

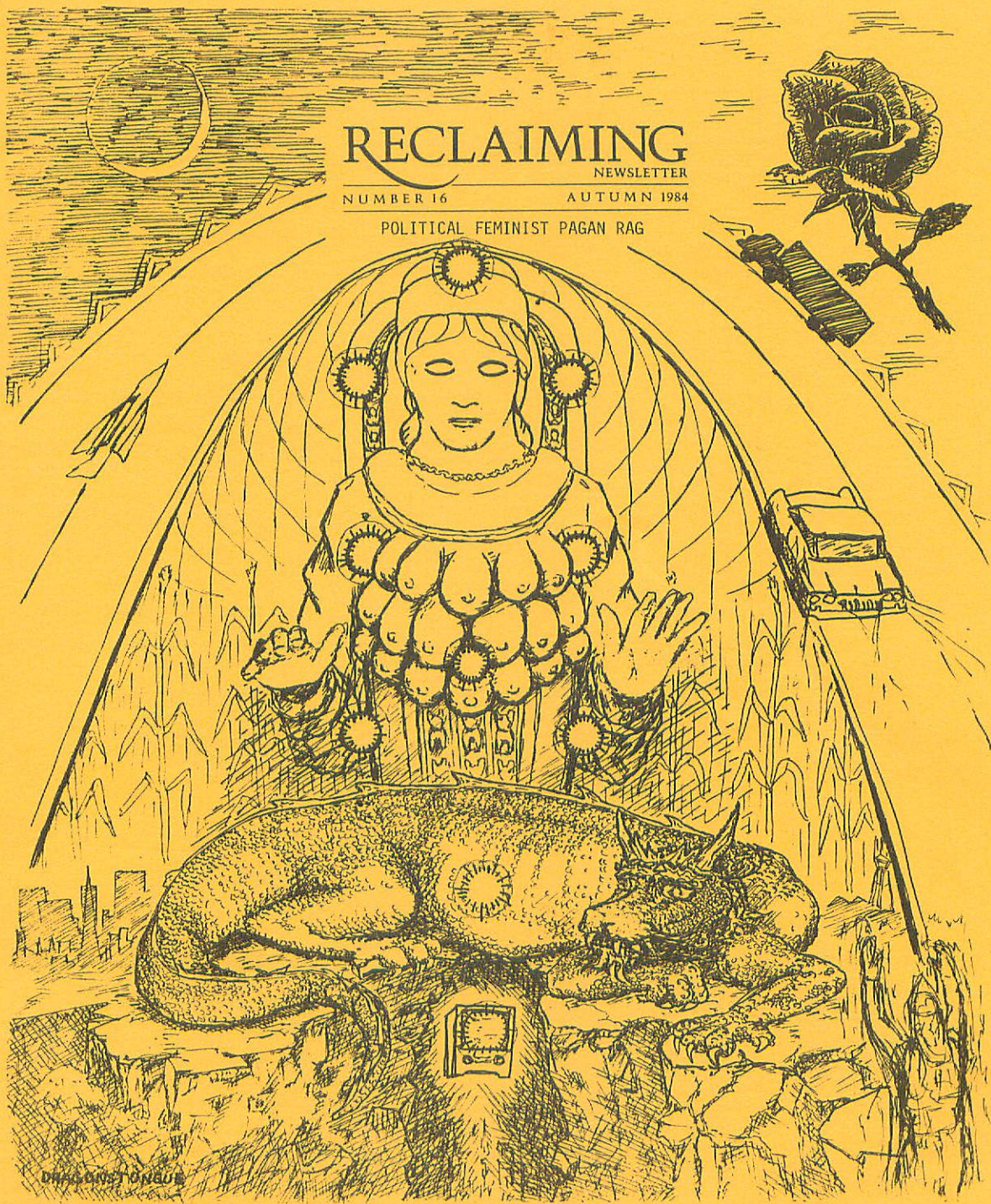
RECLAIMING

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 16

AUTUMN 1984

POLITICAL FEMINIST PAGAN RAG



DRAUGHTON

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THE NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is a forum for Reclaiming feelings, opinions, facts and controversy. The publication reflects the spirit of the people involved in it and the content of the submissions. If you want it to meet your needs - PARTICIPATE! There is no official membership - the magazine is open to anyone who identifies (or disagrees) with the struggle to unify spirit and politics.

Our production group is currently coordinated by an open group that rotates responsibility. Decisions are made by the entire work group. We always need more members to report, do graphics, typing, layout, bulk mailing, etc. Feel free to come and join us or send in your contribution.

SUBMISSIONS

Anyone who submits work is responsible for getting it to the work group in time for layout. The closer to layout you come, the more camera ready the work must be (typed with a carbon ribbon in an 8" column). We will not take responsibility for chasing down late material.

The Winter Newsletter deadline is November 15. Call EVENTS LINE 547-4830 (number may change this quarter) for editorial meeting and layout dates. Send material to RECLAIMING, P.O. Box 14404, SF., CA 94114, marked "Newsletter".

LETTERS AND GRAPHICS

We really appreciate your responses. Don't be discouraged if we don't have room to print what you write straight away or if we have to edit to make space. If you feel we have misrepresented you, please say so.

We are short on interesting graphics. If you draw or have photographs or illustrations you'd like to see included, send them to us. WE NEED ART!!!!!!

This issue was put together by Rose May Dance, Roy, and Dragonstongue. These people worked hard during the beautiful weather over Labor Day weekend. Love them. *yea!*

About the cover: The Goddess is the kabbalistic tree of life. The most material (lowest) station of the tree has been absorbed by TV. The veils of non-being surround her, but in this vision even they are touched by technology. Blessed be. Dragonstongue.

EVENTS LINE will be in transition this quarter. There may be a new number and/or a one-month gap in service. Please try the old number (547-4830). We'll let the community know about changes as quickly as we can. Usually, Events Line is a phone recording to announce events which happen too late to be included in the newsletter. Some are sponsored by Reclaiming, while others come via the grapevine. To put something on the Events Line, leave a message on our machine. Be sure to include your number.

WE DON'T NEED THE MEN: INVOKING THE GOD: A Meditation

Where there is fear there is power,
Passion is the healer.
Desire cracks open the gate,
If you're ready,
It will take you through.



— chant written for the 1984 summer solstice ritual
by Reclaiming class

We don't need the men (2x)
We don't need to have them 'round, except for now and then.
They can come to see us when we need to move the piano
Otherwise they can stay at home and read about the White Sox.

— Malvina Reynolds song (frequently heard being sung by my 11 year old
son, Yarrow, on a recent trip to Death Valley by members of Matrix
and friends)

I wrote the following meditation—though it was never used there—for the class on political ritual Starhawk & I just taught. The class was to create a summer solstice ritual & there was a difficult discussion about the role of the god that we seemed to be avoiding. Sensing the resistance, Starhawk & I came to realize we were dealing implicitly with some of the confusing sexual debates that have been taking place within the Reclaiming community at least since Beltane 1983. More generally, at the heart of the discussion our class was avoiding was the question as to the role of the god in goddess-centered spirituality. As we reclaim & re-create the myths, how are we to understand male sexuality—especially in relation to female sexuality? No inconsequential questions to be asking in the Spring of 1984. We weren't sure if our plans in the fifth class (out of six—like I say, we were avoiding the topic) to talk about the god would come easily—at least some people in the class, it was clear, were not comfortable working with the male aspect—& so we planned, as a back-up, twin meditations on the goddess & god to use if necessary.

I both feared & welcomed the chance to guide such a meditation. Like many men I certainly did not survive the 70's & years of working in political organizations which called themselves feminist with a very clear image of male culture, iconography, or sexuality I felt comfortable with. I suspected I was not the only one. Certainly talk of the "male mysteries" in whatever men's magical groups I've been in were almost always dominated by nervous jokes. I also knew precisely because it was scary for me, it was important to do: where there is fear there is power—& of course there is nothing like eroticism to summon up such awesome amounts of both.

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Invoking the God: a Tree Meditation

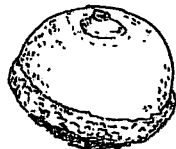
Imagine your self as an acorn, on a high branch
in an oak tree somewhere near the coast of California.
It is a fall day, sunny, on your hill it has been raining
on & off the past week. Towards night a wind comes in
off the ocean; there are strong gusts & you fall
to the earth.



Lying on the ground, rained on, pressing your sharp end
into the earth & where you touch the earth feels good,

damp & cool beneath you, soft, yielding.

Over a period of time slowly you penetrate her, into her coolness,
& the earth wraps herself around you,
 lying there in her embrace, in her energies,
& your fires rise, so you feel your self opening up, bursting forth,
spilling insides out
as your hard outer membrane dissolves.



