

Today's Prayer: Good great gracious Squat, please save me a parking spot.





Events Line - 849-0877

This phone recording, listed under Reclaiming in Berkeley, carries announcements which come up too late to be put in the newsletter; it's also a phone number to contact us (but be aware we can't always reply quickly). If you have news of interest, please pass it on. We appreciate comments. Messages can be left on the machine or sent to the P.O. box; remember to say where we can reach you with questions, and allow plenty of time.

- The Recording Faerie

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

The RECLAIMING Newsletter now costs a dollar if you get it a store or an event. The Newsletter runs at a deficit, and we're trying to cover a higher percentage of our expenses. Additional contributions are welcome.

SUBMISSIONS De to graffiti! PLEASE SEND US YOUR GRAPHICS!

The Newsletter staff encourages more non-Reclaiming people to submit articles, paragraphs, or graphics related to political, pagan, or spiritual issues and happenings. Please understand that due to limited space we cannot print (and anyway might not want to print) everything submitted.

Submissions, whether we print them or not, eventually find their way into our cauldron, so please keep copies for yourself.

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 a 3 3/4" column, justified preferred). We will not take responsibility for chasing down late material.

The Fall newsletter deadline is August 15. Send Material to **RECLAIMING**, Newsletter, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

The opinions expressed in the articles and advertisements in this Newsletter belong to the individual authors and advertisers and do not necessarily reflect the attitudes or opinions of the newsletter staff or other Reclaiming members.

HELP! WE NEED YOUR BLOOD! If you can donate blood into Reclaiming's account (#1913) at Irwin Memorial Blood Bank (567-6400 for information/appointment), please do so. If you or a loved one need blood for surgery, etc., contact Rose at 821-3336 for transfer. If the Goddess blesses you with good health, please share and give the gift of life. And many thanks to our donors.

As the California grasses are dried in the summer wind, think now of those who helped edit, type, and lay out this Newsletter--Vibra, Roy, Rose, Robin K, Rick DT, and Leslie O'B--for they are all growing ripe and juicy.



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#### by Rose May Dance

When we heard about Chernobyl, Starhawk and I were laughing hilariously, making plans for May day. Some women friends were looking for us, traced the sounds of our laughter through a huge building, burst into the room and told us about the nuclear fire, and our laughter vaporized, vanished as the stunning news settled on us. gave a lecture, half an hour later, on "Magic, Sex and Politics", and after the lecture we raised energy on the grass at the University of Colorado, Denver, leading 300+ people in a spiral for life to continue. We drove back to Boulder, where we were staying, by way of Rocky Flats. Our friend drove us to a spot on the road where we could see the huge blinking facility, its weird aura extending across the endless Plains, and we shivered with Nuclear Terror.

The next morning we flew home, settled in and called our affinity group members, knowing that we needed to counsel and share our confusion and horror with each other. We worried about David and his lover, who are expecting a child. A number of us got together night, with members of our household also, trying to process our Deborah said she felt the feelings. world had changed in a way we could never forget. David felt numbness, and worried about his lack of reaction. We moved between despair and numbness, eating chocolate for comfort and staying up too late for fear of our dreams.

People started calling us, calling our house, calling the Abalone Alliance, wondering about a response to Chernobyl. Deborah works with incest and child abuse survivors groups at a Center; the clients and therapists at the Center were feeling Chernobyl deeply, were asking what could be done. We felt that the nuclear fire was an incident which might bring a number of people to the step of taking direct action, but what action? We looked first to our magical skills for working with despair.

Our affinity group met May Eve; we had planned, in weeks previous, a night of pleasure and delight, but as we gathered our mood became apparent. We needed to spend some time dealing with Chernobyl, with numbness, frustration, and fears it brought us, and with fervent prayers for the planet, for the Body of the Goddess. We spent hours "checking in", fighting, despairing, and worked and prayed for many more hours, finally falling asleep together, exhausted, our plans for merrymaking sunken beyond sight by the weight of our mood.

Several of us began to make plans with some friends, organizers, and we listened with interest to Bill's idea for march which would connect the issues of nuclear power and nuclear weapons -- a march from the Soviet Consulate to the Presidio Army Base, a large park-like chunk of the city which "defends" the Golden Gate. We began to have visions of a moving theater piece on the order of the Three Mile Island Parade. Another of our Memorial friends thought that a mid-connection was needed between nukes and weapons. He felt that people would best relate to nuclear power at the point where it obviously came in contact with their lives, i.e., the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG & E) which brings us power from the Diablo Canyon Nuke. tried to find a sub-station in the area round the consulate and the Presidio o. but had no luck. We decided that a transformer box or power pole would do for our purposes.

One of our goals was to make ritual space for people to deal with their fear, grief, confusion and anger around the nuclear accident. Our own feelings were compounded by our rage at the destruction of the Earth's Body that we saw all around us, our anger about the recent military bombing of Libya and our nervous concerns about American military build up in Central America, the travesties of Star Wars, the recent resuming of nuclear testing in the Nevada desert, and a plethora interlocking issues. We wanted a ritual which would honor the connections among the issues. We wanted to make it clear that our rage was at both the Soviet Union and our own government, at our own industries. In a nuclear disaster there are no national boundaries.

So we issued a leaflet "No Nuclear Terror -- East or West -- Power or Weapons", calling for people to gather at 5:30 PM on a Tuesday outside the Russian Consulate. We made plans for a much larger ritual than we actually The Consulate is in an performed. out-of-the way neighborhood, and many activists had been busy that day and week with other political actions. We had to give up our dream of a huge colorful parade. I think what we planned would have worked for a large gathering, but as a small action was also powerful and even enjoyable.

We had asked people to bring flowers, wreaths, grain, and seeds. We gathered at the Russian Consulate and it was immediately apparent that the authorities had seen our leaflets. There was a large police presence, setting up a barricade across the street from the Consulate. We also saw a truck that said "mounted police" on it, but never saw any cops on horses. The cops told us we would have to hold our demonstration behind the barricade, and could not go up to the Consulate building itself.

The whole situation looked bleak to the organizers. We saw only a handful of people showing up by 5:30, (eventually our ranks swelled to about 50), we saw at least 30 police and had at least a hint of more police ready on horses -- though this may have been a bluff -and we saw the little cage they had built for us, which we really did not want to enter. Nevertheless we negotiated with the police, telling them we wanted to lay flowers and wreaths on the Consulate doorstep, in mourning for the victims of Chernobyl. They told us if we went behind the barricade, we could lay the flowers, one person at a time, if we promised to clean up afterward. Grumbling, we agreed -- but really I think the cops provided us with a powerful element of our ritual.

We began by drumming and singing, a bit half-heartedly, as it is difficult to begin ritual surrounded by barricades and 30 police. We spoke of how the web of life was ripped and torn -by Chernobyl, by nukes, by other poisonings and plunderings, and we began to mourn and cry out. One by one, each person walked from behind the barricade, crossed the street, and laid her/his flower or wreath, screaming, crying, mourning the victims at Chernobyl, the whole web of connections from the native peoples whose lives and lands are polluted by the digging of uranium, on outward. The police seemed spooked by our screaming, neighbors stared, diplomats peeked from win-Mayor Feinstein drove up to the Consulate (she was going to a chess match) and we were able to yell at her our anger about the arrival in the Bay of the US Missouri, a "floating Chernobvl".

After screaming, drumming, chanting, and weeping for about an hour there, the time seemed right to move out toward the Presidio. As we began to snake out from behind the barricades, one cop tried to explain to us that we could not leave the area, we had to demonstrate behind the barricade. We just said to him, "we're leaving" and indeed we did. We marched up the street with signs, escorted by police cars. At one point we stopped at a light pole, and formed a tight circle. The cops could not see what we were doing. We made a cairn of grain, bread, and potatoes on top of the transformer slab, and spoke of our fears about the world food supply, the tainted grain in the breadbasket of Russia, making offerings to the Grain Mother that might continue, acknowledging the threat of the Diablo Canyon PG & E nuke and other nukes, and how the nuclear industry makes possible the manufacture of nuclear weapons, could wipe out our life entirely. We burned PG & E bills and covered the ashes with more grain, and then swiftly moved on, not having made any promises about "cleaning up" after this part of the action.

