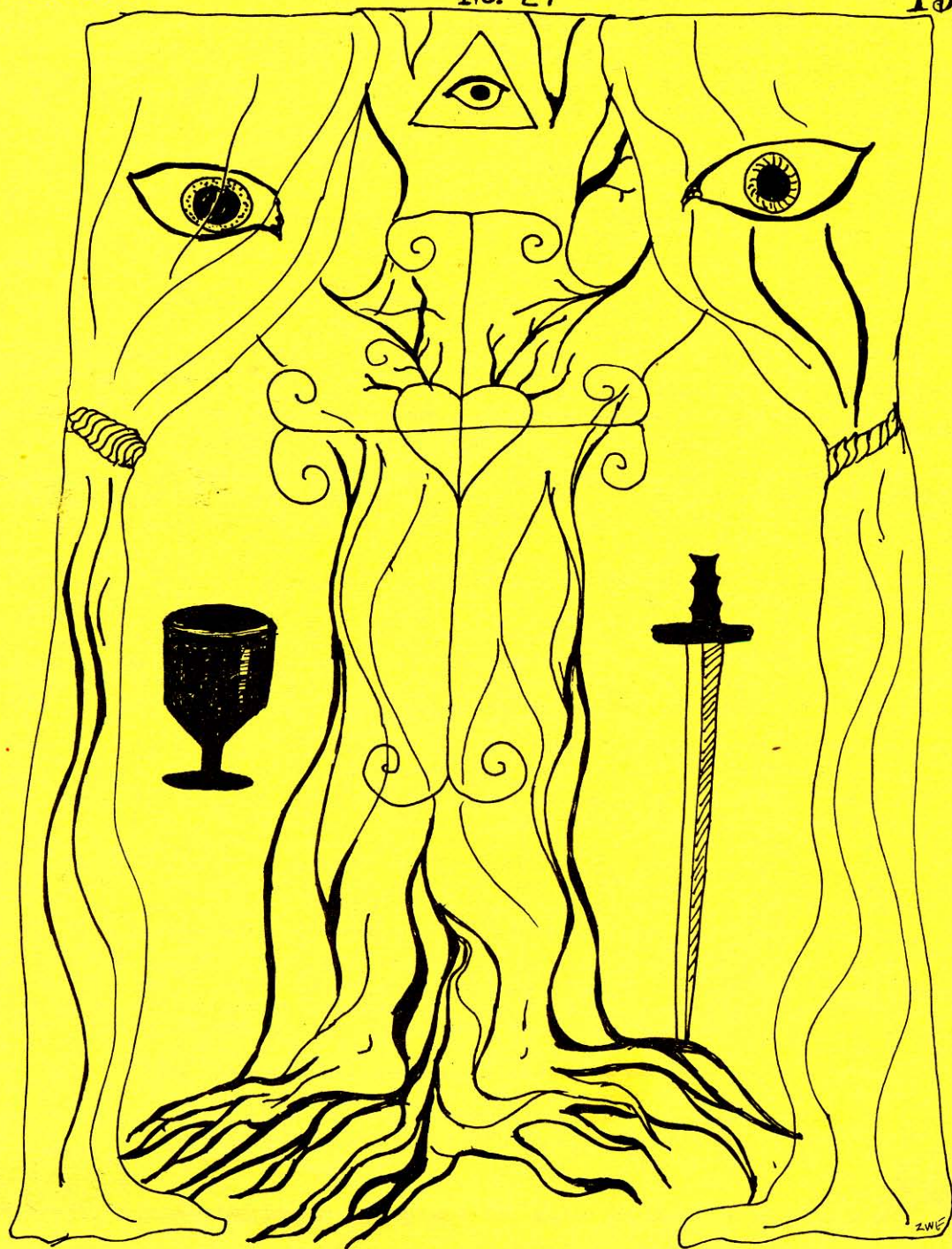


RECLAIMING NEWSLETTER

SUMMER '87

No. 27

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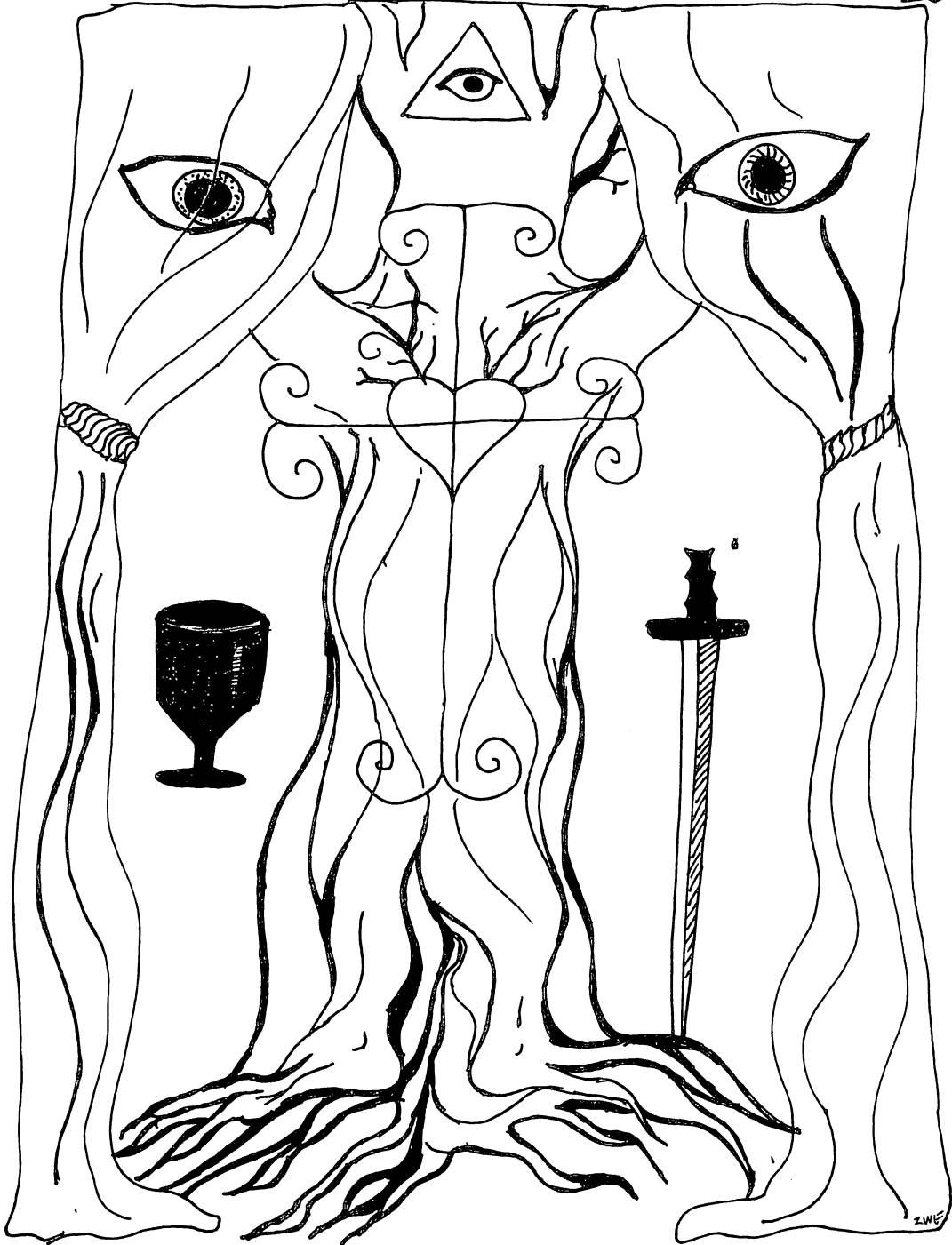


RECLAIMING NEWSLETTER

SUMMER '87

No. 27

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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 at 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

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 has an EARLY DEADLINE: July 15. Send material to RECLAIMING Newsletter, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

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

Help! Help! Help! Help! Help!

We need help getting the newsletter out -- layout, collating, administration. If you would like to help, please call Rick Dragonstongue at 731-2159.

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.

This newsletter was laid out but not buried by Kat Whiskers, Roy, Rose, Pleiades, Gray Eagle, Robin D., and Dragonstongue.

THE

SUBSCRIBERS
BLESSED BE



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Cover by Zeis Waitdlow-Fuchs

Graphic on page 28 by Donald Engstrom

Various original graphics by Robin Dorn

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. (Some of us actually dislike some of the stuff we print.)

EARLY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE SHOCKS CONTRIBUTORS!

"Get Your Articles in by Mid-July," say harassed editors.

The deadline for the Fall 1987 Reclaiming Newsletter is July 15. This exceptionally early deadline is necessary because some of the editorial cell will be going to Witch Camp in August.

In order to get the newsletter out around the fall equinox, we'll need this longer lead time.



HELP NEEDED

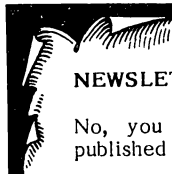
The Reclaiming Newsletter Cell is looking for someone to set up and manage out of town distribution for this newsletter. Several out-of-town bookstores have expressed interest in carrying our publication, but there is neither time nor personnel to handle this task. This, like all Newsletter work is basically a volunteer job but we do offer a miserly stipend for certain types of poop-work. If you are interested in making the views expressed in this newsletter available to more people, and can help, contact us care of Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

SEND YOURSELF TO WITCH CAMP!

This August Reclaiming is offering two one-week summer intensive programs: opportunities to study feminist ritual, magic, and political change with Starhawk and Reclaiming teachers such as Rose May Dance, Rick Dragonstongue, Raven Moonshadow, Kat Whiskers, and others. There will be an Elements track and advanced topics. Programs are open to women and men.

For the session near Vancouver, B.C., Aug. 9-16, send SASE to Patricia Hogan, 1937 W. 2nd Ave., Vancouver, BC, V6J 1J2, Canada.

For the session in Northern California at Ben Lomond (near Santa Cruz), Aug. 23-30, send SASE to: Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114



NEWSLETTER WELCOMES CONTRIBUTIONS

No, you don't have to know somebody to be published in the Reclaiming Newsletter.

We welcome contributions -- articles, poems, graphics -- related to pagan, feminist, political, antinuclear, and ecological issues. We don't publish everything we receive, but carefully written articles relevant to our issues tend to get in. Poems don't make it as often. Decisions may seem arbitrary at times (we do give priority to submissions from folks in our community).

We really do like to hear from new voices.



INVOCATION TO APHRODITE

-- Kat Whiskers

(inspired by the Women's Pentacle Class, Fall '86)

Aphrodite!
Lovely sea-foam Goddess
Glistening green
Goddess of our yearnings for union
With You our selves our myriad selves.

