

# RECLAIMING

Q U A R T E R L Y

Witchcraft and Magical Activism



Issue 100

Spiral Dancing – and a whole lot more!

Early 2010

# PRINTING TIPS

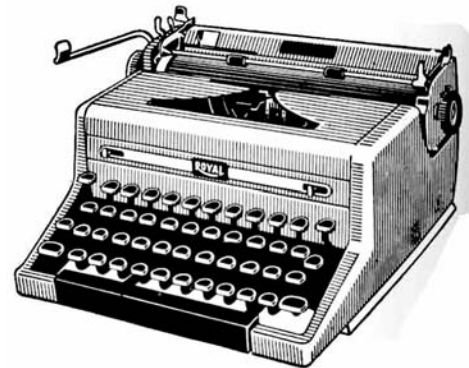
## for the Modern Age

Now that you have successfully downloaded RQ, you might want to print some pages.

We sort of hope you do, since we still see ourselves as producing a magazine. We like the idea of you holding it in your hands, spilling coffee on it, leaving it on the floor for your roommate's cat to chew up, etc.

Printing should be easy. While we realize these are famous last words, we place our faith in Hewlett Packard and your perseverance.

Choose Print from the file menu. You'll get a dialog box where you can select which pages to print, as well as a choice of scaling or re-sizing the pages.



You can shrink them to fit the paper, print two mini-pages side by side, or leave them as-is ("no scaling" or "none" in dialog box). If you leave them as-is, some printers may cut off the footer and page number.

You may also be able to choose "print quality." Photos should print reasonably well on a laser or inkjet printer set for high-quality printing.

Please contact us if you have any trouble with printing, or feedback about the new online RQ.

RQ -- [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org) -- 415-255-7623

# RECLAIMING

Q U A R T E R L Y

Issue 100

Early 2010

## Reclaiming

P.O. Box 14404  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
[reclaiming.org](http://reclaiming.org)

## Reclaiming Quarterly

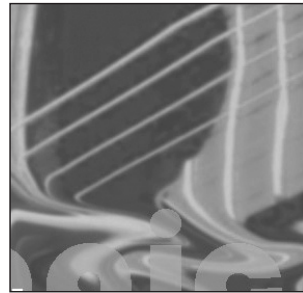
(415) 255-7623  
[quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)  
[reclaimingquarterly.org](http://reclaimingquarterly.org)

**Reclaiming** is a community of women and men working to unify spirit and political action. Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess — the Immanent Life Force. We see our work as teaching and making magic — the art of empowering ourselves and each other. In our classes, workshops, and public rituals, we train our voices, bodies, energy, intuition, and minds. We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, both as individuals and as community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live, and to bring to birth a vision of a new culture.

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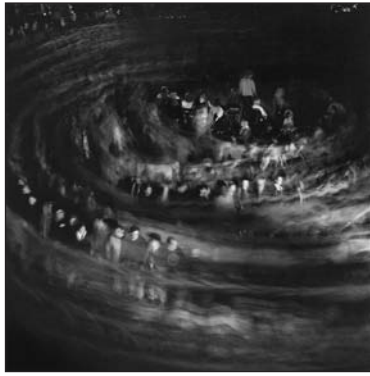
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**COVER PHOTO**

by Michael Starkman — see more photos at [www.michaelstarkman.com](http://www.michaelstarkman.com)

**BACK COVER BACKDROP**

detail from a work by AManda Adamah — [birthing\\_etaim@excite.com](mailto:birthing_etaim@excite.com)



Our Founder

RQ is descended from *Reclaiming Newsletter* (1980-1997), itself a distant offshoot of *Ye Olde Gazetteer & Reclaymer* (1613-1776), which sprang from *Dog's Life*, the late-Hellenistic Anubian Cult newsletter. The latter traced its roots to neolithic petroglyphs in southern Bohemia, before which RQ's past is shrouded in mystery.

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Views expressed in articles, graphics, and advertisements belong to the authors, not to the Reclaiming community or the production cell.

Producing RQ is a volunteer effort. You don't need to be in the San Francisco area to help! Contact us via email at [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)

The following people helped produce this issue: George, Ruby, Cerridwen, Riyana, Natalie, Ciana, Naeomi, Kerrick, Esther, Omar, Michael

Special RQ kisses: Lynx, lily, Carol, Jonathan, Lothlórien, Lisa, Aimee, Elka, Kat, Rain, John, Jim, Sabrina, Mab, Kala, Urania, Tia, Macha, Vibra, Starhawk, Rose, Yoeke, Seed, Ewa, Evelie, Elfin, Copper, Briana, Nolan, Sabine, the Spiral Dance cell — and to our generous contributors!

# Who are we (and what is this magazine)?

*Reclaiming Quarterly* returns with our 100th issue, dating back to our beginnings as *Reclaiming Newsletter* in 1981.

Are we a quarterly? Not at this point. We are presently publishing only in “selected quarters.” But we are attached to the “Q” in RQ, so we retained the title.

RQ is produced by a work cell based in San Francisco, with co-conspirators around North America, Europe, and Australia. We see our magazine not as “the” Reclaiming publication, but as one of many forums, both print and online.

Our mission is to bring together Witchcraft and magical activism. Our focus, developed in response to past reader-surveys, is on practical articles about magic in the world — from household magic to community rituals to grassroots activism.

RQ works together with Reclaiming's websites and elists to serve Reclaiming as well as the wider Pagan and activist worlds. We hope you'll find our feature articles interesting and challenging whether or not you walk the Reclaiming path.

In response to past experience and reader feedback, we have decided to omit several topics from our slender allotment of pages. Poetry and fiction ranked low in our surveys, and will appear rarely. Book and music reviews didn't fare much better, so we will offer only capsule announcements of releases.

Similarly, discussion and analysis of Reclaiming organizing takes place on the Reclaiming elists, where everyone can take part in a timely and democratic way. For information on the elists, contact RQ or visit [Reclaiming.org](http://Reclaiming.org)

Speaking of timely and democratic, we close with the Revolutionary Pagan Workers Vanguard — sacred guardians of the dialectical materialist interpretation of Reclaiming's Principles of Unity.

Want to know anything else? Contact [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)

## Submissions

RQ welcomes articles, photos, artwork, etc., related to activist, cultural, or spiritual happenings. You'll save yourself time if you contact us for submissions guidelines.

Submit via email or mail to the address below. For emails, copy and paste text into the message rather than sending word-attachments. We love photos of all kinds! Please query about how to send them. Print-photos will be returned on request. All other submissions are eventually used to line hamster cages, so save a copy.

We accept submissions anytime. When we're close to publication, we announce a deadline. Articles are sometimes held for another issue as space and topicality dictate. We reserve the right to edit for length, grammar, or readability.

Anything submitted to and/or appearing in RQ may be posted on our website. If you do not want your article or name to appear on the website (i.e., to show up on Google searches), please let us know in writing at the time you submit it.

Send to [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org) or PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

## Advertise ~ Display Advertising

1/8 page (business card)	\$55	<i>Discount for three or more issues.</i>
1/4 page (4.75" x 3.5")	\$95	<i>Send camera-ready copy, or for electronic submissions, contact us via email. RQ also offers design services.</i>
1/2 page (4.75" x 7.25")	\$185	
Full page (9.75" x 7.25")	\$360	<i>Contact <a href="mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org">quarterly@reclaiming.org</a></i>



# To Our Readers

Welcome to the first-ever online edition of Reclaiming Quarterly.

This is a big jump for RQ, one that we believe will make the magazine more sustainable and increase our circulation.

Naturally we hope that you will immediately print the entire issue and treat it with all the love, honor, and respect that has always welcomed a new print edition of RQ!

You can also browse it online and print just those pages you want. The new RQ should print on any laser or inkjet printer. See page 2 for print-tips.

If downloading proves impossible, we are standing by to help, including printing the issue ourselves and mailing it to subscribers who request it. See “Assistance” section below.

## DECENTRALIZED PRINTING

The decision to decentralize the printing of RQ was made for both economic and ecological reasons.

Decentralizing the printing of RQ reduces the number of unread copies, and eliminates the costly mailing of print editions.

It also makes our issues instantly available to readers anywhere on the planet. Older editions of RQ are being archived and made available online. Someday, readers will be able to access any issue of the magazine at the click of your mouse.

That’s right – every issue of RQ, 24/7.

## WHY SUBSCRIBE IF IT’S FREE?

That’s a common dilemma faced by all media today. With print declining and the internet unable to produce income, once-proud titles are disappearing under the weight of their budgets.

RQ’s response is to minimize our already-low costs.

Almost all of the work on RQ is volunteer. Unlike professional publications, we are not saddled with high production costs.

But we still look to readers for crucial support – equipment, internet costs, travel to events and gatherings, and office expenses.

Your support of RQ underwrites all of Reclaiming, from the camps and classes we publicize, to the Pagan Cluster activities we cover, to services like nonprofit status that RQ helps maintain.

A donation to RQ, or an advertisement in the magazine, supports these crucial functions for all Reclaiming communities.

## ASSISTANCE FOR THE COMPUTER-CHALLENGED

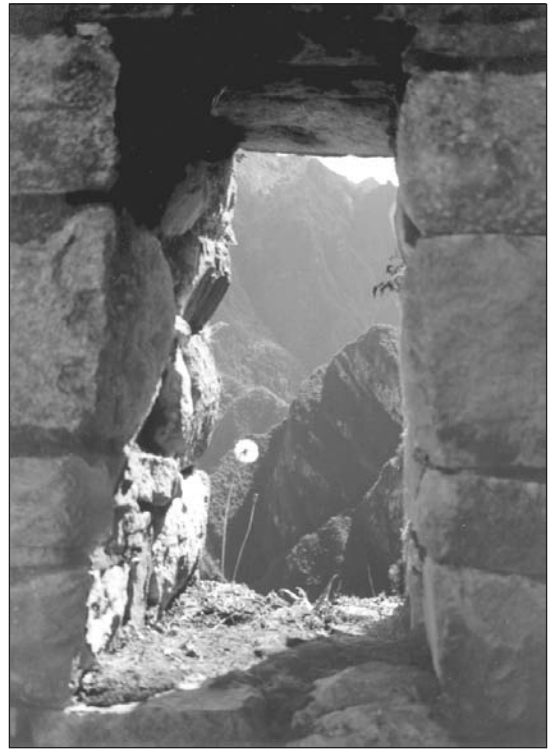
RQ honors the Luddite movement, and proclaims our kinship with those who would impede the march of dehumanizing technology.

As a special service in solidarity with the computer-challenged, RQ will print and mail a complete copy of the new RQ to anyone who requests it. For subscribers, this service is free. For others, we will ask a donation.

We want everyone to have access to RQ!

Please contact us with feedback about the new online RQ.

Until next time — *the RQ production cell*



*Photo by GaiaMore.*

## Dandelion Gathering

Plans for the fourth biennial Dandelion Gathering (an all-Reclaiming conclave first held in Spring 2004) are underway as RQ heads to press.

Dandelion 2010 will be held at Diana’s Grove in central Missouri, a 102-acre sanctuary “dedicated to the magical work of personal and community development.”

Diana’s Grove, located two hours southwest of St. Louis, sponsors a year-round Mystery School, and is the longtime site of Reclaiming’s Midwest Witchcamp. (*See page 41 for more info, or visit [www.dianasgrove.com](http://www.dianasgrove.com)*)

The first agenda item at the Dandelion Gathering is building community. Rituals, workshops, and shared meals are favorite activities.

Reclaiming’s evolving BIRCH council will convene again at Dandelion. Any Dandelion participant can take part in BIRCH. Reclaiming communities are encouraged to send a spoke.

As always, RQ reps plan to be at Dandelion — hope to see you there!

*See article on Dandelion 2010 on page 38.*

*For photos of past Dandelion Gatherings, visit [www.reclaimingquarterly.org/web/dand06/](http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/web/dand06/)*

# Alternate TAKES

# Books • Film • Music • Resources

## Guardian UK

Number one source of international news in English, with good US coverage. Web pages are print-friendly, so you can practically assemble your own daily paper. No US paper compares — [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

## Earth First! Journal

More international activist news than ordinary mortals can possibly read. Print edition published eight times a year. EF!J sets the standard for grassroots publications. \$25/year to Box 3023, Tucson, AZ 85702. Or visit [www.earthfirstjournal.org](http://www.earthfirstjournal.org)

## Indy Media Centers

Up to the moment, locally-based activist news from around the world. When the action is breaking, there are no better online sites. Their flagship site has links to dozens of local sites. Visit [www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org)

## Witchvox

Witches' Voice is the top networking site for Witches and Pagans online. Everything from religious liberties to the latest local ritual. Events are user-posted and come from every corner of Paganism. An inspiring site to browse. Visit [www.witchvox.com](http://www.witchvox.com)

## RQ.org

RQ.org carries photo-features and reports on grassroots activism and Pagan events, as well as reports on Witchcamps and other Reclaiming events. Our back-issue archives have dozens of magical and activist features. RQ.org's pages are print-friendly, so you can read offline too.

## BOOKS

*A History of Western Astrology*, by Jim Tester. Sober, skeptical, and fairly well-documented, Tester's work traces astrology from its ancient focus on "determining propitious moments for actions" to today's psychologically-based charts and signs.

*The Invisible Mountain*, by Carolina De Robertis. A deeply engaging story about three generations of Uruguayan/Argentine women and their families. Intelligent, inspiring, and heartfelt.

*Green Egg Omelette: An Anthology from the Legendary Pagan Journal*, edited by Oberon Zell-Ravenheart. A collection of classic texts from one of the great modern pagan publications.

*The Trial and Death of Socrates*, by Plato (CD/audiobook). This extraordinary three-dialog compilation brings to life Socrates' final teachings before his execution (well, Plato's version, anyway). Philosophy has seldom been so funny or entertaining.

*Kissing The Limitless*, by T. Thorn Coyle. A guidebook for self-liberation

through magic, offering a system of spiritual practice to tap our divine natures. Designed for the advanced magical practitioner, *Kissing the Limitless* can be used with diverse spiritual traditions. For this and other publications, visit [www.thorncoyle.com](http://www.thorncoyle.com)

*White as Bone, Red as Blood*, by Cerridwen Fallingstar. An historical novel set in 12th-century Japan, as Seiko Fujiwara, priestess of Inari, the deity of abundance and sorcery, explores the shamanic traditions of Shinto.

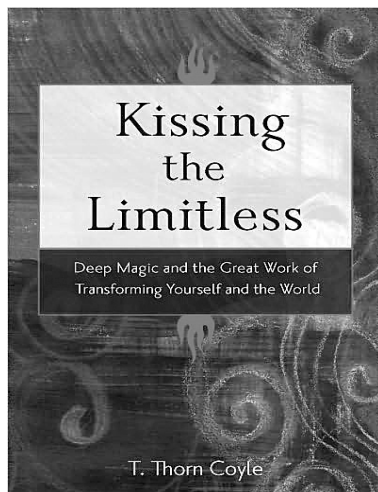
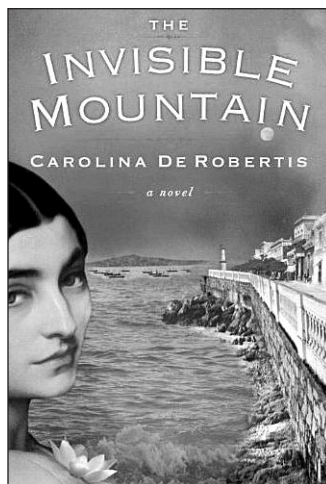
*God is a Verb: Kabbalah and the Practice of Mystical Judaism*, by Rabbi David A Cooper. An invigorating book, dynamically marrying Eastern

and Western approaches to spirituality. Cooper is a warm, generous, earthy, clear-thinking, and radical teacher and writer.

*The Intimacy of Death and Dying*, by Claire Leimbach, Trypheyne McShane and Zenith Virago. Well structured, relevant, and moving guide to the practical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the journey of death and dying.

*The Spell of Rosette: Book One of Quantum Enchantment*, by Kim Falconer. An exciting, very pagan fantasy that plays with Chaos theory, the Dark Goddess, and Earth's future, as well as the odd temple cat.

*Aphrodite's Magic: Celebrate and Heal Your Sexuality*, by Jane Meredith (coming from O Books in April 2010). Journey through a seven-layered spell as you reweave your sexual and feminine self and create a magical girdle dedicated to the Goddess.



## & More...

*Animal Vegetable Miracle*, by Barbara Kingsolver. I've always wanted to farm but believed it impossible. Now I know it's not. Read this, you may find eating locally easier than you dreamed.

*Women, Wisdom & Dreams: the Light of the Feminine Soul*, by Anne Scott. This insightful book into the realm of dreams reads like a series of journal entries and meditations. Simply reading a few pages at bedtime stimulates the Dream World.

*What To Do When Dreams Go Bad: A Practical Guide to Nightmares*, by Anne Hill. A practical guide to nightmares and transforming them into creative allies. Advanced techniques include dream re-entry, re-scripting, and lucid dreaming.

### MUSIC/RECORDINGS

Five Classic Alt-CDs of the 2000s

1. The Libertines - *Up the Bracket*
2. Lali Puna - *Scary World Theory*
3. Jean Grae - *Jeanius*
4. Babushambles - *Down in Albion*
5. Beirut - *The Gulag Orkestar*

*Spirit Dancing: Radical Faerie Ritual Chants*, by Shane Hill & Heron Saline. Two male voices and a drum create simple, moving arrangements. Includes pagan classics plus Radical Faerie chants for classes and rituals. Contact heron3@mindspring.com

*I'm Back*, by Meri St. Mary. Folk punk — think Velvet Underground/Nico. Four autobiographical tunes that will rivet the listener with real and raw power.

*Box of Danger*, by The Firesign Theatre. This 4-CD collection of Firesign's Nick Danger episodes is a great introduction to the troupe. More than comedy, Firesign is truly a Theatre of the Psyche.

*more reviews on next page*

**Contributors:** Jane Meredith; Ortha Spingard; Nicolette Nasr; Leah Spinrad; Sarah Campbell; Flame; Luke Hauser; George Franklin; Natalie Mogg

## Consensus for Cities

*A forthcoming book by C.T. Butler*

Reclaiming-tradition groups often make decisions by consensus, and may be familiar with C.T. Butler's pamphlet: *On Conflict and Consensus*.

His upcoming *Consensus for Cities* both deepens and broadens participatory decision making — to cities, community groups, and families.

Don't let the title mislead you — consensus for cities is only one of several valuable ideas and discussions therein.

*Cities* lays out a detailed structure for consensus decision making for up to 100,000 people. If you want to know how many hours per week you'd spend and in what type of meetings, it provides a thorough and surprisingly tolerable estimate. The book also describes a parallel mediation structure for disputes which are not easily resolved through the decision-making structure.

*Cities'* discussion of and design for healthy volunteer-oriented community groups feels immediately relevant, useful, and democratically respectful. Other nonprofit management literature often focuses on hierarchical management and boards to the detriment of volunteer power, intelligence, and energy. If you have or are starting a community group, this book is worth reading.

Is the "family of the future" structured like an affinity group? Why might adopting consensus actually increase conflict? What is the psychology behind each formal consensus step?

Butler deepens his earlier consensus work by addressing these and other questions. Charts, definitions, and facilitation techniques are clear and useful for consensus practitioners.

*Consensus for Cities* is soon to be available from Food Not Bombs publishing, where you can also find a downloadable version of *On Conflict and Consensus*. Visit [www.consensus.net](http://www.consensus.net).

— reviewed by Pablito / image by Rini Templeton



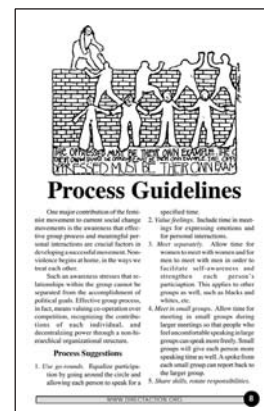
## Consensus & Feminist Process

*Free download at RQ.org*

This 16-page handbook, distilled from direct action handbooks, offers short essays and pointers for small (and not-so-small) groups.

Sections cover nonviolence in action and in our relationships, consensus and group process, affinity groups, working amid diversity, and confronting oppression.