(continued next page . . .)

We moved to a nearby gate of the Pre-Army Base. Normally "park", which has many gates coming off city streets, is open, but we were greeted by the sight of a line of cops across the driveway to the gate, another line of cops in front of the closed gate, behind which were 40 or soldiers in fatique more (Later a friend drove all around the Presidio, and reported that all the gates were locked and guarded by soldiers -- for years unheard of in this city.)

We had made plans to express our rage about nuclear weapons and testing, to say NO to Star Wars, to scream NO MORE to the US military and its war-making in Africa, Central America, or anywhere, and to work with our anger until the energy was transformed. Then we were going to plant a "peace garden" in the Presidio, sowing the seeds of disarmament, visioning what could take the place of the crimes we protested. The locked gates changed our plans a little, but we proceeded.

We gathered around a cannon at the side of the gateway, away from the police and troopline. We began to drum and chant, each person calling out what she/he wanted stopped, and the rest of us answering NO MORE! At some point I started screaming for everything I was worth, just letting the fury pour forth from the bottom of my heart. I don't exactly remember anything that happened for a while after this because I screamed myself into deep trance. I know the police and soldiers seemed frightened and uneasy, and I have mixed feelings about how effective a tactic it was, but mostly am glad we screamed. Finally people began to throw seeds over the wall, stating what they were planting. Someone would say, "I plant the seeds of a nuclear-free future" and we would chant a refrain, "Protect, Continue, and Survive." I planted seeds, for their tenacity and orneriness -- "the seeds or struggle and resistence." "Protect, continue and survive". Each person called out their wishes for peace and change, and we

chanted on. (At one point someone peeked over the wall and discovered damouflaged soldiers lurking in the bushes, being showered with the seeds of transformation.) I was particularly impressed when "Running Sore" of our group eloquently planted the seeds of "insurrection among the troops" and I heard a whoop or two from the men behind the gate.

By the time we had planted seeds for 10 or 15 minutes, the cops and troops were extremely baffled -- we hypnotized them with drumming, made them nervous by screaming, and I don't know what they made of our planting and singing. I looked over and saw the nice empty space made in the driveway which was surrounded uniformed men. I winked at Stark I winked at Starhawk, who was drumming, grabbed her arm, and we began a snake dance out into the middle of the dancing ground police and army were marking out for us. We struck up "Soon and very soon. we are going to change this world" and danced a spiral, fifty of us smiling and singing, enjoying ourselves in the unique energy available only when one is dancing in a large group surrounded by mystified police. The police shook their heads and began to drive off. grinning. The troops seemed delighted by the show. It was fun. We danced up a cone of power, grounded it, and opened our circle, laughing as we "merry parted."

I'm not sure how much of a statement we made to the Russians, PG&E, or the military brass. The action has to go in the books as a symbolic one, but I think we did help move emotion and commitment for 50 of us, and we did some good material magic. And who knows, maybe some day we'll advertise a ritual action, draw a thousand people and only 5 cops will show up. I'll return to the Presidio some sunny day and make wishes on dandylion fluff. Soon and very soon.





#### DIABLO REVISITED

#### - MoreGrace

Ahhh, remember Diablo Canyon-those midnite hikes through the backcountry with your favorite friends and guides; those rituals overlooking the nuke; those arrests at the frontgate; those sunny days in jail nude sunbathing? Well, two members of the Reclaiming community were so homesick for the place that they went there on their spring vacation. "Diablo Revisited" is their gripping, hair-raising yarn. It's about poison oak (of course), private property, stinging nettles, magic, topo maps, and hot tubs. Soon to be shown at your local theaters.

Post Chernobyl, what about Diablo and Rancho Seco? Is the future of nuclear power a question for USIANS? Do we dare hope or do we continue our little forays into the sites of nuclear reactors in order to pray for the land, assess how it's holding up under the weight of the nuclear menace, or to remind people that we can't forget that that's how

a lot of us got our start in this activist business. For many of us, Diablo Canyon was the first place we "committed civil disobedience." It was the place where we learned that what we did mattered, and it was the springboard for the reemergence of the direct action movement in the Bay Area. Even though Diablo Canyon opened and continues to operate, I don't think we can say we lost the war. Most USIANS might not have had the reaction they had to the Chernobyl disaster if we hadn't laid the groundwork with Diablo. They might have believed what our government told them about the extent of the damage and not started to question nuclear power here--for that is what is happening. Rancho Seco has been closed since December and there is good indication that it may never reopen. The fight is not over by any means and it's a terrible tragedy that Chernobyl had to happen in order to wake people up, but that may very well be the result.

If you get a chance to visit Diablo or Rancho Seco, do a lot of magic. They still need it.



(Ed. note: This letter accompanied the submission of a nice drawing. We always print fan mail.)

Dear Reclaiming Staff:

Especially enjoyed the Spring issue of Reclaiming Newsletter. I'll have to remember NOT to read these things with a mouth full of peanut butter. Nearly gagged when I read the captions to the Tarot cards ... humour in unexpected places is deadly.

Yours truly,

Jerryl E.

#### HANNAH'S HOUSEHOLD HINTS



#### by Hannah Clancy



Well hello all you nice people who are still trying to get your houses clean but having no luck. As you know, I am always thinking up new ways to fix your problems and I have thought up a whole bunch but I do not have time to tell them to you right now on account of that nice boy told me that it is time that I explained to you some of the things that are Not My Fault.

Because some of you have begun to think that a whole lot of things ARE my fault so I think you should know right now that not much is, especially all that dust which was supposed to be coming here from Someplace Else and if I told any of you that what would work best was Endust, I am supposed to tell you that that was not me, it was Somebòdy Else. Who does not live here any more, and besides I do not know them.

So I think that is about it on messages about what is my fault, which like I say is Not Much. I am very much more happy to tell you some more news about the movies in Purgatory, which as you know, some of you are going to be seeing a lot of, and that is that I thought that there was an infinite number of movies showing and everybody was seeing a different one, so you couldn't get any help from the person sitting next to you on what was the plot so you could figure it out and get out sooner, but I have recently found out through that there are only a Sources Limited Number of Movies and the Vatican Has A Copy Of Them All! Because it seems that there are only so many plots possible, which I didn't know, I thought they were all different.

So. My new plan is to get some copies made because as you know, I have Friends, and then I could rent

them to you at a nominal charge, and you could bone up on all the plots, so then when you get there you can get out sooner on account of knowing the plot.

Now what I don't know is, do you have to understand the inner significance of the characters and symbolism also, in which case if you do we can maybe hire somebody to write up the Cliff notes as I don't think I can do it, as I am Too Busy, as you know.

So I think that is about it for now. I am a little worried about some of you, as the holy sacred spider season is approaching, and I know you don't want to kill any of them on account of not wanting to see it in Purgatory, but really as you know, your mother when she comes by this summer is goiing to see all the Holy Sacred Webs and she will not understand that it is Intentional on your part, but instead will think that you are Sloppy. Which of course you do not want, especially if she has already ask about the Holy begun to Sacred Artifacts in the corner, such as the bones.

So my solution is to make a lovely home for the spiders, down in the basement if you have one, and carefully take them all down there, saying holy sacred words such as Don't Bite, and leave them there until your mother goes home.

But the bones in the corner it is probably best if you put cloths all over them and tell your mother you're painting.

So that is all and I hope you are all very happy and remember it is Not My Fault and I Do Have Friends,

Love, Hannah







## Response to Bob Gustafson's Thoughts on Shamanism by Brett Slocum

As a white pagan who has practiced Shamanism for over a year, I felt a need to respond to Bob Gustafson's article on Shamanism in the Spring '86 issue. Bob feels that Indians have exclusive rights to the techniques of Shamanism, and that no one else can learn them without earning the privilege. I strongly disagree with this attitude.

Shamanism is a collection of universal spiritual techniques practiced by most cultures at some time in their development. Shamanism has been found in areas as wide spread as Siberia, Australia, Polynesia, Asia, Africa, Lapland, North and South America, and, yes, Europe. Shamanism does not "belong" to anyone; everyone has the ability, and I venture, the right to learn these techniques. I can understand a group being careful about who they taught, but I cannot understand making these decisions based on matters of race.