Feel your self dying as seed, lying unseen in the ground,
 in the mother,
 silent but active, organizing
 & being formed: taking cellular form
 forming patterns
 patterning energy

After long time of activity that unseen, silent,
you burst forth out of earth

A tiny shoot

soft, very fragile looking, having to contend with shading from
bigger plants & insects & fungi that sap you

&

living in a vibrant community of the birds, insects, animals, rains,
winds, fires, lightning, streams, fish, cycles of the seasons . . . &
people

Feel the warmth of spring, drinking her waters; the searing heat of summer;
the darkening rains of fall & winter.

Surviving. & living though years of little rain growing tall,
 abundant rain; ever stronger,
 clouds, & straighter,
 too much sun a tiny shoot

growing up & sending out past little swirls of energy & form small
branches & tiny leaves which spread out to drink as
much of the sun's energy & the air & the dew & rain & animal
breath as they can, seeking out the angles & the
branchings to take advantage of the play of light &
shadow, wet & dry, the dance of life around them

dancing in the winds embrace

to seek what you need
& take what you get

Until the shoot that is you begins to look like a tree
growing tall into the sky, taking on a role against the horizon,
while underground roots interpenetrate with those other trees, bushes, the
 burrows of animals, the mosses, fungi, bacteria,
taking comfort & pleasure in intertwining with your brother oaks.
In the larger community you form with them & all of life:
nesting in you, nibbling of you, worshipping you.

As you send your roots deeper, to bring up drink & food from the storehouse of
the mother

& as you send your roots into the rich earth, into the past, you find root in
the future as well:

On your branches little buds form amongst the sharp-lobed leaves
& in time grow larger, take on a complexity of structure
& burst forth as beautiful small flowers

& the birds & insects enter to drink
& frolic

So that out of the flowers emerge
long hard candle-like seeds, yellow-orange
in color & capped with a hard dome. Swelling
until an inch or more long
hard
filled with energy
& delight

& dancing in the winds, on your hill, till the
winds & rain & time take those seeds from you, scattering them

where some of them grow beneath you
beside you
around you

& some, taken by animals & fertilized by their shit,

go over the hill
down the stream &
into different valleys

& it gives you pleasure
(& sometimes pain)

& one winter night
in the middle of a violent storm
the winds howling around you
birds taking shelter in your overgrown branches:

Lightning flashes through the skies

& strikes low on your trunk

& you fall
split open
never to heal
your leaves turning brown & falling to the ground as the bonds of life let go
your wood no longer grows
but gets soft, crumbles, chunks of it eaten by
insects & birds, & the elements, & you slowly

fall into the earth
to feed the shoots of new trees.



David Kubrin
June 7, 1984

© 1984

Invitation to Invoke the God on Samhain



I would join your circle -
Do you know me?

I am Lord of Death.
Blood and Bone and the steady stare of empty sockets,
I am the shattered Dream, the Promise unfulfilled
And the guiding Wisdom of long-lost friends and Ancients.
I am not Death without Dignity, Death without Purpose.
The battlefields and the slaughterhouses
Are not of my choosing.

I am the Consort.
Lover of Women and Men, loved as Woman and Man,
I am the frenzied pounding of the giant drums
And the stroke of gentle fingers on an ancient harp.
I recognize the Wisdom of those who deny me
And the bloodied thighs and broken skulls
Are not of my choosing.

I am the Horned One.
Hunter and hunted, brother to Artemis,
I am her pupil, her mentor, her bow-carrier;
I am her piercing Shaft and the Stag she slays.
I ask forgiveness of the Spirits I free
And the endless plains of rotting Bison
Were not of my choosing.

I am Goddess-born.
Friend, lover, phallus, extension, living part of Her,
I am the first-wetted fingers of the Virgin
And the wart on the nose of the dying Crone.
Tonight I return to Her and the Circle closes.
My birth will give me Strength to fight
Things not of my choosing.

I am Lord of the Dance.
Brother, Prankster, Merrymaker, Fool, Dying One,
I come to share my Deathdance with you.
Though tears burn furrows in my cheeks
I am strong, proud, unafraid. I am loved
And these yearly cycles of Death and Rebirth
Are of my choosing.

I would join your circle -
Will you call me in?

(To be delivered with full gestures and movement
and followed by an appropriate chant or noisemaking.)

Craig McLaughlin



BLACKBIRD INVOCATION

Sun
shine on dusty city sidewalks,
the blackbird's daughter
crying to be freed.
Feed me! Feed me!
dark shining father,
the blackbird's brother,
crying to be free.

Dark shining father,
song of joy and sadness,
illusion and illumination,
madness of the free.
Feed us, teach us
joy of life within us,
hungry screeching blackbird,
shaman of the seed.

Wind
blow over tar and gravel rooftops,
dry summer grasses,
blighted city trees;
rattling panes
of dusty city windows,
windows where a soul grows
reaching with the trees.

Dark shining father . . .

Turning of the year
brings new chains to be broken,
love spells to be spoken
with sisters of the sea.
Waves
throw your souls against the sea wall,
endless life and endless death,
endless rolling sea.

Dark shining father . . .

Turning with the stars,
turning from the grave's dark,
blackbird be within us
wisdom of the seed.
Earth
feed all dancers where the winds blow,
dancers where the weeds grow,
tenders of the seed.

Dark shining father . . .

-Dragonstongue

Two thousand years
the sacrificed son-god
hangs dying in the sun
flesh stretching on the spikes
blood dripping on and on and on...



"The Mother demands no sacrifice..."

Father, Your empty image haunts the darkening sky
Your voice is a rusty whisper
the winds swallow Your Word

"The Mother demands no sacrifice..."
but the winds scream for blood
though not of lamb, nor man

Father, Your brittle desert blood
crumbles like artificial stone...
beyond righteous walls seas throb
scouring Your gold and silver bones to sand
to nourish green tangles of vine
and reptiles

"The Mother demands no sacrifice..."
but...

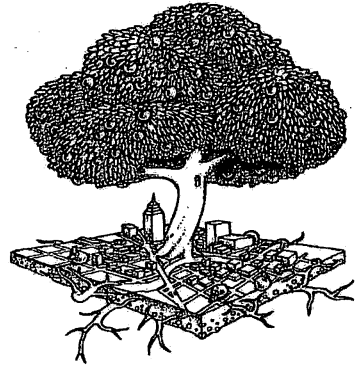
In the rich stench of swamps
insects sing of your death

Life blood runs from the wombs of women
down the warm legs of dancing women
spatters red in the dust with tears and ritual drumming

The air grows dense
the sun dims
polar ice thickens
and descends

Father, Your incense yet burns
in the tombs of doomed cities
as machines whine and men scheme
the Earth nears Her purification

© Roy King



The Goddess in (Direct) Action

To those of you new to this newsletter, I'd like to explain that various members, friends, and family of Reclaiming are involved in direct action politics because of our commitment to the Goddess to be preservers of Nature, because the Spider Woman gives shape to our sense of the feminine--that everything is connected from the personal outward and in again, and because our miracle bodies are both our temples and our tools. So we are out on the streets (or are involved in other ways) for Central American issues, for issues of militarism and nukes, for feminist issues, and for radical ecology.

It has been a rip-roaring summer. Having first done a public ritual for political activists for empowerment and protection, some of us were out to meet the Democrats to let them know we will not let them fall asleep about our concerns if they are elected. War Chest Tours helped point out the connections between Demo campaign funding sources and the military efforts by the US in Central America and elsewhere. We greeted the Moral Majority, saw to it that magic was afoot, and attended a marvelous exorcism by the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The Sisters sought to exorcise the hatred and lies from the hearts of Jerry Falwell and Phyllis Schlafly; I shed a tear of joy when I saw "Jerry" in a black maria, dancing with a gentle, glitter strewing "Jesus", and "Phyllis", cleansed and purified, inside a circle where the Maiden, Mother, and Crone had been called. So mote it be!

After the Democrats it was up to Bohemian Grove, where some great work was done against the power elite boys summer camp, making rituals to resurrect the Goddess Care whom the Bohos ritually cremate each year. Some of the rowdies floated down the river to the Grove and wove webs on the river bank (which caught at least one Boho windsurfer). You'll be interested to know the Bohos had a toy displayed on their dock -- an air mattress decorated with a shiney lifelike image of a 16-year old woman, which one can lie on top of while relaxing. We sang to the Bohos and made them slightly nervous--their security man sank his rowboat while performing tricky surveillance of our antics. Then a Boho took charge of the boat, yelling at us --appropos of nothing--"Yeah, well it's my wife and my child and I believe in abortion!", then turned and furiously rowed the swamped craft backwards to the dock.

