



DENVER CENTER FOR THE
PERFORMING ARTS
Theatre Company
40th Season

INSIDE OUT

A STUDY GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS



LAST NIGHT AND THE NIGHT BEFORE

LAST NIGHT AND THE NIGHT BEFORE SYNOPSIS

When Monique and her 10-year-old daughter, Samantha, show up unexpectedly on her sister's Brooklyn doorstep, it shakes up Rachel and her partner Nadima's orderly New York lifestyle. Monique is on the run from deep trouble and brings their family's Southern roots with her, grabbing hold of Rachel's life more ferociously than she could have ever imagined. Poetic, powerful and remarkably moving, *Last Night and the Night Before* explores the struggle between the responsibilities that are expected of us and the choices we actually end up making.

PLAYWRIGHT

Donnetta Lavinia Grays - raised in Columbia, South Carolina - is a Brooklyn based actor and playwright. Ms. Grays' plays include *Last Night and the Night Before*, *Laid to Rest*, *The Review Or How To Eat Your Opposition*, *The New Normal*, and *The Cowboy is Dying*. Ms. Grays is a 2016-2018 Time Warner Foundation WP Playwrights Lab Member, a member of the Actors Studio Playwright/Directors Unit and is the inaugural recipient of the Doric Wilson Independent Playwright Award. Acting credits include Broadway's *In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play* and *Well*. Ms. Grays is a proud member of The Actors Center Workshop Company, SAG-AFTRA, AEA and The Dramatist Guild of America.



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**LAST NIGHT
AND THE NIGHT BEFORE**
By **Donnetta Lavinia Grays**
Directed by **Valerie Curtis-Newton**

Producing Partners:
Robert and Judi Newman

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LOCATIONS

BROOKLYN

Monique: Ain't no need lookin' for somebody don't want to be found. Right?

Brooklyn, one of the five boroughs of New York City, situated at the southern tip of Long Island, was originally inhabited by a group of Native Americans who called themselves the Lenape, which means “the People.” They included the Nayack and the Canarsie, who planted corn and tobacco and fished in the rivers. The Dutch, who settled in Manhattan in the early 1600s, called their neighbors “river Indians” or “wild people.”

The Dutch began to buy land across the river in 1636, and their fortunes often contrasted those of the Native Americans. As a result of diseases (such as smallpox, that were new to America), war, land deals that were not always honorable, and other factors, by the 1680s the native people had lost all claims to the rolling, heavily forested landscape. The Dutch founded five villages: Bushwick, Brooklyn, Flatbush, Flatlands, and New Utrecht. Gravesend, a sixth village, was founded in 1643 by Lady Deborah Moody, an Englishwoman who was fleeing religious persecution in England and the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The British captured the Dutch territory in 1674, and gathered the six villages into Kings County, part of the crown colony of New York. Slavery flourished in these rich farmlands during the 18th century.

By 1771, just before the Revolutionary War, slaves represented nearly one third of the population of Kings County. Slavery wouldn't become illegal in New York State until 1827. The village of Brooklyn, directly across the East River from Manhattan, was the funnel through which the food grown on Long Island's rich farmlands passed to New York City.

As New York City flourished, so did its nearest neighbor. Rowboats, sailboats, and horse-powered ferries plied the waters of the East River, and speculators and merchants began to buy land along the waterfront. In 1855, nearly half of Brooklyn's 205,000 residents were foreign-born; about half were Irish, with the rest evenly divided between Germans and Britons. A second wave of immigration began in the late 1880s. People from Eastern Europe, including Russian Jews, Italians, and Poles, along with a mix-

ture of Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, and Finns, filled the city. More than one million people lived in Brooklyn at the end of the 19th century — and more than 30% of them were foreign-born.

In 1860, 40% of Brooklyn's wage earners worked in New York City, and ferries carried more than 32 million passengers a year. However, they could not keep up with demand for transport. To ease some of the congestion and link the two great cities, plans to build a bridge were proposed. The New York Bridge Company was founded in 1865 and constructed the Brooklyn Bridge, which opened in 1883. By 1880, Brooklyn had evolved into one of the leading producers of manufactured goods in the nation. Brooklyn's largest industry, sugar refining, produced more than half the sugar consumed in the United States.

There were also dockyards, gas refineries, ironworks, slaughterhouses, book publishers, sweatshops, and factories producing everything from clocks, pencils, and glue, to cakes, beer, and cigars. Work, though not always safe or healthy, was widely available. Between World War I and the 1930s, thousands of southern Blacks filtered into Brooklyn's neighborhoods. They were among the hundreds of thousands who moved to northern cities during the “Great Migration,” and by 1930, more than 60% of the African Americans in Brooklyn had been born outside the borough. When the A train was extended from Harlem to Brooklyn in 1936, thousands of African Americans left Harlem in search of better lives and less expensive housing.

Thousands from Puerto Rico also settled in Brooklyn. The trip from Puerto Rico took five days by steamship, but offered an alternative to the poverty and limitations of the tiny island. Brooklyn had helped to supply the industrial needs of the country, but by the 1950s, Brooklyn's industrial energies began to wane. Heavy manufacturers began to move to cheaper locations in other cities, and the ports became less active as large container ships, requiring deep harbors, began to dominate the shipping trade.