Bob states that by learning Shamanistic techniques, non-Indians are somehow stealing something from the Indians, as if knowledge were land. My feeling is that the more people that know these techniques, the sooner we can change the way modern society deals with the Earth and with people. I am sure he would be appalled to know that I have learned the Ghost dance, which is a

technique used to retrieve knowledge and rituals from our ancestors. If I use these rituals to help heal the Earth or people, I am not stealing, but contributing to the general welfare of all people, Indian and non-Indian.

Bob mentions that Indians have died in the defense of their old ways. This is no reason to exclude non-Indians from learning those old ways. Let us not forget the nine million witches that were burned not so long ago. Should present day Wiccans refuse anyone who is not of European descent because of this?

He states that the medicine is a tribal way, meant to serve the People. Must we become tribal, or is Community enough? I feel I have an obligation to help people because of what I have learned. When I Journey, I regularly do so for others who are in need. In this way, we can build Community in our cities; we can build Community across nations; we can build Community across the globe.

He also states "true sharing comes only between equals -- not between oppressor and oppressed." I agree with this, but I am not personally the oppressor. Others of my race certainly have been and still are oppressors, but I refuse to be held personally accountable for the





actions of all white European males, past, present and future. That sounds to me like Original Sin, which I don't accept.

Everyone, no matter what their race, has knowledge to learn and to teach others. As people concerned about the

Earth, I feel that increased communication and cooperation between all Pagan groups, Indian or not, can help bring a change in society. We have common goals that will be very difficult to achieve without that mutual cooperation.

Blessed Be.



[We asked our friend Luis, an anthropologist who spends time on Pine Ridge, to respond to Brett Slocum's letter. --eds.]

The Finger Pointing At The Moon Is Not The Moon: Is It Really A Finger?
by Luis Kemnitzer

In our search for spiritual experience, spiritual knowledge, and spiritupower, we enter a world of shadow illusion, ambiguity, danger. We're not quite sure what we're looking for until we've found it, or accurately, it has found us. Then we can't really talk about it, except reoundabout ways and in a vocabulary that is at best only allusory. most of us who have been separated from the traditions that had or have a living vocabulary to talk about these things, the vocabulary is artificial, Since we don't borrowed, attenuated. know what we're looking for, sometimes in our impatience we might succumb to illusions, either created by ourselves or waved in front of us by people who are good at creating illusions.

This is especially poignant in these times when everything is in danger of becoming a commodity, from love to children and, yes, spirituality. The need for connection to the TaoGodGoddessAllThatIsAllAroundUsInsideUs is compelling, and many of us try to express our understanding of the connectedness of our concerns for the future

of the earth, for community, healing, egalitarian life, peace and justice, all those fine PC things, in terms of spirituality. Other people try to find some meaning in their personal life, effect personal growth (whatever that means), or gain some measure of control over their life by attaching themselves to what they think is a long tradition that lives beyond the mean oppressiveness of commodity society.

Note that I said oppressiveness, not oppression. It is ironic that the main set of traditions (note: plural, not singular) that do have living languages to talk about spiritual experience and that are connected to the forces that swirl around our home here belong to the people that the society of these new seekers has oppressed for the last 500 years, and continues to oppress, in Lake County, in Arizona, in South Dakota, in Michigan, in most of our neighborhoods. The spiritual traditions of Native Americans, as those of all indigenous people (including Europeans, Africans, Asians, Pacific Islanders) are rooted in their re-



mmmmmmmm

lationships to the land and its inhabitants that they have lived with for that oak tree south of generations: Chico who was the source of the twelve kinds of acorns that fed the maidu, and who bled when the white man cut it that rock on the Marin County coast where Coyote smashed the quartz crystal and formed the Golden Gate: that hot spring that heals; that hill grandfathers for generations back made their vision quest; that creek where this family has cut willows for generations; that butte with the cave where the wolves protected a woman escaping from enemies a long All these and many more, time ago. places of food, medicine, spiritual power, comfort or rest for the dead are now fenced in, paved over, chewed up and ripped off, by the society that rejects or is rejected by people who now seek the spiritual power of the people and the places that remain, and who if they can't get the power, want to play with the language of that power. And, succumbing to the commodity society, there are Indians who will accomodate them.

In all our sincerity and good will, may forget that while we borrow the trappings of a romantic image of the original trustees of this continent real Indians are still being forced out of their ancestral homes, real Indians are being denied access to their spiritual locations, real Indians are in jail for being Indians, real Indians are losing their children to strangers, the list of current oppression goes on and on. The life that produces powerful produced and still practices for healing, for communication with the spiritual world, also includes poverty, discrimination, family disorganization, disease, dislocation, and all the other good things that go If you want with commodity society. one, you have to deal with the other. As individuals we may not think of ouroppressors, but we are selves as trapped in the structure as representatives of the oppressing society. Ιn 25 years of close work with Indians I have always been conscious of that

fact, and as long as commodity society and its agents can move Navajos off Big Mountain, steal land from White Earth Reservation, keep Leonard Peltier in jail, steal Rattlesnake Island, deprive Yuroks of their fishing rights, no amount of good will and deep friendship and constructed kinship is going to change it.

I can't offer any resolution to this Certainly it's possible that dilemma. non-Indians could grow and become more effective quardians of the fellow earth by becoming better acquainted with Native spiritual traditions. Borrowing ideas and actions helps traditions to adapt and survive -- the Longhouse of the Iroquois Confederation has its roots in Hiawatha and D but Handsome Lake revitalized it with ideas he got from the Ouakers and made Iroquois; Navajo got their sheep from the Spanish and a lot of their ritual from the Hopi, but now they're Navajo sheep and Navajo rituals. But in the absence of an egalitarian structural relationship between Indians and non-Indians, observation and borrowing of Indian spiritual ideas can only be done in a consciousness of the relationship between Native Americans and the society that endangers them and uses them as the model to teach racism to the rest of the world. This means also active support for their struggles for life and self-determination, as well as a close examination of one's own motives, and a proper humility in approach to the spirits, the religion, and any knowledge/power may gain as a result of the encounter. Claims to have learned this or that to the acquisition of this or that Indian power, selling of symbols in high-priced "shaman workshops", and the like smell of the 19th Century practice of advertising quack medicines by claiming they were secret potions learned from an Indian medicine, and are just repeating another stereotype.

One more thing: spritual power don't make you good.



#### **LETTER**

#### Joanne Ploof

In the Spring issue of Reclaiming's newsletter, I read an article by Bob Gustafson called "Some Thoughts on Shamanism in the Pagan Community. After finishing, I felt compelled to relay my feelings about.

The first paragraph set the mood, which seemed exceedingly bitter. While these feelings are understandable and human, I think his energy would be much more useful for education. Most non-Indians are still taught in school that the Indians are gone along with their problems, and what may seem like apathy is just ignorance.

Next, Mr. Gustafson complains, and rightly so, that unlearned non-Indian "Shamans" are spreading erroneous information as correct. There are more "quacks" than true shamans and anyone looking for the truth should be discriminating.

The image of the oppressed/oppressor relationship is very strong and not just for Native Americans. Most subgroups of European imperialists have felt it just as heavily. I believe our future relies on coming together, not separating, with ideas, energy, and love. We must be strong and be the first to lay down our weapons, whether offensive or defensive. Only then can we truly work together.

Mr. Gustafson points to European tribal heritage as a source of spiritual inspiration. Although it is an attractive one, I feel no more ties with Europe than he does; it is just as foreign a place. Religion or spirituality is tied inextricably to the land and the land I am bound to is here.



#### AT RECLAIMING



#### PROCESS IS OUR MOST IMPORTANT PRODUCT



Spring, 1986

"They made us many promises, more than I can remember, but they never kept but one -- they promised to take our land, and they took it." (Red Cloud)

Dear Friends,

From time to time you get letters from me inviting you to attend this ceremony or that, this gathering or that lecture. Sometimes I ask you to donate pictures of dead pre\$idents to the honoring of some caretaker of the Earth Mother.

This letter is the  $\underline{\text{Letter for Big}}$  Mountain.