The next day I tied knots in the largest web I've ever seen, all along the road as the Bohemians waited, frustrated in their efforts to leave their camp. The Boho's motto, "Weaving Spiders Come Not Here" was not working. We saw the people who had been organizing the Bohemian Action for years proudly sit down in the road in the first civil disobedience at the Grove. Surrounded by cops we cavorted in the road, 100 of us dancing and singing, free and joyous. A few of us decided to crawl through the gate into the grove. The Boho's security forces were not used to non-violence trained trespassers and supporters. They tried to physically push us back, and the crowd rebuked them: "Let them through, they have a right to be there, stop hurting them!" The security men, amazed to be thus addressed, stopped pushing and we swarmed in, sat down, and declared ourselves to be the true Bohemians as we snapped our fingers, bebopped, and read Ginsburg aloud and shouted "Wow man!" until the little men came to take us away. As we were driven off to jail in a van, we looked out the tiny window and saw all the Boho cars backed up on the road behind us. A most empowering action!

On Hiroshima day there was a ritual on Red Rock, coordinating with our sisters and brothers at Rocky Flats and elsewhere. And then came Diablo. We're itching (but trying not to scratch) for that plant to shut down, but I'll let our anarcho-pagan stringer from the Abalone Office tell you More.

--RMD

Diablo Canyon: The Abalone Alliance--a Magical Organization

The Abalone Alliances uses a variety of techniques to fight PG&E's "Demon in the Canyon": civil disobedience, protests, education, direct action, street theater, door-to-door canvassing, etc. However, little is mentioned of the reliance on magical or spiritual techniques.

Consider this: the NRC is meeting in Washington, C>D>, to decide low-power licensing. The A.A. staff and groupies know they have done everything possible to stop low-power licensing, there's only one thing left--magic. So folks sit and meditate, sending white light over the Sierras, the Rockies, the Great Plains and Eastern Seaboard, envisioning the light around those men causing them to think about life and reconsider what they are doing "in a new light." The staff sits on the couch--zones out. The phone rings. Our friends in Washington tell us the NRC has just adjourned indefinitely--unable to make a decision. A little magic never hurts.

Somehow, though, in the months ahead, the NRC snuck by us and unbeknownst to us granted the low-power license. PG&E met with many snafus during testing, confirming our worst fears about the nuke's reliability. We had rituals and made models of Diablo Canyon (the land) throwing rings of protection around our Mother there. An accident or an earthquake was not called for and would not help our cause.

Full Power--it loomed--large and ominous, covering our summer activities like a wet blanket. I started bringing the MotherPeace Tarot to work. The NRC was meeting Aug. 10 to decide. I asked MotherPeace "Would the NRC issue the full-power license?" I drew the Judgement card! It felt like the exact right card--the female symbol sitting over the world. After the NRC granted the license, I asked, "Would Diablo ever operate at full power?" I drew the Magician! We liked that.

There have been many rituals in the Irish Hills surrounding Diablo over the years. In conjunction with the more traditional protesting techniques, they have combined to delay Diablo this long. With the Magician card on full power, confidence was high on Sun. night, Aug. 12, when the anarcho-magicians split up and headed for the hills under the full moon. (My personal card for the action was the Moon--trust the dark).

We said goodbye to Matress who went to do witchcraft deep inside the canyon. Our group, the Gender Gap Affinity Group (mother/son, grandfather/granddaughter) felt they represented the "typical nuclear family" sneaking up on a nuke in the dead of night. Before we set out for our backcountry hike with our guide, we grounded with the Tree of Life using the Pacific Ocean beside us to wash away the chaos that we went through to get ready to hike Diablo. We hiked all night accompanied by thoughts of our brothers and sisters doing the same thing. Our trail went along the edge of the Pacific. Seals barked all night. The moon shone brightly with just enough clouds around that we could call on if we needed cover. At sunrise we reached the nuke--on our bellies. We photographed it. (Did you know that Diablo looks like a pair of breasts with erect nipples--the ultimate degradation of the female--?) We spread our blanket and had a nuclear family picnic while "they" prepared to arrest us. We felt wonderful knowing the Abalone was out in the hills magically supporting us. We were released after 3 days without being charged. "They" claim to have lost our papers, but we know they don't want to admit where we were arrested. Security around Diablo can be breached by any old family.

August 17 was The day PG&E was to go full power. The Judgement Card and the Magician--remember? Just as PG&E turned the Demon on, a Federal District Court in Washington, C.D. issued an Injunction against full-power for the Mothers For Peace. If that isn't magic--what is? Diablo is stalled until at least early '85. No Diablo!

--More Downing, Abalone Alliance.

"AND" CASTLES

by Cerridwen Fallingstar

"We are selenographers of the psyche, mapping out our own lunar geography. The moon is not as barren as some would have us believe." --C. Fallingstar.

"An octopus can get through any opening big enough for its eye."

--Jaques Cousteau

Healing duality. Holding paradox. Two of the keys for making the quantum leap in consciousness. And so hard to talk about, talk coming from one side of the brain, images from the other. The language we speak so limited, so stunted when it comes to describing realms of the senses and the spirit. While logos almost invariably reinforces duality thinking, mythos can contain and delineate paradox. That is why so much of Reclaiming's magical emphasis is on trance, the place where the mind speaks undiluted poetry and archetype. Conscious dreaming.

The Triple Goddess, the five-fold kiss and pentagram, the seven chakras, the thirteen moons. The odds are with us; uneven numbers resist division, separation, the alienation of taking sides. The Triple Goddess, the multiplicity of Gods, are labyrinthean passageways leading away from the torture chambers of either/or.

A couple of years ago I had a trance about an inner Goddess triad which opened me to new levels of "and". Rather than interpret it, I want to simply offer it, whole, hoping that the resonances and echoes which have nourished me may nourish others as well.

'Down through the rainbow clouds. Once through the hag-storm of Indigo I passed quickly through lavender clouds to white light, to a large white pearl that opened when I willed it, shutting behind me with a thump. Walking in darkness, black air to every side, black air beneath my feet. The air becomes black mirrors and in every direction I saw myself echoing off through eternity--all my selves, my past and future incarnations. Then they all stepped from the mirrors and sat with me in a large circle. I said I wanted visioning to heal my fear of the future.

Evadne came forward. She is a "character" I have written about, a healer who lives in a post-apocalyptic world. She told me that radiation will create fascinating mutations. People will be candles, radiating light. Do I imagine that radiation and radiance are not one? She is both bleached and radiating light herself. She shows me an irradiated rock. "This can cause death. This can also give life." She gave me a white crystal for my right hand. It was hot. "This crystal has been radiated. It is a powerful healing agent." She gave me a thinner crystal, blood-black, red as a night ruby or garnet for my left hand. This crystal was very cool. "This crystal has other power." Vision of the black cave of Hekate, lined with crystals of coagulated blood. As I held the two crystals, light/dark, healing/destroying, male/female, life/death--all the dualities swirled through me until at last they settled at a point of balance. I touched the points of the two crystals together and a third crystal appeared, as large as the other two crystals put together. It was pink, and contained twin gold spirals, dancing among other striations which glittered like golden threads. The black-red crystal was the past, my blood of art. The white crystal was healing, the present. The pink crystal was the future, visioning that which had never been.

As this scene faded, I found myself on an island talking with a pretty Polynesian woman with crooked teeth. She showed me how the sand on the beach was sparkling--disturbances deep in the sea trenches had brought up wonderful sparkling notes of rare minerals. She showed me images of volcanoes spewing golden fire in the night, desolate landscapes covered with ropy black lava. Islands disappearing under the sea and more islands being born. All over the

world there was chaos, people dying. A fiery red meteor careened close over the earth, leaving charred trees in its wake.

Pele appeared in the crater of a volcano. She was also a young island woman but with a crone-like ancientness about her and brilliant red-gold hair. She let the molten lava trickle between her fingers, slow smile, making it look so beautiful that I enter her caldera willingly. The pain is all-encompassing, but brief. "Am I not a forge?" she asks. She rubs magma over me, burnishing my bones. After my bones have been polished to ivory they dance with all my skeleton selves from the past. We glide, shimmy, rattle our bones. We form a giant snowflake and soar through the sky. Night falls and we pulse red-gold like the magma. Then we are the underbelly of a giant UFO, gliding silently through space. We hover over Pagan land, and then I am standing in the high meadow, the stars bright because the atmosphere is so thin. The distance between me and the stars vanishes. I become aware of a chant echoing all around me which has been going on forever; "Take the power. Take the power. Take the power."