Hold up your copper round mirror
That we may gaze at the bright shifting images
Of You
And quicken in our desire
For the holy all-embracing hot circle
Of Being
You!

Ignite our newborn lust of life
That in pursuit consumed
We may be
Transformed awakened renewed.

Come!
Fill us with your presence until we are swollen
Your vessels
Just as You in your vast and incomprehensible love
Are a Vessel that contains the ecstasy of the universe--
The uni-verse
The only verse
Your siren song.





HANNAH'S HOUSEHOLD HINTS
by Hannah Clancy



Well hello, I am back and feeling quite well again, thank you. All you nice people who have been sending money to the Persecution and Hospital Bills Fund don't need to stop, though, as my attorney's fees and bills from the resort spa, where as you know I have to go in order to get my nerves back in order, are piling up. Support the Little People! Save the Avalon Little Dogs! Buy Hannah Some New Lungs! If you think up any more good slogans let me know.

That reminds me, I had some hints on glitter. I know I have been telling you to throw glitter on everything, but some of you have not understood that there is glitter and there is glitter. The sort that is useful for disguising dust is pretty tiny. The sort that is made up of larger pieces is Very Dangerous and if you throw it on people they are going to sue your butt off.

But back to the hints at hand. I have been gone a very long time and I just know that all your houses are falling to hell. I have here a letter from one of my faithful readers who says that she has recently had a Household Hint Experience, which was that her boyfriend sat on some gum on the BART while wearing his only suit, so they put ice cubes on it until they could scrape the gum off. Well, they were pretty proud of themselves.

Now, I won't mention the fact that a much easier way of dealing with the whole situation would have been to carefully cut the gum out and paste matching fabric, cut out of the suit jacket under the armhole, over the spot. No, what I am mostly concerned about here is the way these two earnest young people have Ignored the Root of the Problem.

It is a simple magical fact that like attracts like, and I happen to know, on account of being psychic and attuned to the information hidden in the archives of both the Holy Sacred Great Goddess and the Pope, that that young man had not taken that suit to the cleaners for what must have been Several Weeks.

Obviously, as he was walking down the aisle, every fibre of his suit seat called out to the gum on the train seat, which called back, and they united happily because they were both the same thing, which was Filthy.

Now, all the household hints in the world are not going to do you any good if you ignore the entire basic reality of life.

I had some other hints, but this letter has made me so upset that I forgot them. Sometimes I just don't know what you could all be thinking of.

As a matter of fact, I get pretty upset pretty easily these days, a fact which I think I had better point out to my attorney, and I will, too, just as soon as I can get a hold of him. I think he must have changed his phone number.

Every time the doorbell rings I relive that horrible moment when the nice package I thought was a wonderful Yule present from my respectful readers turned out to be a horrible glitter bomb planted by the terrorists, and I have to go lie down.

But don't think that this has affected my feelings for you, as you know I love you all Very Much and am happy to get your letters. Please have the police examine them and stamp them OK before you put them in the mail.

Love, Hannah



THE CLOAK OF VISIBILITY:
by Sean McShee

Gay Males among Reclaiming



THEA/OLOGICAL PROBLEMS

In the past few months, several of the gay males associated with Reclaiming have been meeting. We discovered that we shared a remarkably similar complaint: Invisibility. What follows is an attempt to articulate what we discussed. The complaint was shared by Raven Moonshadow, Roddy, Ken, Jack Davis and myself. The wording, analysis, and views in this article are mine alone. Time did not allow a group article.

My first encounter with this invisibility occurred in my first Reclaiming class. On the way home, I remarked that I had never before been in a situation where I could not tell immediately who was gay and who was straight (it was an all-male class). Another guy in the car replied, "Yes, isn't it great." I immediately assumed that he was straight.

Now straight people, men in particular, may feel that by blurring these distinctions they are fighting sexism. But many gay people,¹ again men in particular, feel that in blurring the distinctions we become invisible, which negates our coming out. Thus we lose the ability to connect, bond, share experience, and cruise.

The small group process with its many meetings, large commitments of time, attempts to merge the social, the spiritual (in this case), the political, and the personal can be quite devastating for any minority. (Combining any of these with the sexual can be devastating, period.) You end up with a permanent minority status, cut off from your own group.

If one considers the actual history of sexual pairing within this loose collection of people that has grown up around Reclaiming, certain patterns begin to emerge. As far as we could piece together, there was one gay male pairing seven years ago, two sets of lesbian couples, and a great deal of pairing, including some bi-relationships among the straight-identified people. Admittedly, there are multiple reasons for this endogamy/exogamy (pairing within/outside the group) pattern. The point is that social and sexual dynamics are working quite differently for differing social groups, and, in the case of gay males, are quite clearly separated. (Some of the more bi-identified women also fall into this exogamy pattern.)

One of the most attractive things to me about feminist spirituality was the invocation/creation/discovery of the Goddess as an act of transforming self-alienation into strength/beauty/power among women: spirituality as a form of therapy/growth/healing. If women could deal with their alienation that way, then other groups could also, by consciously creating their own psycho-dramas, dreams, and mythology in ritual. Instead of God creating man in his own image, people could create their Gods in the image of their alienation, and through a spiritual path transform themselves from a fragmented, mutilated person into a vibrant whole being: salvation without gurus and healing without sickness.

But what I have found instead is a creeping institutionalization of a solution for one problem into a solution for all problems. Sometimes in ritual a specific deity is invoked; at other times the Goddess and the God are invoked almost as a bi-theistic duality.² In both The Spiral Dance and Dragonstongue's article (RECLAIMING No. 26) there is the implication that the Goddess and the God are personifications of "male" and "female" energy and that when we invoke them we are balancing our "male" and "female" energies as a major part of our work. Traditionally in magickal practice this is called the cosmic marriage, whose goal is to produce the androgyne. This imagery is drawn from heterosexual intercourse and procreation. The language is quite gender specific.

Just what do we mean by "male" and "female" energy? About 10 years ago I stopped using the words "masculine" and "feminine" because they were gender specific, and had absolutely no relationship to the gender and behaviors of people I knew. I replaced them with the camp words "butch" and "nelly" which are based on a polarity/continuum of behaviors, not an iron clad duality of gender. It bothers me at times how invocations, descriptions, and understanding of deities slip into very stereotyped sex-roles: nurturer and energizer. Or how we identify the fullness of the moon as the Mother, as if not having children rendered one barren.

I have heard these two deities invoked as lovers. On the flyer at the Spiral Dance Ritual a few years



ago, it was printed that the relationship between them was as lovers. I find this quite offensive (except at straight handfastings) since, given the form of invocation, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO INVOKE GAY LOVERS as deities. In the midst of the debate about the relative strength and power of the God and Goddess, it becomes even more problematical to invoke male deities as lovers. What is meant by "sex is sacred"? For gay people this is a critical question, as well as a spiritual need - how to sanctify that which you have hidden, despised, tried to "cure", resigned yourself to, and so forth. The point here is not to restrict any sexuality, but rather to open up more possibilities. The sanctification of sexuality works differently for gay-identified and straight-identified people on both a social and thea/ological level.

It works differently, precisely because we are dealing with only the male/female polarity, which is a critically important polarity, as are the white/black, ruling/working class, straight/gay polarities, among others. If only one polarity is accepted as valid then the others become liquidated.

In political terms, this polarization is called a primary contradiction, i.e., all other polarities are either not as important or are collapsed into this one. Implicit in this is the idea that each person has one dominant identity which leads to a hierarchy of, and competition between, personal identities. This is the basis of separatist ideologies, as opposed to tactical separatism.

In recent years another political concept has developed -- that of multiple contradictions and multiple identities (see the book This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color). In this view each person has several identities: ethnic, gender, sexuality, class, health/ability status and so forth. These identities exist along a continuum, so it is quite possible to have a mixed ethnic, class or whatever identity. Each identity is important and interpenetrating. At differing times and in differing situations, one or another may be dominant, but to deny any one is to mutilate the whole. Spiritually this is called polytheism, and bears a very striking parallel to the role of the transvestite shaman in tribal societies -- that of bridging apparently inseparable roles within the tribe but also acting as intermediary between tribes.

What I am questioning is not the relative strength, power or emphasis of the goddess or the god, but rather identifying this as the only polarity, and only working with polarities. There are other polarities which are not the same as male/female - human/animal; ruling/working³ class; urban/rural; developed-industrial/third world; etc.

There are models which exist outside of polarities such as the rainbow. There are other models of a polarity/continuum such as yin-yang: in which each contains its complement and turns into the other.

One possible variation on the standard format would be to invoke the Goddess and God and the Transvestite Shaman and the Amazon Queen. This would still not solve the problem of the impossibility of invoking gay lovers - not that I have anything against rough trade.

I would like to finish by considering the adage that a people creates deities in their own image. Consider the image of a childless heterosexual couple that stands removed from the world of work.

Notes

1. Since I do not speak for lesbians, I use the term gay to apply to males only. Unfortunately, we lack a good general term for sexual minorities (lesbians, gays, bis, trans, voyeur/exhibitionists, drag, leather et al.) that does not sound terminally sociological. Thus I use the term gay people to apply to all sexual minorities, with the understanding that my analysis comes from a gay male perspective, which may apply to other sexual minorities. It also may not. This definition of sexual minorities is considerably broader than what many people are used to, or would agree with. Sexual behavior, like all other aspects of life, is bound by the ethical considerations of mutual consensuality and responsibility. I believe that all the above forms of sexuality can be based on mutual consensuality and responsibility.
2. Bi-theism: the belief that there are two deities. Contrast with mon-theism and polytheism.
3. As I was going over this article, I had to think over a lot of my concepts of deities. One thing that jumped out at me was that the deities that are invoked and worked with are not work-related. They all exist in the private sphere in the realm of human transformation and human potential. Do we work with deities of building, of food production (Abundia seems to belong more to supermarkets than fields of growing foods) or even of recycling? Many of us have separated our jobs from our careers/dharma, but this seems to me to be just another fragmentation. Most of us are in desperate need of healing around this issue, as is much of our politics. This is another whole article, however.

LETTER

(On a Place for the Gods)

Reclaiming has been a source of renewal and connections for me. As we work on the transformations arising out of AIDS and the other pressing issues of our time, we need all the support our families can give us. Reclaiming is such a support. It is a wonderful letter from my kissing cousins by the sea. With this love and commitment to our family in mind, I wish to enter into this discussion on a place for the Gods.