You've been told that the Hopi's and the Dineh People (Navajo) have had a long standing "dispute" resolved by the courts, and that thousands of Dineh have to be removed from "Hopi" land. You've been told that the government has spent millions of taxpayer's dollars in relocation and welfare costs. You know that the deadline for moving the last of the Dineh is July 8 of this year.

There may be some facts regarding the relocation at Big Mountain which you do not know. The original lawsuit was filed by a Salt Lake City law firm which represented (coincidentally) both the Hopi Tribal Council and Peabody Coal. Big Mountain contains coal and uranium coveted by Peabody Coal. The Mormon Church is a major investor in Peabody Coal. Federal Court for Northern Arizona is chaired by a white, Mormon judge, who has not found valid a conflict of interest charge brought against the Salt Lake lawyers. Curiously, the Hopi Tribal Council is predominately Mormon, educated in government schools and Mormon Junior Colleges, and is representative of the traditional Hopi ways or People. The Hopi Tribal Council was in fact organized by their lawyer (see above) in the 1950's and exists

solely to lease mineral rights to energy companies. (Out of 10,000 Hopi people, 900 voted in the last tribal election.) Traditional Hopi People support the Dineh efforts to remain on their land.

The Dineh have resisted all efforts to move them. Thousand still remain on land their ancestors settled 500 years ago. Time is running out! The government is bound by law to remove the people and will use military force if necessary. Peabody Coal has engineered a remarkable feat. After your tax dollars are spent to remove thousands Native-speaking, simple shepher families from land they and their ancestors have lived on from before Brigham Young or the Pilgrims, Peabody Coal will move in and strip Big Mountain. "progressive" Hopi Tribal council has already leased them the land.

What is the future if we don't act to repeal the law and stop the strip mining? Reservation land, former thanks to a Interior Department Undersecretary (now a V.P. at Peabody Coal) has had pollution federal control regulations waived. Uranium tailings can legally be left to irradiate the land and the people. Underground water, used to slush coal and then wasted, can legally be dropped to unusable levels. Electric power plants can pollute sky from unregulated coal powered generators. Acid rain will blow éastward and contaminate the Rocky Mountains. Our latter day coal company will profit immensely from cheap, land, cheap labor, and low overhead. Thousands relocated Dineh will be trucked to border towns to live on welfare.

The Earth Mother will have been raped by her own children one more time.

Why do Americans shell out millions to save the starving in Ethiopia, march in the streets to stop apartheid in South Africa, and turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to greed, cultural genocide, and ecological disaster in Arizona? Why do we cry like celebrities about the homeless in our cities, and then allow the government to so ruthlessly create more? In 1620 there were fifteen million Native Americans. In 1986 there are less than 2 million. Haven't we done enough wrong?

There are three things we all can do to help.

1) Write our senators and tell them to vote to repeal public law 95-531, which is the law that empowers the government to relocate the Dineh. Do not send a form letter. Make a personal request to Senator , The Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (Use "Navajo," not Dineh. The Senators don't know that Navajo is a Spanish slur work meaning

cutthroat, or that Dineh do not call themselves "Cutthroats.")

- 2) Send a check as a donation for legal defense and for food to the Big Mountain Legal Defense Committee, 2501 N. 4th Street, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001. As a preliminary move to relocating the people, the government has taken 80% of the sheep, the source of the people's livelihood, away from them. These families are now starving and have no income. Send money! Do it now! I am begging you to help.
- 3) Pray for the People by sending a copy of this letter with your name on it to ten friends. Ask them to send to ten friends, and so on. "Honor your Father and Mother." Take care of the Sky and the Earth. Don't trust it to the hands of the Council of the Elders of Peabody Coal.

Sincerely,

Glenn

endorsed: Joseph B. Wilson.



## LETTER FROM AUSTRIA: News of Spirituality and Politics in the German-Speaking Countries

At the beginning of March 86 I received a letter from Gae Sidhe of the pagan group "Faerie fire." He asked me about the pagan scene in the German-speaking countries and I will take the opportunity to write a general information letter, that will go to people or groups we are in contact with or which send us sometimes a magazine.

No doubt, since 1983 the pagan scene is geting rapidly stronger in the German-speaking countries and most influences come from England and the USA. But there are very few pagans that also act politically in a green-alternative way. And these few have no "revolutionary pagan perspective" as it is spread by "faerie fire" and the "Thomas Morton Alliance."

Most of our pagans are into the magical scene, doing a lot of rituals and trying to heal the dying woods by kissing the trees, embracing them and so on. Some pagans are pupils of the plastic-medicineman Harly Reagan Swift Deer, who teaches e.g. the "Wuwuchimceremony" of the Hopi; surely not the real one but a plastic shadow of it.

This Mr. Swift Deer is also working agianst traditional Indians. He teaches his followers not to work against uranium mining, because this is -- in New Age ideology --negative thinking that sets out negative vibrations. They should only work for solar energy. Swift Deer claims to have a Hopi teacher named Don Juan -- must be a progressive one from the Hopi tribal council or from Peabody Coal Company. Swift Deer is so (sic) teaching the "Indian prophecies" of Grace Walking Stick. You find them printed in "Universal Network" (Ng. 4/85/Durango/Colorado). newsletter believes Ronald Reagan to be the incarnation of love and light and that he is guided by the cosmic brotherhood and their UFOs.

Well, let's get back to our pagans. The second pagan group, that is getting stronger too, comes from the extreme right wing and is considered by scientists as "fascists." [They] are ariosophic pagans, who believe in the leadership of the Aryan race. Their "ancestors" taught Hitler during his stay in Vienna (Compare: Nigel Pennick, <u>Hitler's Secret</u> Sciences). A stronger and more powerful pagan movement was imported from France into Germany. it comes from the French extreme right wing party, which got more than 10% in the French elections in March 1986. This party has also a very strong occult strategy and Alain de Benoist, the chief-thinker of it, is proud to call himself a pagan.

The "ideology factory" of the French new extreme right wing movement is called "GRECE" and it placed a letter in Akwesasne Notes No. 1/85, page 30, where they claim GRECE to be a friend of the traditional Indians. There are often very similar "mother earth"-elements, but in fact the conception of society and justice is very different. To me it seems that traditional Indians are more the opposite of the extreme right ideology than a proof of it, as many extreme right philosophers believe.

the Well, Working Circle Hopi/Austria is not a right wing group and we don't call ourselves pagans. We try to develop a way of spiritual politics. We want to honor the traditional Indians because we have learnt a lot from them and still do and they are real teachers: they encourage you not to copy them but to stand on your own (cultural) feet. So we (sometimes) try our best and we know that we come from a rootless

technological society. We try to live again with the land and to cooperate with the spiritual powers. We study old celtic and germanic (spiritual) culture and the knowledge of our holy places. The original traditions are lost and in books you find 90% not worth reading. So a spiritual intuition seems to be very necessary. Many teachings seem to come from daily cutting wood, cooking, eating, babysitting, laughing with friends, earning money and so on: a sometimes hard but very realistic way to learn responsbility.

Responsibility is for us the key to a spiritual life -- not instant rituals you have to pay for. We are all parts of the holistic web of life and therefore responsible for our world and the living beings. We have learned this essential lesson from traditional Indians and we want to express our special thanks Thomas Banyacya Sr., the official interpreter of the traditional Hopi and to Janet McCloud (Yet Si Blue) of the North West Indians Women's Circle, who is known in the German-speaking countries as "the Grandmother of Indian Resistance."

We support the traditional Hopi, Big Mountain and Yet Si Blue by collecting and sending money donations and by information work, e.g. by the diashows of Alexander Buschenreiter and his book (Unser Ende ist Euer Untergang), by writing articles, producing leaflets and so on. Also we try to motivate people to get involved, especially those in the apolitical "spiritual" groups.

Big Mountain is raising [sic] here. Groups in Austria and Germany — and I guess also in Switzerland maybe — start to work on it and press articles came out in many alternative, but also established magazines. I quess Big Mountain will be the highlight of the Indian support scene here. In Vienna a new support group ("Big

Mountain Action Group") was established. In April there is a meeting of international support groups in Luxembourg and they want to coordinate support actions for Big Mountain. For April 19th the Denmark Big Mountain Group had proclaimed an international Big Mountain Day.