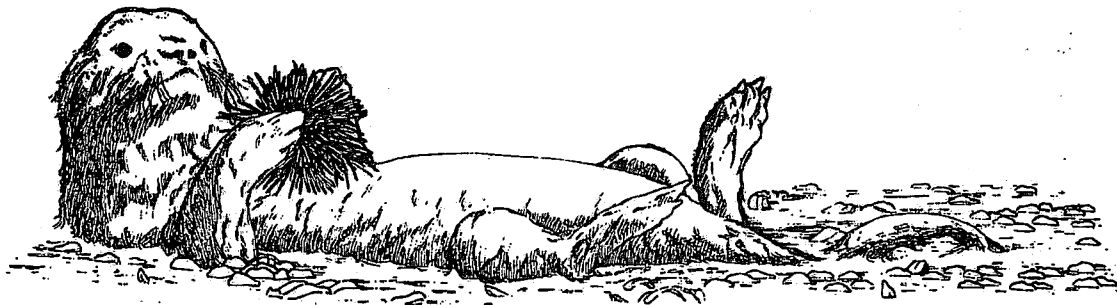
I am back in my circle of selves, thanking them for these visions. I ask for a gift to take back with me. The island woman says, "I am your maiden self, eternally youthful, hopeful, lovely. I will always be with you." She gives me a lei; the orchids resemble dragons spewing fire. She reminds me that I will always find nectar in such monsters and touches some pollen to my third eye, nose, and throat. "You are a pollen carrier." she says.

Pele says, "I am your death. Whoever you wish to know what to do, ask you death. I shall always be there to advise you."* As the crone she reminded me of the power I already had, the power to draw the magma mater, creative life force, up into every vein and seam of my being through the tree of life meditation.

Evadne gave me the three crystals; past, present, future; writing, healing, visioning; life, death, spirit; the Triple Goddess which represents new balances. "I am the creatrix of your soul, writer, healer, seer, and I am always with you."

Back through the pearl, through the white shining air, through the clouds. The purple grape heavy clouds conjured images of my lover as Dionysius. Hekate rolled through the third eye with her indigo storm. The blue air was sweet and open as birdsong through my throat--the green was open-hearted innocence, tumbling on the grass and laughing. The yellow was the sun, my will bursting through clouds of gold. Orange was the sweet satin velvet of the sex-chakra, Aphrodite rising honey-colored from the waves. And at last, billows of red like my menstrual blood, the color of survival in this world.'

*I am aware that this echoes DonJuan in the Carlos Castaneda books. Deep archetypes are universal, and death is a marvelous counselor.



Drawing of sea otter with urchin from California Coastal Access Guide.

If pretzels could talk, would their meanings be twisted?

PERFECT LOVE AND TRUST

Most pagans I know speak of entering sacred space "in perfect love and perfect trust," but I'm uncertain exactly what they mean. Especially in more or less public rituals, I find myself in circles with people I've never met. In workshops and classes I've done ritual with people I wouldn't choose to coven with, and I know others do the same.

I've heard a variety of uneasy rationalizations for not worrying about this. One friend says of an acquaintance, "I try to relate to his 'higher self' when we're in a circle. I feel okay doing magic with him, but I wouldn't lend him my car keys. I feel I'm expected to love and trust him all the time, to always have positive thoughts, but it's hard." In other words, she enters the circle with perfect love and perfect trust and various reservations. I suspect we all frequently hold such reservations and feel uneasy about them.

Nevertheless, there seems to be a working consensus on a few rules of conduct which pass for "perfect love and trust." Foremost is the assumption that no one will enter the circle planning to disrupt or sabotage the ritual or the group. In addition, it's expected that no one will enter the circle intending to hurt or undermine anyone else in the circle. Ideally, any ill will between individuals should be resolved either before the circle is cast or after casting but before major group work begins. The circle is a place for support and love, not for attack; a place where we connect with each other and the goddess, not a place for building new walls between us; a place where we empower ourselves and support our friends in self-empowerment, not a place for competition or domination. We treat each other as we would wish to be treated and keep in mind the law of three-fold return.

These are convenient guidelines that justify, for instance, excluding from the circle someone who is disorderly and disruptive, whose attitude clearly is nonsupportive. Following these guidelines, I would never be part of a ritual whose purpose or methods I seriously doubted. I feel free, however, to set aside disagreements over minor matters of practice or to suspend certain doubts and disbeliefs, because I can be generally supportive despite minor hesitations.

In smaller and tighter circles, I feel a greater responsibility to speak my mind and participate fully. In a small circle, I must love and trust both myself and others enough to express my feelings, positive or negative, welcome or unwelcome. Perfect love -- or a reasonable facsimile, since I don't believe in perfection -- requires that I value the truth of my own and others' feelings. Perfect trust requires me to speak and hear the truth and to make truth the basis of my actions. For me, this means I can do serious ritual with someone who annoys me as long as we've talked about it and are mutually able to suspend our disagreements during the ritual.

At the risk of sounding totally wishy-washy, I must add that I regard all rules of conduct as guideposts to my Path, not as absolute commands. At times we all must deviate from the clear and simple path; part of the Great American Denial is to paint moral decisions as black or white and then ignore the necessity of compromise. I might choose, for instance, to set aside my basically non-violent values. I would expect such a decision to have serious consequences for myself and others, but choosing to face those consequences might be my best alternative.

For me the most difficult problem with perfect love and trust is knowing where to draw the lines between silently holding my reservations and speaking my objections, between necessary sooth-saying and needless disruption. In large ad hoc gatherings, objections and criticisms often seem to hide a desire to take control, to deny others their power, to prove superiority, to be more reasonable or more holy or more powerful. We all have such desires, but allowing them to disrupt a circle displays a lack of respect for others. On the other hand, insisting that we only see each other's bright side makes true trust impossible. Trust and love can grow to their greatest strength only when we are willing to acknowledge the darkness we see in each other and ourselves -- the pain-driven ambition, the desire to dominate, the fear of success, the resentments over past disappointments, the tendency to destroy what we cannot own. When, in love and trust, we share our dark secrets and work to integrate and transform them, we lay the foundation for that most sacred of spaces where we are at one with ourselves and our world.

- Dragonstone



EAT, DRINK, AND BE WARY

No matter what the purpose may be that draws witches together, we are usually in for a surprise or two whenever the greater pagan community gathers for a ritual. Many differing traditions and styles combine at such gatherings. Often these differences comprise a richness and variety that I find nourishing, as individuals freely express themselves. But at a recent, important Bay Area ritual, individual freedom overstepped that crucial line into unethical practice. It was a large ritual for which a large supply of ritual wine was prepared. What the participants didn't know was that an hallucinogenic drug had been added to the wine. They found out soon enough. And while many present enjoyed the effects of the wine, others were distressed and the focus of the ritual shifted from its original purpose to this unexpected "trip". What disturbs me here is the way participants were disempowered, denied knowledge of the drug content of the wine, so they had no power to choose whether or not to take it. As a non-drinker, I passed it up and was spared a dose of its hidden drug, but others were not so lucky.

Our bodies are sacred, and consciousness is the key to power in magic-making. Decisions about our bodies and our states of mind belong to ourselves alone if we are to keep our power and attain our purpose. I consider it an immoral choice to tamper with the consciousness of others in this manipulative and dangerous way. Let us be wary. Let us honor our sisters and brothers of the Craft with full information regarding decisions that so seriously affect our bodies and minds, and the magic we set out to do.

--Sophia Sparks

reclaiming CLASSES

RECLAIMING: A Center for
Feminist Spirituality
P.O. Box 14404
San Francisco, CA 94114

ELEMENTS OF MAGIC FOR WOMEN AND MEN--Dragonstongue and Cybelle

With the art of magic, we deepen our vision and focus our will, empowering ourselves to act in the world. In this class we begin the practice of magic and Goddess spirituality by working with the elements of magic: earth, air, fire, water, and spirit. Techniques will include visualization, sensing and projecting energy, chanting, trance, creating magical space, and structuring rituals. Beginning 6-week course, starting Sunday, October 14, 7:30 PM. Call Dragonstongue (731-2159) or Cybelle (863-8294) for registration and location. \$45-90 sliding scale.

WOMEN'S MAGIC--a 6 week class with Carol and Rose

Bringing magical change into our daily lives using ritual, group work, and our magical tools. Invoking the Triple Moon Goddess and the Earth Goddess, asking Her inspiration for empowerment as we explore Women's Mysteries. Open to women who have taken a Reclaiming class, or who have other experience in working magic in circle with women. Mondays, October 15-November 19. Sliding Scale \$45-90. Call Carol or Rose, 641-5836.

GROWING WITH THE FULLNESS OF THE MOON--with Rose May Dance, Dragonstongue, and Cybelle

An afternoon into evening workshop for people who are working on something--internal or external, which they wish to charge with full moon power and bring to fruition. Working with the energy of culmination, we will focus our intentions and desires in group work and a full moon ritual. We will meet at 2:00 in the afternoon on December 8, and work into the evening. Bring a potluck supper and a treat for feast. Open to people who have taken a Reclaiming class or who have other experience working magic in Circle with others. Sliding scale \$15-\$30. For info and registration call Dragonstongue (731-2159) or Cybelle (863-8294).

