

Bibliography

Ayres, Ed, God's Last Offer: Negotiating for a Sustainable Future.
Barber, Elizabeth Wayland, Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years.
Barstow, Anne Lewellyn, Witcheraze: A New History of the European Witch Hunts.
Bell, Diane, Daughters of the Dreaming.
Blundell, Sue, Women in Ancient Greece.
Burkert, Walter, Rene Girard and Jonathan Z. Smith, Violent Origins: Ritual Killing and Cultural Formation.
Campbell, Joseph, The Masks of God, Four Volume Series: Primitive Mythology, Oriental Mythology, Occidental Mythology, Creative Mythology.
Catton, William R., Jr., Overshoot: The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change.
Davidson, Gustav, A Dictionary of Angels.
Devereux, George, A Study of Abortion in Primitive Societies.
Diamond, Jared, Guns, Germs and Steel.
Diner, Helen, Mothers and Amazons: The First Feminine History of Culture.
Dinnerstein, Dorothy, The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise.
Edgerton, Robert B., Sick Societies: Challenging the Myth of Primitive Harmony.
Ehrenreich, Barbara, Blood Rites: The Origin and History of the Passions of War.
Ehrlich Paul and Anne H. Ehrlich, The Population Explosion.
Evans, Arthur, Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture.
Faludi, Susan, Backlash.
Flynn, Elizabeth Gurley, The Rebel Girl: An Autobiography.
Grahn, Judy, Blood, Bread and Roses: How Menstruation Created the World.
Guttentag, Marcia and Paul F. Secord, Too Many Women? The Sex Ratio Question.
Harris, Marvin and Eric B. Ross, Death, Sex and Fertility: Population Regulation in Preindustrial and Developing Societies.
Harris, Marvin, Our Kind: The Evolution of Human Life and Culture.
Hayden, Tom, The Lost Gospel of the Earth: A Call for Renewing Nature, Spirit, and Politics.
Hrdy, Sarah Blaffer, Mother Nature: A History of Mothers, Infants and Natural Selection.
Kahn, Miriam, Always Hungry, Never Greedy: Food and the expression of gender in a Melanesian society.
Knight, Chris, Blood Relations: Menstruation and the Origins of Culture.
Koltuv, Barbara Black, The Book of Lilith.
LaChapelle, Dolores, Sacred Land, Sacred Sex, Rapture of the Deep.
LaFleur, William, Liquid Life: Abortion and Buddhism in Japan.
Lerner, Gerda, The Creation of Patriarchy.
Levi-Strauss, Claude, The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology.
Maguire, Daniel C., Sacred Choices: The Right to Contraception and Abortion in Ten World Religions.
Markale, Jean, Women of the Celts.
Miller, Patricia G., The Worst of Times: Illegal Abortion.
Morgan, Lynn M. and Meredith W. Michaels, Fetal Subjects, Feminist Positions.
Nile, Richard and Christian Clerk, Cultural Atlas of Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific.
Oliver, Douglas L., Ancient Tahitian Society.
Pagels, Elaine, Adam, Eve, and the Serpent.
Paige, Karen Ericksen and Jeffery M. Paige, The Politics of Reproductive Ritual.
Paris, Ginette, The Sacrament of Abortion.
Pomeroy, Sarah B., et al. Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural History.
Ratner, Rochelle, ed., Bearing Life: Women's Writings on Childlessness.
Reed, A. W., Treasury of Maori Folklore.
Reed, Evelyn, Woman's Evolution: from Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family.
Reich, Wilhelm, The Mass Psychology of Facism.
Riddle, John M., Contraception and Abortion from the Ancient World to the Renaissance.
Riddle, John M., Eve's Herbs: A History of Contraception and Abortion in the West.
Ruether, Rosemary Radford, Gaia & God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing.
Sanger, Margaret, Margaret Sanger: An Autobiography.
Schmookler, Andrew Bard, The Parable of the Tribes.
Shlain, Leonard, Sex, Time and Power: How Women's Sexuality Shaped Human Evolution.
Shrage, Laurie, "From Reproductive Rights to Reproductive Barbie: Post-Porn Modernism and Abortion," Feminist Studies, #28, Spring 2002.
Singer, Peter, Writings on an Ethical Life.
Sjoo, Monica and Barbara Mor, The Great Cosmic Mother: Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth.
Stone, Merlin, When God Was a Woman.
Tate, Carolyn, Olmec Sculptures of the Human Fetus, in PARI Online Publications, #30, Winter 1999.
Thompson, William Irwin, The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light: Mythology, Sexuality and the Origins of Culture.