In Vienna we plan to carry a garland on April 18th to the embassy of the USA in order to pity this mighty government, that they burn and bury the rights of human beings and nations in their own country. The Austrian public is losing more and more sympathy for Reagan's America. We will express on April 18th our sadness, that by destroying Big Mountain the USA will destroy themselves, as the Hopi say. And we will say in public to the US government: Stop the forced relocation at Big Mountain! We want to prepare this little public ceremony spiritual-political one: aggressive, but full of symbolism and with a clear and prayers statement: Don't relocate the people of Big Mountain! AUSTRIA IS WATCHING BIG MOUNTAIN AND THE 

Let's all work together to create peace, love, justice and a responsible spirituality on our Mother Earth! We feel we can do it, if we really try and work hard on it!

In the name of the Working Circle Hopi/Austria I send my best wishes from my heart to you,

Roman Schweidlenka 3/31/86



Lines in the ground—
Symbols that transform
The living/dving moment
Of this mortal space.
When the contras came,
They drew a line
The pust of the earth

And Bade all who would support them,

None came Porward...

Cross.

So the contract killed

All the men in the village,

Kibnapped the voye,

Raped and killed the women.

Lines in the ground! What do they conjure In the way of courage, Cruelzy, and pain? The ducz of our lives Szírc uneacily ar paccing zidec; We grir our circle, En gearch of transformation. - Daniel









## ELEMENTS OF MAGIC FOR WOMEN - Kat and Anda

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 course, six Thursdays starting July 17, 1986, 7:30 pm. Call Kat (454-8435) for registration and location. \$45-90 sliding scale.

# RITES OF PASSAGE FOR WOMEN AND MEN - Cybele and Raven Moonshadow with Sean McShee

The Rite of Passage focuses on dreams, myths, and language, using traditional and nontraditional tales and techniques to create a personal rite of passage. Through story-telling, trance, release work, and dreams we receive our challenge, meet our helpers, work through our blocks and emerge renewed, reborn. This class ends with ritual created by students. Prerequisites: Elements of Magic or experience/study. Six Tuesdays starting July 22, 1986. Call Sean, 771-2303, or after July 1 you can also call Cybele, 863-8294, for registration and location. \$45-90 sliding scale.

## PENTACLE FOR WOMEN - Rose May Dance and Kat

Using our magical skills, moving and shaping energy, transforming ourselves through trance to explore the five points of our inner pentacle: Sex (primal energy), Self, Passion, Pride (self-esteem), and Power (effectiveness in the worlds). Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent experience/study. Six Tuesdays beginning August 26, 1986. Call Kat, 454-8435 for registration and location. \$45-90 sliding scale.



For other classes, events, and updates, call the RECLAIMING Events Line, 849-0877.

If you would like to receive the RECLAIMIN scale) to RECLAIMING, P.O. Box 14404, San Fi









#### RECLAIMING RECOMMENDS

Bone Blossom and Owl Blossom will be offering a beginner's magic class on the Peninsula for women and men in the late summer or fall. For information call Bone. 368-9655, or Owl, 325-9266.





#### **GAY DAY PARADE**

A pagan (witch, fairy) contingent is being planned for Gay Day, June 29th. There will be a circle the night before. Call the Reclaiming Events Line, 849-0877, for details. To help plan, be sure to call by Iune 22.

### PAGAN **PICNIC**

## COMMUNITY NETWORKING

PAGAN

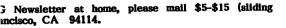
All Pagan- and Wiccan- oriented folk are welcome to gather for a potluck picnic on July 12 at noon, in Sunnyhills Park in Milpitas (Hiway 680 between San Jose and Fremont.) CHILDREN WELCOME.

Sponsored by the Coven-at-Large of Northern the California Local Council of Covenant of the Goddess. RSVP/Info: Susa, (415) 355-0526

#### RECLAIMING NEEDS SPACE FOR CLASSES

Reclaiming teachers have been holding classes in their own cramped living rooms or the living rooms of students. We would love to arrange for occasional use of a fairly large room (living room, rec. room, attic, studio, classroom, whatever). Our classes usually meet once a week for six weeks, and we need comfortable space for 15-20 people to sit in a circle and move around a little. We could barter tuition for use of the space or could pay a fairly small rental fee. If three or four people offered occasional use of space, the Reclaiming teachers' roommates would be eternally grateful, to say nothing of the teachers and students.

If you have space you might be willing to make available, please call Kat at 454-8435.



NOTE: The two articles that follow are responses to "Ethics: Dealing with Power Over?" by Robin Kreger, which appeared in our Spring 1986 issue.

While we are pleased to print letters or articles on ethics issues in general, we will not print personal charges and countercharges.







Dear Robin.

Your article, "Ethics, Dealing With Power Over," stirred a lot of thoughts and feelings in me.

There is a tradition of sexual and personal manipulation in the Craft. So what? I hold no allegiance to Craft traditions. I don't care what 'Old George Pennyfeather' did. I didn't sign up to be a WITCH.

I bear allegiance to my spirit and the seamless One of which it is part. The path I find myself on seems to be called pagan, earth religion, Wicca, the Craft. It could as easily be called Zingu.

My task is to be faithful to the Spirit. I know that making unwilling use of others, "power over," is betrayal of that spirit, no matter what precedent there is for it. ("If I ever betray my knowledge of Her Love my heart will turn to ashes...") I am bound by what I know to stand up, to tell the truth. Yet I am only a piece of the whole.

Recently, I met a woman who, twelve years ago, became an initiate of the one coven in my tradition which was committed to heavy secrecy and total control over neophytes.

Talking to this woman now, I realize that the training she received caused such havoc in her life that she hadn't wanted any part of the Craft for a good seven years. She had no idea what she was getting into when she became an initiate. At the same time, she did learn a lot. The man "knew" a lot, he structured a real crash course in Witchcraft. (Which was why our scholar had taken this person under his wing.) And the group was definitely a crucible.

There is a tradition of sexual and personal manipulation in the Craft. So what? I hold no allegiance to Craft traditions. I don't care what 'Old George Pennyfeather' did. I didn't sign up to be a WITCH.

The high priest (and founder), a rigid, insecure man, was accepted by the chief scholar of our society, so even though he was a bore and a pain in the ass, what the hell, live and let live, caveat emptor...

No one really knew the details, but we joked about the mirror-walled red room with hooks in the ceiling in the suburban home.

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The ethics of what we were doing were less clearly defined twelve years ago. None of the rest of our Order seriously tried to divest ourselves of this group or interfere in its workings. And really, no one asked us to.

What are the limits of one's personal responsibility? Life is risk and chance and choice. To try to take responsibility for another person's choices is arrogance and folly.









This woman chose to be initiated into the coven in question. True, she was very young, naive, had no idea what she was getting into. It is impossible to know what her life would have been like without that experience.

Here she is, many years later, part of my circle. I respect her heart, her intelligence, her Craft.

Who can say?

I know that there are Witches I am not interested in covening with. That I can recognize rigidity, paranola, manipulation, and power-trips a mile away. And am quite willing to give my opinion, if asked.

I know that I have a lot of anger at men who are "in it for the nooky" (to quote a friend) and am glad to see them nailed. Though I don't claim to be proud of that feeling.

I know that when I get caught up in my own indignation I get suspicious - there's obviously an emotional pay-off in it for me. This doesn't mean I forget about an ethical issue because my motives are tangled. It does mean I observe my attachment to being right, and try to avoid self-indulgent, self-righteous gossip. While continuing to deal with the issue.

Not long ago, the opportunity came to me to speak and be heard in the case of a person who for years had used his power to manipulate youngsters sexually and emotionally. I had personal knowledge. To let the opportunity go by without speaking up would have been a betrayal of the Spirit.

I agree with your decision not to print the name of the man in Maryland. I agree that those directly involved or closely associated with the situation are the ones who can judge it best. In my experience publishing such letters usually starts a long, rancorous, energy-wasting, boring exchange of charges and counter-charges.