NIGHTWALKS IN THE WILD--Sophia Sparks with guest teacher Tom Ness

Put away your flashlights--we can see by starlight, we can quiet our fears, open our senses and enter the realm of night. This class is a 6-session experience transforming an obstacle into an opportunity as we discover our power in darkness. One preparatory session in San Francisco and one day-hike for practical readiness, followed by four nightwalk rituals in the wilds of Marin. First meeting Monday October 1, others to be arranged with the students. Talk to Tom or Sophia, 647-0430.

SACRED SITES: SACRED EARTH--by Starhawk. A benefit for Reclaiming

This slideshow and talk explores the sacred sites of the ancient European earth religion. From the painted caves of prehistoric France to the great stone circles and dolmens of the megalithic era, we can catch a glimmer of a vision that saw the earth and all creatures on it as inherently alive, sacred, and interconnected. Images of the earth Goddesses and Gods affirm our own inherent value as bodily beings, and give us new/old models of women and men. The amazing builders of the old earth temples expressed the unity of the human community with the cycles of the seasons, the sun, the moon, and the stars. They tapped powers of the earth and long-forgotten energies, to create a culture in which there was no split between matter and spirit, science and religion. Their vision is one we need today when our desacralized view of the earth is leading to its destruction. The evening culminates in a ritual, in which we can evoke our vision of an earth renewed and re-enchanted.

October 12, 7:30-10:00 p.m., Fort Mason, Room C 260, sliding scale \$3-7.

RECLAIMING APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

SUMMER '85

Celebrate the Goddess amid the redwoods and tidepools of the beautiful Mendocino Coast of California. Study magic and ritual-making in the Wiccan tradition and learn tools and skills to take back to your own communities. Our goal is empowerment and our methods are nonhierarchical and experiential.

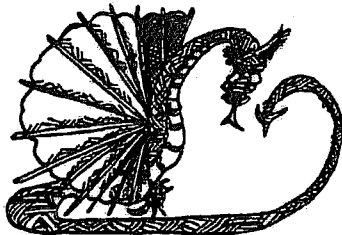
Two one-week sessions. Take either or both.
Beginning and advanced programs. Open to women and men.
Session 1 Saturday, August 10--Friday, August 16
Session 2 Sunday, August 18--Saturday, August 24

At Jughandle Farm Nature Preserve near Caspar, California.
\$225--\$375 sliding scale, includes food and lodging. (Costs may vary slightly.)
Limited childcare for ages 3 and up.

Reclaiming is a feminist collective of San Francisco Bay Area women and men working to unify spirit and politics. 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 work, 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 bring to birth a vision of a new culture.

For information, write Reclaiming: Apprenticeship, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94110

Drugs and alcohol discouraged.



RECLAIMING'S SLIDING SCALE FOR 6-WEEK CLASSES

In order for Reclaiming to offer affordable classes to people on all income levels, it is important that students pay a fair share of costs. In placing yourself on the following simple sliding scale, please take into account factors not included such as children and other dependents supported by your income.

Income	Fee for 6 sessions
0-\$8,000	\$45
\$8-12,000	\$55
\$12-15,000	\$65
\$15-18,000	\$80
\$18,000 up	\$100

Rosie rambles at COG

I have just arrived home from the Covenant of the Goddess Festival and Grand Council, held at Harbin Hot Springs, hoarse from singing and cackling, my skin dry and cracking off my face, dehydrated, but stirred by my experience of this weekend with 350 or so witches and pagans.

The setting for the festival was beautiful, and despite some problems with scheduling and feeding 350 rugged individualists who are "living on pagan time", the organizers and workers for the Festival deserve heartfelt appreciation, and I hope someone is even at this minute rubbing their backs and feet and serving them treats. Many thanks to those who thrashed through the meetings.

For me, the tone of the Festival was set by several events. Thursday night, Ruth Barrett and Cynthia Smith performed. After enchanting us with their music, Ruth sang to us of Diana, her voice filling and chilling the hall. I was snuggled on a pillow with my family, and felt the special magic rising through our bodies and all the bodies around, as we lifted our voices to join in the final line "We must take back the night!" Then the next day there was a Dianic Workshop facilitated by Moon Birch Grove, where Rhiannon and Felicity and all the women in the workshop made me feel strong about the culture we create and the feminine principle--connection--that can guide our souls and lives as we reclaim our spirituality.

I felt that we were presented with an example of "What's Right about Paganism and Neo-Paganism" in the play that Forever Forests and friends presented, "The Fox At the End of the World", by Gwyddion. They gave Good Ritual! Anodea's flute was entrancing, the dancing and singing were lovely, all the little goofs one gets in home-made production--shuffling for props and loudly whispered cues and late entrances--were touching. The animal costumes were clever, and people got into their roles. I especially enjoyed Eldrie's tail, Ayisha's method acting in the role of gorilla, and Deirdre's innocence as the Skunk. The story healed and delighted all who heard.

Reclaiming folks presented several Festival events. The first was a discussion group on "Teaching the Craft" facilitated by Dragon's Tongue and Rose. This was lively, stimulating--there were representatives from a number of traditions and we shared some good stuff. One of the topics was the power model used when teaching, and we discussed the pros and cons of non-hierarchical versus top-down leadership. There was discussion of "do-it-yourself" witchcraft, and the need for discipline and centering. Reclaiming teachers, students and others talked about the benefits of setting the stage to let the power flow, and creating a space for students to learn from their own experience, using their magical tools in their own lives. Some of us mentioned that we are unable or unwilling to learn from traditions which require a hierarchical structure. Difficulties are present because much of ancient Goddess worship has been destroyed by patriarchy. In Reclaiming tradition we give honor and credence to scholarship and the traditional teachers who help us, and we appreciate those who, with spiritual purity, preserve the old ways as they have been taught. But we feel we can well learn from our bodies, our lives, each other especially in the Circle, and through our inspiration. This is not so much "do-it-yourself" as creativity, being in touch with the Goddess Within and Without. This workshop made it clear that teachers and students need to keep talking to each other--it was good to make new friends and contacts--we have much to learn from one another about teaching the craft.

Reclaiming also held a class facilitated by Cybele and Rose, "Playing with Fire", and David Kubrin held a talk on the "Burning Times" connecting the war against witches with the current war against the planet. The highlight of the weekend, for me, was the workshop/dark moon ritual at midnight Saturday by Bone Blossom, Macha Nightmare and Sharon Devlin. This was a presentation on Kali, and She was there. After Reclaiming recent discussions on public ritual--what works and what doesn't, and how to build an experience of power, it was fine to get a lesson in What Works. The 3 priestesses did an amazing amount of work -- scholarly, theatrical, and channeling--providing spectacular costuming, music, and text, and leading us in an inspired ritual. They showed us the 3 aspects of the Dark Mother, who fed us, slew us, and brought us back through the tunnel of rebirth. We all took hold of dry white bones, and meditated on them while we were taken in a trance where we remembered and forgot, again and again, what we have known of death, the cauldron, and rebirth. It was transformative, eerie and powerful. Many thanks to Sharon, Macha, Bone and the musicians--Sean F. and Co. Afterwards Sean piped us into ecstasy again and we whirled and danced the night down.

The Kali ritual awakened many feelings and issues for folks which they were able to work on the next morning in two meaty workshops which brought healing. I heard that Cerridwen's workshop on Reincarnation was valuable. And Stonedancers, a hot new coven from Palo Alto, presented a trance journey, "Descent with Inana" led by Freya and Maya, which was quite helpful in healing.

The COG festival was so packed with events that I can't begin to mention all (nor were we able to attend all the offerings we wanted to). I hope we can share information about what we learned. I enjoyed attending Holly Tannen and Jim Duran's Wheel of the Year, got a lot of juice from Z's workshop on Dianic networking, and heard good things about Diana Paxon's Mystical Geography and the Earth First workshop on the Shamanic Warrior. The women's circles were fantastic, of course, and I recommend that women wanting to learn more about feminist spirituality attend a Mass of the Goddess in Berkeley. Heard that the Fairy Circles were rewarding as usual.

The COG Festival gave me a good bird's eye of the pagan community, and I found much to love and much to criticize. I was disturbed by talk I heard about hard drug use among pagans, and felt an excess of tripping and alcohol at the festival. I realize that substance use is a part of many pagans' tradition, but I was uncomfortable at how much mead was glorified, and felt a little blown away from being around so many psychedelized pagans. I received feedback that my views were too strait-laced, and I realize that I enjoy certain substances, but I do want to mention my discomfort. I'm glad Abbey Willowroot offered her workshop "The Government Wants You Stoned", and I wish that pagans would at least examine the role intoxication plays in magical experiences, become aware of the signs of abuse and addiction, and explore alternative ways of creating a high.