Economic dislocation and the easy

availability of government-sponsored housing spurred the middle classes to leave their old neighborhoods for the suburbs. Finally, in 1957, Brooklyn's pride was dealt a harsh blow by one particular departure: the Dodgers moved to Los Angeles. Once-vibrant neighborhoods fell into disrepair, decay, and poverty. Manufacturing fell by one half between 1954 and 1990, and the Brooklyn dockyards were largely abandoned. Even the Brooklyn Navy Yard closed in 1966. The blackout of 1977, a decade later, became one of Brooklyn's worst moments: The power failure led to widespread rioting, looting, and arson; entire sections of now predominantly black neighborhoods went up in flames.

Despite the turmoil of the 1970s and early 1980s, the final decade of the 20th century witnessed a revival in Brooklyn's fortunes. Crime ebbed during the 1990s,

and neighborhoods like Brooklyn Heights, Fort Greene, and Clinton Hill began to spring back to life. The Brooklyn Academy of Music began to draw avant-garde crowds from Manhattan, the Navy Yard began redevelopment into a booming industrial park, and a new generation of artists, fleeing from the high rents in Manhattan, created vibrant new communities in DUMBO (Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass), Williamsburg, and Greenpoint. And, of course, new waves of immigrants continued to make the borough their home, lending new accents, flavors, and textures to old Brooklyn neighborhoods.

<https://www.thirteen.org/brooklyn/history/history3.html>
https://explorebk.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/PATH_100Brooklyn_GM_060118.pdf

BROWNSTONE

A brownstone is a particular style of rowhouse that's been faced in brownstone. Brownstone is a soft, close-grained Triassic sandstone or freestone. When first cut, the stone is pink, but it soon weathers to an even, rich, chocolate brown because of the presence of hematite iron ore. A rowhouse is one of a group of low-rise residential buildings that shares one or both side walls and a roofline with the structures next door. A rowhouse is typically just two to five stories in height and home to one or two families. However, some of Brooklyn's rowhouses have been converted into a greater number of apartments.

During the late 18th and early 19th century, when New York rowhouses were built in the Federal and Greek Revival styles with red brick facades, brownstone was often used for stoops, doorway trim, and window lintels and sills on smaller houses, because it was cheaper than the customary and preferred white marble or limestone. By the late 1840s, however, brownstone became the most fashionable building material for rowhouse facades.

Brownstone reflected the mid-19th-century popularity of Romantic Classicism, which glorified picturesque nature. Brownstone echoed the dark browns, grays and greens of the romanticized landscape.

Brownstones occupy a unique place in the New York City psyche, as one of the city's most prototypical signposts, like yellow cabs and fast walkers. Thousands of these structures are crammed into the five boroughs. As it turns out, most of them are not only cast from the same mold, but were also made from the same stone, a brown sandstone quarried in Portland, Conn. After being mined on and off for centuries, the Portland Brownstone Quarries, the very last of its kind, closed down in 2012.

<https://www.brownstoner.com/architecture/brownstone-brooklyn-architecture-charles-lockwood/>
<https://www.brownstoner.com/architecture/what-is-a-row-house-brooklyn-townhouse-architecture-history/>
<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/23/nyregion/saying-goodbye-to-the-face-of-new-yorks-brownstones.html>

LOWCOUNTRY: LOCATION AND CUISINE

Vixen, GA is a fictional town invented by the playwright, but few regions in the United States pack in as much history, culture, and natural beauty as the Lowcountry—a 200-mile (322-kilometer) stretch of coastal South Carolina and Georgia. Precise boundaries for the Lowcountry are unclear, but Charleston is generally agreed to be its largest economic center. And just as there is considerable ambiguity related to the boundaries of the Lowcountry, there is an ongoing disagreement concerning the correct spelling of the region's name. Some favor one word – Lowcountry, while others insist on the separation of the words Low and Country. Similar disagreements relate to capitalization. Does the initial character require upper case or lower case? Consensus is elusive. In any case, the most common variant is Lowcountry – one word, capital L. This is the one the State of South Carolina uses. The Lowcountry is an officially recognized region within the governmental structure of South Carolina.

South Carolina's Lowcountry holds a major place of importance in African-American history for many reasons, but perhaps most importantly as a port of entry for people of African descent. According to several historians, anywhere from 40 to 60 percent of the Africans who were brought to America during the slave trade entered through ports in the Lowcountry. This has given the Lowcountry the designation among some as the “Ellis Island for African Americans,” although some dispute this term, as the Ellis Island immigrants arrived voluntarily as opposed to the Africans who were captured in the Atlantic slave trade. Today, nearly 80% of African Americans can potentially trace an ancestor who arrived in Charleston.

Roughly one-fifth of rural residents

in this country are people of color, and their interests and political views are as diverse as they are. What gets covered [in the media] is rural white America, so that shapes how people think about rural America, and those are the stories that get told over and over again. Schools that serve mostly rural communities of color often have less of a funding base, less of a tax base to draw upon. So they literally have got less resources than rural white communities.

Generally speaking, Lowcountry food is based in French and English cooking traditions, but the subtropical environs allows for the integration of plants and ingredients that can't be found in either of those. The African influence is integral as well. Hoppin' John, a bean and rice pilaf, which has become a traditional dish on New Years' Day, is daily fare in the rice lands of West Africa. Like most Southern cuisines, Lowcountry is comfort food, best eaten in the warm familiarity of someone's home. It is centered on large, one-pot meals like gumbos, catfish stew, shrimp and grits, benne-oyster soup, and seafood boils. Other Lowcountry dishes include, fried chicken, country-fried steak, fried green tomatoes, pulled pork, okra, collard greens, and boiled peanuts.

