."
"That must happen especially in the developed world, and especially in the US, which produces 25% of global emissions.

"And if we start investing in the technology that's available, we could do a lot within the timescale necessary, and without the effects we fear."

Christian Aid says that ratifying and implementing the Kyoto Protocol must be no more than a first step.

**Equal pollution rights**

It says future carbon reduction agreements "must begin with the principle that everyone, be they in a rich or a poor country, has an equal right to the atmosphere".

"This means that people in developed countries should not have any more right to emit greenhouse gases than people in Ethiopia or India."

Its figure of a total cost of £6.5 trillion is based on a United Nations estimate that natural disasters cost between 5% and 9% of developing countries' gross domestic product.

There are those who will criticise the assumptions about climate change on which the report is based.

Not all scientists will accept that the extreme weather conditions and rapid warming recorded at the Earth's surface in recent years can be ascribed to human greenhouse emissions.

They question the reliability of the modeling on which future assessments are made. This modeling, they say, has difficulty simulating many important climate processes and should be treated with extreme caution.

Moreover, they say the cost of the damage to world economies, and especially those in the emerging world, of restricting carbon emissions could exceed the sums environmentalists say will result if the Kyoto Protocol is not implemented.
THE DEFORMED GIRL: A Shocking Reality....

Although it seems like the Deformed Girl in the final scene of The Skriker may be hard to imagine, the environment is not the only thing that has suffered from our damage and neglect. Humans too have become the victim of illnesses and disorders caused by air pollution, water polluted by radiation, and contaminated lands filled with toxic particles left from past industries. When people have come in contact with these toxic particles (whether found in the air, water, or land), there have been reports not only of cancer, but an increased infant mortality rate as well as a high rate of babies born with deformities (due to the toxins the pregnant mother may have come in contact with). The primary type of deformities include “multiple fingers, unusually large heads, unilateral lips, or no arms or legs” (Jones). During the late 70s and early 80s and Brazil, there was a series of incidents where babies were born without brains -- an issue that brought pollution and its shocking effects to the front of news headlines (Lewis).

The pictures and deformities below come from victims of pollution in Iraq, Brazil, China, and England.
Other Incidents of Deformities Due to Pollution Ripped from the Headlines...

Birth defects were the norm for years following the Chernobyl incident.

Children in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine have been suffering from the effect of the radiation released in 1986. The Rechitsa orphanage in Belarus has been caring for the huge population of sick children.

Photo Credit: Julien Behal/Chernobyl Children’s Project

The reactor disaster in Chernobyl took place on April 26, 1986. The reactor was encased as a temporary solution to secure the site for only 20-30 years.

Photo Credit: Julien Behal/Chernobyl Children’s Project

Mentally handicapped children exposed to radiation.

Photo Credit: Alex Emes/Blacksmith Institute

If pollution and the careless release of toxins continue, the victims with deformities may very likely become the frightening norm.
A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

What is in store for the world “years and tears” to come...

2008-2018

• Global oil production peaks sometime between 2008 and 2018, according to a model by one Swedish physicist. Others say this turning point, known as “Hubbert’s Peak,” won’t occur until after 2020. Once Hubbert’s Peak is reached, global oil production will begin an irreversible decline, possibly triggering a global recession, food shortages and conflict between nations over dwindling oil supplies (Robelius).

2020

• Flash floods will very likely increase across all parts of Europe (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

• Less rainfall could reduce agriculture yields by up to 50 percent in some parts of the world (IPCC).

• World population will reach 7.6 billion people (U.S. Census Bureau).

2030

• Diarrhea-related diseases will likely increase by up to 5 percent in low-income parts of the world (IPCC).

• Up to 18 percent of the world’s coral reefs will likely be lost as a result of climate change and other environmental stresses. In Asian coastal waters, the coral loss could reach 30 percent (IPCC).

• World population will reach 8.3 billion people (U.S. Census Bureau).

• Warming temperatures will cause temperate glaciers on equatorial mountains in Africa to disappear (Taylor).

• In developing countries, the urban population will more than double to about 4 billion people, packing more people onto a given city’s land area. The urban
populations of developed countries may also increase by as much as 20 percent (World Bank).