Available for free download at:  
[www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org/web/handbook/](http://www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org/web/handbook/)







*Roomsound*, by Califone. Experimental post-rock from Chicago. An enchanting pastiche of blues and folk fragments that never quite reduces to a simple set of songs.

*Live from New York City 1967*, by Simon & Garfunkel. Beautiful acoustic renditions of the duo's early hits, minus the rock-band treatment of the better-known studio versions. Great for singing along!

*The Source*, by Brook. Two hands, one guitar — this acoustic-instrumental journey is both inspiring and entertaining. From blues to folk to flamenco, the CD combines virtuoso guitar technique with heartfelt musical meditations.

*In the Hazel Wood*, by Fireseed. New Englanders Crystalline, Daniel, and friends share traditional acoustic Celtic and Appalachian dance tunes as well as a couple of their original songs.

**FILM/TELEVISION/VIDEO**

*Towelhead*, 2007, screenplay and directed by Alan Ball. Don't let so-so reviews put you off. *Towelhead* is an intelligent and disturbing look at the complexity of race-

relations in America today.

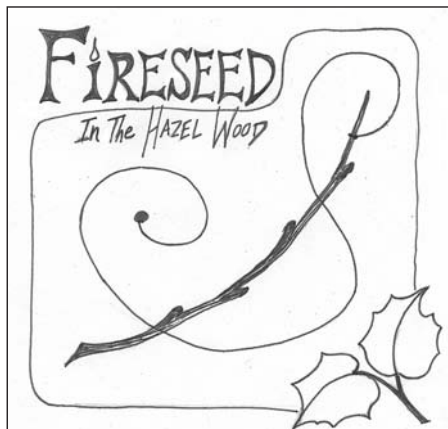
*Bright Star*. Jane Campion is unflinchingly emotional in her portrayal of John Keats' last romance. Overwhelmingly beautiful and daring in its intensity.

*Ponyo*. Another masterpiece from Hayao Miyazaki and Studio Ghibli in

Japan. Miyazaki's deep love of Nature, Peace, and the Feminine Divine is imbued on every gorgeous inch of this film.

*Children of the Stones*. A seven-part British TV series from 1977, filmed at Avebury stone circle and village. Mysterious Neolithic stones, chanting, time-

shifting, psychometry, ley lines, black hole... Good stuff.



## Twenty Years Ago: a Vintage Reclaiming Newsletter

### Reclaiming Newsletter, Issue No. 35 ~ Summer 1989

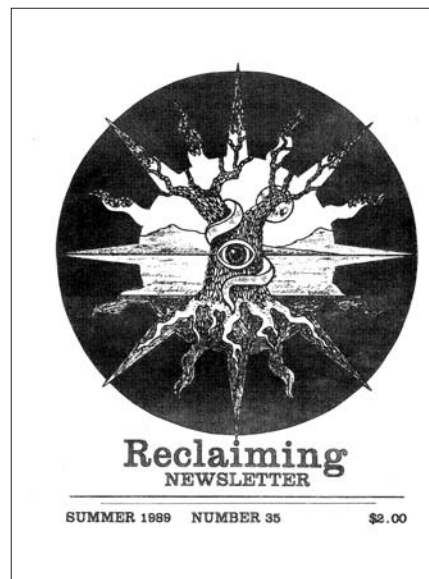
Feature articles included:

- “My First Blood Ritual” by Aurora
- “A Quick Quiz on Nonviolence,” by Anne Hill
- “Tenth Anniversary Spiral Dance”
- “Meeting the Queer God,” by Sparky T. Rabbit
- “The Wild Blue Yonder of Religious Freedom,” by Vibra
- “Prevention Point Needle Exchange”

Advertisers included local magic shops Ancient Ways, Tool of Magic, and Sword & Rose, as well as the 1989 MerryMeet Gathering.

Classes included Elements of Magic, Pentacle for Women & Men (*sic*), Abortion and Feminist Spirituality, and Michigan Witchcamp.

Reclaiming Newsletter No. 58 was produced by the RQ production cell's distant ancestors, whom we honor here: Anne, Rose, Sophia, Karen, Rosemary, Pandora, Kim, Rhabyt, Cam, and Susan. Cover by Sophia Sparks.



Coming soon — complete RQ Archives  
[www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/](http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/)

# Let It Begin: Activism In Brief

*Coordinated by Luke Hauser*

The weeks prior to publication of RQ#100 saw a wave of protest and civil disobedience at several University of California campuses.

The protests addressed huge tuition increases imposed by desperate state officials, faced with billion-dollar deficits in the wake of the economic downturn.

Apparently the UC Regents didn't get the memo telling them that the recession is officially over.

More than a dozen students were arrested at the UCLA campus to protesting the Regents' decision to impose a 32% tuition hike.

Protesters shut down the Regents' meeting at one point, with some throwing food and vinegar-soaked bandanas. Riot police were required for the meeting to proceed, and at least 14 people were arrested.

With the new increase, UC tuition — virtually free when many of the Regents themselves were students — is now over \$10,000 per year.

Average annual parental income at leading campuses long ago exceeded \$100,000, and the latest tuition increases are another step toward making the "public university system" accessible only to the financial elite.

Meanwhile, at the UC flagship campus in Berkeley, police arrested about 40 protesters occupying Wheeler Hall on the third day of protests and strikes over labor disputes and the tuition hikes.

As the word of the arrests spread through an estimated crowd of 2000 people, some heeded orders to sit down and others clashed with police at barricades.

## **RNC 8 NEED SUPPORT**

Eight protest organizers from the 2008 Republican National Convention in Minneapolis-St. Paul are being singled out for post-action prosecution.

The RNC 8 have been targeted for their political beliefs and for organizing

direct action at the Convention in what appears to be the first use of Minnesota's version of the Patriot Act.

The eight are currently charged with Conspiracy to Commit Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism, a felony that carries the possibility of several years in prison.

A little background: the RNC Welcoming Committee was formed in late 2006 to serve as an anarchist/anti-authoritarian organizing body, creating an informational and logistical framework for radical resistance to the RNC.

The group spent more than a year and a half doing outreach, facilitating meetings throughout the country, and networking folks of all political persuasions who shared a common interest in voicing dissent in the streets of St. Paul while the GOP's machine chugged away inside the convention.

The RNC 8's arrests in late August were preemptive, targeting known organizers in an attempt to derail anti-RNC protests before the convention had even begun.

For more information on the case and how to support or donate, visit [www.RNC8.org](http://www.RNC8.org)

## **BRITISH POLICE FIGHT DIRTY**

Borrowing a page from the CIA torture handbook, British police facing protesters at a Climate Camp in August outside the Kingsnorth Power Station barraged activists with sleep-depriving music.

Even more sinister was one of the songs the police chose: "I Fought the Law (and the Law Won)" by the Clash, which counts either as a great sense of humor or a horrid abuse of all that is good and decent in our culture.

More predictably, the playlist also included Richard Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" and sit-com themes.

In another gesture of respect for civil liberties, police flew helicopters over a family picnic at the camp with loudspeakers blaring, "Disperse now, or



dogs, horses, and long-handed batons will be deployed."

Camp participants were subjected to repeated searches. Confiscated items included a clown outfit, cycle helmets, tent pegs, and board games.

Finally, police seized the camp's supply of soap "because protesters might use it to make themselves slippery and evade the grip of police."

Wow, what a great idea! Wish we'd thought of it.

## **SACRED WALK FOR PEACE 2010**

Nevada Desert Experience is sponsoring a Sacred Peace Walk from March 29 to April 5, 2010.

Organizers note that the dates include Hanuman Jayanti (Hindu), Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter (Christian), Passover (Jewish), and Theravadin New Year (Buddhist).

(Not to mention All Fools' Day, RQ's favorite holiday.)

The Peace Walk is a walking meditation and prayer-action against the development and testing of weapons of mass destruction at the Nevada Test Site and Creech Air Force Base.

For more information, visit [www.nevadadesertexperience.org](http://www.nevadadesertexperience.org)

## **LET IT BEGIN WITH YOU!**

RQ welcomes news tips and short articles for our Let It Begin pages, as well as photos and full-length feature articles on grassroots activism. Send items to [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)

*Thanks to Paul Lewis, the UK Guardian, the San Francisco Chronicle, and Jim Haber.*

*Luke Hauser is author of Direct Action: An Historical Novel, [www.directaction.org](http://www.directaction.org)*



# Pagan Cluster

at the G20

story by  
Riyana Moon

photos by  
Jason Scarecrow



In mid-September 2009, the Pagan Cluster put out a call for activists to come to Pittsburgh to protest at the G20 summit and the International Coal Conference, which were both (not coincidentally) being held there the same week. This summit was one of many leading up to the United Nations climate talks in Copenhagen, Denmark in December.







## Pagan Cluster

*continued from preceding page*

“It was no accident that the G20 chose to meet in Pittsburgh, the heart of Appalachia where the three great rivers meet,” the Call to Action read. “Coal is so important that the local university hosts an annual international coal conference to promote policies that protect its dirtiest practices, including mountaintop removal and long wall mining. The G20 leaders have chosen to meet in Pittsburgh during this conference so they will be ready to defend coal company interests at the upcoming climate talks.”

In spite of all of the intelligent reasons not to go – finances, danger, responsibilities at home, dreams of other trips that would be much more tropical and serene – Jason (aka Scarecrow) and I felt that we simply had to be there. Making sure that the G20 knew that there were people out there who cared deeply about the earth and her many children felt essential.

### TUESDAY: SEEDS OF PEACE SAGA

It’s been an up-and-down day. For the last several weeks, the City has been denying permits, revoking permits, and employing routine police harassment that has hindered our organizing.

Seeds of Peace, which provides food and other support for direct actions, has borne the brunt. Their bus was impounded for a minor parking violation, fined over \$200, and chased off private properties by the police. One woman, who was a cook at last year’s Free Activist Witchcamp, was jailed for giving her nickname instead of her legal name to an officer. She’s been in jail five days for her egregious crime.

This morning the ACLU filed an injunction against the police to attempt

to stop harassment scare-tactics. We were determined to show support – but first we had to go into the streets. That’s what we came here to do – sing chants about the Earth, do rituals for coal, create altars of the sacred, and in so many other ways to bring the unheard voices of Mama Gaia into the conversation.

Court is a hard place to be. The bailiff looked like an English Bulldog with an upside-down “u” for a mouth. The judge looked bored, which he probably was, having already decided to ignore our request for help.

Next to me sat a red-haired Seeds of Peace woman and her partner, both looking young enough to be at Teen Earth Magic. I kept peeking at her as the witnesses recounted their stories about cops coming in the middle of the night with weapons and no warrants, moving the bus again and again, being stopped and searched without probable cause — the whole thing. I wanted to take her into my arms to protect her.

The judge ruled against us, which was no surprise. As we walked out of the court room, we received a phone call from the folks at the Seeds of Peace buses. The cops were now at their third location — a church — demanding to speak to the property owner.

We can’t even find a place to park a bus.

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## Pagan Cluster

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### WEDNESDAY: THEATER OF THE POSSIBLE

Ah, turkey bacon. It's a lovely way to start your day. Especially when it's accompanied by eggs, pancakes, grits, fresh fruit, and orange juice.

Lest you believe we out here in Pittsburgh are shivering in the cold, hungry and calling with shrill voices to uncaring ears, let me tell you a bit about my day.

We began the day by sleeping in and then getting together at one of the Cluster houses, where a whole spread was laid out before us. It was nice to stuff my belly and have a slow, chatty morning.

That afternoon we headed back out into the streets again. We ended up being about 40 or 50 people strong, carrying banners with images of earth, wind, sea, and fire, with words like "change," "power," and "sustainability" on them.

Deborah, in a spiffy purple hat, opened the march with a beautiful monologue about climate change

beyond the false solutions of green jobs and cap-and-trade carbon credits. "We can't just change the lightbulbs; we need to change our lives."

From there, a song bubbled up and out, "We are rising up, like a phoenix from the fire, brothers and sisters, spread your wings and fly higher." After all of the stalled, frazzled energy of the last couple of days, it felt good to be unencumbered and free. We marched down the Boulevard of the Allies and down to the headquarters of PNC Bank, a major investor in "Clean Coal" here in Pennsylvania, and then to Point State Park where Al Gore's big concert was being held.

This is where we staged our Theater of the Possible: a skit about living in right relation with coal and the Earth. The skit starred four Pagan Cluster folks as "suits" who are sequestered, composted, and reborn as the good solutions we dream of for our world: alternative energies, community gardens, bike lanes, etc. It ended with the creation of a coal altar and the crowd calling out their visions, then everyone singing together: "Take me down to the coal, take me down, where the earth is whole. Take me down in your embrace, where I can see your ancient face."

Almost all of the coal on this planet was created during another period of mass extinction in our history. In fact, it was the sequestering of all that carbon underground as coal and oil that made it possible for life on earth to continue at that time. Coal has witnessed the entire evolution of the human species; it is literally the bones of our ancestors. In right relationship with it, we could learn so much — perhaps, if we listened, we would hear the answers we so desperately need right now. The altar was about that listening.

Tomorrow the actual G20 convention begins. I have a feeling things might heat up.

### THURSDAY: TEARS AND TEAR GAS

The most recent Twitter texts from our Communications people:

12:16 am - Units are responding to hotmetal bridge for reports of protestors gathering.

12:06 am – Student dorms blocked by police with weapons.

Lots of police need fuel, can't find fuel. Trying to get tanker truck to fuel humvees.

11:51 am – Forbes and S. Craig, protestors breaking out windows.

Police not responding to other calls. "All units are in Oakland."

11:30 pm – RIOT POLICE MARCH DOWN FORBES, SENDING STUDENTS SPRINTING TOWARDS TOWERS. TEAR GAS SHOT AT CROWD.

Giving dispersal order – probably 200 people at least there. Almost entire perimeter is surrounded by riot cops.

Near cathedral of learning & heinz chapel: POLICE JUST PILED OUT OF BUDGET TRUCKS. SOUND CANNONS BEING FIRED AT CROWD. COPS HAVE GAS MASKS ON.

11:00 pm – Radical marching band playing on the steps of cathedral, and riot cops continue to launch smoke bombs at them.

Gray 2000 Chrysler town and country w PA registration — get the fuck out of there! The police are looking for you!



*Pagan Cluster activists take a breather at the G20 actions. Follow the Pagan Cluster on the Living River elist. Email [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org). Photo by Jason Scarecrow.*

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# Pagan Cluster

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I didn't really want to go out dancing. It was a really long day today — the first day we've seen chemical weapons, the first we've seen broken windows, the first day I've felt real fear.

We wove through the streets, corralled here by the cops and then there, finally being blocked in on two sides and given the order to disperse. This announcement was followed by a weird, creepy beeping, kind of like a siren, but somehow different. Suddenly, I began to feel very ungrounded, then scared. Plumes of tear gas started wafting up ahead at the front of the march and I was suddenly overwhelmed by the desire to take off. I just couldn't be there anymore. And so I left — pulling a grudging Jason along with me.

I was overwhelmingly, out-of-my-body afraid, and not acting like myself. As we walked, I worked to ground the energy through my feet, noticing each step connecting me to the earth. I touched the part of my body where I have the feeling of groundedness and the memory of the redwoods at witchcamp anchored into my body, and said my magic word. I walked and grounded, walked and grounded. We ran into more cops, and my breath quickened until we were safely away. I went back to grounding.

It was only later that I learned that the strange sirens I'd been hearing were sound cannons called LRADs — devices that play a subsonic noise that disrupts the equilibrium of your inner ear and causes you to become confused, disoriented, unable to think straight or move with your usual balance. Although some of the fear and feeling of overwhelm was my own, and brought

about by the reality of the violence of the situation, I had also fallen prey to this weird device, which in me disrupted my very thought patterns, and certainly my energy body.

At home that evening, Lisa received a text from the Bash Back collective, inviting everyone out to a dance party later in the evening. A dance party! Lovely.

Unfortunately, the “dance party” had very little dancing in it. We stopped at Caribou Coffee for a pit stop and as I pushed the doors open, I saw kids pushing dumpsters down the street, yelling obscenities instead of chants.



They led the dumpsters down into the intersection, right in front of a police van, and turned them over to block the street. And then the smashing began. A moment later, further down the street, I saw smoke — not tear gas, but the smoke of a fire, of something burning.

I looked up at Jason. What I was thinking was mirrored perfectly on his face: The cops are going to be pissed. Best to get the hell out.

Within moments, the streets were full of cops in riot gear, curious college students, shop owners, and the smell of burning trash. We circled around the small plaza where the cops had corralled a large group of protestors — not the ones who had done the window

smashing or dumpster burning, but a different group that had been talking to G20 delegates earlier in the evening.

They brought in the sound cannons again, and started lobbing tear gas into the courtyards of the university, sending whole packs of students screaming and running for safety.

As we moved away, I glanced back towards the protestors who'd been trapped in the plaza, and felt a horrifying sinking in my stomach and saw in my mind's eye visions of what was to come. Tears (natural ones) sprung into my eyes. No one deserves to be tazered or gased because they broke a window — or

happened to be hanging around someone who did.

I'm back at Anne's and we've just finished talking about our plans for tomorrow, and I again wonder why I'm here. It's rather glamorous, I suppose, to be a traveling climate-change activist. But isn't there a more direct

route to saving the world, one that doesn't involve so many cops and so much violence?

I don't want to sleep just yet, because every time I close my eyes, a line of riot cops appears behind my lids. It's been happening all day. They live behind my eyelids now, a constant, unwelcome, haunting force in my life.

## FRIDAY: OUT WITH A BANG...

Today I found out why I'm here. We left around eleven for an unpermitted feeder march hosted by the CMU students. It wasn't what we'd planned to do, but it was the perfect thing for me — there

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## Pagan Cluster

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were kids with marching drums, and others dressed up in hazmat suits with signs that read things like “Climate Change, FAIL” and “There is no Planet B” on their chests and backs. Infused with this kind of creative, quirky energy, we set off toward downtown, where the larger permitted march was to begin.

We started on the sidewalk, took one lane of traffic, then a second, and eventually the whole street. This, of course, brought the cops. They spent some time zooming up and down the farthest left lane of traffic to clear it in their cars and vans, sirens going off, but other than that seemed content to let us go where we were going.

We swelled through the poor neighborhood, where our chants were met with enthusiasm and blessings like, “Whatever you’re protesting, you’re probably right,” and “Don’t let them stomp you!”

We kept going, grooving to the drum beats, taking the streets with our voices and feet to manifest the ideal

of freedom of expression. That creativity, that abundance of diverse voices, grew exponentially when we joined up with the larger (permitted) march. There were all kinds of people there: labor guys wearing hard-hats and t-shirts; Code Pink ladies with their fuchsia dresses and gray hair; a whole host of Tibetans with flags and traditional garb; hula hoopers for peace; a motley group with a huge white dove

puppet; you name it, it was there. I saw signs about universal health care, specifically single-payer health care, as well as ones about climate change, jobs, and economic class issues. Seeds of Peace came, too, renewed and ready to serve lunch to the thousands — literally thousands — of people that had come.

We filled the streets for blocks and blocks. At the front of the march was a group carrying flags for the dozens of countries not represented by the G20, all fluttering in the breeze that occasionally graced us with relief from the hot humid day.

Behind us was the Black Bloc, huge and intense and powerful in a way that



Jason Sorenson

I’ve never seen them before —proud and strong and direct, like a lion shaking its main, uncowed. Sometimes they would shout things like “Basta aqui capitalista,” a short chant that gathered power very quickly. Or whenever the cops were around: “You’re sexy, you’re cute, take off your riot suit!”

As we made our way downtown, the police presence doubled, tripled, quadrupled. They lined up four and five rows thick down every block, weighed down with rubber bullets, pepper spray, tear gas, rifles, dogs, sound cannons, batons, the works. Every bank had a line of National Guard out in front of it, and every intersection had either a

SWAT humvees, one of the black LRAD vehicles with a sound cannon, or a platoon of horse-mounted cops. How can I possibly convey what 6,000 armored police officers is like? It feels like marching through a tunnel of hot, bubbling, bristling danger. It feels like the walls are closing in on you.

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## Pagan Cluster

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It was more police than one would have imagined for a permitted march, or really for anything short of a full-scale invasion of extra-terrestrials.