<http://www.africanamericancharleston.com/lowcountry.html>
<https://iaamuseum.org/>
<http://www.southeastdiscovery.com/blog/2011/03/so-is-it-low-country-or-lowcountry/>
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/road-trips/low-country-south-carolina-georgia-road-trip/>
<https://www.vox.com/conversations/2017/4/24/15286624/race-rural-america-trump-politics-media>
<https://firstwefeast.com/eat/2015/05/illustrated-history-of-lowcountry-cuisine>
https://www.masc.sc/SiteCollectionDocuments/Communications/MASC_Style%20Guide_final_810.pdf

GULLAH

The Gullah Geechee people are the descendants of Central and West Africans who came from different ethnic and social groups. They were enslaved together on the isolated sea and barrier islands that span what is now designated as the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor – a stretch of the U.S. coastline that extends from Pender County, North Carolina to St. John’s County, Florida and for 30 miles inland. The result was an intense interaction among Africans from different language groups in settings where enslaved Africans and their descendants formed the majority.

Over time, they developed the creole Gullah Geechee language as a means of communicating with each other and they were also able to preserve many African practices in their language, arts, crafts and cuisine. Gullah is a unique creole language spoken along the Sea Islands and adjacent coastal areas of South Carolina and Georgia. The residents in Georgia are typically referred to as “Geechee.” Gullah language began as a simplified form of communication among people of different languages including European slave

traders, slave owners and diverse African ethnic groups. The vocabulary and grammatical roots come from European and African languages. Gullah Geechee language is the only distinctly African creole language in the United States and has influenced traditional Southern vocabulary and speech patterns.

Examples of Gullah speech include, the verb *go*, pronounced as /gə/, which is typically used to mark the future tense, as in *he go see um* [he’ll see him/her/it]; *duhz/does /dəz/* which is used to express habits, as in *How you duhz cook this?* [How do you (usually) cook this?]. Gullah’s basic universal negator is *ain* (from English ain’t), as in *he ain go come* [he won’t come] and *Uh ain tell you nothin* [I haven’t told you anything/I didn’t tell you anything]. The language is also characterized by multiple negatives, as in the previous examples and *She ain go nowheh (nohow)* [she isn’t going anywhere (anyhow)].

<https://www.gullahgeecheecorridor.org/thegullahgeechee/>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gullah-language>

THEMES

HAND GAMES

In a 2010 study by Dr. Idit Sulkin of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Beersheba, Israel), *Impact of Hand-clapping Songs on Cognitive and Motor Tasks*, Dr. Sulkin wanted to figure out why children were fascinated by singing and clapping up until the end of third grade, when these pastimes are abruptly abandoned and replaced with sports. “This explains a developmental process the children are going through,” Dr. Sulkin observed. “The hand-clapping songs appear naturally in children’s lives around the age of seven, and disappear around the age of ten. In this narrow window, these activities serve as a developmental platform to enhance children’s needs – emotional, sociological, physiological and cognitive. It’s a transition stage that leads them to the next phases of growing up.”

When a child plays a game s/he creates a situation which is under his/her control.” . . . in the confines of a game there can be all the excitement and uncertainty of an

adventure, yet the player can comprehend the whole, can recognize his/her place in the scheme, and, in contrast to the confusion of real life, can tell what is right . . . s/he can extend his/her environment, or feel that s/he is doing so, and gain knowledge of sensations beyond ordinary experiences. In the field of verbal nonsense, children are extremely inventive, and it is perhaps here that they have their greatest freedom for creative artistic expression. Through the ancient device of rhyme, and the still more ancient ones of furious alliteration and assonance, they have found a way to comment incisively, and often in very up-to-date fashion, upon the world of adults and upon other children.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/04/100428090954.htm>

A Rocket in my Pocket. Withers, Carl. 1948
Children’s Games in Street and Playground. Opie, Peter and Iona Opie. 1969.

Nadima: Make the right fit between a spirit and a place where it can rest.

CHILDREN WITH ANXIETY

Anxiety is a normal part of childhood, and every child goes through phases. Some may eat only orange foods or count in twos. Others may have an imaginary friend or have recurring nightmares about monsters under the bed. The difference between a phase and an anxiety disorder is that a phase is temporary and usually harmless. Children who suffer from an anxiety disorder experience fear, nervousness, shyness, and avoidance of places and activities that persist despite the helpful efforts of parents, caretakers, and teachers. Anxiety disorders tend to become chronic and interfere with how a child functions at home or at school to the point that a child becomes distressed and uncomfortable and starts avoiding activities or people. Unlike a temporary phase of fear, such as seeing a scary movie and then having trouble falling asleep, reassurance and comfort is not enough to help a child with an anxiety disorder get past his or her fear and anxiety.

Children develop tools to respond to extreme stress, disruption, and change, including mature judgement, capacity to tolerate ambiguity, autonomy, willingness to shoulder responsibility, and moral certitude.