2040

- The Arctic Sea could be ice-free in the summer, and winter ice depth may shrink drastically. Other scientists say the region will still have summer ice up to 2060 and 2105 (Holland).

2050

- Small alpine glaciers will very likely disappear completely, and large glaciers will shrink by 30 to 70 percent. Austrian scientist Roland Psenner of the University of Innsbruck says this is a conservative estimate, and the small alpine glaciers could be gone as soon as 2037 (IPCC).

- In Australia, there will likely be an additional 3,200 to 5,200 heat-related deaths per year. The hardest hit will be people over the age of 65. An extra 500 to 1,000 people will die of heat-related deaths in New York City per year. In the United Kingdom, the opposite will occur, and cold-related deaths will outpace heat-related ones (IPCC).

- World population reaches 9.4 billion people (U.S. Census Bureau).

- Crop yields could increase by up to 20 percent in East and Southeast Asia, while decreasing by up to 30 percent in Central and South Asia. Similar shifts in crop yields could occur on other continents (IPCC).

- As biodiversity hotspots are more threatened, a quarter of the world’s plant and vertebrate animal species could face extinction (Malcolm).
2070

• As glaciers disappear and areas affected by drought increase, electricity production for the world’s existing hydropower stations will decrease. Hardest hit will be Europe, where hydropower potential is expected to decline on average by 6 percent; around the Mediterranean, the decrease could be up to 50 percent (IPCC).

• Warmer, drier conditions will lead to more frequent and longer droughts, as well as longer fire-seasons, increased fire risks, and more frequent heat waves, especially in Mediterranean regions (IPCC).

2080

• While some parts of the world dry out, others will be inundated. Scientists predict up to 20 percent of the world’s populations live in river basins likely to be affected by increased flood hazards. Up to 100 million people could experience coastal flooding each year. Most at risk are densely populated and low-lying areas that are less able to adapt to rising sea levels and areas which already face other challenges such as tropical storms (IPCC).

• Coastal population could balloon to 5 billion people, up from 1.2 billion in 1990 (IPCC).

• Between 1.1 and 3.2 billion people will experience water shortages and up to 600 million will go hungry (IPCC).

• Sea levels could rise around New York City by more than three feet, potentially flooding the Rockaways, Coney Island, much of southern Brooklyn and Queens, portions of Long Island City, Astoria, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, Queens, lower Manhattan and eastern Staten Island from Great Kills Harbor north to the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge (NASA GISS).
• The risk of dengue fever from climate change is estimated to increase to 3.5 billion people (IPCC).

2100

• A combination of global warming and other factors will push many ecosystems to the limit, forcing them to exceed their natural ability to adapt to climate change (IPCC).

• Atmospheric carbon dioxide levels will be much higher than anytime during the past 650,000 years (IPCC).

• Ocean pH levels will very likely decrease by as much as 0.5 pH units, the lowest it's been in the last 20 million years. The ability of marine organisms such as corals, crabs and oysters to form shells or exoskeletons could be impaired (IPCC).

• Thawing permafrost and other factors will make Earth’s land a net source of carbon emissions, meaning it will emit more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than it absorbs (IPCC).

• Roughly 20 to 30 percent of species assessed as of 2007 could be extinct by 2100 if global mean temperatures exceed 2 to 3 degrees of pre-industrial levels (IPCC).

• New climate zones appear on up to 39 percent of the world's land surface, radically transforming the planet (Williams).

• A quarter of all species of plants and land animals—more than a million total—could be driven to extinction. (IPCC).

• Increased droughts could significantly reduce moisture levels in the American Southwest, northern Mexico and possibly parts of Europe, Africa and the Middle East, effectively recreating the “Dust Bowl” environments of the 1930s in the United States (Seager).
An Earth day will be 0.12 milliseconds shorter as rising temperatures cause oceans to expand away from the equator and toward the poles, one model predicts. One reason water will be shifted toward the poles is most of the expansion will take place in the North Atlantic Ocean, near the North Pole. The poles are closer to the Earth’s axis of rotation, so having more mass there should speed up the planet’s rotation (Landerer).