We marched across the river on a yellow-railed bridge, and suddenly, a couple of blocks away, I saw the glass-walled Convention Center where the G20 was meeting. I was in eyeshot of some of the most powerful people in the world, people who were making decisions that would effect billions of people and animals and other beings.

Those people have the power to change things so that we either sink or swim, I thought. There they are, using that power, totally sequestered and removed from all of us. I was stung into stillness, curiosity, frustration, and awe.

I wanted to tap into my deep magic, to do something that would make a difference energetically and carry to them. I said a prayer, but couldn't think

of anything beyond that. The march moved on, and the moment was over.

### EPILOGUE: FINAL THOUGHTS

Afterward, a friend asked me what had stayed with me since the G20 – specifically, where I think the next steps lay.

What came back to me most powerfully was a delegation of human-rights protesters from Africa marching illegally down the street, wrapped in traditional garb and chanting. I felt a sense of quiet awe at their presence – as did the riot cops, who seemed unable to move against them. I overheard one cop say to another, “If these people meet up with those other guys, the shit is going to hit the fan.” Yet still, he did nothing.

In that moment, I saw Civil Disobedience at its best, at its heart. I saw the kind of power that I hope that I can cultivate in myself, that I dream of for the Pagan Cluster and the movement as a whole.

It's the kind of power that cannot be touched by violence, and so does not

have to resort to it. It's magic: a strong, focused magic that demands attention and respect. It is stronger than the riot cops with all of their weapons. It is stronger than broken windows. I believe that African delegation could have gotten all the way to the convention hall if they'd wanted to – or, at least, much closer than the rest of us. Their determination and energy was palpable.

I don't exactly know how to get there, but I think that our spiritual practices give us the potential to be that kind of force, to express it in our own way.

We are the ones we've been waiting for, and we are dawning. I'm going to be there when it happens.

*Riyana adores the magic of song, women's blood mysteries, herbalism, and incorporating the magic of other mystical traditions into her work. She has taught at Free Activist Witchcamp, Teen Earth Magic, Witchlets in the Woods, and within her local community in the Bay Area and in Black Rock City, Nevada.*


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# The Pentacle of The Great Turning

## The Great Work of these Turning Times

*By Riyana Moon*

Around the world, different ancient cultures have prophesied a time of great change: the sensation of time speeding up, mother earth becoming less and less able to support life, species going extinct by the thousands, the whole world being torn asunder by greed, ignorance, and lethargy. And in the midst of this, a great awakening – a turning, a rite of passage into a new, greater consciousness.

Ecospiritualist Thomas Berry calls this evolution of consciousness the “Great Work” of our era.

Joanna Macy, an elder of the Buddhist tradition and anti-nuclear activist for over thirty years, calls it the Great Turning. “It’s the essential adventure of our time: the shift from the industrial growth society to a life-sustaining civilization.”

### HEALING THE EARTH

For witches and other people who practice daily to root down and connect deeply with the Earth, we sometimes feel our own hearts and spirits torn apart by the devastation of our mother. Some of us feel the confusion of the many creatures whose homes and families are dying like a daze we can never quite shake off. Still others are haunted by the sorrowful songs of the dammed rivers and the salmon who cannot find their way back to their ancestral homes.

Healing the Earth and learning to live harmoniously with her ways as a culture may be the Great Work of our time, but it is hard work. Activists get burned out, earth-healers become

**Desire**  
**Surrender**  
**Transformation**  
**Solidarity**  
**Manifestation**

encumbered by their own wounds, and dreamers close their eyes to the visions they see, because it’s simply too much at times.

The Pentacle of The Great Turning is a tool that was created through a community visioning process by Free Activist Witchcamp 2007 to honor, inspire, and rebirth this Great Work. The points of the Pentacle were harvested from dreamings on Brigid Eve, visioning under the full moon, and, of course a series of seemingly endless consensus meetings, from which we emerged with a true witches’ tool: one that paradoxically works inwardly and outwardly at the same time – which is precisely the magic needed to bring about the awakening we dream of.

This pentacle, the work, begins in Desire. This is Desire in its multi-faceted, bright and shadowy sense: our deep, loving connection to the Mother, our irresistible attraction to life, our hunger for ecstasy, our yearning to know Her in our bodies, our hearts, our souls.

It is through deepening our connection with Her and with our love for life that we can viscerally understand the extent of the destruction facing our planet, and the intensity of the coming storms if we do not find another way of living.

The sheer enormity of what we have done and what we must learn to do in order to survive and ensure the survival of our brother and sister beings is overwhelming to think about – nuclear waste with a half-life over 300 million generations long, 50% of all species disappearing, an island of plastic waste twice the size of Texas floating in the Pacific Ocean. It’s tempting to turn away, to return to the much smaller and more manageable details of our private lives, but that’s not how the Great Turning is woven.

All we can do is Surrender to the fears that threaten to close our hearts like a stone, the sorrow that makes us feel brittle like dried leaves, the rage that thunders against the hollows of our stomachs like sticks, the apathy that feels like empty death. We Surrender into faith. We may not know if there’s anything we can do to the destruction in time, but we choose to try to do something about it rather than let our worry of personal failure hold us back. We open to the luminous, bright light of adventure.

In that opening, an amazing Transformation blossoms. Some traditions call this blossoming the inklings of enlightenment; some call it becoming indigenous, rewilding, or finding the primal self; some call it

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# Great Turning

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coming through the dark night of the soul into knowing the love of the divine. In the many names and forms of this Transformation, there is a common thread: we open up to the great web of life as our selves, we see how this web holds us, is within us, and that we are of it. We are nature, we are the land, we are nature and the land healing herself.

From this knowing, we can move into true Solidarity with all of our relations. Lila Watson, Aboriginal activist, once famously said, "If you have come to help me you are wasting my time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us struggle together." In the Great Turning, we extend Watson's insight beyond the boundary of species lines to include the salmon and the hazel trees, the orcas and the wild bunch grasses, the stray cats in our neighborhoods and the scrub jays that drive us crazy at 7AM with their scratchy cawing. We reach out with

our hearts and prayers to listen to the wisdom of all beings, knowing that we need the voices of all of them in order to create truly meaningful, culture-altering, save-the-world solutions.

The last point on the Pentacle is Manifestation: not only with the communal manifestation we are creating – The Great Turning – but also the unique callings of our individual lives that make up our own personal part of it. This brings us back to Desire – what we want to do with our lives to help the healing of the earth, the work that we are yearning to do, the visions we long to bring into fruition.

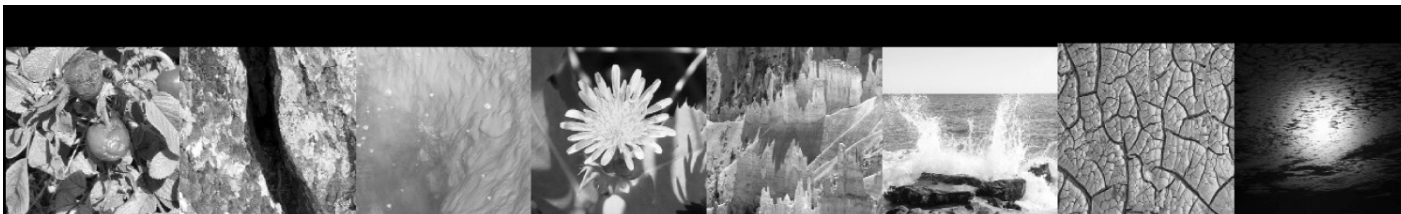
For some of us, a big part of the work of the Great Turning is our activism, whether in the streets or in community centers. For others, our work is as healers and artists and ritualists working to change the consciousness beneath the actions that are so detrimental to the planet. Still others are crafting new initiatives and new systems for our culture, finding visionary ways to manifest the Great Turning in the here and now. Most of us dance between

**"It's the essential  
adventure of our time: the  
shift from the industrial  
growth society to a life-  
sustaining civilization."**

— Joanna Macy

many different spheres of the work, following our hearts and minds and the wise words of our guides to find the right road for us. In all of these places, the points of the Pentacle of the Great Turning can help keep us grounded, inspired, and connected in the wider context of our work. May it be so.

*Riyana adores the magic of song, women's blood mysteries, herbalism, and incorporating the magic of other mystical traditions into her work. She has taught at Free Activist Witchcamp, Teen Earth Magic, Witchlets in the Woods, and within her local community in the Bay Area and in Black Rock City, Nevada.*



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An interview with Starhawk

# Origins of the Spiral Dance

*October 31, 2009 marked the 30th anniversary of the San Francisco Spiral Dance ritual.*

*The first ritual was organized in 1979 as a book-release event for "The Spiral Dance" by Starhawk.*

*As part of our "Anniversary Archives" work, RQ talked with Starhawk about what led her to organize the first ritual, and the eventual decision to make it an annual event.*

**RQ: How did you first come to Witchcraft and the Goddess?**

The first time I met witches was when I was reading tarot cards at a Renaissance Faire when I was around 15, in Los Angeles. There was a booth of witches next to us. I didn't know what they were about, but they were selling herbs and potions and stuff.

When I was at UCLA in 1967, my friend Patty and I did an anthropology project looking into witches, and eventually we met up with these same people. They were from the American Celtic tradition, their names were Fred and Martha. They talked about the Old Religion and the Goddess.

This was the first time I had ever heard of the Goddess in that kind of context. I had never thought of seeing spirit as female. My images of spirit had always been in terms of nature and sexuality. These witches said this was the Old Religion, that nature and sexuality are sacred.

I said, "Wow, that's what I've always believed." And from that time on I was hooked.

**RQ: What were your first steps?**

We started training with these people,



although that didn't last long. We had a little coven going, but we didn't really know what we were doing, we were just experimenting.

I was like 17 or 18 at the time. There were a lot of other things going on, and I kind of drifted away from spirituality.

Several years later, in the early 70s, I got involved with a women's consciousness-raising group, around '72-73. We met for a number of years, and got very close. A couple of times we got together and did rituals.

But in the feminist movement at that time, there was sort of an anti-spiritual bias – I always thought there was a connection between feminism and spirituality, but it seemed like no one else did.

Then one day I was driving through L.A. and I saw a shop called Feminist Wicca. I immediately stopped and

went in. There was Z Budapest. She had a shop and a coven in her Dianic Tradition.

I got very excited, and went to one of her rituals – she was having big rituals, with 75-100 women.

**RQ: So this got you started with organizing rituals?**

No. Right after that my relationship ended, I dropped out of school, and I left L.A. and went traveling around on a bicycle.

I ended up spending a winter in New York. I went there to be a writer, but New York wasn't right for me. I decided to come back to the west coast

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www.michaelrauner.com



# The Spiral Dance

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and move to Northern California. This was around '75. I imagined living in Bolinas and reading fortunes and writing books. But I wound up in San Francisco.

## **RQ: What were your hopes and dreams at that time?**

When I moved here, I wanted to be a writer. I really wanted to write fiction. I'd written some novels that I wasn't able to get published. An agent I talked with suggested nonfiction was a lot easier to get published.

I started to write about my spiritual quest and what I saw as a new approach to spirituality. Gradually this focused on the Goddess tradition and turned into *The Spiral Dance*.

So I wanted to write that book and get it published – and I wanted to make a living as a writer.

I didn't foresee that this would lead to public organizing. I was teaching and reading at psychic fairs as a way to develop material for the book. But I didn't see myself as an organizer.

In the 60s, I had been politically active. I would show up at demonstra-



tions and get chased around campus by the police. But I didn't see myself as a leader.

Way back in nursery school, my lowest mark was in leadership quality. I guess I've been overcompensating ever since.

I am by nature shy and quiet. If I were naturally outgoing and extroverted, my whole life might have been different.

## **RQ: Let's talk about your early**

**involvement in activism. You mentioned Vietnam-era protests, which I remember you wrote about in *Walking to Mercury*. Where did your connection and commitment to activism come from?**

Partly from my family background. My father was an activist and communist in the 1930s. He died when I was five, so I didn't really know him directly. But I heard stories about him and his activism.

It also came from living in the Bay Area. There has always been a strong activist community in San Francisco. Groups of witches got involved in rituals at Take Back the Night marches, anti-nuclear marches, and other events.

And I had my own sense of connection to the Earth and the Goddess. It seemed to me that this was part of the work of creating liberation for women and men – shifting our perception of the sacred.

## **RQ: Was this a common view at the time?**

No — at the beginning it seemed totally nuts to a lot of people. As I mentioned, a lot of feminists were anti-religion. There were a few people like Z Budapest who were doing feminist Wicca, but it



## The Spiral Dance

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was a very small group who was saying “all this political stuff has a bearing on feminism” — that creating our own rituals and exploring our own spiritual nature can be part of our political work.

### **RQ: Had you helped organize public rituals prior to the 1979 Spiral Dance?**

Not really. I had been to some public rituals of NROOGD (the New Reformed Orthodox Order of the Golden Dawn). And I mentioned doing rituals connected to Take Back the Night marches that were politically focused.

The 1979 book-release for *The Spiral Dance* was the first big public event.

Really, the book release was the excuse for doing a big ritual. It was more like an aesthetic experiment — I had friends, different artists, poets, musicians, and we wanted to create a big spectacle and see what happened.

I was thinking about how to bring together music, dance, art — the way art and music are brought together in other traditions. I said, “Let’s start our own

and see where we can take this.”

### **RQ: How did the first Spiral Dance ritual originate?**

I had been writing *The Spiral Dance* pretty much from the time I arrived in San Francisco in 1975, writing early drafts and getting a lot of rejection notices.

I helped start a coven called Compost Coven, women and men. A mixed coven was not unusual at the time. What was unusual was a mixed coven with an explicitly feminist point of view — feminist covens were typically women-only.

During this time we started an all-women’s circle called Raving — that circle, including myself, Kevyn Lutton, Susan Stern, Lauren Liebling, and Diane Baker — this group formed the core of the first Spiral Dance ritual.

When Harper decided to publish *The Spiral Dance* in 1979, they gave us money for a book party. We decided to use it to organize a ritual. We invited friends who were artists, dancers, poets and more, to create this amazing ritual.

That first ritual was two nights — the first included the media and photographers, the second was more private. It was free, since Harper put up money. It was held at Fort Mason, in a space that no longer exists. The second

night, there were 500 people. It was so packed that we turned people away.

### **RQ: Let’s talk about a few details from the early days. I’ve always wondered about the source of the spiral dance itself — the dance, not the ritual.**

To be honest, I don’t know the source. I would guess as a form that it goes way back, although not necessarily as a continuous, unbroken tradition. Many different cultures have versions of it. And the spiral as a symbol goes way back, to cave art.

In 1975, when I moved up to San Francisco, I saw NROOGD do a version of the dance. They had everyone start facing outward. They spiraled out, made one turn, then spiraled in to finish.

At a 1975 Women’s Summer Solstice at one of the rivers in Northern California, other organizers seemed to be dropping out. I felt like if we said we were going to do something, we should make it happen. I have a hard time letting go of that sense of responsibility. Others were laying around saying, “Whatever happens, happens.” I was saying, “Let’s make things happen.”

One of those things was a spiral dance. At that ritual, I started the dance facing in, and spiraled inward to start.

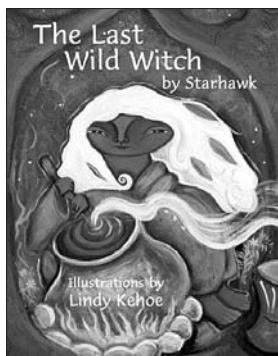
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## The Last Wild Witch

*by Starhawk • illustrations by Lindy Kehoe*

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# The Spiral Dance

*continued from preceding page*

I don't remember how I knew it. It just seemed right.

## **RQ: Did you see the Spiral Dance as an ongoing event?**

No, we didn't imagine we would ever do it again. We thought it was a one-time thing we were doing. But we hoped that it might open some other doors. We wanted to push the intersection of ritual and art, push it to an edge and see what came out of it.

At that time there weren't a lot of people doing public rituals. There was very little that was "out" or public about Wicca. So the big ritual was unusual.

In 1980, Gwydion Pendderwen, who was part of NROOGD, organized a Witches' Ball. He asked us to do another Spiral Dance ritual in

conjunction with the Witches' Ball. It was not quite as elaborate as the first, but it included the chorus.

In 1981, a lot of us were down at Diablo Canyon (construction site for a nuclear power plant in southern California) most of September. Macha NightMare and others stepped up



and organized the ritual, the first at the Women's Building (a multi-use building in the Mission District of San Francisco), where it was held until the tenth anniversary in 1989.

The Women's Building was not that large (it held about 300 people when packed), so there was a limit on

tickets. People were always pressuring us to get in, that part of the organizing was a living hell.

In 1989 (the tenth anniversary of *The Spiral Dance* and the first ritual), I wanted to do a ritual for 1000 people...

*To Be Continued...*

*See next page for Starhawk on the "Music of the Spiral Dance."*

*This interview and the next about Reclaiming music conducted in Fall 2009 by George Franklin ©2009 by RQ.*

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# Where did the songs come from?

*While talking with Starhawk about the history of the Spiral Dance (see preceding pages), we asked about the music for the ritual, which has evolved steadily over the years.*

**RQ: Where did the music for the Spiral Dance come from? Which of the songs on *Let It Begin Now* are from the first few Samhain rituals?**

The “Let It Begin Now” litany, the earliest version, is from the first Spiral Dance. Some of us had gone to a poetry reading by Diane Di Prima, and she read a long poem with the refrain “May It Continue,” a very Buddhist feel. That gave me the idea for the refrain “Let It Begin Now.”

In the original version, there were four spoken litanies: one for people we knew who had died; one for endangered or extinct species; one for heroes and heroines; and one for victims of violence.

We ended by remembering the witches who had been killed.

The ritual circle would spiral slowly inward to these litanies, and then spiral out to more positive litanies. Of course, it never worked exactly right.

As I recall, we used “The Gates,” with music by Bonnie Barnett, and the refrain “What is remembered lives.” The spoken litanies were done over this.

It wasn’t until 1989, for the tenth anniversary, that I wrote the Quatrain (“Let it begin with each step we take / Let it begin with each change we make / Let it begin with each chain we break / Let it begin every time we awake”). The song was still changing at that time.

In the mid-80s, we also added the first version of the “Goddess Song.” People also wanted a new God song, because they felt “Honor to the Untamed God” didn’t have enough energy.

I went out in the back yard at Black Cat house and asked: “What do you want us to say?” From there I came up with the words, and Michael Charnes added the music. (All of these songs are

on the *Let It Begin Now* CD.)

In the 1990s, Deborah Hamouris wrote a new version of the “Goddess Song” (which incorporates much of the older song — available on Reclaiming’s *Witches Brew* CD).

**RQ: It seems like the early Reclaiming days were a very rich time for pagan chants. Tell us where some of yours came from.**

A lot of people were writing new chants and songs at that time. I remember writing “Demeter’s Song (I Am the Wealthy One)” at a time when I was really broke, and singing, “There is no end to my abundance, no end.” I wrote it and forgot about it, but someone found the words and liked it. Eventually, we included it in the Spiral Dance.

“Weave and Spin” was written for the multi-cultural ritual in 1992, at the

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from Reclaiming

## Witches’ Brew

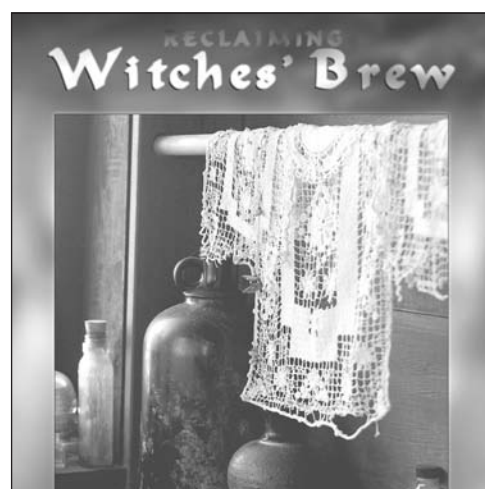
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## Spiral Dance Music

*continued from preceding page*

County Fair Building. We had altars to different traditions and ancestors. The idea was that people would take a strip of colored cloth from each of the altars, then weave them into a big basket – “Weave and Spin” was written for that working.

The “strand by strand” descant came from a song some of us wrote at BC (British Columbia) Witchcamp called “Powerful Song,” and we noticed it worked with “Weave and Spin” too.