25 percent of American kids grow up in households where substance abuse is present. These children are more likely

to experience emotional and behavioral problems, low self-esteem, and a higher risk of developing anxiety or depression. Growing up in a home affected by substance abuse can damage a child's self-esteem, making it even more difficult to approach a sober adult or the authorities. This situation can lead to extreme anxiety, fear, and a profound sense of helplessness.

To live with chronic fear during the vulnerable childhood and adolescent years – when one is developing beliefs about oneself and the world at large – is traumatic to emotional, psychological and spiritual development. The majority of people who experience trauma will experience a more subtle, chronic form that most often occurs within their own family system. The only way out is for a caring adult to hold, reassure, and restore the child to a state of equilibrium. When primary caregivers are not available to soothe and reassure, the child is left to live through repeated ruptures in their developing sense of self, their fundamental learning processes and their relational world.

<https://adaa.org/sites/default/files/Anxiety%20Disorders%20in%20Children.pdf>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64258/>
<https://americanaddictioncenters.org/guide-for-children>
<http://www.addictioninfamily.com/family-issues/trauma-in-the-addicted-family-by-claudia-black/>

TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT PUBERTY

Michael McGee, C.S.T., who was in the Education Department of Planned Parenthood Federation of America for 27 years, ten of them as Vice President for Education, writes: “When talking about sexuality and young people in our culture, we are much more comfortable discussing disasters (teen pregnancy, for example), disease (HIV and other STIs), and dysfunction (coercive sex, etc.). It's much easier for us to talk about what we DON'T want for our kids' sex lives than about what we DO want. In my work with parents, we ultimately get to the hope that kids:

- Will appreciate their own bodies
- Will express love and intimacy in appropriate ways

- Will enjoy sexual feelings without necessarily acting on them
- Will practice health prevention, such as regular checkups and breast or testicular self-exams
- When they are mature enough to act on their feelings, will talk with a partner about sexual activity before it occurs, including sexual limits (theirs and their partner's), contraceptive and condom use, and the meaning of the relationship and of relationships, in general.

These things are included in the longer list of behaviors of sexually healthy people, compiled by professionals who work in sexuality and human development.”

<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents/175?task=view>

JOURNALING

Effective journaling is a practice that helps you meet your goals or improves your quality of life. This can look different for each and every person, and the outcomes can vary widely, but they are almost always very positive. Journaling can be effective for many different reasons and help you reach a wide range of goals. It can help you clear your head, make important connections between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and even buffer or reduce the effects of mental illness. Journaling requires the application of the analytical, rational left side of the brain; while your left hemisphere is occupied, your right hemisphere is given the freedom to wander and play. In particular, journaling can be especially helpful for those with PTSD or a history of trauma.

It's hypothesized that writing works to enhance your mental health through guiding you towards confronting previously inhibited emotions (reducing the stress from inhibition), helping you process difficult events and compose a coherent narrative about your experiences, and possibly even through repeated exposure to the negative

emotions associated with traumatic memories. Even for those without a traumatic experience to work through, we have a good idea of how writing can enhance your mental health. For instance, it can make you more aware of sneaky, unhealthy patterns in your thoughts and behaviors. It allows you to take more control over your life and put things in perspective. Further, it can help you shift from a negative mindset to a more positive one.

Writing down your feelings – either in a paper journal or an online blog – and recording the things that happen to you might feel scary at first, but it's a good way to work through your fears. A journal can also be a good way to remember things that have happened when you make the decision to talk to someone. If journaling isn't your thing, try expressing yourself in other ways, like recording videos, composing poems, making art, or writing songs.

<https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/benefits-of-journaling/>

<https://americanaddictioncenters.org/guide-for-children>

HEROIN ADDICTION

Heroin is an opioid that is highly addictive. Derived from the poppy plant, heroin is typically used for its euphoric effect. Whether injected, inhaled or smoked, heroin enters the brain rapidly, triggering the same chemical response associated with intense pleasure as well as survival itself. Prolonged use of increasingly higher doses of heroin changes the brain so that it functions more or less normally when the drug is present and abnormally when the drug is removed. In the U.S., heroin dependence is at an all-time high. The nation's epidemic level of addiction to prescription opioid medications (painkillers) has given rise to use of heroin as a less expensive, more readily accessible substitute. Every day, the opioid epidemic claims an estimated 115 lives. Individuals who are dependent on heroin face unique challenges that can undermine addiction treatment. Going through heroin with-

drawal feels like having a terrible case of the flu. Nausea, body ache, fever and fatigue are common withdrawal symptoms. Anxiety, depression, restlessness and irritability are often part of the picture as well. Treatment dropout rates are high, and if the heroin-addicted person relapses, overdosing is likely—and often deadly. Most people who abuse substances will relapse at least once.