Who are the Earth Island Angels?

Introduction

Some of us have been listening to the Great Goddess Gaia — our Earth — and she is telling us things. She is telling us to remember the Angels of Earth Island. Earth Island is our planet, our home in the sea of space. It is the only place we have ever lived and it may be the only place we ever will live.

Yet the weight of humanity is becoming more than the planet can bear as we overwhelm the planetary systems that provide us with clean air, water, food and a livable climate. If we are to survive into the future, we must reduce the human population. We must reconsider our attitudes to abortion and birth control.

Patriarchal culture has stigmatized women who choose abortion, turning them and their health care providers into objects of hatred and persecution. I hope that these writings and images will be helpful to those who have experienced abortions and the cultural conflict surrounding them, as well as those who may be questioning the morality of abortion.

Earth Island Angels are the Spirits of Embryos, Fetuses and Stillborns

Who are the Earth Island Angels? They are the angels we know from Judeo-Christian religion, but they are also found in many other cultural and religious traditions.

In many cultures angels and spirits represent aborted fetuses or embryos.

A survey of four hundred ancient cultures found evidence that nearly every one practiced abortion (George Devereux, *Abortion in Primitive Societies*). Without effective contraceptives, women who did not have the food, love and other resources to give to an additional child often had no other choice but abortion. To choose not to abort might threaten the health of her other children and the survival of the community as a whole.

Aborted fetuses were seen as messengers to the gods and many cultures venerated these small sacrifices as angel, fairy or water spirit. Cherubs, Polynesian Tiki gods and the Jizo dolls of Buddhist Japan are all examples of Earth Island Angels.

This essay will explore these ancient traditions and show us ways to once again honor the spirits of those children we cannot

The Seraphim

Angel lore comes from many sources: the Bible, the Talmud and the Koran as well as Jewish mysticism texts like the Zohar and the Gnostic texts. In these texts, Seraphim and Cherubim are the two most prominent orders of angels.

The Seraphim are the wisest angels. They are described as brazen or burning serpents. Seraph means serpent and their element is fire. They were recruited as God's messengers to man. Some of them are fallen angels, like Lucifer, bringer of light. The serpent almost always refers to the ancient Earth Goddess religion. The Seraphim are undoubtedly wise, but their loyalty to God is sometimes questionable because they still serve the ancient Goddess.

Create Your Own Earth Island Angels

You can create your own Earth Island Angels as the modern version of the Tiki god or the Cherub. Like the Buddhist Jizo dolls, we can use these icons to focus our thoughts and prayers.

Earth Island Angels can be anything. Angels and fairies are very popular today and lovely images of them can be found everywhere.

Put an angel or a fairy on your personal altar or sacred space and use it to remind you of the sad but sometimes necessary sacrifice of abortion.

Use it to give thanks that we have much better contraceptives today than our ancestors did. Give thanks that we rarely have to resort to abortion and never to infanticide. Give thanks also for the lives of millions of women that have been saved by access to safe, legal abortion.

I have created my own Earth Island Angels in the image of a fetus with butterfly wings. These images remind me of the wondrous biological diversity of the Earth as represented by the thousands of species of butterflies.

When I see these images I am reminded that because I chose to end my accidental pregnancies, there are two fewer human beings on the earth impacting the habitat of butterflies and other creatures. They make me feel good about the decision I made because I have left more room on Earth for nature to flourish.

If you would like to see my images, go to the web site:

www.earthislandangels.com



Questions? Comments? Write to: lily@earthislandangels.com

legalization of abortion is at variance with the function of the family, which is to produce children, and would lead to the definite destruction of the family with many children."

A large part of the success of the extreme right wing in American politics derives from its appeal to abortion opponents.

Like the Nazis, the right wing has tied abortion to the stability of the family and ultimately the security of the nation. But this is a big lie. In fact the opposite is true.

Abortion, family planning and comprehensive health care for women can halt exponential population growth. If we don't accept the necessity of population limitation, we will have it imposed upon us anyway as the burden of growing population continues to destroy our environment.

As the environment deteriorates, we lose our health, our livelihood and our security. Abortion is an emotional issue. It is never anyone's first choice and should not be used as a contraceptive.

But the fact is that even modern contraceptives are hard to use, can harm women's health and can fail. Abortion is still necessary as a backup.

Instead of fighting against abortion, let us honor the souls of the tiny beings we must send back to heaven and concentrate our energies and passions on creating a better world for the people who are already here.

In the process we will also create a sustainable future so that those souls may have a chance to return to Earth some day.



