

Into the Unknown - Engaging Safely with The Otherworld

Taught at Convocation 2023 by Nicole and Kai

Fairy Definition

- Fairy is a simplified explanation, but it's the best we've got for general wording
- For this class we are specifically talking Western European - Britain, Ireland, Scotland, Scandinavia, etc.
- Beings that are non-human that come from worlds intersecting and parallel to ours, generally supernatural and possibly wound into how we experience reality

Terry Pratchett quotes:

- "Elves are wonderful. They provoke wonder. Elves are marvellous. They cause marvels. Elves are fantastic. They create fantasies. Elves are glamorous. They project glamour. Elves are enchanting. They weave enchantment. Elves are terrific. They beget terror. The thing about words is that meanings can twist just like a snake, and if you want to find snakes look for them behind words that have changed their meaning. No one ever said elves are nice. Elves are bad." -Lords and Ladies
- "You said: The Shining Ones. You said: The Fair Folk. And you spat, and touched iron. But generations later, you forgot about the spitting and the iron, and you forgot why you used those names for them, and you remembered only that they were beautiful" -Lords and Ladies

Definition of Otherworld in the context of this class

- General - A world or series of worlds that overlap with this one that can be traveled to either physically or energetically
- Cross-cultural universal, examples of otherworldly beings all over the world
- Specific examples - Irish Otherworld, Huldrafolk, other culturally similar ideas

Why Bother?

- Dagda Story - The Taking of the Sidhe
- Personal Stories - Protection, Wealth, etc

Ground Rules that are Universal in the Otherworld

- Don't eat or drink their foodstuffs
- Don't take stuff or accept gifts
- Don't give away parts of yourself
- If you see them no you don't
- Travel with a guide or guidelines -Don't stray from the path
- Particular phrasing (Gratitude, Apologies, exchanges)
- Be respectful and polite

Recommended journey methods

- [For Irish Otherworld, Lora O'Brien's method](#)
- Aftercare: When coming back, make sure to take care of your physical body - Drink some water, eat food, and stretch your body
- Good idea to keep a record of your work, both for future review and for processing

Discernment and Divination

- Having a reliable discernment method is essential for sorting through information
- Use established folklore as a touchpoint - if it doesn't follow a trend, be critical and examine experiences thoroughly
- Also important to use discernment when using sources
- UPG is a thing, but it's still important to verify with both established sources and discernment

Building relationships

- Contracts and Servitude
- Boundary Setting -
- Some Deities that are helpful for contracts and boundaries (there are definitely more):
 - Irish: The Dagda, The Mórrígan, Manannán mac Lir
 - Welsh: Gwyn ap Nudd
 - Norse: Loki, Odin, Hel, Freya, Freyr

Recommended Resources:

Books/Authors:

Non-Fiction:

- Morgan Daimler's Fairy Witchcraft books
- Lora O'Brien - Fairy Faith in Ireland
- Claude Lecouteux books
 - Witches, Werewolves, and Fairies
 - Tradition of Household Spirits
 - Demons and Spirits of the Land
- Eddie Lenihan
 - Meeting the Othercrowd
- Katherine Briggs
 - Dictionary of Fairies
- Dr. Jenny Butler
- Michael Fortune
- Emma Wilby
 - Cunning Folk and Familiar Spirits

Fiction:

- The Call and The Invasion by Peadar Ó'Guilín
- Between the Worlds Series by Morgan Daimler

Movies:

- Don't Be Afraid of the Dark (2010) - Guillermo del Toro
- Pan's Labyrinth (2006) - Guillermo del Toro
- Spirited Away (2001) - Studio Ghibli
- Absentia (2011) - Mike Flanagan
- Labyrinth (1986) - Jim Henson

Blogs:

- For Folklore and Sources:
 - Lora O'Brien (Irish): <https://loraobrien.ie/>
 - Ireland's Folklore and Traditions (Irish): <https://irishfolklore.wordpress.com/>
 - Mhara Starling (Welsh): <https://www.youtube.com/@mharastarling2730>
 - Living Liminality (Irish/Irish-American/Norse): <https://lairbhan.blogspot.com/>
Specifically these pages:
 - [Living Liminality: Sources for Working with Fairies](#)
 - [Resources for Studying the Daoine Maithe](#)
 - [Living Liminality: Online Fairy Resources](#)
- For Modern Experiences:
 - Speaking Starlight (Irish/Irish-American/Norse): <https://speakingstarlight.blogspot.com/>
 - Whispers in the Twilight (Romanian): <https://whispersinthetwilight.blogspot.com/>
 - 7Serendipities (Irish/Irish-American/Norse): <https://www.7serendipities.com/>
 - Seo Helrune (Norse): <https://seohelrune.com/>

Websites:

- Kai's Website: <https://sanctuaryontheshore.com/>
- Nicole's Website: <https://livingrootscreations.com/>
- Irish Pagan School: <https://irishpaganschool.com/>
 - 4-week Fairy Faith course here: <https://irishpaganschool.com/p/fairy-faith>
- Circle Stories on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CircleStoriesDavidHalpin/>
- Mary Jones Archive of Irish Texts: http://maryjones.us/ctexts/index_irish.html
- Dúchas (for various folklore from Ireland): <https://www.duchas.ie/en>
- In-The-Sky: <https://in-the-sky.org/> Excellent for finding culminations and other astronomical phenomena