“Weaver, Weaver” is written to the tune of an old lament to Bonnie Prince Charlie. The Chieftans recorded it on an album one year when we were doing SpiralHeart Witchcamp in West Virginia.

We were working with different pentacles. For the Pentacle of Death night we needed a song. I loved the music from the Chieftans, so I wrote new words to it.

“We Are the Power in Everyone” is from the Livermore 1982 anti-nuclear protest, held on Summer Solstice. It was also a full moon, so that’s the part about the “dance of the moon and sun.”

*Note — most of these songs are on Reclaiming’s Let It Begin Now or Chants: Ritual Music CDs. These and other CDs are available on the RQ website, where you can hear samples and order CDs or downloads.*



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# Dancing with the Sacred Third

## A Personal Trans/Othergender Pagan Theology

By **Kerrick A. Lucker**

I stopped believing in gender when I was small.

I have a clear memory of this process, although it may not be a true and accurate memory. First — I was sitting in a bathtub, crying, because I'd just cut my chin with a shaving razor.

My mom, who was the center of my whole world and could do no wrong, dabbed the blood off my chin and asked me what I thought I was trying to do. Shave like daddy, of course.

And my mom — who fixed cars and rode motorcycles and whose example made it possible for me to grow up never questioning the fact that

women could be strong as well as gentle — told me that I was, in fact, a little girl, and little girls don't shave their faces. Grown up men do. Little girls grow up to be women, and women can shave their legs, if they want to.

Some transgender kids fight back at this point, but to my ears Mother was speaking ex cathedra. My reaction is perhaps best described as: "Oh."

Second — maybe a year later, my mom cutting my hair with dog clippers, then parting it on the side, rather than in the middle as I was accustomed to. I remember asking "Isn't this a boy's haircut?" and thinking "Is it okay that I like having a boy's haircut?"

My mother (possibly embarrassed

that her child grooming skills were not as great as her dog grooming skills) may have said gruffly, "It doesn't matter."

My reaction: "Oh."

I learned that there was gender, and that it didn't matter. It only mattered when it hurt, when it made me cry and bleed, but not when it made me proud. I decided to pretend it didn't exist.

But eventually I noticed that gender is a real thing, in spite of the fact that it's a process we enact socially rather than a structure that exists biologically. I stopped being able to pretend it didn't exist. I could see how it shaped all my social interactions, even the way I related to my own body, in ways that hurt me.

I thought that if I were "really transgender," I should somehow have known it ever since my mom told me I was a girl. I decided, very rationally, that I would live as a third gender person for what I thought were purely ideological reasons. I had a hard time acknowledging the depth of the yearning I felt to have a place in my community where I felt at home.

### MYSTERY OF THE SACRED THIRD

What did I know then about that Mystery that is outside Woman and Man?

My first exposure to the Sacred Third came as a teenager when I read a theogony by someone styled the "White Bard." In this contemporary myth, the Goddess and the God, each tripartite, were accompanied by a tripartite Third, called the Holy Fool, who was Trickster, Chaos, and the Void, and who was

*continued on next page*

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*Raven Kaldera is a Northern-Tradition Pagan shaman, herbalist, astrologer, FTM transgendered intersexual activist, homesteader, and founding member of the First Kingdom Church of Asphodel. He is the author of the Northern Tradition Shamanism books, Pagan Astrology, Drawing Down the Spirits, Northern Tradition for the Solitary Practitioner, and many others.*



## Sacred Third

continued from preceding page

called She, He, or It in turns throughout the tale.

It felt right to me. Everywhere I looked and saw supposed “dualities,” I sought their synthesis, a balance point between them, or something that fell completely outside them.

Day, night — twilight. Fire, water — steam. Life, death — rebirth. Self, other — relationship.

Man, woman — me?

### SEARCHING AND RESEARCHING

The world I lived in could not accommodate me living as a third-gender person. So deeply ingrained is the binary view of woman and man in our culture that unless I threw all my energy into confounding expectations, I would immediately be pigeonholed as “woman”.

I found myself “butching up” more than I felt. I tried to be hard and fierce, like my warrior mom, but it was wearing me out. I wanted to be able to smile in public. I wanted my gentleness to be the surprise and not the expectation. I wanted to approach the Sacred Third from the other direction — as a queer man.

At the same time, as a college student, I was searching for a thesis topic. I’d tried a few on for size and was

leaning toward a thesis on Greek and Egyptian funeral rituals, but it was a broad topic, and my adviser had warned me that I risked communicating to grad programs that I had spent five years flapping around in black eyeliner and a velvet cape (true, but not the whole story).

Then I encountered the Gallae. I found them in a Roman novel by Apuleius that combined vulgar humor with a heavy-handed and somewhat satirical mystical message.

In Apuleius’s *The Golden Ass*, the Gallae are reviled figures of abuse — “men” who have cut off their penises in frenzied worship of the Goddess Cybele, who dressed and spoke as women and



lusted after the book’s transfigured protagonist. I instinctively knew there must be more to the story than this. After all, a man who claims to have been turned into a donkey (as Apuleius’s narrator does) is not always the most reliable witness.

My research turned up, not a great deal of information, but some very good information. I read Lynn Roller’s book *In Search of God the Mother*, which illuminated the complexity of the

history of Cybele’s worship for me, and incidentally caused me to question the narrative of a single paleolithic Mother Goddess, theorized by Marija Gimbutas and others. Some of the most moving and telling pieces of evidence for ancient Mother Goddess worship are small stone figures of women, often with their maternal features greatly emphasized.

But in addition to the Goddess figurines, there are a number of male figurines, and still other figurines with androgynous characteristics. What do we make of this?

This is in no way to discount the powerful work of Marija Gimbutas in expanding our awareness of the mystery of paleolithic people’s relationships with

the Divine Feminine. Without her, we might not have a modern Goddess Movement, or if we did, it might look very different, and I’m grateful for how the Goddess Movement has shaped the world. And I think like any truly great scholar of the ancient world, Gimbutas would

probably not insist that she has written the last word.

Yet it makes sense to me that there were a lot of different ways of conceiving of the Mystery in ancient times, just as there are today. For instance, in Sumer, as among the ancient Norse, the moon was represented as masculine.

One of the other Great Gods of

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Image by Beau Caughlan © 2009  
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## Sacred Third

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Sumer was Inanna — a warlike Goddess whose wrath caused storms, shook the earth, withered the crops. She was also known as the “head-overturning one,” the one who “makes the man become the woman, the woman become the man.” Among her worshipers were those called kurgarra and gala-tur, who were people assigned female who dressed and lived as men, and people assigned male who dressed and lived as women.

In the Sumerian account of the Descent of Inanna, when Inanna is killed by Ereshkigal, the Goddess of Death, Enki creates two beings, Kurgarra and Galatur, who are genderless, to go down and revive her with the food and water of life. When they go into the Underworld, they find Ereshkigal raging in great pain. In history’s first recorded use of active listening, the Galatur and Kurgarra echo Ereshkigal’s cries of pain until she is soothed and gives them Inanna’s body in gratitude.

The role of the Kurgarra and Galatur seems to have been to represent the anger and pain of the Gods, Inanna particularly, and by acting it out in frenzied lamentation, soothe their wrath and bring the Divine world and the human world back into a harmonious relationship.

In researching the rites of Cybele, I believed that is precisely what the Gallae were doing for this other, quite different Near Eastern Goddess who had repeatedly been brought in as an outsider to the pantheons of Greece and Rome.

Image by Beau Caughlan © 2009  
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## CUTTING OFF PARTS OF OURSELVES

In one version of the Greek myth of Cybele, she had once been a hermaphrodite deity named Agdistis. The other Gods were much afraid of Agdistis’ mysterious power, and asked Zeus to force Agdistis to choose whether to be male or female — if male, to rip



out the womb so that no male can give birth, and if female, to castrate Agdistis, so that no female can wield a penis.

In this demand we can see exact echoes of how children born with ambiguous genitalia are today hated and feared. Surgeons cut into infants’ bodies to make their genitalia appear “normal,” often with disastrous results — and without even giving them a chance to choose what gender they will be, as

Zeus offered to Agdistis in this account.

But Agdistis did not want to be confined to being either male or female.

Many intersex people identify as solidly on one side or the other of the female/male dividing line. But some intersex people, like some non-intersex people, identify as something different, or as a combination of both.

Here the ancient story becomes confused and tragic. Zeus castrates Agdistis and throws his penis away, where it becomes an almond tree. Agdistis becomes the goddess Cybele. An almond from the tree impregnates a river nymph, who gives birth to a beautiful youth called Attis, whom Cybele seduces, then eventually, maddened by his infidelity, sends him into a frenzy in which he castrates himself and later dies of his wounds.

It’s likely, however, that originally “Attis” was a Phrygian name or title for Cybele’s chief Galla, and the Greeks — needing an explanation for why any man, in their understanding, would choose to castrate himself and become a woman — invented the mythological figure of “Attis” to explain how Cybele, missing her dead lover, would reinvent him by seducing young men into becoming eunuchs.

In truth, the Gallae seem not to have been castrating themselves in imitation of Attis, but Attis along with other Gallae were becoming women — at least partly in imitation of Cybele, like the gala-tur of Inanna, to take her grief and pain into themselves and thus heal it.

While I was learning these ancient stories, I was learning my own. I had felt most authentically myself as a walker between worlds, and now I saw myself in a representation of the Divine that was likewise a walker

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## Sacred Third

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between the worlds. I saw in the Galatur and Kurgarra echoes of my most compassionate and generous self, the self that I wanted to free from the constraint of being assumed to be female.

I realized that whether there was any essential thing that could be called “really transgender” or not, this was the story I was being called to live into the world.

And thank Godth, I have not had to castrate myself to fit into anyone else’s ideas of what a man or a woman or a third-gender person is.

### SPIRAL DANCE

When I realized that my devotion to the Sacred Third was calling me to invoke Hir in the Samhain Spiral Dance last year, I was anxious. I’m not accustomed to putting myself out as a ritual leader, and I’m afraid of that part of myself that likes the idea.

I was afraid to dance the Sacred Third in the form I was most called to, because it made me feel vulnerable, and because one of Hir defining features is willingly taking on suffering in order to alleviate it, and suffering frightens me. I was afraid because I didn’t know how to dance, and the Sacred Third as I was called to honor Hir is a superb dancer.

But I did put the idea out there, and to my surprise and delight (and terror) there was a lot of support for it. When I heard Starhawk had written some music for our invocation, I was floored. And when I heard it was a part of the Goddess Song, I was floored again, both honored and a little puzzled.

It’s fundamental to my spiritual beliefs that women, men, and third gender people can all honor the Goddess and the

God. A transgender woman honoring the Goddess is a woman honoring the Goddess, no matter what her genitals look like or how much of her life she spent living as male.

I had no doubt that the Reclaiming community would support me in honoring the God or the Goddess as a man. So it wasn’t simply, for me, about making room for trans women to honor the Goddess — trans women should have just the same place of honor among Her Priestesses as non-trans women. It was about all of us, women and men and third-gender people, making space for the Faces of Mystery who don’t fit into Goddess or God. And putting the invocation of the Sacred Third into the Goddess invocation was not what I had intended.

People make our plans, but Spirit works. The invocation of the Sacred Third looked like an invasion into Goddess space. That’s no doubt what some people felt it was — one of my dancers got yelled at that year for being in the women’s restroom.

My original intention was to hold some space between the Goddess and the God invocations that was not either one or the other, but that was not in the cards for our first year. Instead, we came on during the verse of the Goddess invocation Star had written for us, and we danced, first making a tug of war with a rope and then opening it out into a balanced circle. (I have it on reliable authority that no one really “got it” — such is life! We are new, and we are learning.)

Regardless, I was elated. It was Mystery running through me, imperfect and weird — who could ask for anything more?

*Kerrick went to college in Florida for Classical Archaeology. He came to the Bay Area in 2005 to study museums and be queer. Since then he has learned to cook, take care of plants that take care of him, pray as a Jew, and run the Iron Pentacle, as well as design exhibitions and educational programming. His Homeric Greek is still appalling.*



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# PEOPLE'S PARK: STILL BLOOMING

BERKELEY LANDMARK CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY

*By Terri Compost*

*(This article is excerpted from "People's Park: Still Blooming" — see next page)*

Some years ago, I stumbled upon a cut-up copy of "People's Park," Alan Copeland and Nikki Arai's 1969 collection of photos.

That book came out when the Park was surrounded by a chain-link fence and the story seemed over.

But it wasn't. For forty years, the spirit has lived on in the struggle for this land.

Tilling the soil of People's Park, I have found something precious, alive. It is not healthy and thriving. It is worn and tired, desperate, and in danger. Fed on kindness and sharing and persistence, this little light flickers in a cement capitalist world, in the shadow of a corporate university so lost from life that it mechanically destroys.

People's Park exposed all this.

And the Park is still an antidote. The Park turns the mad race for money on its head and relies on an economy of sharing. It brings people together in peace and equality.

It shows us the way to bring back nature to land that was built over. It



teaches us how to get along with others. It reconnects us with soil and life and the sacredness of the land.

It reminds us of the importance of history and our roles in it. It offers blossoms and birds, mud and softness to our poor city souls. It gives us

sustenance and purpose, a chance to make a difference, a chance to help. A place to sing and dance.

It is our victory, tattered as it is.

This small piece of land holds a big story: of creation and loss, cooperation and reclaiming, neglect and decay, celebration and persistence, but mostly of the sharing of common land.

Born in struggle during the Vietnam era in 1969, People's Park is a tale of people uniting to stand up to injustice. Many people's dreams, sweat, and tears nourish the soil of today's humble-appearing Park.

The Park is alive. It did and does embody the hopes of the sixties, and more. It also carries the scars and awkwardness of her brutal suppression as she came to bloom. She hides the shame of the father, misunderstanding his child and worse reacting with violence to her freedom and

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## PHOTOS

This page — John Jekabson, April 1969

Next page — Zachary Ogen



## PEOPLE'S PARK

*continued from preceding page*

beauty. How much was lost? Could it have been other?

And yet miracle, she is still. And beautiful to me. And to many. Wretched, frightening, disgusting to others. What does she still tell and ask of us? Here she is with her failures and lack of becoming, her hope and incredible beauty, a place where miracles happen.

People's Park is such a trouble maker. And it attracts such a cast of characters. It remains free. Liberated by stubbornness, love, work, and rebellion.

So many claim her, people with not much to lose, people who still believe, people who need people and freedom and wildness.

There is truth here. The pulse of American travelers is measured on her skin. The health of society, the creativity of resistance, the hope of the people are all played out on her soil.

The web of people that remember, care and act for People's Park is tentative and fragile. There is such chaos in our lives: refugees, activists, dreamers, outcasts, survivors, those who think for ourselves, and try to be free



Zachary Ogen

in a controlled society, meeting in our sacred refuge to hold hands and know that community, land, hope, sharing... are here in our hands. Acts of obstinance and generosity, need, hope, loneliness, desire, but acts for the commons.

The web is fragile and yet the park has such deep roots and strong ghosts. They rise up to give us strength and righteousness. They call out supporters

hidden in the fabric of a society that seems to have forgotten. They link us with a larger struggle and remind us of the potency of symbolism.

The park is rebellious by nature. It comes to life when threatened. It doesn't behave.

The moment of history at which we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the creation of the park feels like a precipice. Berkeley, the country, humanity and nature are all falling into something else. Trying to hold onto what is alive.

As I write this, the University has plans to build a bunch of creepy evil labs up our precious Strawberry Creek Canyon in Berkeley... and what are you going to do about it?

Ever the bold nemesis, UC will rationalize the torture of millions of animal lives in its expanding labs at the top of University Avenue as if they are something to help humanity.

And which part of humanity will be killed by killing our animal kin and refusing even to talk about it? Nanotech, biotech, genetically engineered fuel crops. Hello... there is a web of life out here... talk to your Biology Department.

We know so little. With all our money and scientists we couldn't put

*continued on next page*

## NEW BOOK ABOUT PEOPLE'S PARK FROM SLINGSHOT

Edited by Terri Compost • Published by Slingshot Collective

This book is for those that hear the name "People's Park" and know deep down that the park is theirs and something to defend. And create.

"People's Park Still Blooming" is our family heirloom, our memories, our scrapbook, the story of the courage and hope that freed and tended this sacred piece of earth. It is for us to remember, but mostly it is for the next to come. This book is an attempt to capture the spirit and story of the Park.



It was published with the hope that, like seeds, copies will find fertile ground in the hearts of young people and encourage them to try again. We are connected. The land wants to live. Let a thousand Parks bloom.

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## PEOPLE'S PARK

*continued from preceding page*

Strawberry Canyon together again. And is it to be UC's gift to the world — inventing a way to make it financially feasible to destroy “fallow” and wild lands the world over, so Americans can keep driving SUVs using biofuels? Not my idea of progress. Frankly it is tough to keep up with UC's uncaring “progress.”

Is People's Park a distraction? Is it a real example of resistance? There

have been few victories in stopping the UC steamroller. It's kind of a stand-off. Why does the Park matter now, as the world changes on large economic and ecological scales?

People's Park holds some secrets we will need to make it through the changes. Secrets like Sharing, Diversity, and Loving the Land. It is an ecological ark, and one of the most fertile and productive acres in the neighborhood. People's Park can show us how to turn asphalt to food gardens. How to make it work. How to take care of each other.

Like a bulb that pushes through the black dirt, we seek light, truth, the promise of something new. Justice, Peace, Life, Freedom. Can it bloom in the compost of chaos? Can we hold this land open and free enough to keep blooming? Can we hold away the jealousy, the fear, that want to control through concrete and pain?

Push, little bulb, push! We need your sweetness. Surprise us with your beauty. We need the Park.

*Terri Compost has been a People's Park activist and user since riots there in 1991. She has attended protests and meetings, helped organize the People's Park Anniversary concerts, and nourished the soil of the Park's gardens, seeing how the Park has created community both through sharing and struggle. Terri has also helped create the North Altar at the San Francisco Spiral Dance for many years.*



## PHOTOS

Photographs by Lydia Gans.

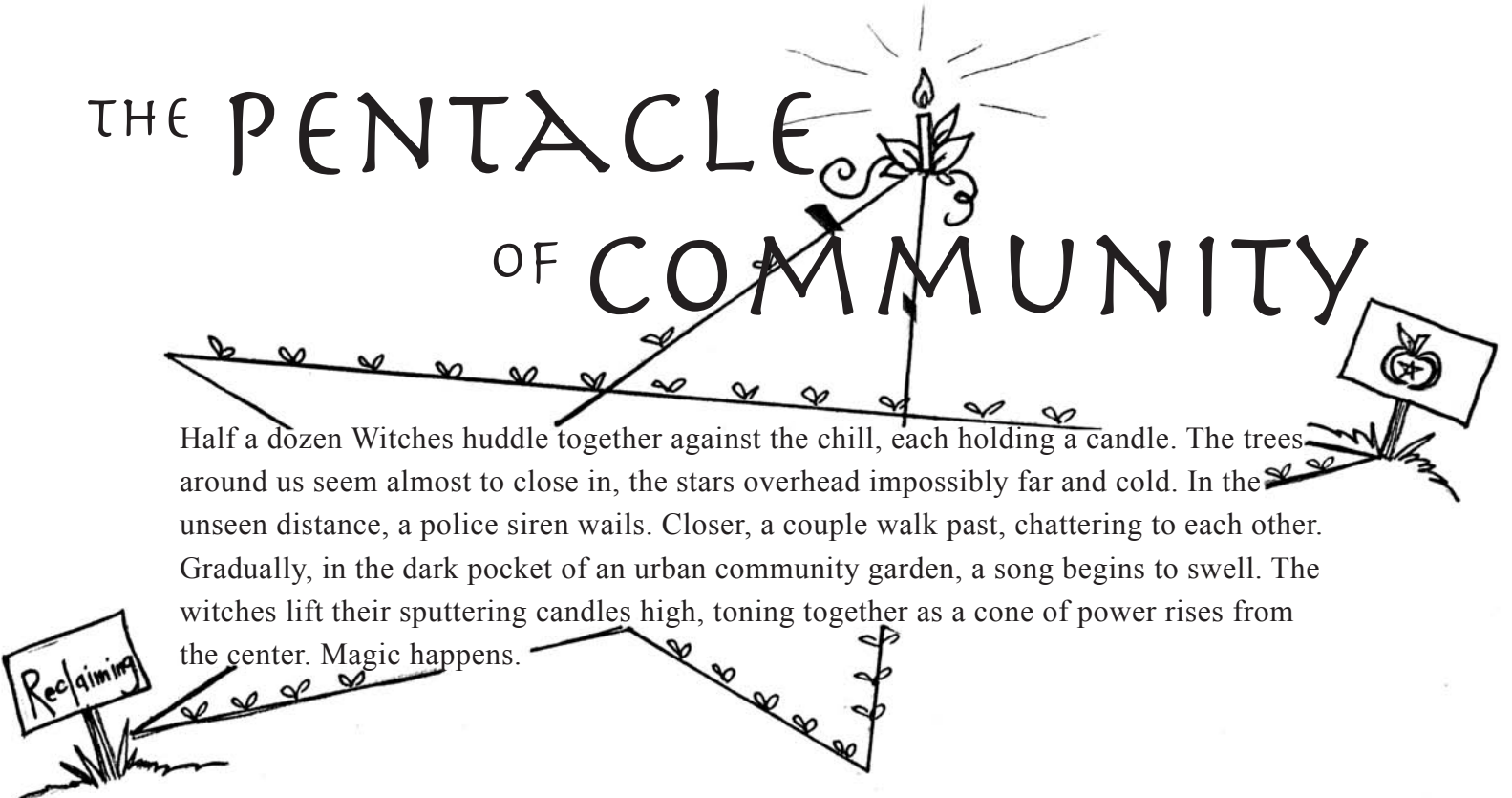
Above: The Funky Nixons perform at a People's Park anniversary concert in the early 2000s. Reclaiming activist and saxophonist Dress is in the witch's cap.