Our spiritual paths of Eclectic Wicca/Neopaganism include one joy I particularly relish, the gift of paradox. That monism and pluralism are both perceived as truths is certainly not one of the least aspects of this gift. In other words, we have the potential of unity in our diversity. The ultimate truth is the Truth is made up of many ultimate realities. Yet, the dualistic ideas of women and men, the Goddess and the God, us and them, are still deeply rooted in our consciousness. The paradox of a unity based on our diversity has not become a part of our everyday lives. We still cling to the comfort and security of the thought patterns of our childhoods. Now is the time to work through these simplistic worldviews. It is time to listen to what our guts are telling us. After all, our experiences and feelings are just as valid as anyone else's.

"Hear the words of the Star Goddess
Let My Worship be in the heart that rejoices
for behold -- all acts of love and pleasure
are My rituals."¹

The Great Goddess doesn't give a Damn if you've got a cock or a cunt between your legs. She longs to lick them both. She lusts for life, for the pleasures of all flesh. Everyone of the Gods and Goddesses wishes to seduce us while playing with our tits, our asses, and our ear lobes. They look past butch and fem. They stand beyond the safe roles we were taught as boys and girls. The Goddesses and the Gods are urging us to follow them into places of change and yes, maybe even danger.

We need to create new models of what it is to be human. The metaphors of yin/yang, hot/cold, male/female are not adequate in describing our lives. Let us look to the color wheel for a possible new model. The color wheel is a circle of colors continually blending, contrasting, and complimenting. The color wheel is a circle of light leaving no room for good and evil; all are interrelated. We can mark the spot of "purest" red, blue, and yellow, but truthfully these marks are just vague sign posts indicating that maybe a "pure" color is in this general direction. So it is with human beings. As we stand in our circles, we cannot be labeled simply as men and women. There is a continual blending of the individual with every other individual in the group for as long as life lasts. This is the formation of community.

We must also remember that not all peoples think of themselves as women and men. Some people would argue for three sexes, some for four. Does anyone know how many variations of human kind there really are? It seems to me that what is important is to encourage each person to explore and joyfully name the Gifts that wait within. For we do know in our heart of hearts that we are more than just men and women. We know that we are more than just gay, bisexual, or straight. We are diverse. We are many. And we are all awakening to a human ecology that only a few of us have even dared to visit in our dreams.

But what the hell, shall we take a chance? Let's visit a world between the female and the male.

"Winkte is different, neither man nor woman. It is a third group, different from either men or women. That is why winkte is regarded as sacred. Only the Wakan Tanka (the Great Mystery) can explain it, so we accept it."²

The spirituality of Queerness is re-emerging. The Queer Goddesses and Gods are stirring. They are calling queer people out of the



desolation created for us by a culture that fears and hates the Daughters of Sappho and the Sons of the Sacred Cocksucker. They are calling us home. The Purple Ones are urging their people to use the unique spiritual gifts given them.

These gifts are not about homogeneity. They are about loving, encouraging, and cultivating those parts of us that make each of us a unique being. These gifts are about the courage of proudly living differently. They are about making a complex unity out of as many diverse aspects and styles of living as we possibly can. These gifts are about building bridges. They are about healing wounds. These gifts are about being queer.

"Cocksucker,
Butt Fucker,
Tit Biter
We are calling you,
To our Homes
In our Hearts."3

The Queer Gods are everywhere. They go wherever they will. No one can keep them out, no one in their right minds would try. They dance in the Oak Groves and They dance in the Discos, They laugh while swimming in the Rivers and They cry inconsolably beside their lovers dying in crisp white hospital beds.

You better damn well believe that the Purple Gods have a place in Wicca and Neo-Paganism. We aren't talking about straight identified homosexuals. We are talking about Uppity Queers and Flaming Faggots. We are talking about the Fairie King, who will bless you as you bless His brothers, His lovers, His sons. His blessings can be brutal. We are talking about the Queer Gods who are demanding things I am as of yet too afraid to face, let alone to name. You better damn well know that the Purple Gods have a place in Wicca and Neo-Paganism. We are singing about the Sacred Lips that whisper ancient secrets into His boyfriends' ears as they work their way to waiting tits. We are telling the stories of Bridge Builders between unresolvable misunderstandings. We are talking about the Gods of the Shamans, the Gods of the Medicine People. We are looking at the Gods

who are transforming the AIDS epidemic into paths beyond fear, into tools of power, into visions of unity and love.

The Purple Gods are searching out every faggot, fairie, and queer on land or sea. They are bringing invitations to a Transformational Ball. And what about the Goddesses? They are laughing with glee and encouragement as They watch the boys dressing for the Party of their lives. The love of the Goddesses flows over their expectant faces, turning their tears into pearls. All of the Goddesses and the Queer Ones are well pleased and humming with pleasure.

I believe that as queer men continue to rediscover that we are more than just who we fuck, the Purple Gods' energies and powers will increase. They will manifest Themselves as the healers of not only queer men, but the whole of the natural world. They, too, are midwives of the new culture struggling to be born.

The choice is ours. We can deny the Queer Gods. We can deny the transformations they offer. Or we can celebrate the Queer Gods and the diversity they will bring us. We can welcome Them with kisses as They embrace us in Their power, Their beauty, Their love. The Purple Gods long to hold us in Their arms.

I don't know much about the other Gods. That is for non-queer men and others to explore. But I must say this, the powers of love, change, and growth are not monopolized by the Goddesses or the Queer Ones alone. The powers of healing and transformation are found in everyone of us; stone, plant, animal Goddess, and God.

-- Donald Engstrom
Iowa City, Iowa

1. Traditional, quoted in *The Spiral Dance*, Starhawk
2. *The Spirit and the Flesh*, Walter L. Williams
3. *A Book of Queer Shadows*, Donald L. Engstrom





LETTER



(On Dogmatic, Guilt-Tripping Pagans)

Hello, Reclaiming

After reading Rick Dragonstongue's article, "Why We Can't Just Balance the Goddess and the God," I realized that not all pagans are as free of dogmatism and guilt-tripping tendencies as they'd like us to think. On one level, I'm not really surprised. I've avoided labelling myself a pagan, because I feel that the crystallization of the divinity that permeates everything into a goddess and a god opens the door to dogmatism and its consequences including moralism and guilt. Rick's article certainly confirms my feeling.

Rather than telling us why he won't balance the goddess and the god, Rick chooses to tell us why "we can't" do so. He is laying down an imperative for all pagans. That is absurd. Rick may "need the goddess more than...the god." But the sort of image I need is one of a playful, joyful, androgynous being -- because that is what I want to be. Women in this society may need images of free, strong women to learn from, but most men need images of gentle, playful, androgynous men.

I wonder if the level to which Rick needs the goddess may not be based on guilt-feelings he harbors about the oppression of women. For the statement, "For men to truly respect women, they must keep in mind that women have been forced into the role of secondclass citizen for thousands of years," is permeated with guilt and is simplistic and false. Certainly Rick does not in every encounter with a woman mull over the thousands of years of sexism -- but does he, therefore, not respect the women he encounters? True respect cannot be given to whole classes of people without becoming dangerous; it can only be given to individuals, and in relations between individuals such abstractions as thousands of years of oppression are irrelevant. What matters is how I relate now to those I relate to. And due to my chosen lifestyle, I have never been in a position to force anyone into the position of second-class citizen. So I won't mea culpa over others' obnoxiousness; I will just refuse to be a part of it.

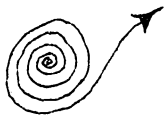
I also see something almost macho in Rick's attempt to balance out a debt he feels all men owe to all women. Even if one grants that every man owes every woman for the thousands of years of patriarchy, who's got the strength to pay it back? To even pretend it's possible smacks of machismo.

Besides, the constant attempts to make up for past wrongs produces a pendulum effect, a constant swinging back and forth without ever achieving balance. Rather, if we ever want balance, we have to stop the swinging and create balance in the present. Rather than giving into the negative magick that says, "I don't think we'll live in this nice world any time soon," we need to create "this nice world" now by living it on a day to day basis. Paradise is here now, it is only the negativity of people like Rick that keep us from realizing it.

Rick's article also manifests a general negative trend in feminism. The present upsurge in the women's movement seemed to begin as part of a wider liberation movement, one that saw this entire society as oppressive to everyone. It seemed at first to be seeking to bring about a balance and to realize that this balance required that men be freed from their sex roles as much as women. But somewhere along the lines the type of nationalist/socialist ideology that created Nazism and Stalinism seems to have become dominant in feminism. "Men" as a class are oppressors--- enemies to be fought by women. To the extent that this is a gut reaction it is just a sort of sexual racism, but where it is ideological, it is fascism. I have been the victim of the former -- walking into a feminist bookstore to meet sneers and dirty looks. And recent feminist literature manifests the latter. Whatever happened to the magical vision of a world where male and female were of no significance, where our androgynous nature was recognized and allowed to manifest in an infinite variety of ways as every apparent polar opposite came to be recognized as just the extremes of spectrums that allowed for numberless possibilities? When a movement lives longer than its vision, it becomes a monster. If feminism is to be more than another hate movement, it has to regain the vision of balance and androgyny. It has to recognize that men have been as screwed over as women by the present sexual status quo. Until it does, it will continue to manifest the sort of dogmatism and guilt tripping bullshit that permeate Rick's article.

- Feral Faun

[Ed's note -- we are enjoying a lively chain of response: Rick, DT's response (issue 26) to Rowan's article (issue 25), 2 letters and Sean's article in this issue in response to Rick. We are curious whether women readers, Dianics and others, have anything to add, and invite your contributions. -- rmd.]



A FEW OF THE WONDERFUL THINGS ABOUT PENISES

by Anne Hill

The way you can put them in your mouth
and make their owners go crazy.
Their purplish color, with green and
blue veins.
How powerful they feel when they are
hard, even though they're still
pretty tender.
The various positions you can be in
while fucking them, and most feel
real good.
The way they can push me out of my
body with constant pressure on my
womb, when we are going at it madly.
How with one false move to the balls or
something you can make a man crumple

and his penis go soft. Then you
usually have to talk a while.
How small and babyish they look when
just hanging between some man's
legs, but when a naked man is standing
with an erection, how you want him to
start chasing you.
All of the nasty and dirty names you
can call penises.
The first moment of contact between
penis and pussy, when the world
becomes a vast range of fucking
possibilities.