I was gratified by the feminist spirituality and political awareness I found at the Festival, but was sad to observe that feminism is important to only some witches. Another criticism: I would like to see the pagan community consider alternatives in its power models. Leadership is important but the wand needs to keep passing, and power-tripping and turf battles are dangerous and disruptive. We need to work on tolerance which is a good antidote to power-tripping. But I don't want to "bitch about the Craft" as my friend and constant source of inspiration, Van Ault, would warn me. I recommend everyone read his editorial letter in the current (July-August '84) issue of "Cernunnos News" on the subject of factionalism. We don't need to imitate Mainstream Culture in setting up warring camps in our community through the medium of backbiting. A little gossip is fun but it goes a long way. (A certain DK hints that I am the worst gossip of all so I'll try to clean my own house.)

But some of the gossiping was fun, and making connections with people was nourishing. Dragon's Tongue sez, and I know it's true, that one of the nicest parts of the Festival was being able to camp out and hang out with great friends. About 30 of our Family camped in the meadow (where we handfasted A&R earlier this year), making coffee ritual, counting shooting stars, serenaded by coyotes. I was glad to be with Bone Blossom, our Witch of the East, after 2 years separation. And I was impressed with "our" kids. Special blessings to Deirdre, Silas, Yarrow, Delaney, Zach, and Vanessa because they are special blessings! I felt community with 350 zany, inspiring witches and pagans. as I heard tell of digital watch smashing rituals, joined the Javacrucians chanting in line at the urn each morning, and got that old time religion when we sang "Waiting at the Midnight hour, By the branch and bud and flower, Folks are raising up the power, And that's good enough for me!" I had fun. Thanks and Blessed be. RMD



Hannah's Household Hints--by Hannah Clancy

Many people have been asking me Please Hannah won't you help us we are having a terrible problem over at our house and you know I am just too busy to visit you but I like to help when I can so please write to me I will give you my address and you can ask me questions about your terrible household problems which I know are just rampant all over the witches' houses and I will tell you all my good advice just as soon as I think it up.

My advice this month is for those of you who are having wax drips all over the pretty altar cloths you bought at the garage sale. First of all you know that if you got those nice dripless candles your mother uses you wouldn't have this problem but you just have to be different don't you. And I know you won't put foil under the candle holders to catch the drips because you don't like how it looks.

So what you have to do is, using your athame, cut the wax right out of your altar cloth.

Now those of you who are artistic can cut out star shapes by tracing around your pentacle but the rest of you had better just cut out simple circles. Neatly bind the edges of the cut-outs, using a buttonhole stitch and your own hair.

After you make enough of these embroideries the altar cloth will look just like lace and you can easily get rid of it by throwing it in the cauldron.

Some of you have been having a related problem which is that you get black wax drips on the floor and black wax makes a terrible stain which will not come out and of course you can adapt my earlier advice by digging a hole out of the floor with your athame and filling it up with chewinggum but the real problem is why are you using all those black candles and is your life really that serious which is not any of my business as I am here to help you run your house a little bit better, love, Hannah.

Any questions you have now you just write to me c/o Reclaiming.

FEATHER SINGING'S SABBATICAL

(Feather wrote this letter in April to let the "community" know of his whereabouts. We somehow didn't get it into the summer newsletter.)

Dear friends, I am going off in some new directions, working on long-put-off projects, and need to pull back from Reclaiming collective activities for a while. This winter I felt a need to reclaim the hours I've put into meetings, administrative duties, teaching classes, traveling to S.F., etc., and apply that time to my study of geomancy, and to writing (earth mysteries, men's magic, seasonal cycles). I've been feeling a need to do more magic with radical faeries and my friends working within native american traditions. Also, for those that haven't heard yet, I took a job as editor of the Ecology Center Newsletter (in Berkeley) back in November, and have been quite busy with that ever since.

This is a particularly hard time to withdraw from Reclaiming, because some of what I've wanted to see happen for years is finally underway: retreats on a regular basis, in-house workshops, and a more organized administrative process. I'll keep a little toe in the Reclaiming wellspring by contributing to the teacher's workbook. And I'm very excited to be a part of a men's circle that came out of the Pentacle class Rose and I just finished teaching.

So I've got the writing and research bug. Working as an editor has created this pattern of writing all the time. So I'm getting through the backlog of essays I've wanted to write. I'm learning to translate thoughts into words more quickly. It's also very rewarding to get paid for the first time for editing, doing layout, bulk mailing and networking, after years of volunteering my skills.

Another change in my life is that I have finally acted on my long-time desire to have my life centered where I live, the East Bay. From a pagan point of view, it no longer makes sense to me to travel to another locality to connect with the earth. So I'm connecting with earth stewards in the East Bay: Urban Ecologists, Berkeley creeks restorers, local medicine wheel creators. I am using the Ecology Center Newsletter to network and circulate others' ideas about how to protect and live in harmony with mother earth in the East Bay. I'm involved with citizen actions to control development at the Berkeley Waterfront, to keep it available as open space and wildlands, and prevent Santa Fe from building a second downtown district there. I'm also working to generate some consciousness of the East Bay as a bioregion, with its own unique habitats, microclimates, plant and animal associations, and power spots. I'm real pleased with the bundle of essays on "East Bay as a Bioregion" I just published in the August Ecology Newsletter.

Connecting with the earth spirit and the ancestors in the British Isles was extraordinary, but I now turn to connect with the earth and ancestral spirits of this Turtle Island. I am exploring animistic, primal, pre-verbal modes of ritual. I also need to reclaim some time to play with faerie friends (there's a household right in my block), and help with our gatherings, sanctuary projects, etc. I want to teach a magic class for gayfaeries in the next year, using a radically different approach. I'll also repeat my geomancy class, adding what I'm learning now. If interested, call me at 548-3342 or 548-2220 (wk).

So I thank all you Reclaimers for the last four years of transformation, empowerment and the support to follow my passions and visions. I do hope my path leads me back into the cauldron. Meanwhile I'll retire into the broader Reclaiming "community" and see you at the open sabbats.

Feather Singing



Lughnassad 1984 c.e.

Dear Sisters and Brothers of Reclaiming:

This letter is a response to Diane Adler's letter in the Spring issue of the Reclaiming Newsletter.

I have known and worked with the mothers of Reclaiming since before they birthed Reclaiming Collective, which I believe was in 1979, and I became more deeply involved from then until I left in January of 1983.

The reasons for my leaving were many and here I'd like to outline them. When reading this, please bear in mind that these were conditions I encountered prior to January 1983 and may have been remedied or become non-existent by now. Later I will speak of what I have learned from my experiences with Reclaiming.

1. Burnout. I am one of those people that Starhawk describes in Dreaming the Dark, who takes on a lot of responsibility and who will come through on commitments often at the expense of other things in my life. I also rescue people and projects which have been underway but have fallen undone. This, needless to say, exacerbates burnout. I found myself, perhaps unrealistically, expecting others to have a similar level of commitment.

2. Big Sister Party Line. (I'm using this term for want of a better one.) After being in Reclaiming for some time I felt frustrated about expressing myself on behalf of the collective because I was acutely and painfully aware of an unarticulated "party line." I reached the point at which I was inhibited from saying anything, either within or without the collective, for fear it would be "politically incorrect" and would offend someone. This was paralyzing. It was the opposite of empowering.

3. Excessive Emphasis on Agreement/Uniformity on EVERYTHING. I don't want my garden to have only roses growing in it, or only dandelions. I prefer a variety of blooms which each has its time in the Sun. Some flowers blossom in Spring; others later in the year. Each has its special kind of beauty. I see the Lady in each flower and in each face at Reclaiming gatherings. I felt that there was strong pressure within the collective for us all to like exactly the same things and to conduct ourselves in the exact same way (for instance, to aspire to having a covenstead or to living communally), to rear our children in the same way. This is related to Big Sister Party Line.

4. Public Rituals. I felt pressure to help with public rituals. Public rituals perform a very valuable and necessary function in the community at large (beyond Reclaiming). And I have been willing and able and eager to put my energy into creating a ritual, including hauling around altar makings and other materials. And I have done all this. And I don't want to do it all the time. My willingness to work on public rituals has come from my feeling that they are valuable as outreach, and not necessarily very satisfying personally. I feel I can go deeper and get more out of a magical working in a smaller and more private group where there has been a gradual buildup of trust than in a large amorphous gathering.

On the subject of public rituals -- and private as well, for that matter -- I found that as Reclaiming expanded there was more of an emphasis on unstructured rituals with largely untrained participants, which in and of itself is fine, but which is not "my cup of tea."

On the other hand, a rigidly structured ritual can be constraining and have a dampening effect on the magic that is being worked if there is no room for moving with the spirit of the moment.