Right: Food Not Bombs has served free meals in the Park on weekdays since 1991. Reclaiming co-founder Judy Foster is second from left, wielding the serving spoon.





# THE PENTACLE OF COMMUNITY



Half a dozen Witches huddle together against the chill, each holding a candle. The trees around us seem almost to close in, the stars overhead impossibly far and cold. In the unseen distance, a police siren wails. Closer, a couple walk past, chattering to each other. Gradually, in the dark pocket of an urban community garden, a song begins to swell. The witches lift their sputtering candles high, toning together as a cone of power rises from the center. Magic happens.

By Sierra Black

This is a typical new moon ritual hosted by Viriditas, my Boston-area Reclaiming group. The name means “Greening the Earth,” and our vision has been to grow a new Reclaiming community in the Boston area.

Like all magic, our wishes were granted, but here in the real world, where wishes are never simple. Viriditas is like a garden: a living thing that sometimes bears fruit and sometimes collapses in the face of drought or flood. It requires tending and freedom to grow.

Are you carrying the seeds of a Reclaiming community? Perhaps you’ve just come back from a Witchcamp, or an action with the Pagan Cluster. Maybe you just read *The Spiral Dance* for the first time. You’re hungry for that magic in your own campus or community, and ready to make it happen.

If so, I offer a Pentacle of Community, with tools for nourishing your seeds.

**1. Create a Core** – Consider forming a work group, circle or coven with a group of interested friends. The original Reclaiming Collective formed out of a coven, and the model has worked to create thriving communities

in Austin and Vermont. In Boston, the core members of Viriditas belong to Tapestry, a coven that has met regularly for over three years.

Being part of a coven with the other people leading rituals and teaching classes in Viriditas helps in many ways.

As covenmates, we see each other throughout the month. A lot of the logistical work of planning a ritual or event can happen while everyone is hanging around after ritual.

We know and trust each other deeply. I taught an Iron Pentacle class last month with a covenmate. We loved how easy it was to communicate and to raise energy with the group, drawing from years of shared experience.

Our coven gives us a place to grow as Witches. We try new skills, and take risks we wouldn’t take in a public circle. Tapestry recently created a curriculum for working with Energy Bodies. The coven worked through the material together, and a few of us may take it and teach it as a public class come fall.

**2. Connect** — Once you’ve established your core group, and built trust to deepen magic, it’s time to connect with the larger community.

When Viriditas started out, we contacted a long-time Reclaiming teacher who had offered herself through

RCRC to mentor groups or individuals. She helped us by teaching us basic magical skills, like how to lead a Spiral Dance, and by giving us pointers about organizing and advertising events.

We send people to classes or Witchcamps. Sometimes, we collect scholarships for individuals to go to a workshop in another area and bring back skills to teach locally. This lets our whole community continue to deepen our magical skills.

You can build connections with the larger community through:

- Reclaiming e-mail lists
- Reclaiming.org, Witchcamp.org and the Reclaiming Livejournal Community
- Attending Witchcamps
- Traveling to classes or workshops being offered in your region
- Using the RCRC list to find a local mentor

• reading and subscribing to RQ!

**3. Share** – You have your core group established, and you’ve made connections with the larger Reclaiming community. You’re learning new skills and growing as a Witch. The next stage in community building is to share these skills. Here are a few ways to share your new skills and grow community:

*continued on next page*

graphics by Naeomi Castellano

# THE PENTACLE OF COMMUNITY

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Offer community Sabbat rituals. Organizing an event for Beltaine or Samhain is a great way to meet people, use new skills, and worship in community. Currently, Viriditas hosts Wheel of the Year rituals for Pagan families.

Create a public moon circle. Viriditas offered monthly new moon rituals for several years. The repetition gave a sense of consistency and community.

Organize a study group. There are many workbooks that serve well for this purpose: *The Spiral Dance*, *Twelve Wild Swans*, and *Evolutionary Witchcraft* are a few written by Reclaiming Witches. Or you can create your own curriculum as you go along.

Invite teachers from other communities to teach classes in your area. Many teachers are willing to travel. Organizing a workshop can draw energy into your local community and strengthen ties with the broader Reclaiming movement.

Work with an experienced teacher to learn Reclaiming's core course material and offer local classes yourself.

**4. Act** – When you have a growing community of Witches and activists, it's time to put your skills into action. Find ways to use what you've learned in service to your community and to those around you. Some examples:

- A Pearl Pentacle group in Austin met for some months to walk the Pearl Pentacle in the Texas state house as a prayer for peace.
- Viriditas hosts a monthly labyrinth walk at the community garden where we hold our New Moon rituals.
- We have worked with a local food pantry to organize volunteers for their food distribution.
- Viriditas has also sent groups to large anti-war protests as part of the Pagan Cluster.

**5. Sustain** – The work of growing community can be exhausting. It's key to feed yourself as much as you feed the group. Useful strategies include:

- Getting paid. Many Witches find that being rewarded for their efforts with money, even in small amounts, helps balance the energetic scales so that they can continue to offer their gifts.
- Setting a routine.
- Taking a break when you need one. If you've been offering the same series of rituals for too long and it's boring you, you can stop.
- Having some private space to do magic in. If you're at the center of a community in which people come and go, having a private working group or coven where you can relax, do magic, and not be on stage can be a powerful, nurturing experience.

Which leads us back to our core group, where we nurture and sustain deep relationships that in turn provide support to a larger, more flexible community.

Growing community is no different from growing a garden. You need seeds, fertile earth, a clean, clear flow of water, and the bright heat of the sun. It's probably a bit of magic that our rituals are often held in our local community garden, among the growing plants. Like them, our little Reclaiming community grows when it is tended and nourished.

*Sierra Black is a Reclaiming Witch and freelance writer living in the Boston area. She writes about the magic of parenting, sustainable family living and her thriving community at [www.childwild.com](http://www.childwild.com)*

*Graphics by Naeomi Castellano/RQ.*





# Witchcraft and Magic in Europe

## Athlone Press's Six-Volume History Unravels Neopagan Mythology

by George Franklin

Ever wonder what really happened during the Burning Times, and why the European witch-hunts occurred when and where they did?

Who were the New Order of the Golden Dawn and the Theosophists, and how did they shape our practices today?

What did Aleister Crowley, Margaret Murray, and Gerald Gardner contribute, and where did they get their inspirations and training?

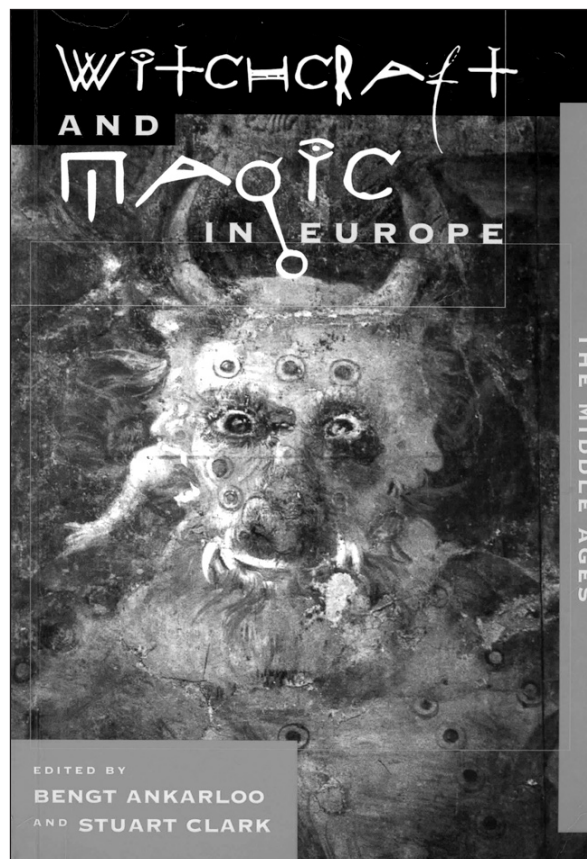
Where did the European concepts of “witch” and “magician” arise, and how have they evolved over the centuries?

More chilling, how were witches and magicians steadily demonized from Ancient times, until in the Burning Times magical practitioners were routinely accused of (and tortured into confessing to) a satanic conspiracy against Christendom?

Finally, how is it that after centuries of repression and/or ridicule, magic and witchcraft are flourishing today?

### DEMOLISHING OUR MYTHOLOGY

For those of us who stay awake at night wondering about such things, Athlone Press's six-volume history of magic and



witchcraft (published in the U.S. by the University of Pennsylvania Press) sets a new standard in pagan scholarship.

The essays collected in these volumes survey the scholarly terrain around the year 2000, and pretty well demolish dozens of favorites myths and

legends that have accrued over the years.

Whether the authors are challenging past exaggerations of the number of witch executions (a maximum of about 40,000 deaths in all of Europe is suggested, with the majority found in Post-Reformation Germany), or debunking the magical and scholarly claims of venerable elders such as Gerald Gardner or Margaret Murray, these essays are a sober and meticulous reassessment of our heritage.

Footnotes abound, but most of the essays are quite readable. The box on the next page offers a plan for reading most of the series. Each essay stands alone, and they can be read in any order.

### WHAT — NO TAROT?

Even in six volumes, gaps are evident. Renaissance magic gets short shrift, and astrology and tarot are barely mentioned.

Russia seems not to be considered a part of Europe.

Of more concern, the essays focus so narrowly on their given topics and

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# Witchcraft and Magic in Europe

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geographical boundaries that it can be difficult to see witches and magic in their wider context.

For instance, Volume Four does a great job establishing a factual basis for the new estimate of witch-executions during the “Burning Times” (current estimates, based on painstaking analysis of church and secular records, vary from about 30-40,000 total witch-deaths for all of Europe).

But I wonder how this compares with executions of, say, heretics or pickpockets? The scant evidence offered suggests that witchcraft was one of numerous “moral offenses,” and generally not the most pressing to authorities.

## WITCH-HUNTS — COMPLEX PATTERNS

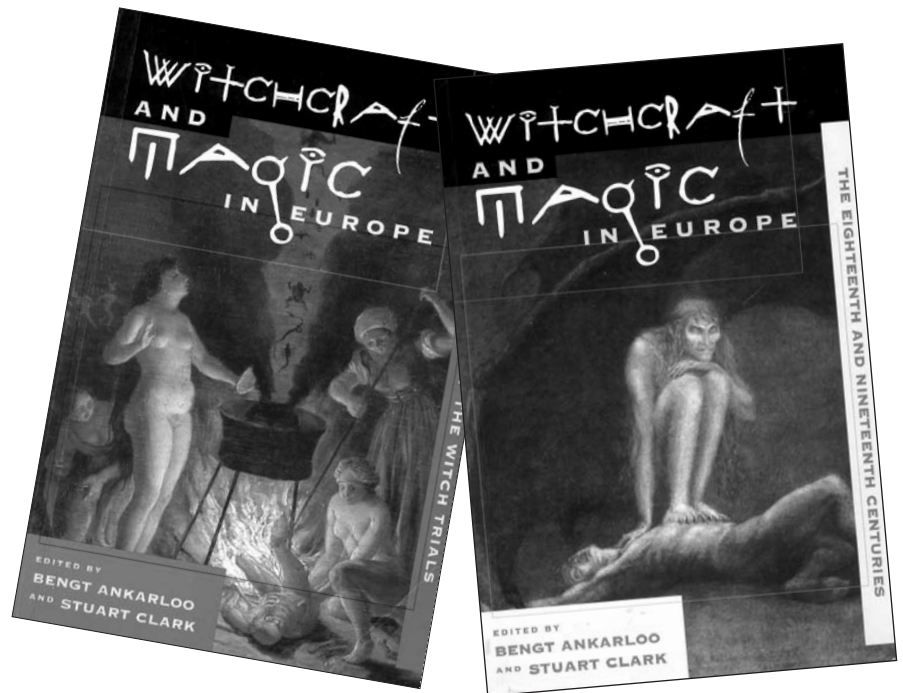
Why, during one era (yet at strikingly different times in the various regions of Europe), was witch-hunting suddenly an obsession for church and state authorities as well as common people?

The essays covering the organized witch-hunts (roughly 1500-1750 — the Early Modern Era in Europe, not the much-reviled Middle Ages) show the complex interplay between popular persecutions, small-village scape-goating, and church and secular authorities.

Why witches became targets precisely at this moment remains somewhat a mystery. Yet these volumes offer a coherent picture of the progressive demonization of magic and witchcraft, tracing the issue from ancient Greece and Rome through the Burning Times and showing how the notion of a “satanic conspiracy” evolved from diverse sources to become, around 1500, the “hammer of witches.”

Exacerbated by the strained religious situation in the century after the

*continued on next page*



## Reading the Athlone Series

The Athlone series consists of focused essays, each under 100 pages. Most are quite readable, and some are fascinating.

A great introduction to the series is Ronald Hutton’s “Modern Pagan Witchcraft” in Volume Six, which traces neopagan history from the late 1800s to the present. Hutton shows how groups like the Theosophists, folklore societies, and the Golden Dawn, as well as individuals such as Aleister Crowley, Margaret Murray, and Gerald Gardner, created the forms and practices that evolved into contemporary witchcraft.

Volume Four covers the peak period of the witch trials, surveying the intensive research of the past 30-40 years and drastically revising our understanding of this period.

The second essay of Volume Two is a short “biography” of every witch, magician, wonder-worker, or sorcerer mentioned in ancient literature, including Circe, Solomon, Apollonius of Tyana, and Jesus of Nazareth.

Here’s a suggested plan for reading most of the series, skipping the more specialized essays. Start with the second essay of Volume II:

Volume II.2 — Witches and Sorcerers in Classical Literature

Volume II.3 — Imagining Greek and Roman Magic

Volume II.4 — The Demonization of Magic in Late Antiquity

Volume III.1 — Medieval Magic: Definitions, Beliefs, Practices

Volume III.3 — Medieval Church and State on Magic and Witchcraft

Volume IV.1 — Witch Trials in Continental Europe

Volume IV.2 — Witch Trials in Northern Europe

Volume IV.3 — Witchcraft and Magic in Early Modern Europe

Volume V.1 — The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions

Volume V.2 — Witchcraft After the Witch Trials

Volume V.3 — Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic, and Liberal Thought

Volume VI.1 — Modern Pagan Witchcraft



# Witchcraft and Magic in Europe

*continued from preceding page*

Protestant Reformation, this demonization led to a climate where witches were seen as the “devil’s apprentices” — a belief not widely held before this era.

Broad conclusions suggest that the common denominator of many hunts was a weak central government and/or judicial system.

Thus decentralized and politically chaotic Germany was the source of over half of all executions, while more stable and centralized France and England ended their hunts earlier and with far fewer deaths.

One interesting finding of the detailed archival studies conducted over the past half-century is that the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions, far from instigating systematic witch-hunts, generally played a tempering role.

Organized witch-hunts ended far earlier in Inquisition-dominated areas than in Protestant Germany and Scandinavia, due largely to the Inquisition’s insistence on strict judicial procedure and evidence rules.

As to who the witches were, and who was targeted by the witch-hunters, the variation across Europe is so great that no summary is possible beyond the fact that women were accused and executed more often than men in most places. The essays in Volumes 4 offer succinct surveys of these divergent and fascinating patterns.

## NEOPAGAN ROOTS AND SEEDS

Volume Six features Ronald Hutton’s essay on Modern Pagan Witchcraft.

Hutton, whose outstanding late-1990s book *The Triumph of the Moon* covers this material in more detail, traces neopagan roots from Freemasons and Spiritualists, through predecessor groups such as the Theosophists (who acquainted Europeans with Indian philosophy) and the Golden Dawn

(assemblers of the framework of modern pagan rituals), on to the mid-20th century revival inspired by Gerald Gardner, Doreen Valiente, Aleister Crowley, and others.

In the process, Hutton takes a certain delight in uncovering the highly-fictionalized biographies of a number of our honored ancestors.

According to Hutton and other recent researchers, virtually every well-known neopagan author and magus of the later 1800s and the first half of the 1900s fabricated significant parts of their credentials, often in attempts to provide a “hallowed antiquity” to their innovative reconstructions of paganism.

Some of the fictions are easily unveiled, such as the Golden Dawn’s claims to derive its organizing structure from a committee of “secret chiefs” living in the Himalayas and directing global esoteric efforts.

Others, such as Gardner’s claims of advanced academic degrees and secret initiations, took more determined research to uncover. Yet in the end, these too fall under Hutton’s skeptical blade.

The result is a bit sad. But like a glass of cold water, it clears the palate for whatever comes next. Any future claims of recently-discovered

*continued on next page*

## Origins of Our Practices

Ronald Hutton and others have traced sources for some of our favorite practices and turns of phrase. Here are the oldest occurrences the authors have traced (from *Athlone* Volumes 5-6):

“So mote it be” — Scottish Freemason expression from about 1700.

Image of the witch as leader of popular resistance — *La Sorciere*, by Jules Michelet, 1862.

Watchtowers of the four directions — John Dee’s “Enochian” Magic, c. 1600.

Elemental tool associations (air = dagger, fire = wand, water = chalice, earth = pentacle) — Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, c. 1890.

Earliest mention of “millions of witches burned” — *Medica Sacra*, by Richard Mead, 1755. The *Athlone* series puts European witch-hunt executions at around 40,000 deaths.

Drawing-down deities (“aspecting,” in our terms) — Samuel L. Mathers of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, c. 1896, imaginatively recreating ancient Mediterranean practices.

“Coven” as a term for an assembly of witches — Scottish term from 1660s, brought into English usage by novelist Sir Walter Scott around 1830.

“Neopaganism” as a descriptive term — W.F. Barry, in *The Quarterly Review*, 1891. Barry and other Christian critics used the term to belittle the growing interest in reviving ancient paganism.

The Triple Goddess (Maiden, Mother, Crone) — proposed by Cambridge professor Jane Ellen Harrison, 1903; and propounded by James Frazer in later editions of *The Golden Bough* (final edition 1922). The intent was that a single Great Goddess lay behind the countless manifestations of specific goddesses, whose diversity could be reduced to one of the three age-related aspects of the over-arching Triple Goddess.

# Witchcraft and Magic in Europe

continued from preceding page

manuscripts, secret initiations, and the like will sound hollow.

## AMERICAN OVERSIGHTS

Hutton is less successful in dealing with North American witchcraft. His best research depends on personal trust and communications. This web breaks down when he ventures across the Atlantic, where he seems to rely on cursory readings of a few popular texts.