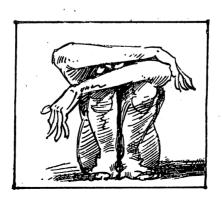
If you are sufficiently moved by the woman's letter, why not write her and tell her how you feel, giving her support? (One friend suggested that next time the circle of women should be larger.)

I don't believe there are any general answers to protecting others from "power-over" in the wider Craft community. Each situation in which we have a part is best met with common sense, intuition, humility, and faith in the Spirit. Pick up what comes to our hands to do and trust that the rest will be done by others.

B.B.

Calypso Iris











#### LETTER About Ethics in the Craft

#### - Valerie Voigt

In most branches of the Craft practitioners are discouraged--or even forbidden--to bring a fellow Witch before the law of the land. Witches are expected to take care of our own dirty laundry rather than airing it in public or taking it to outsiders. I find it ironic that some people advocate Witches asking the patriarchy to do our dirty work for us, especially given that patriarchy's history of putting the female victims of rape (let alone other types of sexual coercion) on trial. Additionally, sexual coercion of a non-minor is, in many states, not an actionable crime; but it is certainly against the Wiccan Rede.

It is true that the present-day Craft in America exists within the context of the larger, patriarchal, Christian society. It does not, however, follow that we should call in the agents of that patriarchal Christian society to judge Witches whose actions took place specifically within a Craft context of which that society has no understanding. After all, many of us--I suspect the majority--see the Craft as a holistic alternative to the established culture, an alternative which, admittedly, we are in the process of constructing/reconstructing based on natural models and common sense (neither of which are much respected by mainstream culture).

One widespread method of justice-making and conflict resolution in the Craft is for each of two conflicting parties to choose an Elder to serve as arbitrator, and for the two Elders to choose together a third Elder; whence the three Elders, in private or otherwise, hear all available testimony and attempt to resolve the conflict. In the case of a Witch being found guilty of some crime, the usual "sentence" is redress of the crime, an injunction and oath not to repeat the offending behavior, and aid (if needed) in finding a more adaptive behavior pattern (including magical work as appropriate). If a guilty party refuses to redress and correct the behavior, the community has the option of binding and/or

banishing the offender. Banishment is a traditional rite, rarely used, which places the offender ritually outside the community and the law s/he has betrayed, and therefore subject to secular law rather than to Craft law. At this point, and only at this point, do Witches in the Craft groups which include this procedure go to police or courts. Similar procedures are prescribed by the Books of Shadows in various of the Englishderived branches of the Craft.

While these Craft laws probably are of relatively recent origin, they nonetheless bear some examination. They date from a time when the Craft was illegal in England, as it is still now illegal (though unconstitutionally so) in some parts of the USA. We are still subject to persecution, even though that persecution is not necessarily legally sanctioned; we would do well to remember that when we talk of police and courts. A victim of sexual coercion by a "Craft teacher," for example, is doubly reluctant to go to court: not only is the court likely to try her as courts often try rape victims, but it may try her as a Witch, too--not to mention that fundamentalist relatives may then try to take her children away (and succeed, as has occurred), or someone may burn her house down with her in it. Resolving matters within the Craft has its advantages, and has often worked well.

It is true that, as written, these Craft laws involve some "power-over;" it is, however, mutually consensual power-over: nobody forces the adherents to join a coven which follows such a law. Of course, one who does not uphold a law is also not given its protection. Also, such a law does not imply the sort of rigid hierarchy that some might assume from the language; the intent is that experienced persons, who, one hopes, will have cooler heads, may find a solution to the benefit of all. An adaptation for anti-hierarchical groups might bring the model up-to-date for those groups. For me, however, the issue isn't power-over; in my observation all groups have that somewhere,







admitted or not. For me, the issue is consensuality of that power exchange, admission that it exists, and freedom from abuse of it. Isn't Reclaiming's process of "checking people out" and letting them in or not an example of power-over? Yet it's justified. Any group has the right to protect itself, and to choose its own members. Not only that, but many of us have taken a traditional Oath of initiation, which usually states, in part, "I will guard and protect the Craft, and the secrets of the Craft, and my Craft brothers and sisters."

Traditional Witches usually have a farreaching concept of the implications of karma in a community: all in the community share karma, to a certain extent. Do we not have a right to some say in the question of with whom we will share karma? Some branches of the Craft include quite a bit of law and lore around this idea of karma. It also leads to some power-over. A concrete example of community karma: to an outsider, any Witch tends to be taken as an example of the Craft community. We all share in the image and reputation--one aspect of karma--of every Witch who is publicly known as such. Anyone calling him/herself a Witch is, in this way, a reflection on all of us. Are you comfortable with this fact? Care to speculate on its implications?

There is an assumption, fairly widespread in the Pagan movement, that anyone calling themself a Witch automatically is a nice, ethical, conscientious person. Not so. There will always be persons who deliberately exploit the aura of mystery, power, etc. around the word "Witch," who are only interested in ego-tripping, gratification of their sexual desires, fattening of their purses, or whatever. Sometimes these exploiters (whether they are "really" Witches or not; that is another debate entirely) knowingly take advantage of the knowledge that their victims are afraid to admit to the outer society any connection with Witchcraft. This is called blackmail. Such people usually feel no responsibility. either to their victims or to the Craft community. I see no way for the Craft to deal with such people internally. Nor do I

see any effective way for the Craft to deal internally with people who, for whatever reason, will not agree to any internal procedure or to cessation of their harmful behavior. If such persons prefer to abjure Craft procedures in favor of secular law, there seems little to be done about it (besides, in appropriate cases, turning the offender in to that law's agents, the police). Certainly, someone who has not sworn to uphold a particular Craft law is neither bound by it nor protected by it. At base, all such laws are based on some form of group consensus, and any individual may choose not to participate in a given group.

Because occult communities, like other subcultures, are relatively easy places to disappear into, we are vulnerable to exploitation by those whose participation in our communities stems primarily from a desire to take advantage of the fact that members of subcultures (especially our own) are reluctant to turn each other in to police. I do not expect this problem to decrease over time, unless we make some drastic changes.

Incidentally, the Beltane '86 issue of Red Garters (published by the New Wiccan Church, POB 162046, Sacramento, CA 95816) contains an excellent article, "Ethics and Tribunals," by Deborah Bender on page 4. I recommend it to all interested in ethics.

In the case of allegations of misconduct, it is certainly appropriate and important to seek complete information from all sides before printing anything. On the other hand, to ignore such reports or to sweep them under the rug is to be unrealistic. I agree that mere rumors of sexual coercion are not grounds for taking action against someone: a first-person complaint must be made. Given the difficulty victims have in bringing charges, however, these accusations, once brought, should not be ignored or made light of, as has been known to happen.

In practice, many of us (including myself) who do a lot of Pagan networking and contact referrals do something like this: On receipt of a complaint about a teacher, I







place that teacher's name in a file marked "Possible Bad Apples." I then inquire to Witches in the accused's locality (including the accused, when I can). If the responses indicate that suspicion is warranted, I no longer refer seekers to that person ("Better safe than sorry . . ."). I do not, however, actively warn seekers away from the person unless I receive numerous complaints and some substantiation—in which case the person's name gets moved to the "Confirmed Bad Apples" file.

An example of what can happen:

Once upon a time, a person used to attend our own (Centre of the Divine Ishtar's) open Waxing Moon Circles. This person, unbeknownst to us, had a long-standing bad reputation in the Craft community (that nobody had bothered to tell us about, which is very unfortunate). When we finally understood what this person was doing, we forbade him/her to return to Waxing Moons or to any Centre function, and expelled him/her from membership in CDI (to his/her vehement protests).

About a year and a half later, we were told by a newcomer to Waxing Moons that a certain woman had warned the newcomer away from our Waxing Moons on the grounds that the scoundrel might be in attendance.

As I told the newcomer, I believe that the woman did the right thing: believing that the scoundrel might be present to prey on the newcomer, she warned the newcomer. It is true that the scoundrel had not been in attendance for well over a year by that time, but since the woman had no way of knowing that, she had a duty to the Craft (as well as to the individual newcomer) to warn the newcomer to the best of her knowledge.

I respect this woman all the more for her having warned this newcomer away from our circles, given the information she had.