This is a difference in style and execution, not in theology. I am happiest and most fulfilled in the middle between tradition and structure (Saturn) on the one hand and spontaneity and innovation (Uranus) on the other.

I felt that in Reclaiming, since the overwhelming approach by certain forceful personalities was for looseness and complete spontaneity, that people like myself who prefer more structure, particularly in large public gatherings, ended up frustrated more often than not -- and that was not a healthy way to continue participation.

In order for the Craft to survive and to flourish in the 20th century of the Common Era we need to keep our rituals alive and relevant to our lives and the times -- yes. And our ancestors worked magic for millenia and what they found to be ritually effective deserves attention as it might apply to our working today.

As an eclectic Witch, I take techniques, approaches, chants, myths from any tradition -- Craft, Native American, Tibetan, African, Celtic -- and use them if they enhance the magic I am trying to accomplish. I am grateful to those who have gone before and who have left us with a legacy of effective magical practices. This, of course, is no quarrel with Reclaiming, since Reclaiming is eclectic. But I tend to value the "tried and true" used in combination with new techniques. I feel, why throw it all away, that stuff from the past, from "dead" cultures, and begin all over again to learn magic, when we can pick and choose from a wealth of diverse sources and thus start our own magical growth that far ahead?

5. "Community." Another of my disappointments with Reclaiming is that, although I heard a lot of lip service given to "community," and being there for each other in time of need, I saw far less of it in actual practice. I personally don't want to limit myself too narrowly in having only Craft friends and associates, or, even more narrowly, to only my own tradition. I think that circulating among all kinds of people and sharing the vicissitudes of life with others with whom I feel compatible is not only enriching, but also keeps the people in a collective endeavor fresher and less ingrown and insulated.

6. Process. I, Macha, seem to have a special gift for upsetting people. Others can do exactly the same things as I and it passes without ruffling a lot of feathers. But when I do the same or a similar thing, something about me or the way I do it pushes buttons or whatever and people re-examine things in light of my conduct. This has often led to hard feelings on the part of others, while I feel undeservedly and too harshly criticized. And these criticisms have not always been given voice -- either to me privately or in general meetings. They have been sat on by the people who had them and they have festered.

And this is where Reclaiming's good work on empowering individuals comes in. If someone is upset or doesn't like the way something is being done, s/he has the responsibility to speak up about it. Chances are (a) that the person being criticized does not know that s/he is upsetting someone (and often this is easy to remedy); and (b) that others in the group are also sitting on some dissatisfaction, often the exact same one, and are grateful to the person who addresses the issue. But we are not taking our power if we don't take the responsibility to express our thoughts and feelings -- who we are.

7. Personal Crises and Rites of Passage. During most of the time when I was most active in Reclaiming I was being supported by being the wife in a traditional nuclear family. Reclaiming, in effect, was being subsidized by my husband.

When that nuclear family disintegrated, I was forced to re-assess my priorities, to operate from the first chakra, to survive in the mundane world. I had to support myself, something I hadn't done in about eight years, and a child, something I had never done alone.

I did not adjust to this change with Grace, but kicked and screamed and resisted for over a year. And I was not easy to be around while I was in that pain and state of grieving. But I did successfully make the transition.

And the dear ones who helped me during that crisis were not the ones I might have imagined and was led to believe would be supportive, but were others. (See Item 5, "Community.") Thank Goddess they were there for me! They helped keep me from drowning in my own toxins; they refused to permit me to succumb to my very real fears.

I would love to earn a right livelihood working in Craft-related endeavors (specifically, my dream is to work collectively to publish Goddess books). But this is not far enough developed to be practical at this time. So I have had to abandon work with Reclaiming for this reason as well, so that I could be free to earn money to keep shelter over our heads and food on our table.

8. "Professionalism." This is a big buzzword and I don't intend to get into it deeply. I would like to say, however, that I could appreciate a collective that has as one of its purposes earning money for the people who work in it -- not excluding people because they don't have money, but still recognizing and honoring those who have special skills (See Item 3, Excessive Emphasis on Agreement/Uniformity.) And rewarding them with the kind of energy that means power in the mundane, contemporary world, i.e., coin-of-the-realm, U.S. currency.

Now for how my involvement in Reclaiming has affected me, as Diane asks.

I was a Witch before Reclaiming was created, but I was not nearly as knowledgeable in an experiential way, as opposed to intellectual, as I have become since my involvement with Reclaiming. And I was not able to take it into the world as I now can do.

By being given the opportunities to do certain things (like editing a newsletter, coordinating The Spiral Dance, teaching) I grew empowered. Without the vehicle of the collective and the encouragement of others in it I might never have attempted those things. Teaching, in particular, I may never have tried had not the need been great and the pool of teachers small.

In addition to miscellaneous teaching (an evening workshop here, a six-week series there) -- all immensely rewarding -- I was presented with the magnificent opportunity to midwife an entire coven. These sisters responded to an announcement in the newsletter that Reclaiming would travel. With the help of Reclaiming resources and people (Rose, Aurora, Mara June, Sequoia), I took on the task of commuting to classes on the peninsula for about six months, and occasionally since then. These women -- nine in number and all very accomplished -- have since become Coven Stone Dancers based in Palo

Alto. The Goddess put this challenge before me and, in spite of the miasma of my personal life, I was able to meet it. The affirmation that these women have given me touches me deeply.

In conclusion, I applaud the work that Reclaiming has done and continues to do, while at the same time feeling incompatible with some of Reclaiming's focus of energy and style of execution. I thank in particular Starhawk, Diane, Mara June, Lauren and Kevyn for invaluable training, both pre- and during the existence of Reclaiming collective. I am grateful to have been one of the first-born daughters of Reclaiming in being myself a founding mother of Coven Holy Terrors, of being able to work with a Sow Goddess, a Dragon Goddess, and a blond Hag, and of having seen reflected in their eyes my own divinity.

I have now recovered my health and strength enough to renew some connections, to work to enhance the work that Reclaiming does, to work in my own way to learn and to teach about The Great Mother.

May the Lady bless all your endeavors and may you continue to grow and to learn and to prosper.

Love and blessings,

M. Macha NightMare

M. Macha NightMare, P&W



Dear Reclaiming,

I just finished reading my second Reclaiming Newsletter (Issue No. 15, Summer Issue). As after the first issue I read, I am filled with thoughts, feelings, questions, opinions and I feel generally inspired to stretch--on all levels--intellectual, intuitive, spiritual and political. Indeed, this letter I write is a "stretch" as my days of active and assertive participation in any kind of public/group activities are just beginning.

For now, I want to say thank you and "right on" for your work in creating alternative visions of community and lifestyles, futures, presents and pasts and for communicating and sharing those visions. Thank you for creatively creating educational forums for exploration of all kinds. Indeed, for creating and holding to a resonance that we can use to inspire ourselves to kindle the spark and stretch beyond the limits.

I have also just finished my first class with Reclaiming--"Creating Public Ritual" and its' significant impact has been readily felt in all areas of my life. Starhawk and David were supportive, encouraging and challenging--albeit taskmasters with the "homeowrk"--just kidding David!! Through the work we did with energy--recognizing, moving and changing it, the rituals, trance work, and most of all, the safe space for exploration and sharing, creative transformational processes were powerfully evoked.

THANK YOU ALL!

With THE GODDESS, in Love and Peace, Barbara

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In order to help keep our newsletter financially afloat (and growing) we are now accepting display ads for goods, services, events, etc. We print 900 newsletters, largely distributed in the Bay Area.

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Final full page copy size is 6" x 7". Please provide camera ready copy of correct proportions. We can make reductions.

ABOUT NOTICES: Notices are for any announcements of concern to the community. For services or classes that charge money, please include \$5.00 for 1-5 lines, and \$10.00 for 6-10 lines. Other announcements are free. Thank you.



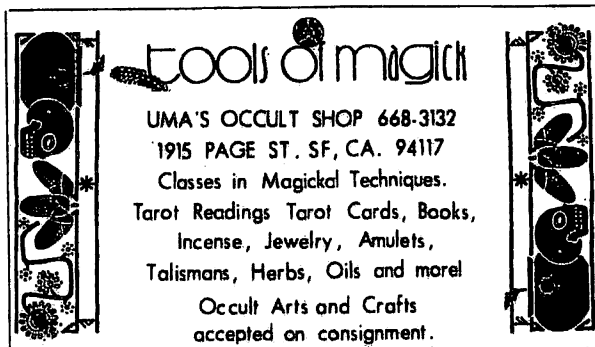
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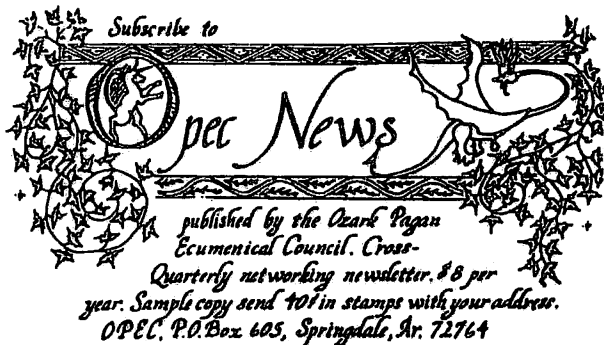


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NON-RECLAIMING CLASSES

PRE-CHRISTIAN EUROPE AND GAELIC LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

taught by Jim Duran, Ph.D., Linguistics, Stanford University

THE WORLD OF THE SIDHE--authentic lore on the "fairies", gathered verbatim from Gaelic-speaking rural people in Donegal, Ireland. Four 2-hr. class meetings, Mondays, beginning October 1.