Thus he (grudgingly) gives California witches such as Z Budapest and Starhawk their due, but he treats them as eccentric authors, seemingly unaware that a group like Reclaiming even exists.

Which is too bad for all parties. Someone send the guy an Avalon Witchcamp flyer and clue him in.

Bruised egos aside, let's not return the favor by pretending that Hutton doesn't exist. His work is the standard by which subsequent histories will be measured, and he deserves to be carefully read as we gather the threads of our tradition.

The North American tradition is given a more sympathetic reading by authors such as Helen Berger and Owen Davies — see “More Neopagan History” on this page.

## POSTMODERN MAGIC

In the finest postmodern tradition, many authors in the Athlone series include “methodological” sections where they puzzle over what exactly they are writing about.

The consensus seems to be a structuralist paradigm in which “magic” is defined as “whatever religion and science are not.”

Through 2500 years of Western culture, magic has shown such incredible resiliency in the face of persecution and marginalization that it seems as if “magic” is necessary to the definition of key Western concepts such as “science” and “religion.”

After all, any religion worth its credo must have heresies and blasphemies to combat. To paraphrase Voltaire, if witches and magic didn't exist, the church would have to invent them.

Which it fairly well did, judging from lunatic texts such as the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* — just one of a thriving genre of witch-hunt

continued on next page

# More Neopagan History

Here are some recent works on pagan, neopagan, and magical history, plus an outstanding web resource where you can find many old magical texts in PDF format.

*The Triumph of the Moon*, by Ronald Hutton. Hutton's full-length treatment of neopagan history. Opinionated but carefully documented, particularly concerning the British background. This will be the standard text for a generation.

*Grimoires: A History of Magic Books*, by Owen Davies. Respected social historian Davies turns his meticulous gaze to grimoires and “books of shadows,” and in the process uncovers the hidden history of pulp literature. Entertaining and informative.

*Witchcraft and Magic*, edited by Helen Berger (2005). A half-dozen essays surveying various Earth-based practices, including New Age, Wiccan, and Feminist strands.

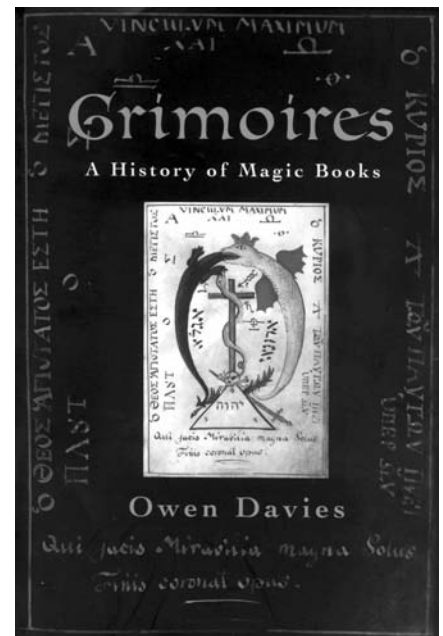
*Religions of the Hellenistic-Roman Age*, by Antonia Tripolitis (2002). Short essays on the Mystery Cults, Mithraism, Hellenistic Judaism, and early Christianity. Dry but interesting survey of paganism before Christian dominance.

*Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*, by Kurt Rudolph (1977). This careful study of the Nag Hammadi and other texts paints a complex picture of late-Roman gnosticism — a spiritual tradition without a centralized authority or dogma whose anti-material tendencies still echo today.

*Enchanted Feminism: Ritual, Gender and Divinity Among the Reclaiming Witches*, by Jone Salomonsen (2002). Salomonsen's groundbreaking study of the Reclaiming tradition of witchcraft.

*Esoteric Archives* — [www.esotericarchives.com](http://www.esotericarchives.com), coordinated by Joseph H. Peterson, is an incredible online compendium of grimoires and other magical texts. Agrippa, Trimethius, Paracelsus, Dee, Bruno, and more, all available for free download.

Is this a golden age, or what?





# Witchcraft and Magic in Europe

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manuals, seconded by lurid popular tracts detailing the horrible crimes of witches. Add a dash of torture so that the confessions matched the propaganda, and the witch-hunts appeared justified.

Through European history there have been intentional practitioners of magic, witchcraft, sorcery, and diabolism. But during the witch-hunt era their numbers and powers were never a threat to organized religion or public morals, and many executed "witches" had no connection to these practices. The demonization of witchcraft and "learned magic" served less to cleanse Christianity than to justify rampages of scapegoating violence (hardly the only

instance in European history).

By showing how "magic" as a negative category is essential to the definitions of religion and science, the structuralist view offers an explanation of the survival of magic and witchcraft to the present day — although today's witches are more likely to run afoul of scientific than religious orthodoxy, and more likely to suffer ridicule than torture.

What seems beyond any easy explanation, certainly on the narrow scale of these essays, is why witchcraft and magic today are not simply surviving, but flourishing.

In the end, it is this flowering which gives such rich meaning to the Athlone series and the wave of new studies of magic. These books are not just "history" — they are the living source of our own practices.

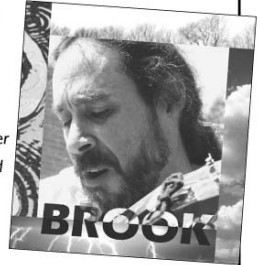
*George Franklin reads history books while commuting at high speeds under the San Francisco Bay. He was Associate Chamberlain of the Revolutionary Pagan Workers Vanguard until the last purge.*

Take equal parts driving rhythms and Pagan revival, and shake, shake, shake!

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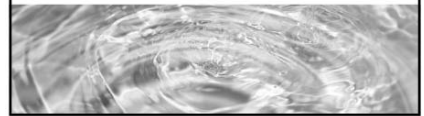
jazz to folk. The live recording...is by turns reflective, relaxing, and stirring. For listeners wanting a rootsier feel to their Pagan music, this CD and its predecessor are a great place to start."

Bill Dewey - Reclaiming Quarterly

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FOURTH BIENNIAL ALL-RECLAIMING

# DANDELION GATHERING

SALEM, MISSOURI • SEPTEMBER 8-12, 2010

Early in September of 2010, dozens, if not hundreds, of Reclaimers will gather together at the 4th biennial Dandelion gathering. This time Dandelion is in the heart of the Midwest at Diana's Grove, long-time host of Midwest Witchcamp.

*By Shauna Aura*

As my fellow organizers and I have begun to plan the fourth Dandelion Gathering we've met and talked to many people who identify as Reclaiming

witches.

Many of them ask us, "What's Dandelion?"

The Midwest organizing team has many goals, and one of them is to help Reclaimers understand what the Dandelion Gathering is.

participants.

Past gatherings have seen a host of rituals, workshops, skill-building, entertainment, coordination between groups, children's programming, social gatherings for teachers and community leaders, and lots of time to connect together as a community.

Dandelion also hosts the biennial BIRCH meeting.

## WHAT IS DANDELION?

Dandelion is a gathering of the tribes within the Reclaiming tradition which occurs every two years.

An open-format event, it has been hosted in the Southwest, the Northeast, and the Bay Area. The fourth gathering will be located in the Midwest.

The programming of Dandelion Gatherings comes together from you, the community of

## BIRCH

The Broad Inter-Reclaiming Council Hub is a meeting that takes place during Dandelion and is a format to support many voices from across the Reclaiming tradition to be heard together. The intention of this assembly is to deal with wider issues in the Reclaiming tradition, nurture seeds of connection and communication, facilitate resource-sharing and skill building, and in general offer a way for Reclaiming practitioners to come together and grow our community. The meeting is open to any Reclaiming-identified individual or group.

## HISTORY OF DANDELION AND BIRCH

How Dandelion came to be may offer some insight into the intention of the event.

Fall 2002: Having heard a call

*continued on next page*



Photographs from the first Dandelion Gathering, 2004



# DANDELION GATHERING

*continued from preceding page*

from their respective communities, the WitchCamp Spokes Council consensed to create a 4-day gathering of the tribes. The event was envisioned as a large gathering, accessible physically and financially, and open to anyone supporting the intention and the Principles of Unity. The intention was to support opportunities to manifest the community that we envision for our future, and “To celebrate, with a re-union of greater Reclaiming Community, tend the hearth, dream the future, and nurture the wild seed.”

Spring 2004: The first Dandelion Gathering was held in Texas. The event was nearly cancelled through lack of early registration, however, enough people registered, and the gathering of the tribes manifested.

2005: Spokes Council dissolved into the Witch Camp Council.

Spring 2006: Vermont hosted the second Dandelion.

Lengthy consensus meetings resulted in the creation of BIRCH as a way to hear many voices—solitaries, small communities, and large communities. BIRCH offers a structure by which all Reclaimers accepting the Principles of Unity can work together to shape the future of Reclaiming.

The BIRCH Administrative Hub was formed to manifest future meetings of BIRCH and future Dandelion Gatherings.

Spring 2008: Dandelion’s third gathering, and the first actual BIRCH meeting, was held north of San Francisco. Several working groups, also called cells or pods, were formed to carry the work between BIRCH meetings.



The current working groups listed on the Reclaiming.org BIRCH page include: Identity (as Reclaiming), Healthy Reclaiming Body (group process), Communications, Supporting Local Communities, Strengthening Wider Community, Outreach/Fostering/Welcoming, History and Lore-Keeping. Groups are open to anyone who wishes to do the work, and the groups are empowered to set membership criteria and make decisions to do their work.

## DANDELION 2010

The fourth Dandelion Gathering will occur September 8-12, 2010, with the organizing team coming from around the Midwest. This will be the second formal meeting of BIRCH.

The Midwest organizing team for D2010 is working hard to support a few goals, including:

Accessibility—making the event

*continued on next page*

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*Ortha Spingaerd, the owner of All Travel, has been a member of Reclaiming since 1997.*

*I'm the REALLY short gal (4'10") with the bun, usually reading a book if you see me on the street or the San Francisco MUNI.*

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# DANDELION GATHERING

*continued from preceding page*

as affordable and easy to get to as possible. Our outreach team will work to coordinate ride-shares and resource-sharing. If you'd like to attend the gathering, and either finances, travel, lack of camping supplies, or other obstacles hold you back, contact the Dandelion organizers for help.

**Eco-Sustainability:** Traveling long-distance has an environmental impact, and we're exploring ways to reduce that, from renting bio-fuel buses or vans for carpool to using locally-grown organic produce. We invite you to bring items from your own garden.

Most personally inspiring to me about Dandelion are connections and long-term sustainability. I'm looking forward to connecting to Reclaimers from all over. What are the challenges other communities and individuals face? What excites you about Reclaiming?

I see a tremendous opportunity for



Photograph from the first Dandelion Gathering in Texas, 2004, by Luke Hauser/RQ

Reclaimers in Dandelion/BIRCH to connect. To share resources. To look into the future. I believe that building bridges is key to sustainability.

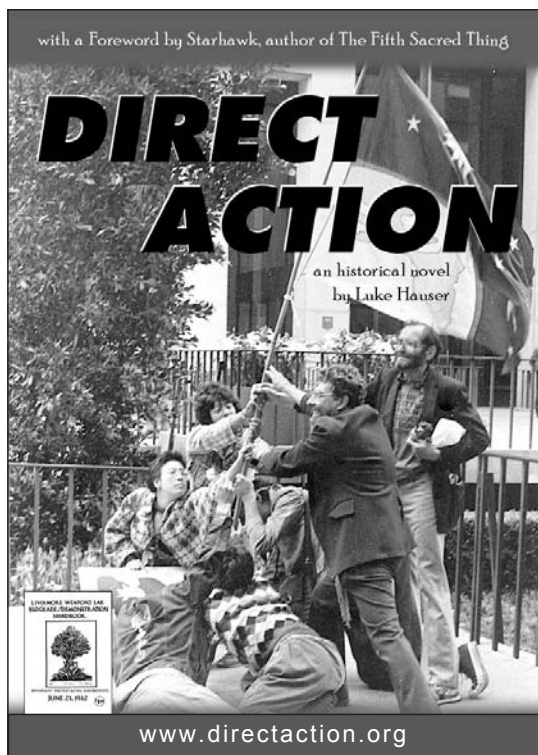
I hope that you will join us at this gathering, add your voice, tend the roots, and blow a wish on the wild seed.

*The next Dandelion Gathering will be held in Salem, Missouri from September 8-12, 2010. Anyone involved with or interested in Reclaiming can attend.*

*For more info on the 2010 Dandelion Gathering, visit [www.dandeliongathering.org](http://www.dandeliongathering.org)*

*Email: [ShaunaAura@gmail.com](mailto:ShaunaAura@gmail.com)*

*Phone: (773) 458-0170*




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[herself@machanightmare.com](mailto:herself@machanightmare.com)





# DIANA'S GROVE TO BE SOLD

*Near press time, RQ received the sad news that Diana's Grove, home of Midwest Witchcamp and other magical events, will be sold later this year. The following is excerpted from a letter by the current owners.*

Diana's Grove was founded in January 1994. The dream was to create a sanctuary where people could come to experience the world of nature free from the distractions of modern city life.

We dreamed of a place to be in touch with the natural elements and to honor wind, fire, water, and earth. We also dreamed of a community of people striving to find ways to heal self, world, and relationships.

While it might have been unrealistic — some have said impossible — we have managed to keep this dream alive with our determination, support of our community, and magic.

We've been blessed with wonderful supporters who have given their time,

energy, and money. We have also been suffering from the current economic challenges. Sadly, we have decided to make major changes before major changes are forced on us. We will be selling Diana's Grove.

We anticipate sale sometime during 2010 or 2011.

However, we are committed to being here on the land through at least November 2010. All scheduled events will be held with the same commitment and support as before.

## MYSTERY SCHOOL TO CONTINUE

Mystery School will continue, although its form will change. We have found other locations where we can gather to continue this work. We will continue seeking out the natural world as our stage for Mystery School and continue with myth, story, and transformation.

What will happen to the trees? We have no intention to sell to a logger.

What will happen to the dogs? We are working to find placement for many of the dogs currently at the Grove.

If you would like more information, please contact us.

What can you do to help? Continue to support us in our transition. Come to Diana's Grove as often as you can. Recommend our work and let people know this may be the last opportunity to experience a very special and unique place and people. Do magic for the future of the Diana's Grove Philosophy and land.

If you or anyone you know is interested in continuing the work here, contact us. We would dearly love to see Diana's Grove continue in the same or similar environmental/magical tradition.

We will plan a "grand reunion" for Fall Equinox September 17-19, open to everyone. Please join us if you can.

— Patricia and Cynthia. Contact us at [info@dianasgrove.com](mailto:info@dianasgrove.com)



## Teen Earth Magic

Teen Earth Magic 2009, in California, drew together two dozen teens and eight teachers from Reclaiming groups across North America.

The five-day retreat worked with the "Journey of the Salmon," shaping our rituals and workshops to reflect the life-cycle of this endangered local species.

### TWO TEEN EARTH MAGICS IN 2010!

The third California Teen Earth Magic retreat is planned for June 12-16, 2010. We welcome youth and young adults ages 13-25 (ages 19-25 will be part of a mentoring path).

Vermonters also plan to host a Teen Earth Magic retreat in August 2010.

For more information, contact RQ — [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)

George Franklin



# Reclaiming Pages

Information and Events in the Reclaiming Tradition

Reclaiming is a community of women and men working to unify spirit and political action.

Our vision is rooted in the religion and magic of the Goddess — the Immanent Life Force.

We see our work as teaching and making magic — the art of empowering ourselves and each other. In our classes, workshops, and public rituals, we train our voices, bodies, energy, intuition, and minds.

We use the skills we learn to deepen our strength, both as individuals and as community, to voice our concerns about the world in which we live, and to bring to birth a vision of a new culture.

The following pages highlight events sponsored by regional Reclaiming-tradition groups. Many of these groups are anchored by Reclaiming Witchcamp teachers and organizers.

While Reclaiming communities vary widely in their focus, style, and ways of organizing, all Reclaiming groups agree on the Principles of Unity (below).

## Reclaiming's Principles of Unity

“My law is love unto all beings...” — The Charge of the Goddess

The values of the Reclaiming tradition stem from our understanding that the Earth is alive and all of life is sacred and interconnected. We see the Goddess as immanent in the Earth's cycles of birth, growth, death, decay, and regeneration. Our practice arises from a deep, spiritual commitment to the Earth, to healing, and to the linking of magic with political action.

Each of us embodies the divine. Our ultimate spiritual authority is within, and we need no other person to interpret the sacred to us. We foster the questioning attitude, and honor intellectual, spiritual, and creative freedom.

We are an evolving, dynamic tradition and proudly call ourselves Witches. Honoring both Goddess and God, we work with female and male images of divinity, always remembering that their essence is a mystery which goes beyond form. Our community rituals are participatory and ecstatic, celebrating the cycles of the seasons and our lives, and raising energy for personal, collective, and Earth healing.

We know that everyone can do the life-changing, world-renewing work of magic, the art of changing consciousness at will. We strive to teach and practice in ways that foster personal and collective empowerment, to model shared power, and to open leadership roles to all. We make decisions by consensus, and balance individual autonomy with social responsibility.

Our tradition honors the wild, and calls for service to the Earth and the community. We value peace and practice non-violence, in keeping with the Rede, “Harm none, and do what you will.” We work for all forms of justice: environmental, social, political, racial, gender, and economic. Our feminism includes a radical analysis of power, seeing all systems of oppression as interrelated, rooted in structures of domination and control.

We welcome all genders, all races, all ages and sexual orientations, and all those differences of life situation, background, and ability that increase our diversity. We strive to make our public rituals and events accessible and safe. We try to balance the need to be justly compensated for our labor with our commitment to make our work available to people of all economic levels.

All living beings are worthy of respect. All are supported by the sacred elements of Air, Fire, Water, and Earth. We work to create and sustain communities and cultures that embody our values, that can help to heal the wounds of the Earth and Her peoples, and that can sustain us and nurture future generations.

*This statement of core values was developed at the Reclaiming Collective Retreat held the weekend of November 8, 1997.*



# About Reclaiming



## Reclaiming Core Classes

These classes have evolved as the “core curricula” of many, but not all, Reclaiming communities.

Elements of Magic is the basic Reclaiming class, and is taught at most Witchcamps as well as in local communities. The other three core classes, as well as many other workshops and classes, have Elements as a prerequisite.

### Elements of Magic

Deepen your vision and focus your will, empowering yourself to act in the world. Practice magic by working with the Elements: Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and Spirit. Techniques include drumming, singing, sacred dance, breath



work, visualization, sensing, projecting and raising energy, chanting, trance work, creating magical space, spell crafting, and structuring

meaningful ritual. We hope to provide a nurturing environment for all participants. Prerequisite: Read the first six chapters of *The Spiral Dance* by Starhawk.

### Iron Pentacle

The points of the Iron Pentacle name our birthrights as free beings: Sex, Pride, Self, Power, and Passion. In this class, we will explore these aspects of our own authentic energy. Six weeks. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent.



### Pentacle of Pearl

We will work with the deep, healing energies of the Pentacle of Pearl, moving through the five points: Love, Law, Wisdom, Liberty, and Knowledge. Six weeks. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent.

### Rites of Passage

Journeying into the realm of our own dreams and imaginings, we will each become the main character in our own myth. Through storytelling, trance, and dream work, we will draw forth and weave a rich tapestry of images and symbols between the worlds, to empower us in all the worlds. Six weeks. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent.

## Reclaiming Classes ~ General Information

Classes are offered in many regions (see following pages for local groups). To arrange classes in other areas, contact RQ — [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)

Classes are announced throughout the year. Visit Reclaiming’s website, [www.reclaiming.org](http://www.reclaiming.org), or see contact info for various regions in the following pages.

Although studying and practicing the Reclaiming tradition can be profoundly healing, Reclaiming classes are not a substitute for medical or psychiatric care. Teachers are not responsible for diagnosing illnesses nor for recommending treatments. Students are responsible for seeking professional help if they need it.

## Resources

How does today’s Witch-on-the-go find out more about Reclaiming?

The easiest way is to take a class, attend a ritual, or sign up for a retreat or Witchcamp.

Contacts for local communities and Witchcamps can be found on the next two pages. New groups and updated contact information can be found on the Reclaiming website, or in future issues of RQ.

Here are some more resources.