The brazen serpent that healed the followers of Moses may have represented the Seraphim.



Lucifer, a fallen angel known as the bringer of light, was one of the Seraphim.

The Seraphim may well represent the spirits of our wise ancestors, the priestesses and shamans who were humanity's spiritual leaders before the advent of monotheism.

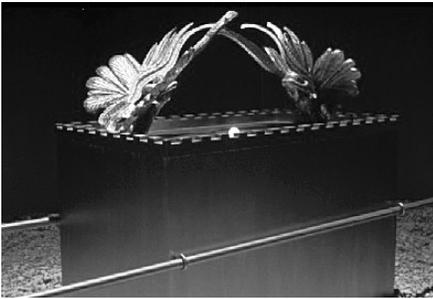
The Cherubim

The Cherubim are the guardian angels. They wield the flaming, whirling sword. They are beasts with wings and four faces: Lion, Eagle, Ox and Man. Their wings cover the Ark of the Covenant, folded about it like a perfect yoni. The cherubim guard the east gate of Eden, where Adam and Eve were expelled.

The Cherubim are of air and breath. Their role is to touch the fetus while it is still in the womb and give it the breath of life. The mark on a newborn's upper lip is the sign of that touch.

The chief Cherub is called Metatron. His female aspect is the Shekina, the Hebrew Goddess. Metatron is called "the small face of Yahweh" and "the Rod of Moses." From one side of the Rod

comes life and the other death. He is the teacher of prematurely dead children in paradise while they await a more auspicious time for birth.



The Ark of the Covenant represents Eden or the Womb, to which we can never return. The Cherubim who guard it form the shape of a vagina with their wings, as can be seen in the two images above.

Since the Renaissance, cherubim have been portrayed in art as baby angels. This reflects their role in guarding the gates of Paradise, the Womb. Once we have left the Womb we cannot return. These cherubs represent then, those children who died prematurely through miscarriage, abortion or infant neglect. Their souls have not been tried on earth and so they can return to Paradise to wait for another chance.

Throughout human history, around the globe, people have practiced abortion and infanticide as a necessary population control. In Europe, from the middle ages until the nineteenth century, infanticide was institutionalized in several ways.

First, the practice of hiring wet nurses often resulted in the death of the foster nursling as undernourished mothers had trouble keeping two or more infants alive. During the population explosion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, abandoned infants became such a problem that foundling hospitals were established where unwanted babies could be deposited. However,

power above all else.

As human population continues to grow exponentially, it is now doubling at a rate of every 30 years. The stresses on the environment and systems of food production, water and energy are enormous and growing. The stresses on human society are equally great. Outbreaks of violence, substance abuse, disease and insanity are increasing. Poverty is on the rise as labor is over-supplied and wages fall. Since the globalization of economic systems, America is no longer immune to these forces.

One consequence we rarely think about is the impact of mass society on democracy. The Jeffersonian ideal of democracy is based on a small society where problems can be solved by participation of all citizens in town hall meetings.

In 1800 it was quite possible that your representative to Congress would know you or your family by name. Now it is unthinkable unless you are a wealthy contributor, a lobbyist or a political activist. The number of constituents per representative has grown from 25,000 to 640,000 and is still growing. In the words of science fiction writer Isaac Asimov: "Democracy will not survive overpopulation."

Adolf Hitler said in Mein Kampf: "the great mass of people will more easily fall victim to a big lie than to a small one." The masses of men are easier to manipulate than thoughtful small groups and the mass media is the perfect instrument of control. Thus George W. Bush can claim to be "pro-life" while he sends young people off to die in an unprovoked war.

Fascist rulers have learned that the easiest way to control people is by controlling their sexuality. Women in particular are made to feel that their natural sexuality is "dirty" and the only noble function of sex is to produce children.

A Nazi newspaper in 1931 published the following:

"The family with many children must be preserved.... because it is a highly valuable, indispensable part of the German nation not only because it alone guarantees the maintenance of the population in the future but because it is the strongest basis of national morality and national culture.... the

and the depopulation of Europe, a general prosperity took hold as the survivors inherited the wealth of the land. Laborers and artisans commanded high wages. The wealthy merchants, however, wanted lower wages and so increased pressure was brought upon women to bear large families again.

The period of the Renaissance coincides with the peak of the witch persecutions in which an estimated half million women were executed. Most of these women were either midwives with knowledge of contraception and abortion or single women who had aborted. As a result, most of the ancient knowledge of herbal abortifacients was lost to ordinary women.



Women healers murdered by the witch hunts.