SIBERIAN SHAMANISM--four 2-hr. class meetings, Mondays, beginning Nov. 12. (\$40 for the series; \$12.50 per single class) for each of the above.

BEGINNING IRISH GAELIC--Level one--Introduction to spoken languages and writing system. Oct. 20, 21, 27, 28--11 AM to 3 PM. Pre-registration deadline Oct. 12. \$25.00 deposit.

BEGINNING IRISH GAELIC--Level Two--Exploration of the world of movement--acting out the language. Nov. 10, 11, 17, 18 -- 11AM to 3 PM. Pre-registration deadline Nov. 2, \$25.00 deposit.

Tuition for Gaelic Classes: \$100 each level; includes tape cassettes and written materials.

LOCATION: 840 Contra Costa Ave., Berkeley (near Solano and Alameda, basement in back)

FOR INFORMATION, call Jim Duran at 535-1086, 525-4091 for message. To pre-register, send your check to Jim Duran, 1822 13th Ave., Oakland, CA 94606.

WOMANSPRIT COUNTRY WORKSHOPS, LED BY HALLIE IGLEHART

For more information, phone Hallie, 843-2763

These workshops emphasize reclaiming and developing female power, both individually and collectively. We will focus on how to integrate spiritual strength with action to effect lasting change in our personal, social and political lives. All workshops begin at 8 P.M. Friday and end 5 P.M. Sat. Cost: \$75. Price includes housing and food. Profits donated to Nuclear Freeze Voter Registration. Workshops take place in quiet home in Mt. Tamalpais State Park. Limit: 10 women.

September 21-22: PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE MYTHOLOGY AND DREAMS, exploring pre-patriarchal art, personal myths, and Senoi Dream Theatre.

Oct. 26-27: HEALING AND RITUAL, with healing through natural cycles, everyday ritual, and Hallomas ritual.

Classes by Anodea Judith: Anodea Judith has been a teacher and professional psychic reader for the last six years. She is the founder of a school for the study of consciousness related skills called LIFEWAYS, in Northern California, and author of a recently completed book on the chakra system.

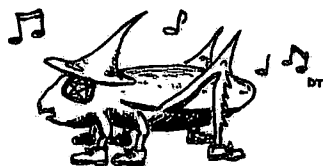
PRACTICAL PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT--\$20, Saturday, November 10th, 10:00-4:00, 141 Belvedere, San Francisco. A de-mystification of the techniques and theories of working with the aura and chakras. Includes techniques for healing and cleansing self and others, reading and interpreting, strengthening grounding, and general increase of psychic perception.

This workshop will also be given in Berkeley on October 13, at the CENTRE for Non-Traditional Religion, 2221 Prince, 848-8505.

WORKING WITH MOCK-UPS--\$15, Sunday, November 18th, 12:00-4:00, 141 Belvedere, SF. An examination of the way we create our own reality and how to make that creation conscious and effective. A look at why our visualizations don't always work, and how to increase their effectiveness and the level of what we allow ourselves to have.

Call 731-2159 or (707)485-8277 for more information.

ASSORTED ANNOUNCEMENTS & STUFF



We recently received the following anonymous communique:
CHALLENGE TO THE WHITE HOUSE

WE HEREBY CLAIM THAT WE, THE ANARCHO-PAGAN TERRORISTS, SHAPE SHIFTED INTO CRICKETS AND INVADDED NANCY AND RON'S BEDROOM DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 1984, CAUSING THEM SLEEPLESS NIGHTS WHILE WE MUTTERED INCANTATIONS AT THEM. WHEN WE HEARD THE BUG BOMBERS APPROACHING WE ESCAPED, CHANGING BACK INTO HUMAN FORM. WE DEFY NANCY TO PRODUCE THE BODY OF THE "DEAD" CRICKET! CREEK or CROAK, by Jimmy.

REVIEW ---- IRON MOUNTAIN, A Journal of Magical Religion, an excellent new (type of) publication includes in its first issue in-depth and provocative articles on; an east coast Medicine Wheel gathering; the disturbing escalation of Paganism and Satanism in Denver jr. and high school culture; the questionable authenticity of assumed direct historical roots of Gardnerian Witchcraft; specific uses of drumming in ritual; an attempted sociological study of the Craft, with responses; the role of Myth and symbolism in ritual; and some very nice poetry. A breath of fresh air for the thinking Pagan! --- Semi-annual, Artemisia Press, P.O. Box 6423, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80934
---Roy King

GODDESS RISING READING ROOM, open every Saturday, 2-6 p.m., beginning Sept. 1, '84. Come read books and materials on Witchcraft, Feminism, Herstory, Psychic Development, etc. \$2 donation per visit requested (\$50 special memberships available). Located at 2441 Cordova St., Oakland, CA 94602 (off Fruitvale Ave., at Castello and Cordova).

FOREVER FORESTS TREE PLANTING WEEKEND--December 29 through January 1
Children's Tree Planting--December 27-28.
For more information write: Forever Forests/Box 212/Redwood Valley, CA 94570.

In-depth psychic readings and classes on developing psychic skills and grounding. The work is deep and highly technical. On the Peninsula. Call Maya, (415) 327-5493.

"And every woman with a vine and fig tree
Shall live in poeace and unafraid."

We have a three bedroom house in Kentfield (Marin) with a huge yard and garden including grape vines, fig and many other fruit trees. Cerridwen Fallingstar, Elie Demers and Zachary Moonstone (age 21 months) are looking for a room-mate; non-smoking, preferably Pagan. We would like someone who is interested in extended family and gardening. Outdoor pet o.k. Call 461-9220 for more information.

RECLAIMING STUFF

Considering Ritual

Reclaiming has been discussing ritual, what makes good ritual--what works and what does not. We are interested in meeting, beginning perhaps early in October, to study and discuss ritual-making. People who have taken Reclaiming classes, Reclaiming collective members, and people in Reclaiming-connected covens or circles who are interested, please call Arachne or Robin, 346-5257.

Reclaiming's own Ariadne, recently returned from a 4500 mile workshop tour, is once again offering classes and bodywork for women in the East Bay. "Equal Rites for Women," an introductory magickal training and history class, will run for 7 weeks this fall as a joyous alternative to the traditional holiday season stress. Sliding scale, \$55-75 includes 100+ pages of free handouts. "Claiming Our Power to Survive," a women's advanced class, uses magickal skills to be-friend and celebrate life's transitions. 4 weeks, \$40. Also consider Ritual Magic Massage for Women, a very nourishing and relaxing treat for the overwhelmed little girl inside even the most together witch. Two-hour session, sliding scale \$25-\$50. Please call me for details. (415) 444-8998. I'm looking forward to working with old and new friends.

Starhawk's Fall Schedule

October--Seven week course in Creating Ritual, Thursdays 1-4 beginning mid-October. For information contact Institute for Culture and Creation Spirituality, Holy Names College 415-436-0111, 3500 Mountain Blvd., Oakland, CA.

October 29--Talk at the University of Montana, Bozeman, on Power, Peace and Spirit. Contact Joanne Troxel 406-587-7732. Tentatively--One-day workshop on Ritual and Personal Power either October 27 or 28. Contact Jeanne Powell, Box 266, Big Sky, Montana 59716. 406-995-4521.

November 9--11, Austin, Texas, Fri., November 9. Evening slideshow and talk, followed by ritual: Sacred Sites, Sacred Earth. Sat., Nov. 10, 1-day workshop: Rites of Passage (women and men). Sun., Nov. 11, 1-day workshop: The Pentacle (women only). Contact Rita Green, 1615 Confederate, Austin, TX 78703, 512-472-9885.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To receive issues of the Newsletter at home, send your \$\$ subscriptions to Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco CA 94114. \$3-\$10 one year; \$6-\$20 for two years; minimal income, cannot donate.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

We want to hear from you!

I am renewing because:

I am not renewing because:

Reclaiming is a collective of San Francisco Bay Area women and men working to unify spirit and politics. 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, public rituals, and individual counseling, 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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