### RECLAIMING.ORG

Reclaiming’s website (and the sibling site [ReclaimingQuarterly.org](http://ReclaimingQuarterly.org)) is a great source of information — everything from history and background to photo-features of our latest organizing, from classes and rituals to samples from our music CDs.

### BOOKS

Here are some books by Reclaiming teachers that you can find in bookstores and online.

Starhawk, *The Fifth Sacred Thing*, *The Spiral Dance*, *The Earth Path*, and more

T. Thorn Coyle, *Evolutionary Witchcraft*, *Kissing the Limitless*

Starhawk, Anne Hill, & Diane Baker, *Circle Round: Raising Children in Goddess Traditions*

Starhawk & M. Macha NightMare, *The Pagan Book of Living & Dying*

Luke Hauser, *Direct Action: An Historical Novel*

David Miller, *I Didn't Know God Made Honky-Tonk Communists*

### RECORDED MUSIC

Reclaiming offers four CDs of Earth-centered chants and songs — see the back cover of this issue for more information, or visit our website.

Numerous Reclaiming teachers have also recorded CDs — Reclaiming’s CD *Witches' Brew* is a sampler of recent Reclaiming-inspired releases.

### IF ALL ELSE FAILS — CONTACT RQ

If you can't find what you're looking for — contact RQ! Our experts are standing by to answer your queries, or figure out who can.



# Reclaiming Regional Groups & Contacts

Local groups are anchored by Reclaiming teachers. RQ offers this list of kindred communities as a public service, but is not responsible for these groups. If contact info is outdated or you want us to add a group, or if you have other questions, please contact [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org), (415) 255-7623.

## Australia

Reclaimng Australia  
[www.reclaimingau.ravenhawk.net.au](http://www.reclaimingau.ravenhawk.net.au)

Melbourne Reclaiming  
[fimariposa@yahoo.com.au](mailto:fimariposa@yahoo.com.au), (03) 9384 1082

## Continental Europe

Reclaiming Réseau Francophone (France)  
[reclaiming.online.fr](http://reclaiming.online.fr)

Reclaiming Deutschland (Germany)  
[www.reclaiming.de](http://www.reclaiming.de)

Reclaiming Netherlands  
[www.reclaiming.nl](http://www.reclaiming.nl)

Phoenix Witchcamp (Germany)  
Deutsch: [www.phoenix-camp.eu](http://www.phoenix-camp.eu)  
English: [www.phoenix-camp.eu/englishhome.html](http://www.phoenix-camp.eu/englishhome.html)

European Wintercamp (Spain)  
[www.reclaimingspain.org](http://www.reclaimingspain.org)  
[m.morgaine@sie.es](mailto:m.morgaine@sie.es), (0034) 920 37 25 73  
English: [www.reclaimingspain.org/CamptextEnglish2009.htm](http://www.reclaimingspain.org/CamptextEnglish2009.htm)

## Britain

British Reclaiming  
[www.britishreclaiming.org.uk](http://www.britishreclaiming.org.uk)

West Wales  
[moonroot@uko2.co.uk](mailto:moonroot@uko2.co.uk), (+44) 01267 281414

Cambridge  
[cradle@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:cradle@globalnet.co.uk)

Devon  
[flamingirondragon@googlemail.com](mailto:flamingirondragon@googlemail.com)

Hertfordshire  
[suparnovajuce@gmail.com](mailto:suparnovajuce@gmail.com)

Nottingham  
[jeanniejonathan@aol.com](mailto:jeanniejonathan@aol.com)

Derby  
[mazmc@macunlimited.net](mailto:mazmc@macunlimited.net)

West Sussex  
[georgia.conway@btopenworld.com](mailto:georgia.conway@btopenworld.com)

Scotland  
[epredota@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:epredota@yahoo.co.uk)

Buckinghamshire  
[amhranai.annemarie@gmail.com](mailto:amhranai.annemarie@gmail.com)

Avalon Spring Witchcamp  
[www.avaloncamp.org.uk](http://www.avaloncamp.org.uk)  
[avaloncamp@gmail.com](mailto:avaloncamp@gmail.com)

## Canada

British Columbia Witchcamp Community  
[www.bcwitchcamp.ca](http://www.bcwitchcamp.ca)  
[witchcampbcinfo@gmail.com](mailto:witchcampbcinfo@gmail.com)  
(250) 598-9229

Wild Ginger (Ontario)  
[www.wildgingerwitches.org](http://www.wildgingerwitches.org)  
[margaretrossiter@rogers.com](mailto:margaretrossiter@rogers.com)  
(519) 439-6252

Fredericton (New Brunswick)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/paganrituals/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/paganrituals/)

Vancouver Reclaiming Community  
[www.vancouverreclaiming.org](http://www.vancouverreclaiming.org)

Montreal Reclaiming  
[www.cosmic-muse.com/reclaiming](http://www.cosmic-muse.com/reclaiming)

## United States

### California

San Francisco Bay Area and North Bay  
[www.reclaiming.org/rituals](http://www.reclaiming.org/rituals)  
[www.reclaiming.org/classevents](http://www.reclaiming.org/classevents)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/BAREclaiming](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BAREclaiming)  
(415) 255-7623

North Bay Reclaiming  
[NorthBayReclaiming@yahoo.com](mailto:NorthBayReclaiming@yahoo.com)

California Witchcamp  
[www.californiawitchcamp.org](http://www.californiawitchcamp.org)  
[info@californiawitchcamp.org](mailto:info@californiawitchcamp.org)  
(510) 534-9600

Witchlets in the Woods Family Camp  
[www.witchletsinthewoods.org](http://www.witchletsinthewoods.org)  
[info@witchletsinthewoods.org](mailto:info@witchletsinthewoods.org)  
(415) 946-7798 or (415) 255-7623

Indigo Artichoke Heart (Southern California: Valley/West Los Angeles/Laguna Nigel)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/IAH-Discussion](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/IAH-Discussion)

Mountain Circle (Truckee/Incline/Reno/Nevada)  
[sismhall1@aol.com](mailto:sismhall1@aol.com), (530) 546-4226

### Oregon

Portland Reclaiming  
[www.portlandreclaiming.org](http://www.portlandreclaiming.org)  
[webgeek@portlandreclaiming.org](mailto:webgeek@portlandreclaiming.org)

Free Activist Camp (Oregon/Washington)  
[www.freewitchcamp.org](http://www.freewitchcamp.org)  
[freeactivistwitchcamp@gmail.com](mailto:freeactivistwitchcamp@gmail.com)

### Washington

Turning Tide (Seattle) [www.seattlereclaiming.spiderweb.net](http://www.seattlereclaiming.spiderweb.net)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/SeattleReclaiming/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SeattleReclaiming/)

Cascadia Village Camp  
[home.comcast.net/~cascadiavillagecamp](http://home.comcast.net/~cascadiavillagecamp)  
[cascadiavillagecamp@comcast.net](mailto:cascadiavillagecamp@comcast.net)  
(206) 517-7876





# Reclaiming Regional Groups & Contacts

Local groups are anchored by Reclaiming teachers. RQ offers this list of kindred communities as a public service, but is not responsible for these groups. If contact info is outdated or you want us to add a group, or if you have other questions, please contact [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org), (415) 255-7623.

## Texas

Tejas Web (Austin)  
[www.tejasweb.org](http://www.tejasweb.org)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/tejas\\_web/](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/tejas_web/)

Tejas Web Witchcamp  
[www.witchcamp.tejasweb.org](http://www.witchcamp.tejasweb.org)  
[witchcamp@tejasweb.org](mailto:witchcamp@tejasweb.org)  
(512) 496-8034 or (210) 319-2595

## Colorado

Colorado Springs  
[www.reclaimingcoloradosprings.org](http://www.reclaimingcoloradosprings.org)

Reclaiming Spirit (Denver)  
[www.reclaimingspirit.org](http://www.reclaimingspirit.org)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/reclaimingspirit/](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/group/reclaimingspirit/)

Colorado Witchcamp  
[www.reclaimingspirit.org](http://www.reclaimingspirit.org)  
[morgans\\_insight@yahoo.com](mailto:morgans_insight@yahoo.com), (303) 618-7702

## Midwest

Dreamweaving Witchcamp (Missouri)  
[www.dreamweaving.org](http://www.dreamweaving.org)  
[camp@dreamweaving.org](mailto:camp@dreamweaving.org)  
(504) 899-5350

## Minnesota

Twin Cities Reclaiming  
[TwinCitiesReclaiming@yahoo.com](mailto:TwinCitiesReclaiming@yahoo.com)

Winter Witchcamp  
[www.winterwitchcamp.org](http://www.winterwitchcamp.org)  
[winterwitchcamp@yahoo.com](mailto:winterwitchcamp@yahoo.com)

## Michigan

Trillium Reclaiming (Southeast Michigan)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/trilliumreclaiming](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/group/trilliumreclaiming)

## Illinois

Chicago Reclaiming  
[www.chicagoreclaiming.com](http://www.chicagoreclaiming.com)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/chireclaim/](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/chireclaim/)

Weaving Women (Champaign-Urbana)  
[slvr\\_moon@ifairtrade.net](mailto:slvr_moon@ifairtrade.net)

## Tri-State

Tri-State Reclaiming (OH, KY, WV)  
[tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Tri-StateReclaiming/](http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Tri-StateReclaiming/)

## Vermont

Vermont Witchcamp  
[www.vermontwitchcamp.net](http://www.vermontwitchcamp.net)  
[information@vermontwitchcamp.net](mailto:information@vermontwitchcamp.net)  
(802) 436-3451, (603) 894-5871 or  
(413) 369-4049

## Massachusetts

Boston Area  
[qb.skraus4828@real-cheap-email.com](mailto:qb.skraus4828@real-cheap-email.com)  
(781) 658-2687

## New York

Ithaca Reclaiming  
[www.ithacareclaiming.org](http://www.ithacareclaiming.org) [soulspirals@soulspirals.net](mailto:soulspirals@soulspirals.net), (607) 227-5852  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/IthacaReclaimingCollective/](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/group/IthacaReclaimingCollective/)

Long Island Reclaiming (Suffolk County)  
[www.lireclaiming.org](http://www.lireclaiming.org)  
[asherahscauldon@msn.com](mailto:asherahscauldon@msn.com), (631) 751-3477

## New York / New Jersey / Pennsylvania

New York / New Jersey / Pennsylvania  
[NyNjPa-Reclaiming@yahoo.com](mailto:NyNjPa-Reclaiming@yahoo.com)

## Delaware Valley

Delaware Valley Reclaiming  
(PA, NJ, DE, NY - Greater Philadelphia)  
[DelValReclaiming@yahoo.com](mailto:DelValReclaiming@yahoo.com)

## Pennsylvania

Reclaiming3Rivers (Pittsburgh)  
[reclaiming3rivers@yahoo.com](mailto:reclaiming3rivers@yahoo.com)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/Reclaiming3River/](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/group/Reclaiming3River/)  
(412) 722-9117

## Maryland

Baltimore Reclaiming  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/bmorereclaiming/](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/group/bmorereclaiming/)

## Mid-Atlantic

SpiralHeart Witchcamp Community  
[www.spiralheart.org](http://www.spiralheart.org)  
[info@spiralheart.org](mailto:info@spiralheart.org), (202) 728-7510  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/group/spiralheart/](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/group/spiralheart/)

Otters of the Fae (Central Virginia)  
[ReclaimingCVA@yahoo.com](mailto:ReclaimingCVA@yahoo.com)

Dragon's Cauldron (Raleigh/Durham)  
[www.dragonscauldron.org](http://www.dragonscauldron.org)  
Elist: [groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/RTPReclaiming](mailto:groups.yahoo.com/subscribe/RTPReclaiming)

Dreamroads Witchcamp  
[www.dreamroads.com/witchcamp](http://www.dreamroads.com/witchcamp)  
[witchcamp@dreamroads.com](mailto:witchcamp@dreamroads.com). (704) 502.7674

Wild Child Camp (Chesterfield, Virginia)  
[www.spiralheart.org/events/wildchild/](http://www.spiralheart.org/events/wildchild/)

## Florida

Earthwater Glade  
[www.myspace.com/earthwaterglade](http://www.myspace.com/earthwaterglade)  
Elist: [www.groups.yahoo.com/group/earthwaterglade](mailto:www.groups.yahoo.com/group/earthwaterglade)

Magnolia Circle (Tallahassee)  
[www.magnoliacircle.org](http://www.magnoliacircle.org)  
[DragonWing56@aol.com](mailto:DragonWing56@aol.com), (850) 575-5948



# Reclaiming Witchcamps

A week of Earth-based spirituality and magic

## What Is Witchcamp?

Study magic and ritual in a week-long intensive that includes trancework, healing, drumming, dancing, chanting, storytelling, guided visualization, and energy work.

Witchcamp is offered to women and men at all levels of experience. Newcomers can learn the basic skills of magic and ritual, working with the elements, movement, sound, and the mythological and historical framework of the Goddess tradition. Advanced paths offer the chance to apply the tools of ritual to personal healing and empowerment, or to focus on taking the Craft out into the world, creating public ritual, and healing issues surrounding leadership and power.

Witchcamp is an intensive — seven days of ritual and magic designed for people who are dedicated to powerful spiritual learning experiences and personal growth. This intensive is not a festival. It will expand your unconscious awareness, push your edges, and likely change your life. The intensive is sequestered for the entire seven days. Please plan to attend the entire week.

Witchcamps were first organized for adults. Over the years, some camps have experimented with all-ages and adults-plus-teens. Contact the specific camps for more information.

## What Happens at Witchcamp?

As you might expect, a lot of magic takes place at Witchcamp. But what exactly does it look like?

The heart of Witchcamp is a series of evening rituals, often based around a myth or magical story. These rituals carry participants into the magical, emotional, and social layers of the story, and often involve deep personal work.

Morning path offers a choice of weeklong intensive workshops. Paths are a chance for more intimate magical experience, a place to ask questions and learn new skills.

For folks who are new to the Reclaiming tradition, Elements of Magic is a good introduction. For those who have already taken Elements, advanced paths focus on everything from labyrinths to the Iron Pentacle to priestessing skills to Earth activism.

Workshops, talent shows, and even the occasional free moment fill out an amazing magical week between the worlds: Reclaiming Witchcamp.

## Reclaiming Camps for Youth, Kids, & Families

Reclaiming Camps are autonomously organized, and each camp decides its own focus and policies. Some camps are adult-only, some for adults and teens, and some for all ages.

Several of the Witchcamps listed on the next page include teens and/or young folks. These camps offer special youth paths where young campers can learn magical, ecological, and group-process skills. Contact the camp for specifics.

Several Reclaiming camps are specially oriented toward families. Family Camps are all-ages retreats with a special focus on young campers. In recent years, Wild Ginger (Ontario), Cascadia (Washington), and Witchlets (California) have been family camps.

Contact specific camps to find out their focus, age range, and other details. For info on organizing a camp in your area, contact RQ.



*Witchlets in the Woods offers magic for kids, teens, and adults. Photo: Loki Rainman*



# Witchcamps

## in the Reclaiming Tradition

Most camps are annual — some are biennial. Dates are approximate. Some camps include teens and/or children (marked with an asterisk\* below).

For current dates, contact the camp or [www.Witchcamp.org](http://www.Witchcamp.org)

Many of these camps are camper-organized. If you want to see a Witchcamp happen in your area, one way is to attend an established camp and talk with teachers and organizers.



**Winter Witchcamp (Minnesota)** • February  
[www.winterwitchcamp.org](http://www.winterwitchcamp.org), [winterwitchcamp@yahoo.com](mailto:winterwitchcamp@yahoo.com)

**Winter Witchcamp (Spain)** • February-March  
[www.reclaimingspain.org](http://www.reclaimingspain.org), [m.morgaine@sie.es](mailto:m.morgaine@sie.es), (0034) 920 37 25 73

**Avalon Spring (England)** • April  
[www.avaloncamp.org.uk](http://www.avaloncamp.org.uk), [avaloncamp@gmail.com](mailto:avaloncamp@gmail.com)

**MidWest (Missouri)** • June  
[www.dreamweaving.org](http://www.dreamweaving.org), [camp@dreamweaving.org](mailto:camp@dreamweaving.org), (504) 899-5350

**Teen Earth Magic (Northern California)\*** • June  
[www.reclaimingquarterly.org/web/tem/](http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/web/tem/), [george@directaction.org](mailto:george@directaction.org), (415) 509-0139

**Wild Ginger Family Camp (Ontario)\*** • June  
[www.wildgingerwitches.org](http://www.wildgingerwitches.org), [margaretrossiter@rogers.com](mailto:margaretrossiter@rogers.com), (519) 439-6252

**California (Mendocino Woodlands)** • June-July  
[www.californiawitchcamp.org](http://www.californiawitchcamp.org), [info@californiawitchcamp.org](mailto:info@californiawitchcamp.org), (510) 534-9600

**Cascadia Village Camp (Washington)\*** • July  
[home.comcast.net/~cascadiavillagecamp](http://home.comcast.net/~cascadiavillagecamp), [cascadiavillagecamp@comcast.net](mailto:cascadiavillagecamp@comcast.net), (206) 517-7876

**Free Activist Camp (Oregon/Washington)\*** • July-August  
[freewitchcamp.org](http://freewitchcamp.org), [andrew.paik@verizon.net](mailto:andrew.paik@verizon.net), (310) 570-3662

**Colorado** • July  
[www.reclaimingspirit.org](http://www.reclaimingspirit.org), [morgans\\_insight@yahoo.com](mailto:morgans_insight@yahoo.com), (303) 618-7702

**SpiralHeart (MidAtlantic)** • August  
[www.spiralheart.org](http://www.spiralheart.org), [info@spiralheart.org](mailto:info@spiralheart.org), (202) 728-7510

**Witchlets in the Woods (California)\*** • August  
[www.witchletsinthewoods.org](http://www.witchletsinthewoods.org), [info@witchletsinthewoods.org](mailto:info@witchletsinthewoods.org), (415) 946-7798

**British Columbia** • August  
[bcwitchcamp.ca](http://bcwitchcamp.ca), [witchcampbcinfo@gmail.com](mailto:witchcampbcinfo@gmail.com), (250) 598-9229

**Dreamroads (North Carolina)\*** • August  
[www.dreamroads.com/witchcamp](http://www.dreamroads.com/witchcamp), [witchcamp@dreamroads.com](mailto:witchcamp@dreamroads.com), (704) 502.7674

**Vermont\*** • August-September  
[www.vermontwitchcamp.net](http://www.vermontwitchcamp.net), [information@vermontwitchcamp.net](mailto:information@vermontwitchcamp.net), (802) 436-3451, (603) 894-5871 or (413) 369-4049

**Phoenix (Germany)** • September  
Deutsch: [www.phoenix-camp.eu](http://www.phoenix-camp.eu)  
English: [www.phoenix-camp.eu/englishhome.html](http://www.phoenix-camp.eu/englishhome.html)

**Texas\*** • October  
[www.witchcamp.tejasweb.org](http://www.witchcamp.tejasweb.org), [witchcamp@tejasweb.org](mailto:witchcamp@tejasweb.org), (512) 496-8034 or (210) 319-2595

\* means camp has included children and/or teens some years. Contact camps for more info.



Photos from top: Robin Parrott;  
Randy Ralston; Otter



# The Wheel of the Year

Reclaiming groups celebrate rituals in many locales across North America, Europe, and Australia. Some groups observe the entire Neo-Pagan Wheel of the Year, while others meet less frequently. To find out what's happening in your region (or halfway around the world), visit [www.Reclaiming.org](http://www.Reclaiming.org) — if no internet, call (415) 255-7623.

All Reclaiming events are clean and sober. No alcohol or drugs, please.

## Samhain

The holiday popularly known as Halloween is the time of year known to Witches as Samhain, when the veil is thin between the worlds of the living and the dead. We gather to remember and honor our ancestors, our Beloved Dead, and all those who have crossed over. As we mourn for those we love who have died this year, we also mourn the losses and pain suffered by the Earth, our Mother. Yet even as we grieve we also remember and honor the sacred cycle of life, death, rebirth and regeneration, celebrating the births of our children born this year, and our own vital connections to the Earth and each other, in which we ground our hope.