If pollution continues impacting our environment at the rate it is now, we are sure to encounter not only the above problems, but we will also face...

- Melting glaciers, early snowmelt and severe droughts will cause more dramatic water shortages in the American West.

- Rising sea levels will lead to coastal flooding on the Eastern seaboard, in Florida, and in other areas, such as the Gulf of Mexico.

- Warmer sea surface temperatures will fuel more intense hurricanes in the southeastern Atlantic and Gulf coasts.

- Forests, farms and cities will face troublesome new pests and more mosquito-borne diseases.

- Disruption of habitats such as coral reefs and alpine meadows that will drive many plant and animal species to extinction.
GLOSSARY of FOLKTALE CHARACTERS

BLACK ANNIE

Also known as... Black Annis, Black Agnes, Gentle Annie, Cat Anna
Comes from... English and Scottish folklore.
Associated with... land/earth.
Description: Black Annie clawed herself a cave in the Dane Hills, using only her fingernails. When she is not in her cave, she crouches to surprise children who are lost and wandering through the country. When she catches a child, she takes them back to her cave. There, she drains their blood and eats them. One she's eaten them, she hangs their skin out to dry before sewing it into clothing for herself.
Tales, Stories, and Resources:
- Black Annie Tales http://www.whitedragon.org.uk/articles/blackann.htm

BLACK DOG

Also known as... Barghest, Black Shuck, Padfoot, Striker, Skriker.
Comes from... English Folklore.
Associated with... fire. There are accounts that during thunderstorms, the Black Dog will appear with flashes of fire coming from his fur and strike down those he passes.
Description: The Black Dog is an apparition, often associated with the devil. Most commonly, seeing this goblin-like dog foreshadows death. They are also said to strike during electrical storms and places where violent crimes have been committed. In other tales, the Black Dog is a guardian of the underworld. Because people once believed that the first person buried in a new cemetery would automatically become the ghost/guardian of the churchyard (and therefore prevent them from progressing into the afterlife), a dog was usually buried before the first person. These ghost dogs not only protected the dead spirits but were said to toll the church bells when someone in the town was about to die.
Tales, Stories, and Resources:
- “Black Dogs in Folklore” by Bob Trubshaw http://www.djmeadam.com/blackdogs.htm
- British Versions of the Black Dog http://www.mysteriousbritain.co.uk/folklore/phantom-black-dogs.html

BLUE MEN

Also known as... The Blue Men of Minch; Na Fir Ghorma.
Comes from... Scottish folklore.
Associated with... water.
Description: The Blue Men inhabit the stretch of water between Lewis, the Shiant islands and Long Island. They swim alongside ships trying to convince sailors to jump into the water. They also have the power to conjure up storms to wreck sailing ships. These creatures are similar to mermaids, and live in underwater caves. They can be defeated with a quick tongue and skill in riddle-solving.
Tales, Stories, and Resources:
- Tale of the Blue Men and the Princess http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/cei/psen/tsm08.htm
BOGLE

Also known as... a boggart; brag; Shellycoat.
Comes from... English and Scottish folklore.
Associated with... both land and water. As there are many different manifestations of bogles, some are known to guard certain swamps and streams, whereas others are known to cause mischief in one’s house or in nearby forests.
Description: Bogle is a general term used to describe territorial and evil-looking specimens who prey upon people that encroach upon their space. Shellycoats, Scottish bogles known to inhabit freshwater streams, are described as short creatures with long arms and fingers. Always damp and slimy, Shellycoats find many water insects and animals attached to their skin -- making their movements loud and cumbersome. While they do seek to confuse and deceive people, they rarely cause serious damage or harm. In addition to Shellycoats, there are many other forms of bogles that folklore scholar Balfour describes as ghosts that are already dead and simply waiting for their corpse to fully decay.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• “The Fiddler and the Bogle of Bogandoran”
  http://www.scotlands.com/folklore/18.html
• “Sam’I’s Ghost” from Joseph Jacob’s Folklore, Volume 2