Abortion and Democracy

The witch was called a baby killer because she took the regulation of population into her own hands against the interests of the merchant rulers who based their power on growth and war.

This struggle continues. The interests of women, labor and the small democratic society are opposed to the interests of those who value the accumulation of obscene wealth and concentrated

very few infants survived the hospitals which farmed them out to wet nurses in the country.

The winged baby cherubs that decorate so many sentimental objects are a way of unconsciously honoring the spirits of babies who did not survive.



The "putti", small angel faces found in much Renaissance art, represent unwanted babies sent back to heaven to wait a better time for birth.

Jizo Dolls of Buddhist Japan

Many women or couples in Japan who have terminated a pregnancy, suffered a miscarriage, or had a stillborn baby choose to honour the soul of this child through a practice called mizuko jizo. Mizuko means 'child of the water' and is used to refer to the soul of a child who has been returned to the gods. Jizo is the name of the Buddhist god who protects and guides that soul on its journey to another world.

Abortion is regarded as the parents willingly making a decision to return a child to the gods, sending a child to a temporary place until such time that it is right for the child to come into this world, either into the same family or another one. The child is returned because the parents, at that time, would be unable to provide enough love, money, or attention to this child, without it being to the detriment of their present family. Practicing mizuko jizo allows the parents to apologize to the child and to ask for forgiveness from their child for being unable to bring them up. This involves the practice of a ritual where the parents purchase a doll, adorn it and enshrine it in a temple where it is cared for by priests.



Jizo images at a Japanese shrine and an image of Jizos with the Buddha in heaven.

Tiki Gods of Polynesia

In Polynesian languages, a tiki is a penis as well as a small fetcher spirit that can protect a person, like a guardian angel. Some tiki spirits were originally fetuses.

The heitiki, usually carved from native greenstone, is one of the most prized of Maori ornaments, and is worn as a pendant by women. It represents a human embryo. The heitiki gave its wearer mana (power) associated with fertility and creation.

The heitiki is also associated with the Maori culture hero, Maui. Maui was aborted by his mother who already had too many sons. She placed his body on a bed of seaweed to be washed out to sea. Maui floated on the seaweed to another island where an aged couple rescued him and raised him.

Though she was required to cut off her topknot to atone for what she had done, Maui's mother was not evil. She had done what was necessary.

Later, Maui came back to her and she recognized him as her son. Maui became a trickster god, the author of many bold stunts including the attempt to defeat death by crawling back through the womb of the creator goddess Hine.

where primarily concerned with the regulation of women and their fertility. The new laws required that a woman who aborted should be impaled on a stake and refused sacred burial. Infanticide however, remained perfectly legal, if exercised by the father, as it was now his right to choose which children to keep and which to kill. Fathers were more likely to keep sons and to kill daughters.

Still, throughout much of the ancient world, women continued to practice abortion. Ancient medical texts show that a variety of effective herbal abortifacients were known. Mostly these were taken within the first month of pregnancy. An herb called silphium, a variety of giant fennel, was so effective that during Greek and Roman times it was harvested to extinction. It could not be cultivated and grew only in the deserts of Libya.

Toward the end of the Roman empire, rulers became increasingly concerned about the slowing of population growth. More and more of their subjects refused to birth large families. The custom was to sell unwanted children as slaves, and fewer families were willing to do that. At its height, about twenty percent of the Empire's subjects were slaves. Needing a steady supply of slaves, Imperial Rome imposed new laws against abortion.

A similar situation took hold with the rise of mercantilism during the Renaissance. In the aftermath of the bubonic plague



Lilith tempting Eve with the fruit of knowledge and a representation of Lucifer after the fall. Note that he/she causes birth as well as death.



Left: A fish-fetus sculpture from neolithic Europe.



Right: A silver frog with a human face from the Alps, 19th century. From The Language of the Goddess by Marija Gimbutas.

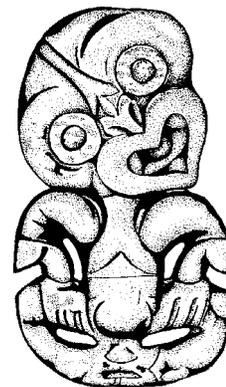
The Fall

Adam's first wife Lilith was something like a goddess of abortion. She wanted to be his equal and when he refused to let her change their sexual position so she could be on top, she left him. Yahweh sent three angels after her, but she escaped and went to live in a cave. Yahweh punished her by decreeing that all her children would die, but since she knew the secret name of Yahweh, she retained power over all newborn children and could cause any of them to die. The daughters of Eve must protect their children from Lilith by using amulets to ward her off.