She is, fortunately, not alone in preferring to err on the side of caution.

Incidentally, I am also pleased that she

told the newcomer why she was warning him away: this allowed him, upon making further inquiries, to feel comfortable seeking us out after discovering that the scoundrel had been expelled.

Comments may be sent to Valerie Voigt POB 9494 San Jose, CA 95157







#### Book Review: <u>JAMBALAYA: The Natural Woman's Book of</u> Personal Charms and Practical Rituals by Luisah Teish



For a long time I have been waiting for Teish's book -- I first heard her speak at the Goddess Rising gathering in Sacramento four years ago, and the presence, charm and power of the woman astounded me. I wanted to listen to her talk-story all day, and she tantalized her audience with the promise of this book. Now JAMBALAYA is here and it is indeed a marvelous stew. I know the trials Teish suffered putting this book together and am so greatful she persevered.

JAMBALAYA truly is an everywoman's book. It is the first work I have seen that can guide me through the rudi-ments of African and Santeria prac-tices. (I used to puzzle and pour over the little pamphlets I'd pick up in occult stores to my greater bewilderment.) There are charts which explain the various gods and goddesses "eguns', the colors, candles, herbs, and oils; there are workings which fulphysical and spiritual needs. These things one expects in a book on ritual practice. What makes the book special is the way this necessary information is woven into the story of Teish's life and spiritual journey, the

history and theology she gives of Santeria, Voudou and African-diaspora religion, black history and especially the history of New Orleans (the LaVeau Women) and Haiti, Teish's feminism which reaches out to all spiritual women in a practical way, her information about healing, her practical advice to the spiritually and psychically sensitive, and the wealth of spiritual information this infinitely wise woman lets drop in her conversational tone. JAMBALAYA is a guide book for those who seek a pathway in disciplined Voudou tradition, and also for the shamanistic witch or other spiritual woman who shuns hierarchical, structure and for all those who fall in between the two.

Teish's story of how she journeyed to New Orleans to retrace her religious roots is poignant. She ran up against so many dead ends, so many people who told her that the old people who knew how to do certain rituals and practices had died out. She tells of her discouragement at the commercialization of the botanical stores. She finds that there are few in her family who can tell her about their own practices. It is empowering to see her realization that her religion is indeed in her blood, she has to recreate it as best she can. by studying with those who know, but also by practice, by chanelling, by uniting with practitioners of many traditions (as in her own altar circle), and by applying the spiritual information whispered to her by her personal goddesses and ancestors to her life in Oakland. Teish has done her homework, studied with her elders and undergone strenuous and complicated initiation, sought her roots, and has taken it all a step further to place women's religion in her sisters hands.

I appreciate Teish's description of the coconut oracle (p. 97). She states that the ritual for obtaining information from the coconut is complex and can require the help of an initiated priestess, may take days, et cetera. Then she instead recommends a process requiring only seriousness, attention, openness and imagination, a method of following one's heart and listening to one's intuition. I appreciate this kind of advice from an initiated priestess who could benefit from a hierarchical system of secrets; she gives validation to women's original, make-shift creative spirituality. This kind of validation is one of the best things that's happening for women today -priestesses who know their stuff making religion available to other women. Throughout JAMBALAYA Teish gives us a choice -- she names proper procedures







and points the way to a disciplined, traditional approach to the altar, and she also encourages our creativity and validates our imagination and intuition, opening the door to the shamanistic approach.

In telling her stories, Teish disciplined awareness imparts important advice to the spiritually hare-brained like myself. Loud and clear come several messages. One is "pay attention". We are taught to read the signs, the meanings of what happens to us. If a path is particularly hard to follow, it is time to walk in another direction.

Teish makes it clear that there are many signs about "letting go" and they must be minded. Teish's advice to psychically gifted people is valuable-cleansing is important and overextension of psychic abilities is dangerous. "When people you care about are falling all around you there is a strong desire to try to exercise more power than you truly have. It's easy to slip into a superwoman stance, and it's a deadly mistake!" (167). Another example which steers the spiritual woman from danger:

"...be able to make a distinction between sensitive perception and deliberate hexing. It will keep you clear of guilt. If you dream that Sister A is going to fall down and break her leg, and she does, you did not hex her. Your responsibility in this case is to call her and tell her your dream, then pray for her safety.

"If you go to your altar and ourn candles against her while breaking matchsticks or if you deliberately say things to her that undermine her confidence, then you have hexed her. You are guilty and will probably injure yourself." (204).

Teish's spiritual politics here are superb -- and quite practical. She is a shaman who sees all her acts as sacred, yet is not frightened of her own spirituality or power. She uses her

power and her story telling to poke at "the ism brothers" -- racism, sexism, classism, etc., without resorting to dreary preachiness. I loved Teish's reaction to one spiritual woman's solution to dealing with a rapist. The woman simply surrounded the rapist in light. Teish was horrified. She gives a class analysis of why this woman would be so misguided as to want to protect the rapist, and suggests a very thorough curse for the rapist which runs through personal injuries (including hot grits poured down his back), tears, guilt, confrontation, humiliation, justice, imprisonment, hard dreams, labour, bad intimidation, shame and other horrors, then allows surround himself in white light and to reform himself (should he get that far.)

Teish speaks of "working the rainbow" and this is a great gift to those of us whose roots do not lie in African religion. She reaches out to all her sisters, opening doors to black and brown sisters to reclaim their heritage, and letting the rest of her sisters know we can work together, prodding us to let loose of the "ism brothers" and making clear what we all have in common. She lets us know we are all related, by blood, and that our common blood is a touchstone for world peace and harmony. She encourages us to know and work with and honor our ancestors, and she also extolls the extended family:

"Extended family is how the runaway slaves made their way to freedom. It is the way humble people have always functioned. Today the pressures of urban living --economic deprivation and loneliness -- make this practice more than a courtesy. If we are to survive as whole human beings, the extended family must become the norm.

"Any mentality that sets people apart from each other is the same mentality that gave rise to the slave trade, Nazi Germany, Hiroshima-Nagasaki, the massacre of



the Native American, the Salem witch hunts .... Now this demon mentality is being extended to the entire planet through the nuclear weapons game.

"But through proper use of the nommo [the life force] we can turn this ill fate around. We can affect the spirits of those who are possessed by the demon. We can activate the Da [the energy that carries creation] and debilitate the monster. We must make the whole of humanity our extended family." (93-94.)

I sleep better at night knowing Luisah Teish is teaching people to make ritual, to "work the mother". May JAMBALAYA enjoy every success, and may we please hear more from this fine author. Modupe Teish!

-- Rose May Dance

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#### A PENTACLE RITUAL

by Ann, Burke, Cindy, Ellen, Mary Ann, and Pleiades

#### A PENTACLE RITUAL

by Ann. Burke, Cindy, Ellen, Mary Ann. and Pleiades written up by Mary Ann

We created the following ritual as the finale for our Pentacle class. Our purpose was fivefold:

- to pull together the threads of what we'd learned/experienced into a tapestry of our own weaving;
- to celebrate our individual selves, as well as the Group Self that evolved over the six-week course:
- to exchange the energies of sex, self, passion, pride, and power (the five points of the Iron Pentagram) with one another as a final gift:
- to have fun; and
- to say farewell with feeling.

We think the ritual succeeded on all five points (subtle pun, there), so we thought we'd share it -- if only as a working guideline for others to create Pentacle rites.

We set up the room with objects placed in the four directions to mark the circle. Then five candles, representing the points of the pentacle, were placed within the circle. We kept handy a large diagram of the Iron Pentagram, with the points labelled, for easy reference in the latter part of the ritual.

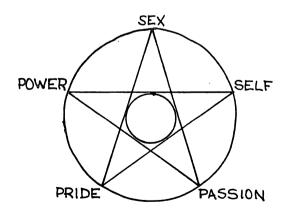
After grounding and centering, we cast the circle and invoked the Goddess and God. Then we sat down within the Pentacle-Circle and sang a chant to put ourselves into a light trance state.