BROWNIE

Also known as... elves.
Comes from... English and Scottish folklore.
Description: Said to have tan or brownish skin and to stand no more than one foot high, these elf-like creatures are one of the few friendly spirits that inhabit Churchill’s The Skriker. According to stories, Brownies sneak into homes and farms to help with housework chores. As they generally work by night, they are rarely seen.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• “A Brownie Legend from Lincolnshire” from Peter Binnall
  http://www.jstor.org/stable/1256692
• “The Elves and the Shoemaker” by the Brothers Grimm

GREEN LADY

Also known as... gruagach.
Comes from... English and Scottish folklore.
Associated with... land/earth and water.
Description:
There are many stories that surround the Green Lady claiming her to be a ghost, brownie, fairy, or a banshee. Often described as a beautiful woman with long blonde hair and a dazzling green dress, the Green Lady is said to appear at people’s front doors soaking wet asking for shelter. If she is let in, she will protect the family who resides at the home and any other family who lives there afterwards.

The most detailed and documented account of the Green Lady, however, comes from a folk tale that originated in Herefordshire. In this tale, the Green Lady is depicted as both a kind and cruel spirit who lives in a cottage in the woods. One day, a young girl who has left her home to seek her fate carrying with her only a cake and beer, encounters an old man who tells her to visit the Green Lady and ask for her service. When the young girl arrives at the Green Lady’s cottage, she is welcomed in and allowed to stay as long as she keeps the house clean and never looks through the keyhole of the Green Lady’s room. Later that evening, the young girl cannot resist peeking through the keyhole where she spots the Green Lady dancing with a bogle. After denying that she had peeked, the Green Lady grows angry and blinds the young girl. Despite this punishment, the Green Lady praises the girl for her hard work around the
GREEN LADY (cont.)
cottage and rewards her with a bundle filled with fine clothes and money. On her way out of the cottage, a young man waits by the well and tells the girl to wash her eyes with the well’s water. Her eyesight is restored and the young couple runs off to get married.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• “The Green Lady: A Folktale from Hertfordshire”
  http://www.jstor.org/stable/1253313

HAG

Also known as... Caillech.
 Comes from... Irish and Scottish folklore.
 Associated With... Earth, Wind, Water, Fire. Hags are often associated with the destructive parts of these elements.
 Description: Hags are most commonly old, ugly women that posses some sort of evil magical power. They are often associated with witches and crones. The original hag was a woman-like creature that visited sleepers at night and sat on their chests. This causes them to awake and be unable to move. Sometimes they also had hallucinations. This was referred to as “hagridden.” Now it is known as sleep paralysis. In Scottish and Irish folklore, hags (or Cailleachan) are thought to symbolize the destructive power of nature.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• Hag Legends and Traditions
  http://www.jstor.org/stable/1256390

JENNIE GREENTEETH

Also known as... Nellie Longarms, Jenny Greenteeth, Peg Powler
 Comes from... English folklore.
 Associated with... Water.
 Description: Nellie Longarms and Jennie Greenteeth are the same character. Both are hags said to dwell in ponds and streams. If young children who aren’t careful come to play by the water, these hags will pull them in. Once they have the children, the hags promptly eat them. Jennie Greenteeth is the most common of these women. The Tale of Nellie Longarms is specific to the English village of Wynbunbury.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• Information on the Origins of Nellie Longarms/Jennie Greenteeth Tales.
  http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A2922176
• “Tale of Jenny Greenteeth” as retold by Joel Hayward
  http://webzoom.freewebs.com/joelhayward/JennyPDF.pdf

JOHNNY SQUAREFOOT

Also known as... Foawr or Manx giant; Jimmy Squarefoot
 Comes from... English and Irish folklore.
 Associated with... land/earth.
 Description: Churchill’s description of Johnny Squarefoot combines two different legends involving stone-throwers --
JOHNNY SQUAREFOOT (cont.)

one of a pig-like poltergeist, Jimmy Squarefoot, and one of the Foawr giant. Jimmy Squarefoot, once a human, was known to fight with his wife and throw stones at her. After she finally left him, he transformed into half wild hog/half human ghost, plaguing the land with his riotous stone-throwing habits. In some accounts, people claim that Jimmy Squarefoot carries the stone-throwing Foawr giant upon his back.