A FEW OF THE WONDERFUL THINGS ABOUT VAGINAS

by Jacques Lapin

A new set of lips you can french kiss
Hair covering vulva covering hood covering
clit:
Secrets within secrets within secrets
A little nubbin that can get a big
beautiful butt moving
And not just a butt . . . silent,
It can yet produce the most exquisite
sounds
Winds of moan and sigh and sob-
called down
My tongue in the vagina's mouth,
I can see the rolling hills of
sweet thigh,
The mysterious pubic wood, a sexy
Black Forest,
And within the red valley,
Over whose sides rolls a moist film
Steamy as the tropics, pungent
With odors of invisible fish
Invisible fish with glistening bodies
That press up and out, surrounding me
Until I am in their deep water spell,
When my hands move of their own accord
Parting the rolling hills like some god,
And my penis is a fish, long and visible,
Leaping like a sexy salmon up the river
Of smell and slick into the
dark inviting mouth
Of life and pleasure
When I feel like a god, a fish/god,
The vagina is alive, a mouth
That speaks to my body directly,
Making my blood pound and
My fingers dance
Seducing my hair into a mane
And my eyes into the eyes of Krishna

And turning my back and buttocks
Into a coiled spring, a snake
A cobra coiling and uncoiling
When the vagina is alive,
A mouth that speaks directly to the body,
My speech is transformed,
I am spoken by the language of command
and need,
Of surrender and exquisite torture,
Suddenly a pussy purrs between legs,
Suddenly a cock cries, head back to the
sky,
Suddenly I fuck, bite,
An animal mask appears under my wild mane,
I nip nipples with bared teeth,
bite bellies
And graze my way down, down
To the sweet red mouth that calls me
By my animal name, my sexual name,
Demanding that I give it back
A divine madness, kisses like sweet crimes,
Strokes that shudder the body with
earthquakes
And on, on, on, on
Reliving in brief hours
The creation of the world,
The mad burgeoning of life,
The long powerful pleased moan of living
The wild ride of my penis
Planted in the earth yet moving
Mountains thrust up by the hips of a
stallion
And all the while, all the while
These wet lips silent, saying
"This is magic," saying "I love you
right now,"
Saying, "This is how the world is made."



THE FAGGOTS AND THEIR FRIENDS BETWEEN REVOLUTIONS VISIT RAY-GUN

(or)

WITCHES WYRD WASHINGTON DC

This October 11, there will be a National Lesbian and Gay March on Washington, to confront our enemies at their seat of power and to present ourselves visibly and forcefully to the American people. Although the focus is on Gay and Lesbian issues, the demands are much broader, and we encourage our heterosexual companeros/companeras to join us.

The March as a whole is organized by mainstream folk who want to politely ask the Democrats and Republicans to stop attacking us because, after all, we're nice people just like them. But civil disobedience at the Supreme Court is an officially-sponsored activity, and the Bay Area contingent is quite militant.

The Radical Faeries will be caravanning there in large numbers, and there's likely to be some hot magic and political action; non-Gay witches and pagans are most welcome. Because the Faeries tend to be flamboyant and photogenic (and will be no less so in Washington), we're likely to attract heavy press coverage. This will give us the ability to reach TV news audiences with our message, while they're looking at the colorful drag.

(A semantic note: the "faerie" in radical faerie doesn't mean faerie tradition; radical faeries may or may not be witches from whatever tradition. There are connections, as both names point back to the Faerie Folk.)

We'll be joining contingents from Seattle, Los Angeles, and New Orleans in a week-long traveling caravan and Gathering, camping along the way and outside the Capitol. Energy will build quite high along the way, and I expect we'll be doing some wild rituals. If we choose, we may do witchcraft in Washington itself. Imagine building a spell for days, possibly building on the imagery we used at Samhain and Brigid, to take to the White House or the Congress. Or . . .

If you want to be part of a pagan, anarchist, sex-positive, political, feminist caravan, do join us! To get more information you can leave me a message on the Reclaiming Events Line (849-0877).

-Roddy



GREEN PAGAN POLITICS

by Jess Shoup

The Green political party was born in West Germany in 1979, and founded upon four pillars: deep ecology (network thinking, social ecology, relatedness), social responsibility, grassroots democracy, and non-violence (both personal violence and that done by the government). In 1984 the Green movement spread to the United States.

"The starting point of Green politics is the recognition that we find ourselves in a multifaceted, global crisis that touches every aspect of our lives: our health and livelihood, the quality of our environment and our social relationships, our economy, technology, our politics --our very survival on this planet." (Charlene Spretnak and Fritjof Capra in Green Politics).

The Ten Key Values of the Greens in America are these:

- Ecological Wisdom
- Grassroots Democracy
- Personal and Social Responsibility
- Nonviolence
- Decentralization
- Community-Based Economics
- Postpatriarchal Values / Feminism
- Respect for Diversity
- Global Responsibility
- Future Focus

At this point in our history, we are more of an educational group than a political party. We are as

interested in changing attitudes in Sacramento, Washington, and here at home as we are in electing people to office. Our meetings serve as networking forums, idea exchanges, ecological action planning periods, and Earth-celebrating rituals. We have working groups going on Green theory, Green spirituality, electoral politics, genetic engineering, toxics, Native American issues, California water policy, etc., etc., etc.

Greens see the planet as an interconnected organism; we are a part of Nature, not on top and raping the hell out of her. Scientists have recently come to same conclusion (Sir James Lovelock's "Gaia Hypothesis"). Pagans, of course, have known this for 20,000 years. Oh well. At least we're beginning to speak the same language.

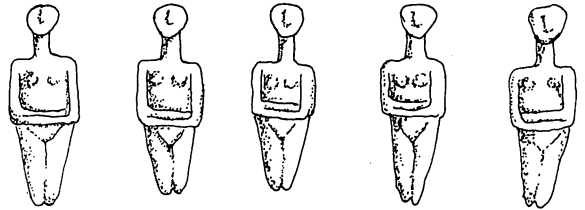
I am a Green pagan and first found the Greens at a talk/ritual given by Starhawk and sponsored by the East Bay green Alliance over a year ago. Star wove her magic (as usual); afterwards I picked up one of everything from the propaganda tables, read the Greenstuff, and exclaimed aloud, "Thank Goddess! This is what I've been waiting for!" If the Democrats and Republicans are no longer serving your needs, welcome to the Greens.

Every good Trekkie knows there are three things that make a habitable planet: air to breathe, water to drink, and some means of growing food. Well, the air's so bad in Richmond that my friend Jill is allergic to it and has to move farther south, 40% of the ground-water wells in San Jose are poisoned from Silicon Valley, and everything you eat has been irradiated or sprayed (unless you were smart and able to grow it yourself). Greed, which was previously one of the Seven Deadly Sins, is now the National Virtue; and the OWGs (Old White Guys) who run things don't seem to be able to say STOP. WE'VE GONE FAR ENOUGH. THERE IS ANOTHER WAY.

We see the Greens becoming an umbrella political group which will speak with one voice for all of us out here in New America, who love Mother Earth / Goddess Gaia and hate seeing her trashed by the looters who are running amok on the land. Anti-nuclear groups, ecologists, pagans, animal rights groups, Small Is Beautiful folks, feminists, Native American supporters, direct actionists, Unitarians, Creation Spirituality people, geomancers -- all are green in spirit. There is a Greens in Japan,

Germany, Belgium, Holland, England, Austria, New Zealand -- these are global ecological problems we're dealing with, so we're a global party. "We're creating the Greens," says April Wells of the British Columbia group, "so that when the dinosaur extincts itself, we're ready."

Native Americans refused to undertake any action until they had considered how that action would affect the children seven generations ahead. The OWGs aren't looking beyond their wallets, which puts us at risk for our own necks, much less our children, or their children.



GREEN SPIRITUALITY AS PRACTICED IN THE EAST BAY

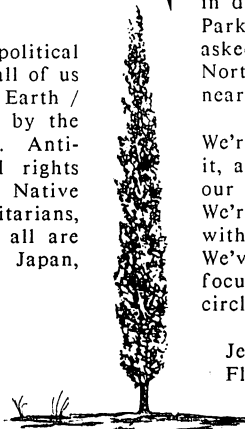
The Green Spirituality working group of the East Bay Green Alliance has been meeting since November, 1986. We've been using that time defining ourselves (we're working on a pamphlet), talking (and yelling) philosophy and politics, creating rituals of celebration and despair, attending public rituals on the quarters, and taking direct ecological action (shore walks with trash bags and sterilized jars for sampling Bay effluents).

We've done rituals in living rooms, outside rituals in downtown Oakland, Inspiration Point in Tilden Park, and the Alameda shoreline, and we've been asked to do the Summer Solstice Ritual for the Northern California Green Gathering at Big Basin near Santa Cruz.

We're learning what Green Spirituality is by doing it, and we believe in "spiritual integrity: making our actions match our beliefs." (Starhawk again) We're a diverse and circulating bunch, but united with a common thread of love for Mother Earth. We've been meeting every Sunday night, and our focus rotates from week to week. We're an open circle, but please call for time and directions.

Jess
Florence 540-0216 (messages only)

654-4904



Nightmarenews

"and what rough beast..." WBY

Carnivorous mannequins slaughter the ground
The blood is hardened into bricks
Stacked into the endless, endless city

Ashen rainbows rise where unborn seas
Are burned in effigy of frozen suns

Imprisoned ghosts crowd lost corridors
From the golden maze out to the broken morning

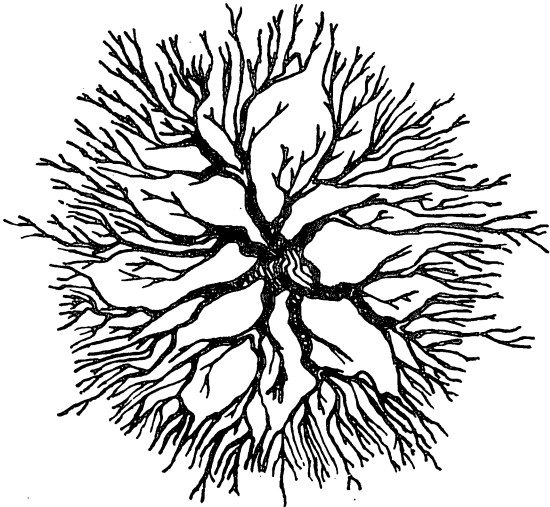
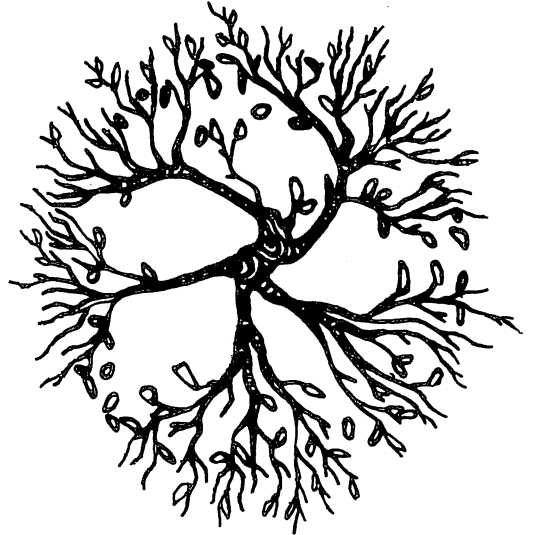
From the wrinkled skin of night
A dance of wild fertility unfolds
Where latent cannibals circle in their cars