The story of Lilith and of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden represents the change of human social organization from matrilineal to patriarchal. In former times, all children belonged to their mothers and mother's brothers. But the fathers wanted their own children to honor them and care for them in their old age and slowly they subverted the ancient system. The knowledge Eve gave to Adam was the knowledge of his exclusive paternity (previously it was thought that a woman had to lie with more than one man to conceive). This knowledge knocked the old world off its foundations and began an era of pain and strife.

One consequence of the change was the loss of old methods of population regulation. Fathers now wanted as many sons as possible to increase their power in commerce and war.

The first written law codes, those of Assyria and Hammurabi,



Left: The Heitiki amulet worn by Maori women represents an aborted fetus and the culture hero Maui.



Right: A tiki god of fishermen from Tahiti.

The Maori call abortion "the excrement of the gods."

Eskimos also called abortion "the excrement of the gods" and they believed that if abortion was practiced irresponsibly it would disturb Sedna, mother of the seals, and the hunters would have poor luck.

The Hawaiians had a god of abortion named Ku Po. He resembles the god of war with his cockscomb and his image is a fierce head on the end of a long pointed stick. The stick was the abortion instrument.

In Hawaii, aborted and still born children were considered part of the family and after several generations they were deified as minor gods who watched over the clan.

Aborted children were thought to return directly to heaven and could serve as messengers to the gods. It was important to honor them or they could become angry and bring down the wrath of heaven.

Tiki gods are especially useful to fishermen who enlist their help in catching fish. Fetuses disposed of in the ocean were thought to become fish and there are legends of women who encountered their aborted children who had become fish.

On the small islands of the South Pacific, population regulation before the modern era of imported food must have been of paramount concern. Abortion and infanticide were widely practiced.

The Arioi: Make-Love-Not-War Hippies of Tahiti

In Tahiti, in the seventeenth century, a peace movement arose after a period of fierce warfare and intense bloodshed in the island chain.

The peace movement took the form of an alternative cult of the war god, called the Oro cult. Oro was a "soft" war god, "warrior-of-the-laid-down-spear," who promoted a peaceful alternative to war.

A key feature of the cult was institutionalized abortion.

Oro's disciples were a group of traveling entertainers, men and women, who were singers, dancers and storytellers. These Arioi, as they were known, traveled about the islands throwing festivals. Wherever they arrived, village people were obliged to feast and gift them in parties and celebrations that went on for days.

Those who joined the Arioi had to pledge to remain child-free. They taught abortion techniques wherever they went because there could not be any children as a result of their celebrations and love-making.

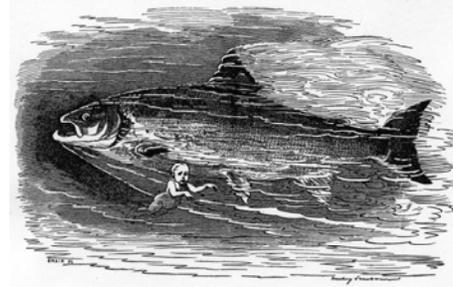
As many as a fifth of the population belonged to the Arioi, significantly reducing the number of breeders, and hence, the competition for resources leading to war.

Jinns, Water Babies and Twists of Clay

There are many more examples of angels and water babies used by different cultures to work through the feelings surrounding abortion. The European fairies and water sprites are fetus-like creatures who inhabit a nether world.

Arabic Jinns, or Genies, are fairy-like spirits. The word Jinn means "hidden spirit," and it is related to the Arabic word for fetus.

Certain small sculptures of the ancient Olmec people of Mexico appear to resemble fetuses. Archeologist Carolyn Tate has studied these sculptures and says: "Among the Mixe, contemporary descendants of the Olmecs, the female supernatural power



Pictures from the Charles Kingsley children's book, The Water Babies.

that controls bodies of water also controls human childbirth and fishing. It is as if one "fishes" for children, or as if fish were placed in the womb in order to be "cooked" into human infants, as the Mixe say."

Abortion was openly practiced in the harem of the Aztec ruler Montezuma. The Aztecs occupied deserts and jungles that provided very little in the way of protein. Their only domesticated animals were the turkey and the dog. With so little meat to go around, population limitation was desirable.

Representations of the fetus may be more common than we know. Marija Gimbutas identifies fetal twists of clay found in archeological sites in old Europe. Figurines of frogs, fish, salamanders and other such creatures may have actually represented fetuses in the minds of those who made them.



Two Olmec fetus sculptures from "Olmec Sculptures of the Human Fetus" by Carolyn Tate and Gordon Bendersky.