The Foawr giant, however, derives as a local Manx variant to the Fomorian giant. Believed to have marine counterparts who would raid ancient ships and war vessels, Foawrs were viewed as pirates of the land. Though often confused with ogres, these land roaming giants threw stones at their enemies, raided fortresses, and harmed farmers’ cattle. In some of the earliest descriptions, Foawrs appear gruesome and deformed (often with only one eye or one limb) and incited fear upon the people through violence and cutting off the noses of others. Later on, though, the Foawrs are said to have thrown stones just for the sake of it and to anger farmers.

Both Jimmy Squarefoot and the Foawr roam and haunt the Isle of Mann that lies between Ireland and England.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• History of the Fomorians from the Dictionary of Celtic Mythology
  http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O70-Fomorians.html
• The Foawr giant appears in a Manx (from the Isle of Mann) folk-tale called The Lazy Wife (http://www.jstor.org/stable/1254712) which is a variation to the Tom Tit Tot folk tale
• “Foawr” entry in The Encylopaedia of the Celts

KELPIE

Also known as... Waterhorse (Gaelic); Glashtyn (Manx - originating from the Isle of Mann)

Comes from... Irish and Scottish folklore.

Associated with... water. They are known to inhabit the many lochs of Scotland.

Description: With the looks of a water horse or seahorse, kelpies are water faeries that entice people to attempt to mount or ride them. Once they achieve this goal, however, the person is abruptly pulled into the water, drowned, and devoured. In addition to preying upon those who approach the waters where they reside, kelpies also possess the power to shape-shift into handsome young men with dark curly hair and bright eyes. Known to appear to young women as a foreigner in need of help, kelpies would lure the women to water where they would then precede to drown them. In some tales, the kelpie accidentally falls asleep in a woman’s lap, when she then discovers his pointy, horse-like ears and seaweed hair -- exposing him as the feared creature.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• A Collection of Three Kelpie Stories (http://www.jstor.org/stable/1252766)
• Scottish Stories and Legends
  http://www.cairngormsmoorlands.co.uk/moorland_stories4.htm
• “Kelpie” entry from Learning and Teaching Scotland
RAWHEADANDBLOODYBONES

Also known as... Tommy Rawhead.
Comes from... English folklore.

Description: Rawhead and Bloodybones is a boogeyman that dwells in dark corners of the house. He was a disgusting, crouching figure covered in blood. He sat on top of a pile of children’s bones. Rawhead and Bloodybones devoured children who has told lies or said bad words.

SPRIGGAN

Comes from... Cornish folklore.
Associated with... land and water. Some claim that Spriggans will prey on travelers luring them to their death in swampy waters or off the edge of crumbling cliffs. In general, Spriggans are known to haunt lonely places.
Description: Spriggans are an evil breed of fairies known to infect people with illnesses and are often blamed for other misfortunes that may befall people. Described as ugly, wrinkly creatures with frog-like legs and features, Spriggans are sometimes thought to be the ghost of giants. They not only possess the power to shrink or grow in size, but both male and female Spriggans can bear offspring. The Spriggans’ offspring are said to be the changelings left in the place of human babies that they steal and devour.

Tales, Stories, and Resources:
• “The Spriggans” entry from *Mysterious Britain and Ireland* http://www.mysteriousbritain.co.uk/england/cornwall/ folklore/the-spriggans.html

THRUMPINS

Also known as... Thrummy-Caps.
Comes from... English and Scottish folklore.

Description: Thrumpins are fairy guardians (sometimes compared to Guardian angels) with the power to take one’s life. When a Thrumpin whispers words of death into one’s ear, even the healthiest person is doomed to die.

YALLERYBROWN

Also known as... a type of Brownie or Bogle.
Comes from... English folklore.
Associated with... land/earth. A farm laborer discovers Yallery Brown whimpering underneath a heavy stone on the ground. Yallery Brown also only appears in the nighttime.