Hardened torsos lean at awkward angles
From the burning iron horizon

Shrunken hearts are held
Within the missile's sterile mouth
Their severed heads awaiting prophecy

Merchant priests ignore the famine grin
Across the masks of children without lives

Beneath desert floors at dawn
Unimaginable guns are aimed
At all that might have been



Ironheart

World's child
half-formed of
sea and time
is casting swollen
shadows on the sun

From withered trees
I hear your ruptured cry
On poisoned stone
I taste your brutal prayer

Recall the sea
resing the song
as the red dawn dies

Return to sea
Ironheart
rust back to clouds
where fish breed
dreams of stars



ROSE RANTS



Rant #1 Abundance

It is very hard to not have money, not be able to travel, provide for loved ones and children, not to be able to be free of the meaningless stressed-out rat race. It is understandable why we are lured by get rich quick schemes. Nevertheless I am so angry about the Airplane Games and the Abundance Workshops, just another Pyramid Scheme cloaked in the language of the New Age. I resent having the Goddess Abundia and the visualizations about Increase co-opted and used in schemes which ultimately hurt other people. I detest being told that ideas like the ones I have just expressed are what keep us all from getting rich and making the Airplane/Abundance scheme work. It is amazing to me that groups which often contain large numbers of therapists, healers, and persons involved in 12-step programs can enshrine denial by repeating insane mantras, believing that they are creating their own reality but not bothering to have the ground under their feet on which to build this reality. There. I feel better. Let us know how you feel.

Rant #2: No Heroes No Leaders Smash the Cult of Personality!

Someone called here not too long ago who was disappointed because Starhawk could not attend the Nevada Test Site Mother's Day Action (because she was giving a women's workshop in Massachusetts at the time). Evidently there was a ritual scheduled for one of the nights of the action, and people thought it would be good if Starhawk could "do" the ritual. I talked to the caller and assured her that there were a number of women from this particular community in San Francisco who were Witches and ritualists and could help plan and help perform ritual. (What I should have said was that in the crowd an action like Nevada would draw, there would be many women who were experienced with ritual.) My roommate, "M", who was going to Nevada, walked in the door at this point and I put her on the phone. I believe that she talked to the caller and mentioned that Starhawk's whole point was empowerment of individuals, and that if ritual was needed at the encampment, women would create ritual.

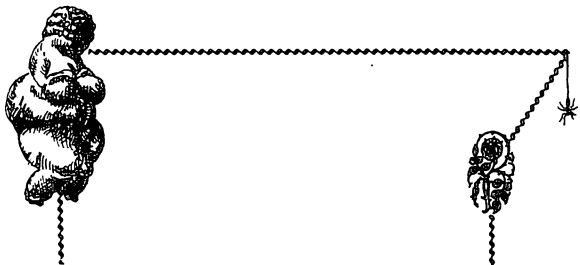
So time passed, and when my friends came back from the Nevada Action, they questioned me

whether I had ever heard of "The Starhawk Affinity Group". I said "what?" They said that when they were at the rally, there had been an announcement for the Starhawk Affinity Group to come to the front, or something similar. We all marveled, and much as we like Star, thought that that was a pretty lame name for an affinity group. We started to speculate on why such a group would exist. Perhaps a group read Star's book and didn't quite get it. Perhaps the FBI was trying to embarrass or discredit Starhawk or her friends. Perhaps there were two Starhawks.

Starhawk called to ask how the action had gone, and I told her about the loudspeaker announcement. She suggested that since she had sent her car, her tape-player/radio, and her tent to the action with "Kitty", who had borrowed these items, perhaps these objects had formed their own affinity group and had named themselves after Starhawk because they felt so close to her. I thought this was a good theory. Starhawk further expressed that if this was not the case, and there really was a "Starhawk Affinity Group" of real people, she hoped "Kitty" allowed this group to sit and meditate in the tent and listen to the radio, or ride in the car, for a fee, of course. [Hey all you serious people out there, this is a JOKE.]

As attractive as these above-mentioned theories were, I finally came to a different conclusion: that somehow information had gotten diluted through the folk process, like a game of "telephone" and someone, because of the call that "M" and I took, was told that a group of women Starhawk knew was coming to the action and could help with ritual. Probably whoever was coordinating the schedule and trying to get ritual going wanted to find Someone In Charge, and thought that asking for the "Starhawk Affinity Group" was a way to find the San Francisco ritualists. I know that "M" and "Kitty", both Witches from our general community, did not have a clue that this announcement might have been an attempt to find them.

But obviously what this incident brings up for us is that the message is somehow not getting across. We can create ritual together, by sitting down and talking about what we want, applying our creativity and intuition, and simply doing it. We need no training (although training is great) to

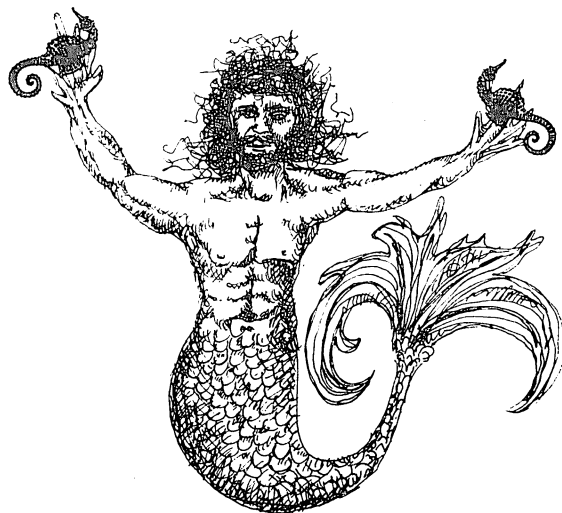
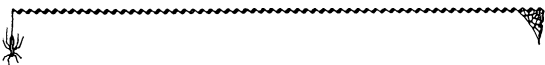


commune with the Goddess. Women have always made ritual together, no matter what the context -- girl scouts, church or temple, birth, death and dinner. Nature offers direct spiritual revelation. Life's drama provides the stage. Gurus are unnecessary for experiencing religious ecstasy, ritual, magic or the like. It is lovely and inspiring that a number of people, including Starhawk, are writing and performing about Goddess and the Craft and Shamanism, etc. Many of our lives have been changed by discovering these writings, these works of art. And it is true that not everyone wants to be a priestess. But many people do and can make ritual, and I have never been disappointed by using this method: post or announce the following message -- "Anyone interested in planning a ritual for tonight please meet at the big tree at noon" or such like.

I hear that there was ritual every night at the encampment, and that it was hot and wonderful. I hear there was a magical Maypole woven, that webs decorated fences, that the air was buzzing with women's magic. Of course.

So let us not replicate patriarchal forms during women's action, (or any action for Goddess's sake). We can acknowledge the gifts we have received from authors and leaders, but we must trust ourselves and each other to have the power within ourselves to create what we need.

Anyone interested in Starhawk's toenail clippings or hairbrush leavings, please send a check for \$50 and SASE to me, care of this newsletter.



SCIENCE PROVES - ALIEN GODS FEED ON THE BRAINS OF UNBELIEVERS

Reclaiming

FALL PREVIEW: THREE-CLASS CYCLE FOR WOMEN by Cybele and co-teachers

If there is sufficient interest, I would like to teach a group of 9-13 women a three-class cycle (beginning with the Pentacle and ending with the Rites of Passage, with the Fire or Breath and Body class between) this fall and winter. I'm looking for small working circles or solo witches who would be interested in working with other women (or other circles). I would work with a different co-teacher for each six-week class (both men and women), and an attempt would be made to keep the class on the same night, with 1-2 week breaks between class cycles. My interest is in the depth the ongoing commitment can allow--in the cumulative effects of magical focus. Staying power. Do give me a call if you are interested. Cybele, 863-8294.

BREATH OF LIFE by Sean McShee

A 3-hour workshop on the Element Air: Separation and Communication. Work with breath as a tool for meditation/chakra cleansing. August 20, 1987. Call Sean, 771-2303.

SF GAY DAY: SUNDAY, JUNE 28

As usual, some of us from Reclaiming, along with other witches and pagans, will be marching with the banner "All Acts of Love and Pleasure Are My Rituals." You're invited to join us; call the Events Line, 849-0877, in late June for details.

GIVE PEACE A DANCE '87 -- PAGAN DANCE TEAM FORMING

Fourth annual dance marathon, Saturday June 20th, noon-midnight.
Fort Mason Center, Pier 3, San Francisco.
Benefit for Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador and the Nuclear Weapons Freeze.
Call Cybele to join pagan team or to sponsor team.

FUN FUN FUN -- Useful to register before June 12. Pre-marathon warmup night out TBA. Blessed Be!

RECLAIMING CLASSES IN SANTA CRUZ?

We have received various inquiries about offering classes in Santa Cruz. Several teachers would be interested in coming to Santa Cruz to teach weekend classes or workshops. To do so, we need help in finding places to teach. Usually we like to trade tuition for teaching space in a student's home; most classes are no larger than 15-20 people including at least a couple of teachers, although we do teach larger groups in workshops. If you would be interested in taking such classes or in helping to organize by providing class space or space for teachers to crash, please contact Rick Dragonstongue by writing to him at the Reclaiming box or by calling (415) 731-2159.

We could also use help in **distributing Newsletters to Santa Cruz**. Please write to our box if you're interested.





Classes and Events



ELEMENTS OF MAGIC FOR WOMEN AND MEN by Kat Whiskers and Sean McShee

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 9, 1987**, 7:30 pm. Call Sean, 771-2303, for registration and location. \$45-90 sliding scale.

rites of Passage for Women by Rose May Dance

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 culminates with ritual created by the students. Prerequisites: Elements of Magic or experience/study. Six **Mondays starting September 7, 1987**. Call Rose, 821-3336, for registration and location. \$45-90 sliding scale.



WICCAN SUMMER INTENSIVE: An opportunity to study feminist ritual, magic, and political change with Starhawk and the Reclaiming Collective. Beginning track and advanced topics. Sessions in Vancouver, B.C., Aug. 9-16, and Northern California, Aug. 23-30, 1987. Send SASE to: Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114 for Northern California application, or Patricia Hogan, 1937 W. 2nd Ave., Vancouver, BC, V6J 1J2, Canada, for Vancouver application.