## Winter Solstice

This is the night of Solstice, the longest night of the year. We watch for the coming of dawn, when the Great Mother again gives birth to the Sun, who is bringer of hope and the promise of summer. This is the stillness behind motion, when time itself stops; the center which is also the circumference of all. We are awake in the night. We turn the Wheel to bring the light. We call the sun from the womb of night.

## Brigid/Candlemas/Imbolc

This is the feast of the waxing light. What was born at the Solstice begins to manifest, and we who were midwives to the infant year now see the days grow visibly longer. This is the time of individuation: within the measures of the spiral, we each bring our own light, and become uniquely ourselves. It is the time of initiation, of beginning, when seeds that will later sprout and grow begin to stir from their deep sleep. We meet to share the light of inspiration, which will grow with the growing year.

## Spring Equinox

This is the time of Spring's return; the joyful time, the seed time, when life bursts forth from the earth and the chains of Winter are broken. Light and dark are equal: it is a time of balance, when all the elements within us must be brought into a new harmony. Kore, the Dark Maiden, returns from the Land of the Dead, cloaked in the fresh rain, with the sweet scent of desire on her breath. As She dances, despair turns to hope, want to abundance, and we sing:

She changes everything She touches,  
And everything She touches, changes

In many locales, children are a special part of this ritual, and a hunt for colored eggs follows.

## Beltane/May Day

This is the time when sweet desire weds wild delight. The Maiden of Spring and the Lord of the Waxing Year meet in the greening fields and rejoice together under the warm sun. The shaft of life is twined in a spiral web, and all of nature is renewed. We meet in the time of flowering, to dance the dance of life.

## Summer Solstice

This is the time of the rose: blossom and thorn, fragrance and blood. Now on the longest day of the year, light triumphs, and yet begins to decline into dark. So the Lord of Light dies Himself, and sets sail across the dark seas of time, searching for the isle of light that is rebirth. We turn the Wheel and share his fate, for we have planted the seeds of our own changes, and to grow we must accept even the passing of the sun.

## Lammas

We stand now between hope and fear, in the time of waiting. In the fields, the grain is ripe but not yet harvested. We have worked hard to bring many things to fruition, but the rewards are not yet certain. Now the Mother becomes the Reaper, the Implacable One who feeds on life that new life may grow. Light diminishes, the days shorten, summer passes. We gather to turn the Wheel, knowing that to harvest we must sacrifice, and warmth and light must pass into Winter.

## Fall Equinox

This is the time of harvest, of thanksgiving and joy, of leave-taking and sorrow. Now day and night are equal, in perfect balance, and we give thought to balance and flow within our own lives. The Sun King has become the Lord of Shadows, sailing West: we follow Him into the dark. Life declines; the season of barrenness is on us, yet we give thanks for that which we have reaped and gathered. We meet to turn the Wheel and weave the cord of life that will sustain us through the dark.

## A Note on Terminology

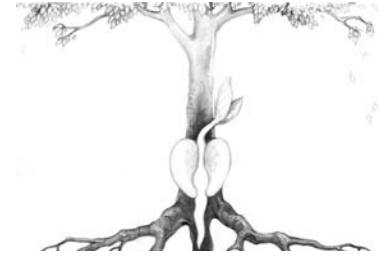
Local communities use different names for some of the sabbats. RQ uses the neutral terms "Equinox" and "Solstice" to honor the fact that these are holidays of the Earth Herself, not of any one culture. We often call the cross-quarters by Celtic names.

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*Descriptions are adapted from "The Spiral Dance," by Starhawk, ©1989, Harper San Francisco.*



# Reclaiming Regional News



## RQ Archives ~ old RQs on the way

Reclaiming Quarterly celebrates our 100th edition by beginning to re-issue our complete archives, going back to the first Reclaiming Newsletter in Winter 1980-81.

The archives will be re-issued as high-resolution PDF files. You'll be able to see and read every page of the original issues exactly as they appeared — stories, pictures, class and event listings, ads, ink-smudges...

You'll also be able to print entire issues or any pages you want for off-screen reading.

In addition, every ten-issue volume will contain bonus features such as photographs, flyers, introductory and reflective essays, audio recordings, humor and satire, and more.

RQ will place selected highlights on our website. But the sheer quantity of material means most of the archives will be available only on disks.

The entire 100-issue archives, along with many special features, are available by subscription — with a discount for current RQ subscribers. Visit our website for details.

*To see highlights and advance features, visit our website — [www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/](http://www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/)*

## Reclaiming Australia

From the earliest roots of Reclaiming, solitary witches, pagans, and several covens have been practising the Reclaiming Tradition in Australia (*See article, RQ#99*). Our vast land mass and our isolation from one another and the rest of the world has meant a delay in forming a cohesive group.

Individuals from several states worked together to establish Southern Earth Reclaiming, a Facebook site, and the Reclaiming Australia Discussion List (RADL). These sites aided networking and inspired interest in developing an Australian Reclaiming network.

In September 2009, a core group from four different areas met to birth Reclaiming Australia. A strong magical bond, stemming from our common foundation in the Reclaiming Principles of Unity, quickly developed between us.

We are inspired to spread the Reclaiming tradition, adding our unique flavour, mindful of the land we live in. We are excited by the prospect of hosting Witchcamps here. Distance has made it difficult to access international teachers, but we believe that the energy we generate will encourage teachers to visit this ancient land of Australia.

For more information, visit [www.reclaimingau.ravenhawk.net.au](http://www.reclaimingau.ravenhawk.net.au)  
— *Greenlilith, Margi Curtis and Jane Meredith for Reclaiming Australia*

## Ontario's Wild Ginger Magic for All Ages

Wild Ginger, an all-ages camp set in the Honeywood Spring watershed on the Niagara Escarpment of Ontario, worked in 2009 with Robert Munch's story, "The Paper Bag Princess," exploring themes of privilege, our relationship with nature, feminism, and dragons.

For more information, you can join the Wild Ginger Community list serve at Yahoogroups, or contact Airmid McBride about registration at [connieboles@sympatico.ca](mailto:connieboles@sympatico.ca)

Hawthorne Mystery School in southwestern Ontario has been operating for a couple of years. We have recently sponsored a two-year training program with Thorn Coyle. In addition to Reclaiming classes in Elements and Pentacle of Iron, we are crafting offerings for individual study, spiritual mentoring (Hecate's Lantern), and classes to help fill your magical tool kit (ritual creation, tarot, creativity). Contact [www.hawthornemysteryschool.com](http://www.hawthornemysteryschool.com) or (519) 438-8208.

— *Selchie / Wild Ginger*

## San Francisco Rituals 2010

*All dates tentative — please check website below for final plans.*

Brigid Saturday January 30 (Cellspace)

Spring Saturday March 20 (GG Park)

Beltane Saturday May 1 (GG Park)

Summer Monday June 21 (Ocean Beach)

Others TBA

San Francisco ritual dates are posted at [www.reclaiming.org/rituals](http://www.reclaiming.org/rituals). For email reminders, contact [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)

## Bay Area Class Listings Now Online

Visit [www.reclaiming.org](http://www.reclaiming.org) ~ RQ welcomes feedback on new listings

Reclaiming Bay Area teachers offer core classes (see page 43) plus courses in spellwork, music and drumming, meditation, permaculture, tarot, astrology, dreamwork, and many other topics.

Classes are offered in San Francisco, East Bay, North Bay, and occasionally in the South Bay and Central Valley.

Reclaiming teachers often team up with other teachers to bring a variety of approaches to their classes.

In past issues, RQ carried a roster of upcom-

ing Reclaiming classes. However, our last reader survey strongly supported listing classes online-only. See below for web-link.

If you don't have internet access, and using cafés or libraries is not an option, you can call RQ, (415) 255-7623, and we'll try to help.

For an up-to-date listing of Bay Area classes, rituals, retreats, and other events, visit [www.reclaiming.org/classevents/](http://www.reclaiming.org/classevents/)

Contacts for other regions can be found at [www.reclaiming.org/worldwide](http://www.reclaiming.org/worldwide)

## Mayans Discover Calendar Error

### End-of-World Snafu Corrected

*The Dzibilchaltun Daily Pyramid*, official organ of the Mayan church hierarchy, has revealed that the prediction of the end of civilization, previously scheduled for December 21, 2012, has been moved back 200 years.

“We were sure that the ancient cosmological calendar was ending,” confessed an embarrassed Mayan spokesperson. “But it turned out that someone mislabeled the next 200 years, so we thought they had already happened. We have corrected this oversight, and the end of the world is now scheduled for December 21, 2212. We apologize for any inconvenience.”

The North American metaphysical industry, which was riding a wave of interest in the 2012 Mayan prophecy, immediately crashed. “For us, this *is* the end of the world,” lamented one editor.

### WORLD ALREADY OVER?

Meanwhile, the Mystical Blood Rose Fellowship, a Rosicrucian splinter group which had predicted the end of the world for 2010, has also revised its prediction.

“We examined the signs again,” said High Prognosticator Lucifer “Larry” Hieronymous. “It seems we were off by 30 years. The world actually ended in 1980. It’s over. Done. Kaput. Go Home.”

### RPWV Archives at RQ.org

In an exclusive scoop, RQ offers a complete reprint of past editions of the Revolutionary Pagan Workers’ Vanguard, along with several other satirical features from our pages! Visit [www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org](http://www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org)

## Reclaiming Unveils New Official History

Stung by criticism that its history was “boring” and “mundane,” Reclaiming has released a new official account of its founding to coincide with the 30th Anniversary of the Spiral Dance ritual.

Gone are the folksy tales of a small work-group of witches meeting in a San Francisco attic to create the first Spiral Dance.

Reclaiming, it turns out, is a lineal descendant of the original Golden Dawn group, and also of the Rosicrucians, Templars, Freemasons, and the 1920s German Expressionist art movement.

In 1979, Neo-Wiccan prophet Gerald Gardner himself appeared in a vision to Reclaiming’s founding coven and called for the organizing of an annual Samhain ritual, to be held in a roller-derby arena (Gardner was a fan of

the San Francisco Bay Bombers). After many years of struggle, Reclaiming fulfilled Gardner’s dream when the Spiral Dance relocated to Kezar Pavilion in the early 2000s.

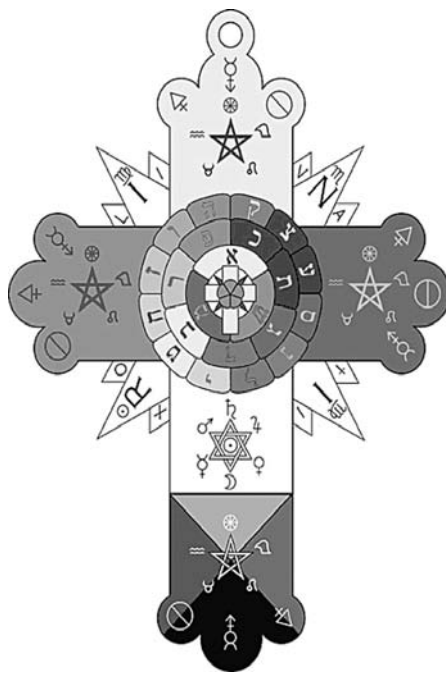
### PARACELSUS & ZOROASTER

Paracelsus, it has been discovered, wrote Reclaiming’s Principles of Unity. Newly-translated documents confirm that the German mage foretold a “groupe of anarchistical witches in Californie whych shall Reclaym the True Faithe” and devoted his last years to outlining the founding tenets.

Perhaps more surprising is Persian prophet Zoroaster’s assertion that at the “turning of the greate wheele” (i.e., the millennium), secular authorities would launch a wave of persecution against the “deare ones” – a clear allusion to the San Francisco beach police’s harassment of Reclaiming’s solstice bonfires. (In a troubling footnote, Zoroaster forecast a thousand years of persecution before the “deare ones” triumph. If he was correct, the Solstice fires may be under pressure for another 996 years or so.)

The new official history offers many fascinating revelations, such as the fact that most of Reclaiming’s chants were co-authored by the infamous Aleister Crowley, and that archeologist Marija Gimbutas unearthed paleolithic goddess-relics with Reclaiming’s PO Box number (14404) carved into them.

Not all the news was positive. Recent research has debunked claims that thousands of early Reclaiming witches suffered persecution for their faith. After exhaustive archival analysis, the only evidence uncovered was a couple of parking tickets from an Equinox ritual, and an anecdotal account of a really painful paper-cut while collating the newsletter.



*The Golden Cross of the Rosy Dawn — just one of many artifacts now known to prophecy the coming of Reclaiming. The “R” in the lower left clearly foretells the group, as do the pentacles.*



# ReclaimingQuarterly.

Current RQ website features include:

Sound-samples from Reclaiming Music and Chant CDs

Five-Minute Labyrinth\*

Witchcamp Chants Book

Pagan Cluster at the School of the Americas\*

Clown Anarchy\*

Pagan Pride Parade\*

Witches Opposing War\*

Garden Lockdown at Reclaim the Commons\*

Revolutionary Pagan Workers Vanguard and other humor

Back-issue archives

Links to Reclaiming rituals, classes, and Witchcamps

(\* - RQ online photo-features)

## Subscribe & Renew Online

You can subscribe or renew to RQ using PayPal, or print a form and mail us a check. Or both!

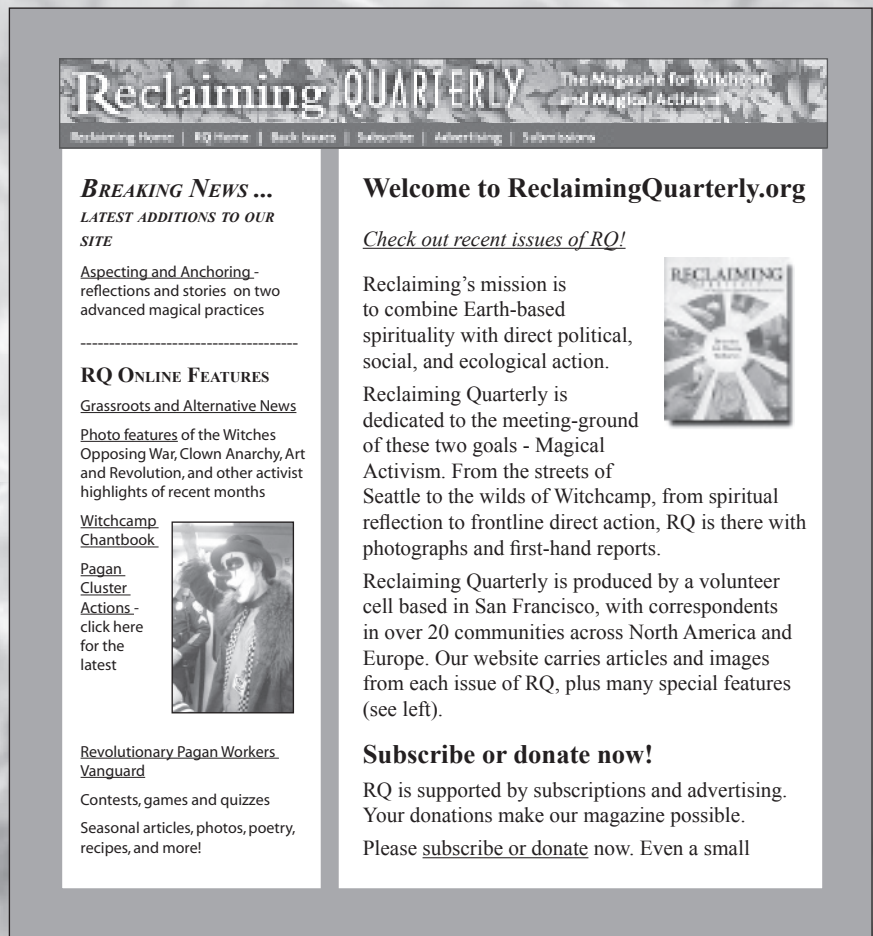
## Help Shape the Site

Help us create a site that you want to visit regularly. Send us your feedback and suggestions ~

## A website for all of Reclaiming!

Whether you're a Pagan Cluster activist, a solitary, a Witchcamper, part of a circle or coven in the far-flung Reclaiming network ~ whatever brings you to RQ ~ this is your website!

Stay connected to Reclaiming ~ bookmark this site and visit it often.



The screenshot shows the website's header with the title "Reclaiming QUARTERLY" and the subtitle "The Magazine for Witchcraft and Magical Activism". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "Reclaiming Home", "RQ Home", "Back issues", "Subscribe", "Advertising", and "Submissions".

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a "BREAKING NEWS ..." section with the sub-heading "LATEST ADDITIONS TO OUR SITE". It lists "Aspecting and Anchoring - reflections and stories on two advanced magical practices" and "RQ ONLINE FEATURES" which includes "Grassroots and Alternative News" (with a sub-heading "Photo features of the Witches Opposing War, Clown Anarchy, Art and Revolution, and other activist highlights of recent months") and "Witchcamp Chantbook". There is a small image of a person in a hat and a "Pagan Cluster Actions - click here for the latest" link. Below this is "Revolutionary Pagan Workers Vanguard" with a sub-heading "Contests, games and quizzes" and "Seasonal articles, photos, poetry, recipes, and more!".

The right column has a "Welcome to ReclaimingQuarterly.org" section. It includes a link "Check out recent issues of RQ!" and a small image of the magazine cover. The text describes the mission: "Reclaiming's mission is to combine Earth-based spirituality with direct political, social, and ecological action." It states that the website is dedicated to the meeting-ground of these two goals - Magical Activism. It mentions that the website carries articles and images from each issue of RQ, plus many special features (see left). At the bottom of this column is a "Subscribe or donate now!" section with the text: "RQ is supported by subscriptions and advertising. Your donations make our magazine possible. Please subscribe or donate now. Even a small

## OTHER RECLAIMING WEBSITES

### Reclaiming.org

One-stop web resource for all of Reclaiming — links to groups across North America and Europe, classes, rituals, Witchcamps, elists, plus articles

### Witchcamp.org

Get information on each of Reclaiming's Witchcamps and family camps. Reclaiming camps are held in over a dozen locations across North America and in Western Europe.

### PaganCluster.org

Link up with the ever-evolving group of Reclaiming folks and other Pagans who join together to do magic, direct action, permaculture, protest, and other grassroots activism.



# Music from Reclaiming

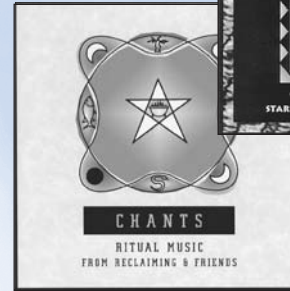
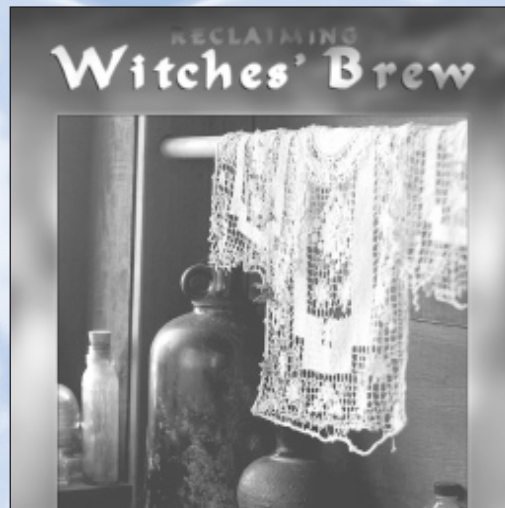
Songs, chants, and meditation music  
for rituals, personal practice, and just listening

Our latest CD is *Witches' Brew: Songs and Chants from the Reclaiming Cauldron*, featuring songs by over a dozen Reclaiming teachers and musicians.

Included are chants for rituals and classes, meditation music for personal or class use, and inspirational songs.

Featuring music by:

Evelie Posch • Evergreen Erb  
Green & Root • T. Thorn Coyle  
Danielle Rosa • David Miller  
Skyclad • Suzanne Sterling  
Jeffrey Alphonsus Mooney  
Beverly Frederick • Brook • Crow



## Coming Soon

- Chants for Kids (fun for everyone)
- Ritual Chants (a new compilation of recent chants from classes and Witchcamps)

Samples and online ordering at [www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org](http://www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org)  
Mail orders — \$16 per copy to RQ at PO Box 14404, San Francisco CA 94114

# RECLAIMING QUARTERLY

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