Description: Yallery Brown is an evil kind of brownie who tricks and curses those that encounter him. According to the tale, a farm worker finds this tiny creature wedged beneath a giant stone. When he frees
Yallery Brown, the brownie tells the farm worker that he wants to repay him by offering a wish or favor. The man asks Yallery Brown to do all of his farm chores for him. Yallery Brown agrees under the condition that the farmer never thank him. After a while of allowing Yallery to magically control the tools and labor, the farm worker finds that other farmers are getting less work done. Their tools have been ruined and their work impossible to accomplish. When finally asking Yallery Brown to let him do the work for himself again, the farmer accidentally thanks Yallery Brown. Because the farmer broke his promise, Yallery Brown curses him to a life of poverty.

**Excerpt from Joseph Jacobs’ *Yallery Brown*:**

“And there in the hole lay a tiddy thing on its back, blinking up at the moon and at him. ’Twas no bigger than a year-old baby, but it had long cotted hair and beard, twisted round and round its body so that you couldn’t see its clothes; and the hair was all yaller and shining and silky, like a bairn’s; but the face of it was old and as if ’twere hundreds of years since ’twas young and smooth. Just a heap of wrinkles, and two bright black eyne in the midst, set in a lot of shining yaller hair; and the skin was the colour of the fresh-turned earth in the spring -- brown as brown could be, and its bare hands and feet were brown like the face of it.”

**Tales, Stories, and Resources:**
- “The Tale of Yallery Brown” (as retold by Joseph Jacobs)  
- “Yallery Brown” (original version in full Lincolnshire dialect told by M.C. Balfour)  
GLOSSARY of TERMS & REFERENCES

adders (1) - a reference to a group of venomous snakes

Tom Tit Tot (1) - the name of the English fairy tale version of the German Grimm Brothers’ Rumpelstiltskin.. In the English version, the girl sends Tom Tit Tot away with the words “Nimmy Nimmy Not! Your name is Tom Tit Tot” (Jacobs 18). Tom Tit Tot then disappears with a deafening “shriek.”

vicar (2) - the priest of a parish in the Church of England who receives a stipend or salary but does not receive the tithes of a parish

bluebell (3) - a blue wildflower that grows along the British countryside. “In English folklore was said to call the fairies to their meetings. People also would not walk through a field of bluebells because they believed it to be enchanted and that the fairies would spirit them away – never to be seen by human eye again. And take heed a warning: Should any one be so unlucky as to actually hear the bluebells ringing then they will die within a year” (Lloyd).

“Eating a plum in the enchanted orchard...was my undoing (3) - reference to a line in the British folk tale The Fairy Dwelling on Selena Moor. The story tells of a man who gets lost, yet finds his love (who he thought was dead) held captive in an enchanted orchard by fairies. Tired and exhausted, the man is tempted to eat some of the food, but the girl warns him that eating a golden plum is what shrunk and trapped her in the orchard. The man tries to rescue both himself and the girl by throwing his hedging gloves at the tiny faeries. This, however, causes the faeries and his love to disappear forever, leaving the man depressed and detached from the world for the rest of his life (Briggs 184).

“blue beard’s one bloody chamber maid” (3) - refers to the French and German fairy tale of Bluebeard, a wealthy man who was newly married to his third or fourth wife. Having to go away on business for several days, he leaves his new wife with keys to all the grandiose rooms in his estate. He tells her she can go into all the chambers except for the closet at the end of the hall, and if she disobeys him she will earn his anger and resentment. The wife’s curiosity gets the best of her, however, and when she eventually gives into her temptation and opens the closet door, she sees the bloody corpses of all Bluebeard’s former wives hanging from the walls. Frightened, she drops the keys onto the ground which become incurably stained with blood. Bluebeard sees the stain upon his return and goes to cut off his wife’s head with his sword. Just as he is about to strike, the woman’s brothers reach the estate and kill Bluebeard.