When a family member abuses substances, the effect on the family may differ according to family structure. The non-substance-abusing parent may act as a “superhero” or may become very bonded with the children and too focused on ensuring their comfort. One of the most important things to remember about addiction is that it can distort the user's sense of reality, hiding the true impact of the disease. Many parents may not be aware of the effects of their drug use on

their kids. They may be so deep in denial that they don't realize how chaotic their children's world has become. In addiction treatment programs, it means recognizing family treatment is not merely an educational process, but that family members have the right and need the opportunities to heal from their familial pain.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers these services to help with drug and alcohol abuse: Call SAMHSA's national helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357). This treatment referral and information service is confidential, free, and available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in English and Spanish for individuals and family members facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

<https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org/>
https://www.npr.org/2018/10/20/659122537/remembering-madelyn-linsenmeir?fbclid=IwAR0JjNc7Baggvu9S82EZJz6QvuHTFqwQ19WBq59iO7vt_a8pdFkeE4ihbbk
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64258/>
<https://americanaddictioncenters.org/guide-for-children>
<http://www.addictioninfamily.com/family-issues/trauma-in-the-addicted-family-by-claudia-black/>

CODEPENDENCY

The term codependent is traditionally used to describe the family members and other loved ones of a person suffering from addiction; however, studies show that codependency is often considered an addiction in itself. Melody Beattie, in her book *Codependent No More: How to Stop Controlling Others and Start Caring for Yourself*, defines a codependent as: "...One who has let another person's behavior affect him or her, and who is obsessed with controlling that person's behavior. The other person might be a child, an adult, a lover, a spouse, a brother, a sister, a grandparent, a parent, a client, or a best friend. He or she could be an alcoholic, a drug addict, a mentally or physically ill person, a normal person who occasionally has sad feelings, or one of the people mentioned earlier." While this blanket definition lends general meaning to the term codependency, the signs of codependency can often look different depending on the person experiencing it.

The effects of substance abuse frequently extend beyond the nuclear family. Extended family members may experience feelings of abandonment, anxiety, fear, anger, concern, embarrassment, or guilt; they may wish to ignore or cut ties with the person abusing substances. Extended family members may have to provide care as well as financial and psychological support. One of the most misunderstood, undervalued, and fastest-growing cohorts of American women is the childless aunt. They may be secondary caregivers, but with their emotional, financial and material gifts, not to mention their quality time and positive influence, these aunts play a primary role in the vitality of the family.

<https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org/articles/consequences-of-codependency>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64258/>
<https://nypost.com/2016/07/24/the-most-undervalued-women-in-america-are-childless-aunts/>

HOME STAGING

The first stager, at least by her own reckoning, was Barb Schwarz, a Seattle real estate agent who started sprucing up homes going to market in 1972. Her previous career in the theater suggested a name for her new profession. Ms. Schwartz has said, "I'm the one who invented the word 'stage' to describe fixing up houses for sale. I have a federal trademark on it, even though it's broken all the time." Staging, or Staging®, has grown

exponentially over the years. According to a survey conducted by the National Association of Realtors in 2015, 34% of sellers' agents rely on staging to move all their homes. And that is just in this country. The go-to look is spare, modern and as personality-free as a W Hotel suite or a Restoration Hardware catalog layout.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/11/fashion/real-estate-home-staging-buyers-clutter.html>

MANUFACTURING

Following the Civil War, Georgia remained predominantly rural, with most of the state's citizens attempting to survive as farmers. The loss of the slave labor force dealt a severe blow to cotton production, which, compounded by a decline in the demand for cotton worldwide, left Georgia agriculture in dire financial circumstances. Neglected by a government focused on industrial and business opportunities, farmers had no choice but to participate in the tenant and crop lien systems, which imposed an exploitative and stifling credit system. By 1880 45% of Georgia's farmers, black and white, had been driven into tenancy, and by 1920 two-thirds of farmers worked on land they did not own, most often as sharecroppers.

The boll weevil became a major problem upon its introduction to the state in 1915 and led to a precipitous drop in cotton production, with the number of bales produced in 1923 only about a fourth of the number produced five years earlier.

During the 1920s more than 400,000 residents, almost all black, migrated to other parts of the country, and between 1910 and 1930 nearly half the state's agricultural workers had abandoned farming. As a result, rural communities struggled to maintain their populations in the face of dwindling farming income and the lack of industrial job opportunities. Promising a surplus of cheap, non-union labor and relying on a

variety of inducements, some of which were financed by public subscription or deductions from workers' checks, several Georgia towns succeeded in attracting small, low-wage employers—mostly textile mills—in the 1930s.

Farming, however, declined as a major occupation in Georgia, as smaller farms were subsumed by larger operations. The total farm population shrank from roughly 1 million in 1950 to around 63,000 in 2000. An article within the August 4th, 2016 edition of the *Atlanta Business Chronicle* reported: “between the outsourcing of jobs overseas and technological changes in the production process, Georgia business recruiters may no longer find manufacturing worth pursuing. That's the conclusion of new study from the Center for State and Local Finance at Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. The report found that manufacturing jobs in Georgia declined by 27.5 percent between 2000 and 2014 . . . The Georgia State study suggests that if state policy makers decide high-paying manufacturing jobs still are worth pursuing, a more proactive approach to workforce training would be needed to equip Georgians with the skills necessary for today's advanced manufacturing technology.

<https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/georgia-history-overview>
<https://www.bizjournals.com/atlanta/news/2016/08/04/georgia-state-study-tracks-decline-in.html>

THE MOON

The moon has served as a source of inspiration, wonder, and symbolism for virtually every world culture. The moon can serve as a symbol for love and personal wellness (if clear and free of clouds) as well as for ill-health or an interruption to comfort or health (if clouded over). A new moon can bring good business while a full moon foretells success in love. The moon in eclipse denotes that contagion will ravage a community. A blood red moon indicates war and strife. The moon has also been symbolic of fertility, cyclic regeneration/life rhythms, resurrection, immortality, the passage from life to death, occult power, mutability, intuition, and the emotions.