Then we each moved to stand at the point of the pentacle that represented the quality we felt we most needed to nurture within ourselves. As we clapped softly and rhythmically, each person took a turn to say what they particularly wanted at the point where they were standing. For instance, a

person standing at the Pride point needed to stop feeling he was never good enough in anything he did.

After one person spoke, the people standing on the points of the pentacle connected by crossing lines to that person's point would verbally and magically send him or her energy from the point/quality they were standing on.

For instance, the points connected to the Pride point are the Sex and Self points, so the people standing on those points would say to the person who needed Pride, "I send you Pride in your Sexuality" and elaborate a little, or "I send you a strong, sure image of your Self," etc. Usually just a few sentences were spoken; the energy transferred was spiritual as well as verbal. Some of the words were reasonable, while others suggested dreamlike images. Sometimes the speakers didn't seem to think much of their own words, but the people they spoke to were strongly affected. Many of us came away with a feeling that the connecting lines of the Iron Pentacle are significant and worth working with.



The Iron Pentagram



When everyone had said what they needed and received responses, we moved to the points that represented our special strengths, and each of us spoke briefly about why we celebrated that quality in ourselves.

When we had finished, we sat down and chanted again to raise a cone of power. The chant Burke suggested goes like this: I AM (referring to the High or Deep Self, the ground of being from which we emerge), WE ARE (our archetypal identities, the Goddesses and Gods, heroines and heroes, who are our potential), THIS IS ME (our everyday existences, including both our triumphs and our failures).

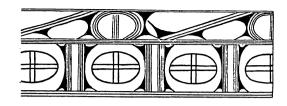
We began the chant slowly, ringing a bell after each line, and then spoke faster and faster until the bell was ringing constantly and the lines and selves and vibrations merged into One.

We grounded, then lit a fire in a cauldron. As it burned each of us wrote on one side of a piece of paper some quality we wished to increase in our lives, then on the other side what we wished to decrease. We tossed the paper into the flames and meditated on the transformative power of fire and on our own power to transform ourselves. When the fire had burned out, we turned to one another and affirmed that power: "You are Goddess. You are God."

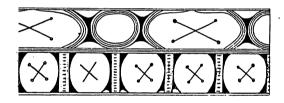
Finally we got down to the important stuff -- eating and drinking -- thanked the powers that be, and opened the circle.

















#### Advice For Cat Owners



by John Newmeyer

You may have witnessed your cat bringing a freshly-killed rat, bird, go-pher, or other small animal into your presence. Your cat seems to be offering the little carcass to you. Perresponse has been, "no your thanks, kitty-- I'm not hungry-- in fact, I don't feel very well right now-- please go away!" If this was indeed your response-- and it is disturbing to me how many cat owners react in just this way -- then you have surely insulted your pet and hurt her feelings, and done damage to felinehuman relations in general. Let me take this opportunity to advise you on the correct way of handling an incident of this sort.

When your cat catches a bird or rodent and brings it to you, she is behaving like Francis Drake to Queen Elizabeth when he presented her with the booty of his Spanish raids. Cats need to work hard and exercise great skill in capturing their prey— but nonetheless, they regard humans as even more skillful and masterful, and are continually awed by our skill at driving cars, opening cans, running democracies, and cleaning litter-boxes. So your cat is saying to you, like Drake to his Queen, "Here is my hard-won booty, O great master; take the best part for yourself!"

Therefore, the next time your cat brings a dead rat into your home, this is the proper action to follow: graciously accept the rat, taking it into your hands and admiring it. Then use your fine strong primate molars to crack open the rat's skull. Pry open the split skull and, using your little finger or an oyster-fork, scrape out the rodent's brains and devour them, smacking your lips and licking your fingers appreciatively. Finally, return the rest of the rat to your

cat, thanking her warmly for sharing so generously of her prize. You will thereby have displayed to your cat another example of your grace and mastery, and worthiness of her continued respect. You will find that your feline friend is fully expecting you to have done just what you did, and she will probably be purring at the felicity of your behavior, just as a Samurai warrior would glow with pleasure after a particularly noble interaction with his lord.

Some people don't have a taste for rodent brains, while others do, but fit into the "I like rat brains, but rat brains don't like me" category. If you're one of these, what you should do is to take a knife and cut off the head or the hindleg or some other choice portion of the rat, then return the remainder to your cat as described above. She will assume that you are about to roast, or braise, or broil the portion, or to do whatever fussy elaborate thing that humans like to do with their food.

**Footnotes** 

- 1 Studies of primate behavior (see Jane Goodall, among others) have noted that when apes capture and eat monkeys, the brains are always eaten first, and-- unlike other parts of the prey-- never shared by the captor.
- 2 If other humans are present, it is best to give them some warning before you undertake this interaction with your cat. Unlike the cat, the people will not be expecting you to do what you are about to do.
- 3 See, for example, William Paul's <u>The Samurai and His Lord</u>, chapters 6 and 7.



#### Starhawk's Travels 1986



Starhawk will be visiting the following areas. Exact dates may change; please call the contact people well in advance. Some events are open only to women.

Location	Dates	Contact Person	
Victoria, BC	June 15 & 16	FOR WOMEN ONLY. Sun. 6/15: Evening of ritual. Mon. 6/16, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm: Workshop and ritual.	
	Contact: Shirley	y Avril, (604) 381-1012	
Rhinebeck, NY	June 23 - 27	5-day workshop.	
		Omega Institute for Holistic Studies utside NY: 1-800-862-8890 side NY State: 1-800-342-2240	
Topeka,	June 28 & 29	Heartland Pagan Festival	
Lawrence, KS	Contact: Sue W	Sue Westwind, (913) 843-4235	
New Hampshire	July 3 - 5 Contact: Michae	Another Place Conference Center el Cosmo, (603) 878-3117	
Minneapolis Minnesota	August 2 Contact: Antiga	Evening with Starhawk and Luisa Teish , (612) 729-5383	
Encino, CA		28 Holy Spirit Carlyle Gill, (213) 395-0977	
Santa Rosa, CA		Angela Center ine van Swearingen, (707) 528-8578	
Big Sur, CA	October 3 - 5	Esalen Institute "Moon Journey: Reclaiming Women's Magic"	
		Write: Esalen Institute, Big Sur, CA 93920 Call: (408) 667-2335	
Mankato State, Minn.	October 18	Keynote speaker, Women in Spirituality Conference	
Minneapolis Minn.	October 19 Contact: Antiga	Workshop a (612) 729 5383	









#### WITCH CAMP '85 PARTICIPANTS:

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Love,
RAVEN

## 10TH ANNUAL PAN-PAGAN FESTIVAL SET FOR AUGUST IN ILLINOIS

Midwest Pagan Council, association of Pagan groups in the Midwest, invites people to its 10th Annual Pan-Pagan Festival August 7-10 near Valparaiso, Indiana just south of U.S. 30 in a "primitive area" motels within with miles. This year's theme is: "We've Come A Long Way, LADY ... 10 Years Young and Still Growing." For further info: Midwest Pagan Midwest Pagan Council, P.O. Box 313, Matteson, Illinois 60443-0313.



WICCAN/PAGAN SUMMER FESTIVAL --Aug. 29 - Sept. 1 in southern Michigan. Workshops, rituals, etc. For information write Amber K, Box 176, Blue Mounds WI 53517. PAGAN/OCCULT/WITCHCRAFT SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP of Mensa is an international network of persons interested in Nature spirituality, magic and esoteric lore. It, and its affiliated local groups, sponsor activities as well as publishing a newsletter, PAGANA, available to its members only. Non-Mensans are welcome as associate (non-voting) members. PAGANA is \$12 for 6 issues, \$2 sample. POW-SIG, P.O.B. 9494, San Jose, CA 95157.

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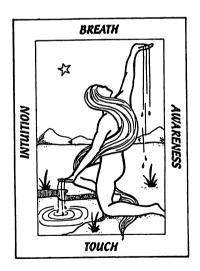


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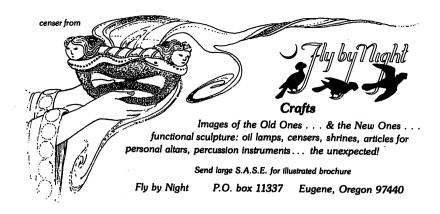
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