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

To receive the RECLAIMING NEWSLETTER at home, fill out the form on the back cover of the newsletter, or send \$4-15 (sliding scale) for one year to Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Help! Help! Help! Help! Help!

We need help getting the newsletter out -- layout, collating, administration. If you would like to help, please call Rick Dragonstongue at 731-2159.



LIFE OUT OF BALANCE, THE NATURAL-UNNATURAL ENIGMA, AND THE CULT OF THE PAST

-- Roy King

The planetary ecological crisis caused by the upward spiral of human population, and the social-political problem of curbing our natural tendency to exponential multiplication of ourselves, are among our most fearful issues. The very notion of global population control seems anti-freedom, anti-people, anti-life. Basic human rights to raise families and women's rights of reproductive choice are called into question. The horrors of forced sterilization and genocide of racial or regional segments of humankind emerge.

But the rate at which wildland is succumbing to farmland, farmland to suburbs, mountains to mines, forest to lumber, canyons to artificial lakes, rivers to chemical sewers, skies to noxious smog, etc., is a planetary disease of critical proportions. We have destroyed nearly a million other life forms with our industry. We are choking ourselves along with life on earth. From a strict "earth first" perspective, all the wild life forms on earth would be far better off with far fewer humans, and probably best off without any of us at all.

Politically progressive people seem to assume a basic unity of humanist and ecological values. In some ways the two are unified. If people are to live in peace and dignity they must have an environment in which to do so. And the exploitation of peoples and of the environment is often perpetrated by the same individuals, corporations and political institutions. But economic and industrial growth doesn't occur without population growth, the growth of the marketplace. Industrial capitalists exploit segments of populations to fulfill the needs and desires of other segments of populations, but the potential needs must be there first, and the consumers. Stated from another angle, if we could achieve instantaneously the miracle of social justice, we would still face the enormous problem of our destructive discord with all life on the planet.

For humanists to ignore or deny the urgency of the need to stop over-expansion of human

beings is to invite fascistic "solutions", not to mention the "natural" holocausts of famine and plague. Our present level of global social-political organization, which fails repeatedly to adequately provide even basic nutrition to starving peoples, shows no real hope of improvement sufficient to cope with the growth of hunger. Turning away from the reality of exploding human population is among the least humane of possible responses to the crisis. Yet there seems a serious lack of initiative and effort to provide education and birth control to still rapidly expanding populations, or to combat archaic institutions such as the Vatican, which continues to insist upon the total noninterference with "natural" reproduction, no matter what the cost in suffering and poverty.

A basic cornerstone of the neo-pagan worldview is the idea that some means of return to nature is our best, perhaps our only hope for survival. But the actual "purposes" or "needs", or "values" of the planet entity, those of the human species, and those of individual people are not necessarily aligned. The survival and evolution of any particular species is not vital to the survival of life on earth. The survival and well being of a given individual is not essential to the continuation of any species; in fact, most lower life forms overproduce, by enormous numbers, individuals of the species so that a few will live to reproduce. Wild herds unchecked by predators eventually suffer starvation from overgrazing, as well as genetic weakness.

Only among higher mammals does an individual's survival become important to others, and then usually only to close kin. We are probably the only species with even a rudimentary sense of all its individual members. We even have some vague sense of the biosphere as a whole, but this is a very rudimentary awareness. Although we possess and occasionally display a remarkable-seeming degree of objectivity, we are ill equipped to comprehend the greater scope of the planet's life, being still intent on the recent evolutionary necessity of our own species' survival.

Still thus impaired and encumbered, we now face the baffling problem of surviving ourselves, rather than natural, hostile environmental conditions. Designed as we are by earth to multiply and flourish, the instinct to reproduce is probably our strongest, and cannot be surgically removed. Yet we are disastrously out of balance, in many ways, but perhaps most fundamentally in our overabundance of ourselves, which has been the prime incubation of rigid social stratification, hoarding of property, violence, war, and runaway technology.

We pagans are particularly driven to reunite with Mother Earth, to glean Her will and follow Her ways. Underlying this impulse is the perception that we have indeed become utterly separated from the natural world. We have somehow been formed by this ever evolving world-womb to override the hazardous checks and balances of nature, and to exert control over our environment to an unprecedented degree, and in this sense we stand "outside" nature. But an absolute dichotomy between the natural and the unnatural is illusory. Our outlandish brains and grasping hands are natural, i.e., made on earth, by earth, of earth, for earth. Somehow the entire human phenomenon occurred here -- music, the stock market, astronomy, the H bomb. There is no "outside". We are an enigma, an anomaly, but we are not an unnatural one, for we are out of balance within the evolutionary process that formed us, and endowed us with such an awesome degree of control. If we are unable to utilize our miraculous abilities to correct the unbalance our hasty upbringing is causing, Earth will eliminate us in restoring overall balance to the biosphere, and integrity to the continuing life process. Ultimately all means of this restoration are "natural", from the creative use of our brains, hands and social skills, to famine and plague, to war and thermonuclear firestorm. And there may well be others we haven't yet imagined.

Our social womb of hunter-gatherer culture, spanning millions of years, in which we evolved into human form, began its sudden and rapid decline only ten thousand years ago with the development of agriculture and domestic herding. We thus took our single biggest step out of union with the rest of life on earth, and out of the social harmony of

fundamental mutual human respect and cooperative purpose. Growing human population probably contributed to this shift; a hundred times more people can live by farming an area than by hunting and gathering wild foods from it. However the change occurred, it was the original opting for quantity over quality of human life, and set our basic course toward higher civilization, with all its excesses, wonders and horrors.

The deep longing to return to the hunter-gatherer world, our cultural and environmental womb, so recently but irrevocably lost, is reflected in our most progressive and idealistic social philosophies and movements -- Marxism, anarchism, and particularly neo-paganism. But as much as we might dream of reversing the devastating march of technology and industry, how many of our largely urban numbers could we support without it? Except through catastrophic elimination of most of our species, there is no return route to paradise. We have pushed and been pushed ill prepared into a realm of overwhelming responsibility, for better or for worse, or for both. We have exploited ourselves (each other) along the way, and are guilty of extremes and excesses, but the main thrust behind our rapid rise to our unstable domination is natural pressure all species face, sooner or later, to transform or die out. And if we weren't socially balanced more toward cooperation than mutual destruction (though perhaps only marginally), we wouldn't have made it this far.

Neo-paganism, inspired by earlier, saner eras, seeks to heal the wretched wounds of the modern earth. We seek uncommonly deep into the past (and the imagined past) for guidance and inspiration, for alternatives to the slavery of women and native people, the rape of children, the blight of racism, our hellish habit of war. We pagans put our hope largely in Mother earth to continue to nourish and sustain us. But here in America, it is easily forgotten that there are 5,000,000,000 people here now, and over most of the world the birth rate curve still rises like a nervous cobra, striking ever more often. Heretically stated, Mother Earth is fucking up, and we are the instrument of the fuckup. If we are the universe seeing itself, we are also the earth giving itself hell. Although the solution does not necessarily include us, we may yet

forge a solution that does. Our minds and hands, languages and sciences are natural gifts of enormous potential. Used with the care, compassion, and wisdom of which we are capable, they can see us through.

Neo-paganism relies on continuity with the ancestors. If we could bring them here they would go mad, overwhelmed by what we have created, and what we have destroyed. The past offers a great wealth of insight and understanding, but not basic direction, which necessarily must be into an unknown future. Neo-pagan time sense is lopsided, addicted as we are to our past, our roots, our myths. We need to seek toward the future with equal vigor. We are the roots of the future. We are already connected -- the bridge. We lack solidity of form. We are not fixed, "created" creatures. That is a patriarchal myth. We need to seek the guidance of our distant descendants as much as our ancient ancestors; it is they who manifest the consequences of our choices and actions.

The whole of humankind desperately needs planetary vision, a shift in perspective from exploitation to reverence. But it must be grounded in present information and conditions. We cannot adopt in total the earth religions of the past -- they don't translate to this time. Neo-paganism seems to assume that the earth religions of the past, if re-enacted in the present, will recreate the cultural values and social conditions, perhaps even the environmental conditions, that the religions were formed in. But they can't. Spirituality comes out of the totality of a way of life, and cannot be successfully transplanted into another time, severed from its formative context. For example, singing herding and harvest songs in urban parks may well be fun and may cast light into the past, but it is not essentially transformative. A living, vital spirituality must emerge from the matrix of the times it is to serve and lead into the future. If our present age is truly barren of its unique spiritual inspiration, then, sad to say, we are most likely finished.

Also, neo-paganism seems unconsciously contaminated with the Judeo-Christian savior god, who offers deliverance for worshipful believers. I do not believe the Earth Goddess

operates in any such guise, at least not so far as our physical continuity with the planet goes.

The neo-pagan subculture models itself socially on natural-unnatural dichotomy by aligning wholly with the natural, outside the unnatural, mainstream culture. This attempted self protection is insulating and ultimately divisive. We can hardly focus clearly on the challenges the present human predicament forces upon us while denying full participation and membership in humanity. Cult consciousness can offer only a false psychological placebo which can dangerously contaminate our potential to cure our disease, to be the healing catalyst to a new reverence for the earth, the passageway to a human future, and beyond.

Fear of the future blinds us. We can see the past securely, however dimly, incompletely, and romantically. The future is seen by neo-pagans as futuristic, as science fiction. And science is not trustworthy. But it's really just the attempt to perfect a system of objective thinking based on evidence, to see accurately, to use our brains and senses well. It seems to me we need it, and to assure that it's used well, rather than to denounce it for a total reliance on intuition, imagination and wish fulfillment.

In the future we will be altered beyond recognition. We have an identity problem. The past can be used to bolster our sense of self, to ground us. But we are the unknown -- the most unique, unknown element earth has ever formed (is forming). Magic's essence is in the unknown, the dark. It is only by entering into the realm of flux that we may possibly shape. At this point, if we lack the courage to shape, and the intelligence and compassion to shape well, we are lost. It won't do to simply be "natural". It is rapidly becoming too late to live in, or for, or by the past. Ancient pagan forms of spirituality are one potentially invaluable cauldron of energy and inspiration and information from which an earth-universe based spirituality can be born for today, and for tomorrow. In many ways neo-paganism is serving this alchemical process; but it can all too easily become a drug, an artificial opiate or

stimulant, rather than a critical nutrient. The stakes are too high for anything less than total assimilation of our present and past and future global condition, and complete honesty of response, if we are to continue to grow and flourish with the earth.