“Don’t get this ointment...in your eyes” (3) - This line begins the reference to the British folk tale The Fairy’s Midwife. (also known as Fairy Ointment, or The Fairy’s Nurse) where a mortal midwife is called to deliver a baby in the middle of the night. After the baby is delivered, the mother asks the midwife to rub some ointment in the baby’s eyes, but not to rub any in her own eyes. Curious, the midwife does rub some into her own eyes and suddenly the house turns into an elegant abode and all the newborn child as well as the parents appear more beautiful than before. The midwife leaves without telling the faeries what she has done, but runs into the husband at the market later in the week. She sees him
stealing others’ goods and tries to get his attention by asking him about his wife and child. Realizing that she can see him, the fairy knows the midwife had rubbed the ointment into her eyes. Angered, he blinds her by punching her in her eyes (Jacobs 210).

“bob’s your uncle” (3) - a British expression that means “and there you have it” or “you’re all set.” In some parts of Britain, it is also considered an expression of good fortune or excitement as in saying “that’s great!”

“roast cats alive” (5) - “In England in the Middle Ages, it was considered lucky to roast a cat alive on a spit before a slow fire prior to eating the first meal in a new house. Whether the cat formed part of the meal was uncertain as cat-torture was rife at the time. However, the cat was also used in medicine. An old recipe ‘for hym that haves the squyhansy [quinsy]’ begins ‘tak a fatte katte, flae hot wele and clene.’ The cat is then stuffed with hedgehog fat, resin, fenugreek, wax and other ingredients before being roast. After roasting, it’s not the flesh that is consumed, but the grease that is used to anoint the patient” (Hartwell).

“fee fi fo fum” (5) - the words of the giant ogre in Jack and the Beanstalk when the ogre smells a human is in his home. “Fee-fi-fo-fum / I smell the blood of an Englishman, / Be he alive or be he dead / I’ll have his bones to grind my bread” (Jacobs 64).

“my mother she killed me and put me in pies” (5, 19) - refers to the chant sung by a little white bird in the British folk tale The Rose Tree. In this tale, a girl is sent out by her step-mother to retrieve some candles, but a dog takes them from her on her way back. The step-mother uses this as an excuse to kill the girl and chop off her head. She then cut out the girl’s heart and liver and mixed it in her husband’s stew and pie for dinner. The father stopped as he thought the food tasted strange, and the girl’s little brother refused to eat it. Instead, he decided instead to bury his sister’s remains under a rose tree. When the tree began to bloom, a white bird would sit on its branches and sing “My mother killed me, my father picked my bones, and my little buried me under the cold marble stones.” The bird also sang this song to several craftsmen in town who rewarded it with a gift. The bird returns to the home of the step-mother to reward the little brother with a brand new pair of shoes and the father with a watch. The bird then kills the step-mother by dropping a millstone on her (Briggs, Dictionary 473).

“an open grave must be fed” (5) - a saying that comes from this verse of a British folklore song: “Gold and silver and all the world’s wealth // who leaves a grave open will fill it himself.” While many counties have their own version of this song, most versions make mention of a similar plot “of an eloping girl who arrives first at the meeting-place and hides for safety in a tree. She sees her criminal lover and his accomplice digging her grave, and so learns that he intends to murder her for her gold. She escapes, and later confronts him with the riddle-song, whereby he is betrayed into showing guilt, and he is killed” (Tongue 107). The phrase may to the also refer a similar British superstition that claims if a dug grave is left open and filled, the person who dug the grave will eventually fill it. To even utter the phrase “an open grave must be fed” or “an open grave fills itself” was considered bad luck and a harsh curse to whomever it was directed (108).
“white heather” (11) - a plant native to Scotland and considered to be a sign of good fortune. “The idea that white heather is lucky was popularized by the Victorians and their love of Scottish traditions...No Highlander would pass by it without picking it, for it was considered to bring good luck.’ White heather's luck may have been attributed to it because of its scarcity, in the same way that four-leaf clovers brought other Celts luck. Other interpretations include the more romantic notion that white heather grows over the final resting places of faeries, or the idea that in a country of many ancient battles, white heather grew on patches of ground where no blood had been shed” (Kendall).

“fish in a dish” (23) - a design that can be made with string in the game of Cat’s cradle.

pram (41) - abbreviation for perambulator, which is a British term for baby carriage
WORKS CITED & REFERENCED