A woman's body and the female cycle are connected to the Moon and the Earth. A woman, through her menstrual cycle, goes through the different lunar energies (new moon, first quarter, full moon, third quarter). These in turn are connected to the different seasons (spring, summer, autumn and winter). The phases of the moon coincide with the phases of the menstrual cycle. Mental and hormonal states are under the influence of the Moon. Just as the Moon takes about 28 days to circle around to Earth, a woman's menstrual cycle is approximately 28 days. That's how our cycles are connected, as well as the four lunar phases: new moon, crescent moon, full moon and fourth quarter.

Moon superstitions specific to Georgia include: never letting the moon shine on fresh meat as it brings bad luck; to see the new moon through the trees is a sign of bad luck; all vegetables that grow out of the ground should be planted when the moon moves from new to full; root vegetables should be planted when the moon moves from full to new. To cook a hog as the moon moves from full to new risks the

meat turning to grease and if during new to full, the meat will swell when boiled.

10,000 Dreams Interpreted. Miller, Gustavus Hindman. 1983.
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VOCABULARY

BLACK BIKE WEEK

Reggie: . . . one thing ya gonna remember is the music of ya daddy's voice.

Black Bike Week, also called Atlantic Beach Bikefest, Bike Week and Black Bikers Week, is an annual motorcycle rally at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, held on Memorial Day weekend. Events include motorcycle racing, concerts, parties, and street festivals. It is considered the third or fourth largest motorcycle rally in the United States. During the 1960s and 1970s, many black motorcyclists visited Atlantic Beach, South Carolina, some riding Harley-Davidsons, but also riding many Japanese Hondas, Kawasakis, Suzukis, and Yamahas, which, along with race, distinguished them as riders from

the white event's participants who preferred the Harley-Davidsons. During the segregation era Atlantic Beach was the only beach in the South where blacks were permitted. The Black Bike Week rally, originally called the Atlantic Beach Memorial Day BikeFest, was founded in Atlantic Beach in 1980. The first rally drew about 100 participants. Attendance now has been variously reported as 350,000, 375,000, and as high as 400,000.

<http://www.blackbikeweek.us/2010/12/black-bike-week-the-whole-story/>

BOUGIE

A variant of *boojee* which implies either an elitist, uppity-acting African-American, generally with a higher educational and income level, who identifies with European American culture and distances him/herself from other African-Americans. Derived from *bourgeois* or *bourgeois-*

sie. There may also be a connotation of *bogue*: derogatory, negative, not good (from the Nigerian Hausa language, literally, 'deceit' or 'fake').

Black Talk. Smitherman, Geneva. 1994.

BRONNER BROTHERS

In 1947, Dr. Nathaniel H. Bronner, Sr. and his brother, Arthur E. Bronner, Sr. (the original Bronner Brothers) with the assistance of their sister, Emma Bronner began teaching cosmetologists at the Butler Street YMCA in Atlanta, Georgia. Sub-

sequently, the first Bronner Bros. Trade Show was born with approximately 300 in attendance.

<https://bronnerbros.com/our-history/>

BULLDAGGER

A lesbian; a derogatory term. A variant of *bulldiker*. *Dike/dyke* is an old Australian term for a hole, pit, or trench.

Black Talk. Smitherman, Geneva. 1994.
Slang and Euphemism. Spears, Richard. 1981.

ESSENCE FEST

The ESSENCE Festival is the nation's largest annual gathering of African-American musical talent featuring an unprecedented weekend of cultural celebrations, ESSENCE Empowerment Seminars and nightly musical performances. The Festival has featured some of the biggest names in entertainment including

Prince, Beyoncé, Diana Ross, Mary J. Blige, Lionel Richie and more. Birted in New Orleans in 1995, the ESSENCE Festival is held every Fourth of July weekend, bringing more than 400,000 attendees to the Crescent City and adding more than \$1 billion to Louisiana's local economy.

<https://www.essence.com/about/>

FIELD NIGGAS/BIG HOUSE

These two terms have their origins within slavery. *Field nigga* refers to an African-American in the working class. Historically, an enslaved African who worked the fields, as opposed to the *House nigga*, an enslaved African who worked in *Ole Massa's* household [the *Big House*]. The *Field nigga* was believed

to be more predisposed toward rebellion against enslavement than the *House nigga*, who was viewed as loyal to *Massa*. The historical roles were updated in the 1960s by Malcolm X.

Black Talk. Smitherman, Geneva. 1994.

GRIOT

A member of a class of traveling poets, musicians, and storytellers who maintain

a tradition of oral history in parts of West Africa.

JAMAICAN CHICKEN

This dish is a well-seasoned grilled chicken of Jamaican jerk marinade. Jerk chicken is believed to have been conceived when the Maroons introduced African meat cooking techniques to Jamaica which were combined with native Jamaican ingredients and seasonings used by the Arawak Indians. *Jerk* is the Spanish word that comes from a Peruvian word, *Charqui*, meaning dried strips of meat - similar to what we might consider as jerky. This was important as the dried beef could be taken on journeys and eaten as is or chopped and reconstituted in boiling water.