[The Unexpected Universe by Loren Eiseley and Origins by Richard Leakey and Roger Lewin contributed information and energy to this article. -RK]





A MESSAGE ON NUCLEAR SAFETY from a brother in the Craft



CONCERN - Safety in nuclear power plants today is nearly as bad as that prior to Three Mile Island. The facts are the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission: (1) has chosen to ignore recommendations made by all major studies (including their own) for elimination of the principal cause of the accident, (2) has been suppressing development of needed regulations to prevent reoccurrence, and (3) is setting the nation up for another accident comparable in severity to Chernobyl.

DISCUSSION - The nuclear industry often claims the cause of the accident at Three Mile Island was operator error. This is a gross over-simplification. The operators did make mistakes; however, all major studies of the accident agree that failure to take human factors/technology/principles into consideration made these mistakes predictable.

In 1979 there were no laws that required nuclear power plants to be designed so that the humans who must operate and maintain them could do so safely. Today, eight years later, there are still no laws of this type. Rather, numerous documents which establish criteria for such critical human factors items as control panel layout, usability of procedures, and the number of hours an operator may work without sleep have been published by the NRC. It is clear from reading these documents that the authors intended them to be used as requirements. In every case the NRC's Executive Director, Victor Stello, under pressure from the Reagan administration and the Atomic Industrial Forum (an industry lobby group), reduced the status of these documents to "information and guidance only."

Today, in control rooms throughout the country the layout of critical controls are illogical. Instruments are located where operators can't see them, or simply not provided at all. Alarm and lighting systems are designed in whatever fashion the cost conscious utility owners considered to be reasonable. Procedures, with the exception of those for a very limited set of "emergencies" (e.g., a fire is not considered to be an emergency), are poorly written and not verified to be workable. Operators routinely are required to work 12 to 16 hours a day, and are continuously being rotated from day shift to night shift and back again. Concerned engineers

are powerless to change the situation because NRC rules do not require any of these features to be treated as safety related. No laws are being broken.

NEED - There is urgent need for a law that requires sound human factors principles to be incorporated into all nuclear plant design elements that affect their safe operation and maintenance. Such a law has been available in draft form for some years now. The law has never been issued, however, because Victor Stello sends every draft back to his staff for "additional study".

ACTION - The timing is right for action now. Reasons for this include (1) the recent accident at Chernobyl, (2) a new Congress that should be capable of standing up to the administration's big business policy, (3) the fact that a professional organization with individual and public safety as its prime concern recently wrote a letter of concern about this very issue to the Chairman of the NRC and to several members of Congress.

You can help by writing Congress and expressing your personal concern. Ask (1) Why there is no human factors engineering requirement in the Code of Federal Regulations, (2) Why all NRC human factors criteria have been downgraded to "information and guidance only status", and (3) Why Victor Stello should not be removed from his position as NRC's Executive Director.

To write a senator address your letter to: Senator (name), Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510. The following senators are likely to be responsive to your inquiry about this concern*: William Proxmire, John Glenn, Lawton Chiles, David Durenberger, Mark Hatfield, Claiborne Pell, Lowell Weicker, Ted Kennedy, Sam Nunn.

To write to a congressperson address your letter to: The Honorable (name), House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515. The following representatives are likely to be responsive to your inquiry*: Morris Udall, Marilyn Lloyd, Les Aspin, Carl Levin, Edward Markey, Dennis Herstel, John Dingell.

*[If you write a sympathetic Senator or Representative other than your own, please be sure to also write your own Senator or Representative -- rmd]



STOP THE TRIDENT II -- A CALL TO ACTION

The resistance to nuclear weapons deepens. Organizations such as the Freeze increasingly embrace direct action to stop warhead testing. Meanwhile, the importance of halting the flight testing and production of new weapons is being recognized throughout the movement. A national direct action campaign in late October will send this message home.

The government plans to deploy first-strike weapons such as the Trident II and the Navstar satellites within the next five-years. The missile alone is more accurate than the MX or the Pershing; with the navigational aid of the satellite, the Trident II can land within 150 feet of its target. Deployment of nearly 4000 of these missiles will render any future treaties with the USSR quite pointless; instead, the new danger will be that the US will have the ability to carry out an effective first strike for the first time since the 1950s, or to stumble into war by accident or political pressure.

We almost went to war during the Cuban missile crisis in late October of 1962. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of that fateful week, national resistance actions will occur at several sites throughout the US to affirm the necessity of the

abolition of nuclear weapons. At Cape Canaveral, Rocky Flats, and here in the Bay Area, dramatic events will underline the danger of these new weapons, which are poorly understood by many of our erstwhile allies in Congress and in the news media.

A new organization, the California Alliance to Stop First Strike, will be co-sponsoring with the Mobilization for Survival an action at the Lockheed plant in Bonny Doon. This Santa Cruz County, California facility, (less than 2 hours drive from San Francisco,) nestled deep in the hills, quietly produces key components for the Trident II missile. A march throughout the Bay Area will raise energy as it passes throughout various communities, culminating at the five mile road leading to the plant. There are few other access roads, friendly neighbors in the neighboring collectives, and plenty of land and water for camping, in preparation for what can be a highly effective blockade for days on end. Participants on all levels are welcome. This is also an action where the use of our magical efforts could be highly beneficial. Contact the Alliance at (408) 479-8781 or (415) 841-5513.

- Stop First Strike, San Francisco





One advantage of a structured, hierarchical magical tradition is that it has rules, and if you can gather enough rules together you can be prepared for just about anything. And, if you've structured your belief system well, you'll be able to identify any odd entities you meet, whether they come to visit you in this reality or you run into them on their turf, between the worlds.

Then you know what to do, whether to banish them, or exorcise them, or feed them, or throw salt on them, or listen to what they have to say, or let them take over your body, or whatever. You know.

So it follows that one problem with traditions such as Reclaiming's (which I myself would call eclectic and anarchic) is that one does not necessarily know what to do with odd visitors. You may know that there is Something There, but it could be any damn thing.

Those of us who teach in this tradition hear a lot of questions on this subject. What do I do if I call something up by mistake? What do I do if I see something on the stairs? If I think I'm being hexed? If I lose control? If I get scared?

Hell, we don't know. All we can tell you is what we do in similar situations, or what one of our coveners did once, or something we read in a book that made sense. We can't tell you the rules, not because we don't know any, but because we know too many, and haven't decided to focus on one set. Have decided not to, in fact. I have seen disappointment, and yes, distrust, on some of your faces. I have wished I could tell you some rule, any rule, that I could stand

by and say, "yes, I really truly believe that one, no kidding."

Well, I have thought one up. I like to think of it as the Taurean Rule for Magical Behavior: Common sense and good manners will serve you just as well in all the worlds, between the worlds, as they do in this one.

If you run into something you feel to be evil, or harmful, it doesn't matter if you have forgotten the banishing pentacle somebody taught you once, or don't have any salt on you, you tell it to go away. Firmly. And don't put up with any sass. What have you been learning to focus your will for, if not some situation just like this?

And you can ask for help, either by calling on the goddess and the freindly spirits you know, or by getting on the phone and calling some other human.

However. As humans, we possess useful and interesting brains that are defective in some ways. If we think something is wrong, it is wrong, but just exactly what "it" is, is up for grabs. It's often not what we assume it is. I have seen some unbalanced people take up magic, and have noticed that one thing they all had in common was the conviction that somebody else was out to get them. Certainly, some people are evil and out to hurt others. But there's very little real hexing going on. It's only common sense to check out our own mental, spiritual, and physical workings before assuming that we're being victimized. We're rather delicately balanced, though paradoxically so sturdy, and often we're just plain wrong when we think other people or spirits are to blame for our problems.

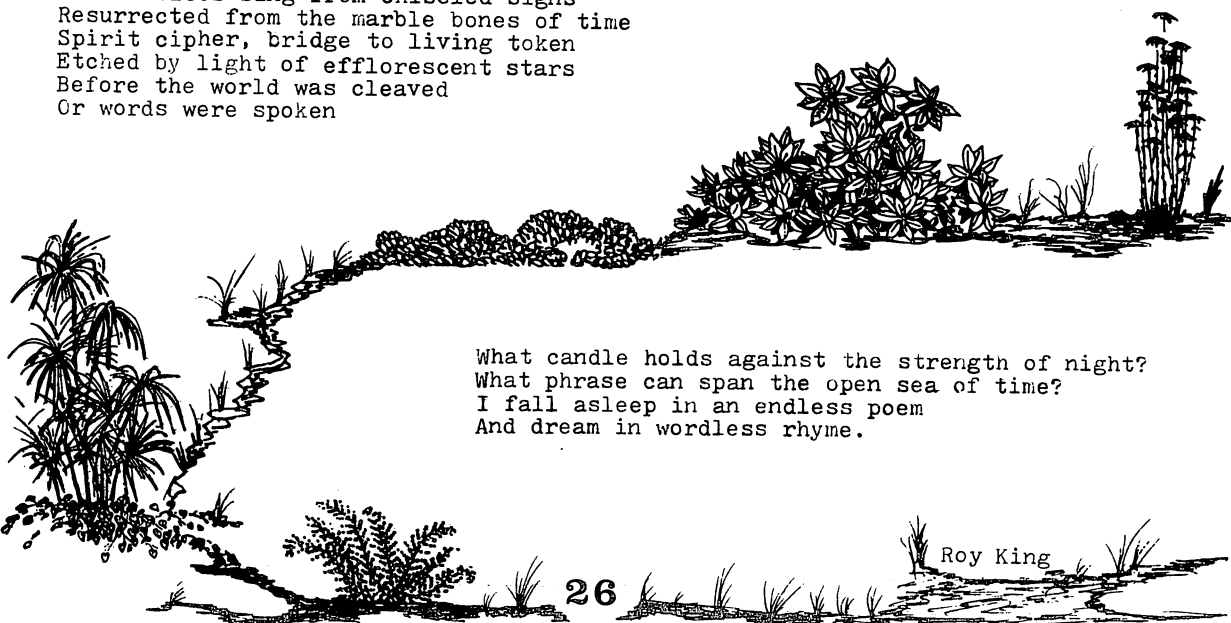
As for the good manners part of the Taurean Rule: when you meet up with helpful entities, whether they showed up on their own or you called them in, you be polite. You say thank you and bless you and have some food and be happy. You be respectful of others, whether they are in bodies at the moment or not. This helps them to have love and trust for you, which you are going to get back threefold when you call on them for help sometime when you get in trouble.