During the early seventeenth century The British brought slaves to Jamaica in order to guarantee a steady supply

of sugar, coffee, cocoa, pimento, and other goods to merchants. A group of these slaves escaped into the mountains and were later named the Maroons. The Maroons would blend an array of spices and herbs that they would later use to marinate and cook the wild game they hunted, mostly wild boar. This led to the famous Jamaican Jerk. Jerk is a paste comprised of a complex blend of seasonings including scallions, onions, scotch bonnet peppers, salt, thyme, allspice (pimento), black pepper and many other spices. The typical cooking style is slow smoked over pimento wood. It is traditionally serve with rice and peas.

<http://www.jjcjerk.com/history-of-jerk/>
<https://www.africanbites.com/jerk-chicken/>

MOMMY DEAREST

This 1981 film directed by Frank Perry follows the dysfunctional relationship between Christina Crawford (Mara Hobel and Diana Scarwid) and her adoptive mother Joan Crawford (Faye Dunaway).

The screenplay is based upon Christina Crawford's 1978 memoir of the same name. The film has become famous for its over-the-top performances and lines of dialogue.

NIKKI GIOVANNI

Poet Nikki Giovanni was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, on June 7, 1943. Although she grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, she and her sister returned to Knoxville each summer to visit their grandparents. Giovanni graduated with honors in history from her grandfather's alma mater, Fisk University. Since 1987, she has been on the faculty at Virginia Tech, where she is a University Distinguished Professor.

Critical reaction to Giovanni's early work focused on the revolutionary tone of her poetry. Giovanni's first three volumes of poetry were enormously successful, answering a need for inspiration, anger, and solidarity. Giovanni publicly expressed feelings of oppression, anger,

and frustration; in doing so, she found new audiences beyond the usual poetry-reading public. Giovanni was often hailed as one of the leading Black poets of the new Black renaissance. The prose poem "Nikki-Rosa", published in her 1968's collection of poems, *Black Judgement*, expanded her appeal and became her most beloved and most anthologized work. The poem builds to its closure:

"Black love is Black wealth and they'll probably talk about my hard childhood and never understand that all the while I was quite happy."

<http://www.nikki-giovanni.com/>
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/nikki-giovanni>
The Collected Poetry of Nikki Giovanni 1968-1998. Fowler, Virginia C. 2007.

PERCHERON

A heavy draft-horse breed that originated in the Perche region of France. The breed probably stems from the Flemish "great horse" of the Middle Ages; modified by Arabian blood to develop a coach-horse type, it was changed again in the 19th century by introduction of draft-type blood to produce animals for heavy farm

work. Although a few Percherons were imported earlier, they did not become popular draft animals in the United States until after 1851. Before mechanization revolutionized farming, Percherons were widespread and influenced American agriculture more than any other draft breed.

<https://www.britannica.com/animal/Percheron>

QUINOA

Quinoa is a type of edible seed that comes in various colors including black, red, yellow, and white. The plant has been cultivated for thousands of years and is indigenous to the Andean region of South America, specifically Bolivia, Ecuador,

Chile, and Peru. Though technically a seed, Quinoa is classified as a whole grain and is a good source of plant protein and fiber.

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/food-features/quinoa/>

RED CLAY

Not all Georgia soils are red, but many of them are. The State is well known for its abundance of "Georgia Red Clay". The red color that is so evident in Georgia soils is due primarily to iron oxides. Soils form from the interaction of climate, organisms,

parent materials, relief and time. Red soils in Georgia result from a warm, humid climate weathering acid crystalline rocks on rolling hills over a long period of time.

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ga/soils/?cid=nrcs144p2_021871

RIIS BEACH

The isolated eastern end of the beach at Jacob Riis Park in Queens has been a location for LGBT sunbathing and cruising

since the 1940s. Historically, it has been the most popular gay beach in New York City.

<https://www.nyclgbtsites.org/site/beach-at-jacob-riis-park/>

ROOT CARE

Root systems are vital to the health and longevity of trees. All plants need water, oxygen, and nutrients. These are most readily available near the soil surface where precipitation infiltrates the soil and oxygen from the atmosphere diffuses into the porous soil. Most roots, therefore, especially the important, tiny, absorbing

roots, proliferate near the soil surface. The majority of a large tree's roots are in the upper 18"-24" of soil. When space is available, roots can spread two to three times further than the branches.

Source:

<http://www.mortonarb.org/trees-plants/tree-and-plant-advice/horticulture-care/tree-root-problems>

I'M SEXY AND I KNOW IT

This is a 2011 song composed and performed by the band LMFAO that

reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 in 2012.

SOOKIE SOOKIE

An expression of admiration, or satisfaction, especially in regards to the shape and beauty of a female. The phrase was part of Don Covay & The Goodtimers 1966

recording of the song, *Sookie Sookie*, which was covered by Steppenwolf in 1968.

Source:

<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=sookie%20sookie%20now>

STUDY QUESTIONS

Pre-Performance Questions

1. What is the difference between the bond between family members that we can choose and those that are deemed family by birth? Do we treat these groups of people equitably or do we weight them differently?
2. What are our familial responsibilities when trauma happens to one of our members? Do immediate relations get a higher priority?

Post-Performance Questions

1. How do the scenic elements of set design, costuming, lighting, and sound help tell the story? Which are the most effective and why?
2. How is the setting of the play portrayed? What technical elements are used to switch places and times?
3. How does the character Sam develop during the play? What moments are given heightened meaning and how do they inform the story?
4. How would you describe the relationship between Rachel and Monique? How is the relationship between Nadima and Reggie reflected? How is each relationship strained and how do they react to that strain?
5. How would you describe the relationship between Reggie and Sam?
6. How do the decisions by Reggie and Nadima effect Sam? How do the choices effect Rachel and Nadima?
7. How are children's games and songs incorporated in the telling of the story?
8. How does each character show love and loss? How do they cope with the change in their lives?

ACTIVITIES

The Places We Would Like to Go

Materials: digital camera, scissors, glue or tape, magazines, photographs, postcards

1. Collect some photographs and/or pictures of different places (continents, countries, cities, etc) that you would like to visit in your lifetime. These selections should be from different artistic mediums. They could be photographs from travel magazines, on-line images of places, postcards or drawings.
2. Select between three to five places and prioritize how important they are to you.
3. Arrange the pictures in way that showcases the first place you would travel. The medium could be a mobile, collage or some other form.

Raise the Bar: Change the selection of the places to reflect different times of your life. Find some places that you have visited and the impact that they have had on your life.

Visual Art PG: Explain, demonstrate, and interpret a range of purposes of art and design, recognizing that the making and study of art and design can be approached from a variety of viewpoints, intelligences, and perspectives.

Perspective Writing – Character Narrative

Have students select an important moment from *Last Night and the Night Before*. This should be a moment that has more than one person in attendance. For example, the first meeting that the audience sees between Nadima and Monique, a scene between Sam and Rachel or an exchange between Reggie and Monique. This moment can be from the play or students can speculate what may have happened offstage.

1. From this moment, the students are to pick a character from the story and, in their own words (paraphrase), provide the character's perspective and attitude of what transpired. Specifically, emotions, behavior, and how the moment affects the character should be explored.
2. From the exploration of a moment from the play, each student will write a short monologue describing the moment from the character's perspective of what they experienced.
3. Compare the monologues about the event from other characters that were involved. Discuss the similarities and differences that arose during the writing process. Was there general agreement of what happened or marked differences? Why were the moments similar or different? Were they subtle or obvious variations? Did students agree on what was important to include and why? If not, how would the elimination of some elements change the way the moment would be understood or remembered by the character?

Writing PG: Articulate the position of self and others using experiential and material logic.

Writing PG: Write with clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail.

PERSPECTIVES

Make your time at the theatre unforgettable when you join us for one of these added experiences:

Pre-Show Creative Team Perspectives

Fri, Jan 18 at 6pm | The Jones

Get an exclusive insider's perspective before the show when you join us for a free, professionally moderated discussion with the creative team.

The Denver Psychoanalytic Society Perspectives

Sun, Jan 27 at 1:30pm

Join us for a discussion on gender, women's issues, and other topics led by the The Denver Psychoanalytic Society after the performance.

Higher Education Perspectives

Wed, Feb 13 at 6:30pm

Participate in a topical discussion led by members of our academic community after the performance.

Accessible Performance

Sun, Feb 10 at 1:30pm

Before selecting seats, use the appropriate code noted below for the services you require in the Promotional Code box when purchasing online. For optimal service, call the box office at 303.893.4100.

Sign Language Interpretation: **ASL**

Audio Description: **AUDIO**

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

The Denver Public Library recommends:

Read!

Let's Clap, Jump, Sing & Shout; Dance, Spin & Turn It Out!: Games, Songs & Stories From An African American Childhood by Patricia McKissack. In this groundbreaking collection McKissack reproduces the hand clapping games of her childhood with the oft-times haunting stories and reasons behind them. Be like Sam and Reggie and create memories with hand games of your own.

Watch!

The Florida Project (Lionsgate, 2018) - Beautifully filmed and superbly played by debut actresses Brooklynn Prince and Bria Vinaite, with a masterful supporting performance from Willem Dafoe. This film captures one Florida summer in the lives of a mother and daughter surviving on the margins in the shadow of Disney World. Lots of subjects are visited: poverty, single motherhood, sex work, and seedy tourist culture, but this film focuses most clearly on the ordinary magic of childhood, and how happiness can be found in unlikely places. Loaded with joy, devilish mischief, and a melancholy that will linger after the credits roll.

Listen!

Rabbit: the autobiography of Ms. Pat (book on CD)

With deadpan humor and more than a little profanity, Ms. Pat delivers an unflinching memoir about being raised in Atlanta at the height of the crack epidemic. From her childhood spent hustling drunks for money to being a mother of two by age 15, Ms. Pat is no stranger to tragedy. But every tragedy needs a little comedy, so Ms. Pat went on to be a successful stand-up comedian. Narrated by Ms. Pat herself, this book on CD will make you feel like you are in the room with the author laughing and crying alongside a good old friend.

Stream!

Soul Food Junkies: A Film about Family, Food, and Tradition (2012)

Meals draw families together, forever mixing memories of identity and tradition with your taste buds. As seen on PBS, find out the history of soul food like collard greens and grits. People who have added more vegetables to their soul food diet, just like Rachel eating quinoa and kale chips, also speak out. Watch it on Kanopy, Denver Public Library's newest streaming movie service, free to all Denver resident library cardholders!



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