But, as I say, plain common sense will take you pretty far. Last month I was at a poker game with a new friend who doesn't know I'm a witch (and may never know, for that matter), and she told me that, due to the great pressure she was under

at work, she was in a particularly vulnerable state and was being tormented by horrible spirits which rushed at her bed as soon as the light was off. I was pretty interested. "You could try sitting up in bed and firmly telling them to go away," I suggested. She said that she didn't like to do that because the sound of her voice in the empty room was just as bad as the spirits. But she looked cheerful about the situation; she obviously had things under control. I asked her what she was doing about it. "Oh," she told me, "I just keep a can of ant spray under my bed and I spray them with it. That works pretty good."

I pass that on, for what it's worth.

Demon voices sing from chiseled signs
Resurrected from the marble bones of time
Spirit cipher, bridge to living token
Etched by light of efflorescent stars
Before the world was cleaved
Or words were spoken



What candle holds against the strength of night?
What phrase can span the open sea of time?
I fall asleep in an endless poem
And dream in wordless rhyme.

Roy King



lunatics

© 1987 by andruid



woke up hazy, didn't move
 strung out again on my love for you
 inhale, exhale, inhale, why do i bother
 then i had a sort of religious experience
 playin this music, remembering
 we're all one when we accept each other

aether the earth
 in trance, under the new moon
 darkness the water
 under the new moon
 we circle the fire
 we dance under the new moon
 raise our voices the air
 raise our hands under the new moon
 we're lunatics

the car broke en route to the full moon jam
 anticipation changed to catch as catch can
 we crashed out on red earth under grape arbors
 i was playin with the moon between my hands
 nomi said "you lunatic" and we began
 to howl and to understand each other

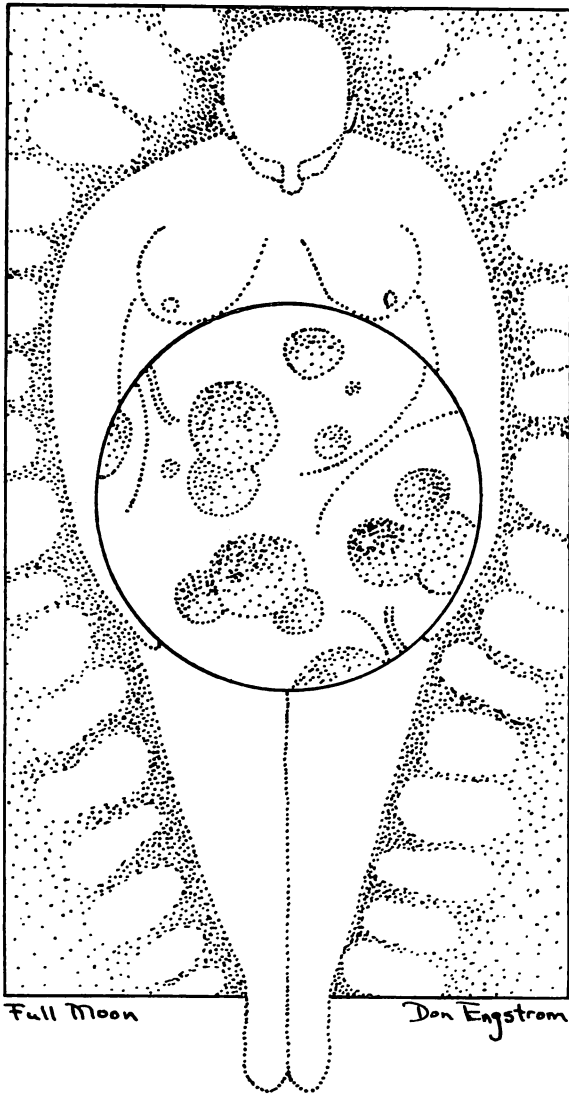
aether the earth
 in trance, under the full moon
 darkness the water
 under the full moon
 we circle the fire
 we dance under the full moon
 raise our voices the air
 raise our hands under the full moon
 we're lunatics

fear of unknown fear of completion
 fear of connection fear of the dark
 love of unknown love of completion
 love of connection love of the dark

you may fear witches who chant under the moon
 or you may fear the star wars budget
 in the magic when you reach out to me
 shines a healing energy
 as luna shines her light on the earth mother

aether the earth
 in trance under the full moon
 darkness the water
 under the full moon
 we circle the fire
 we dance under the full moon
 raise our voices the air
 raise our hands under the full moon
 we're lunatics





Full Moon

Don Engstrom



DAMN THOSE RUBBER DAMS, OR MORE AIDS AGAINST AIDS?

-- More Downing

Remember last issue I promised you more news about rubber dams? Well, here it comes, here they come, and here I go!

First of all, what are they? Secondly, who would want to use them? Next, why are they that gross green color? Then what can we expect from the latex development guys in the future? And lastly, how can we make them fun?

Have you ever been to the dentist when s/he had to isolate one of your teeth? Well, probably a square sheet of latex (thicker than a condom, but smaller than a breadbox) was placed around it. That, folks, is a rubber dental dam. Now, in the world of safer sex, rubber dams have been recommended for the placement thereof in front of orifices that cannot be covered/contained by a condom. Holding the dam in place, (like the proverbial Dutch boy), one's tongue is poked against it, thereby eliminating contact with bodily fluids/juices when one is exploring said orifices. Sound like fun? One can move said dam around easily and gracefully to other regions of that orifice. However, it is necessary to switch to a new dam when switching orifices or partners, of course.

Why would any of us even consider using these things? Well, oral transmission of AIDS is a difficult and unclear route, but a not far from impossible one. Don't forget that even though there have been no cases of oral transmission in gay men in which that was the only sexual activity, studies have only been conducted for about four years. Oral transmission has been a co-factor in heterosexuals in the two years that studies have been done.

In addition, the variables in heterosexual transmission can be more confounded because more than one sexual activity usually (and hopefully) takes place. So what this all means is that you have to decide for yourself what you are willing to consider safe and unsafe since there is only enough evidence to place oral transmission in the "possibly

unsafe" category. Since one of the many goals/aspects of safer sex is to create layers of protection so you can have even more fun, you know you can't go wrong if you use a spermicide, like nonoxynol-9. However, if you or your partner(s) currently have herpes, chlamydia, lesions, any kind of break in the tissue, sore throats, bleeding gums, or a recent socially/sexually transmitted disease (STD), think "dam!"

Now about the color. I guess they are green so dentists won't get them mixed up with your teeth. [Hopefully. - Ed.] Another reason they might be thick and green instead of rainbow or pink or purple is that in the world of sexual latex development, they are generally thought of as something for female orifices and as such have been pretty much out of the domain of the men who have been perfecting latex and condoms for mostly gay men. Now that they have finally gotten it through their heads that AIDS is a heterosexual disease and has been transmitted from female to male, can we expect them to make dams thinner, prettier, sexier, or whatever, so that we might even imagine checking them out?

Which brings me to the next question. My friend, and chief safer sex advisor, Dr. Clark Taylor, has told me of some interesting patent developments. How about sex snorkels or insertable condoms? These would work on the same principle as rubber dams. For those of you more into homemade lo-tech, you can always go to your favorite textile store and buy bolts of latex and make clothes or swathe you and your partner(s) in latex toga-style. Or you can simply glue latex into crotchless panties. Yum!

Are you having fun yet? One witch, who shall remain nameless, but smells like a rose, has told me, moi, More, that the smell of latex positively turns her on. I have learned to not only adore rubber gloves, but on certain occasions have even craved them. Therefore, I am looking forward to exploring the dam world that is coming.



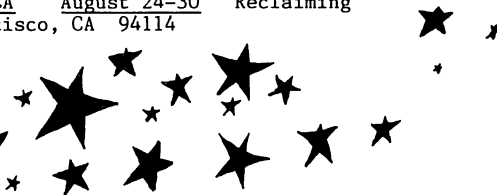
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<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>
<u>Rhinebeck, N.Y.</u>	<u>July 13-17</u>	Omega Institute (914) 338-6030 (914) 266-4301 (after 5/17)
Workshop: Myth, Masks, and Ritual Omega Institute, Lake Drive, Box 377, Rhinebeck, NY 12572		
<u>New York City</u>	<u>July 17-18</u>	Laurie Nelson (212) 219-2527
7/18--Talk 7/18--Workshop Open Center, 83 Spring St., NY 10012		
<u>Cortez Island</u> (off Vancouver Island, British Columbia)	<u>July 21-26</u>	Hollyhock Farm (604) 936-6465
Workshop: Inanna: Ritual Journey (women only) Hollyhock Farm, Box 127, Manson's Landing, Cortez Is., BC Canada VOP 1K0		
<u>Oakland, CA</u>	<u>August 2-7</u>	I.C.C.S. (415) 436-1046
Program in Creation Spirituality with Matthew Fox Starhawk teaches Creating Ritual and Feminist Spirituality I.C.C.S., Holy Names College, 3500 Mountain Blvd., Oakland, CA 94619-9989		

RECLAIMING SUMMER PROGRAMS

Reclaiming will offer two weeklong workshops in feminist spirituality, politics, and magic, with Starhawk and the Reclaiming collective.

<u>Vancouver, Canada</u>	<u>August 9-15</u>	Patricia Hogan (604) 732-5153
1937 W. 2nd Ave., Vancouver, BC V6J 1J2 Canada		
<u>Ben Lomond (near Santa Cruz) CA</u>	<u>August 24-30</u>	Reclaiming
P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114		





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For the session near Vancouver, B.C., Aug. 9-16, send SASE to Patricia Hogan, 1937 W. 2nd Ave., Vancouver, BC, V6J 1J2, Canada.

For the session in Northern California at Ben Lomond (near Santa Cruz), Aug. 23-30, send SASE to: Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114



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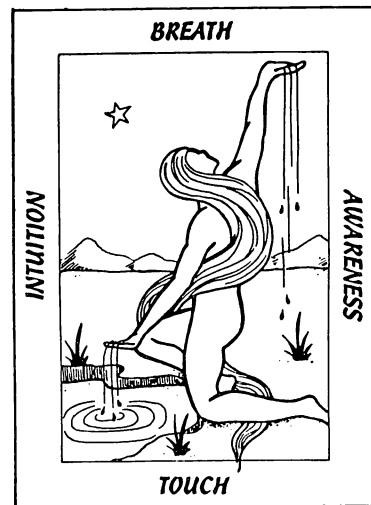
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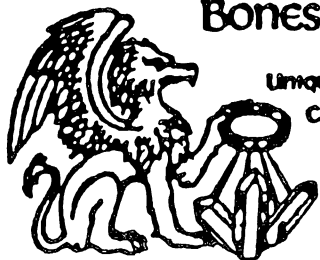


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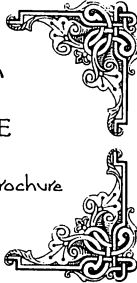


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