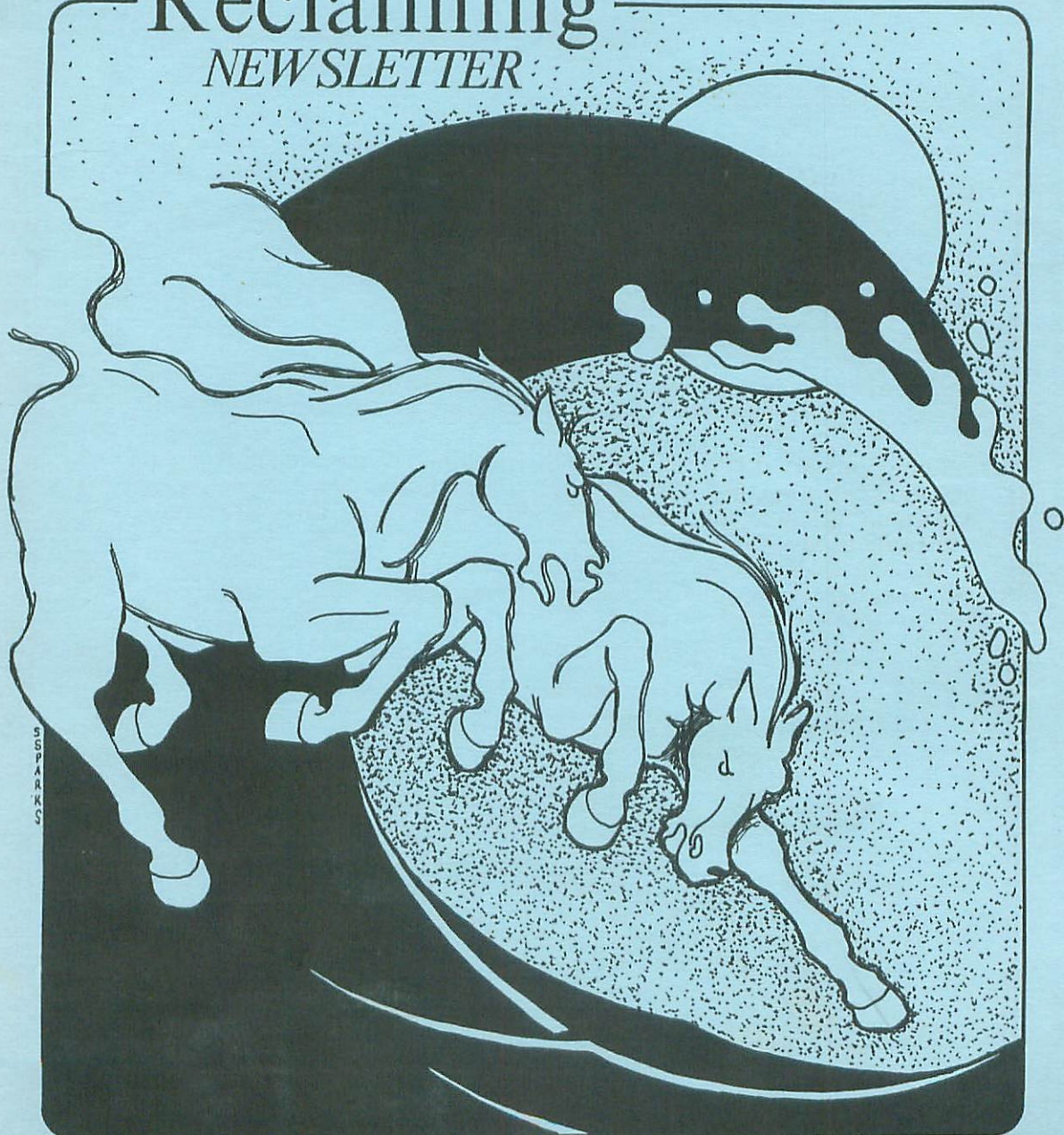


Reclaiming

NEWSLETTER



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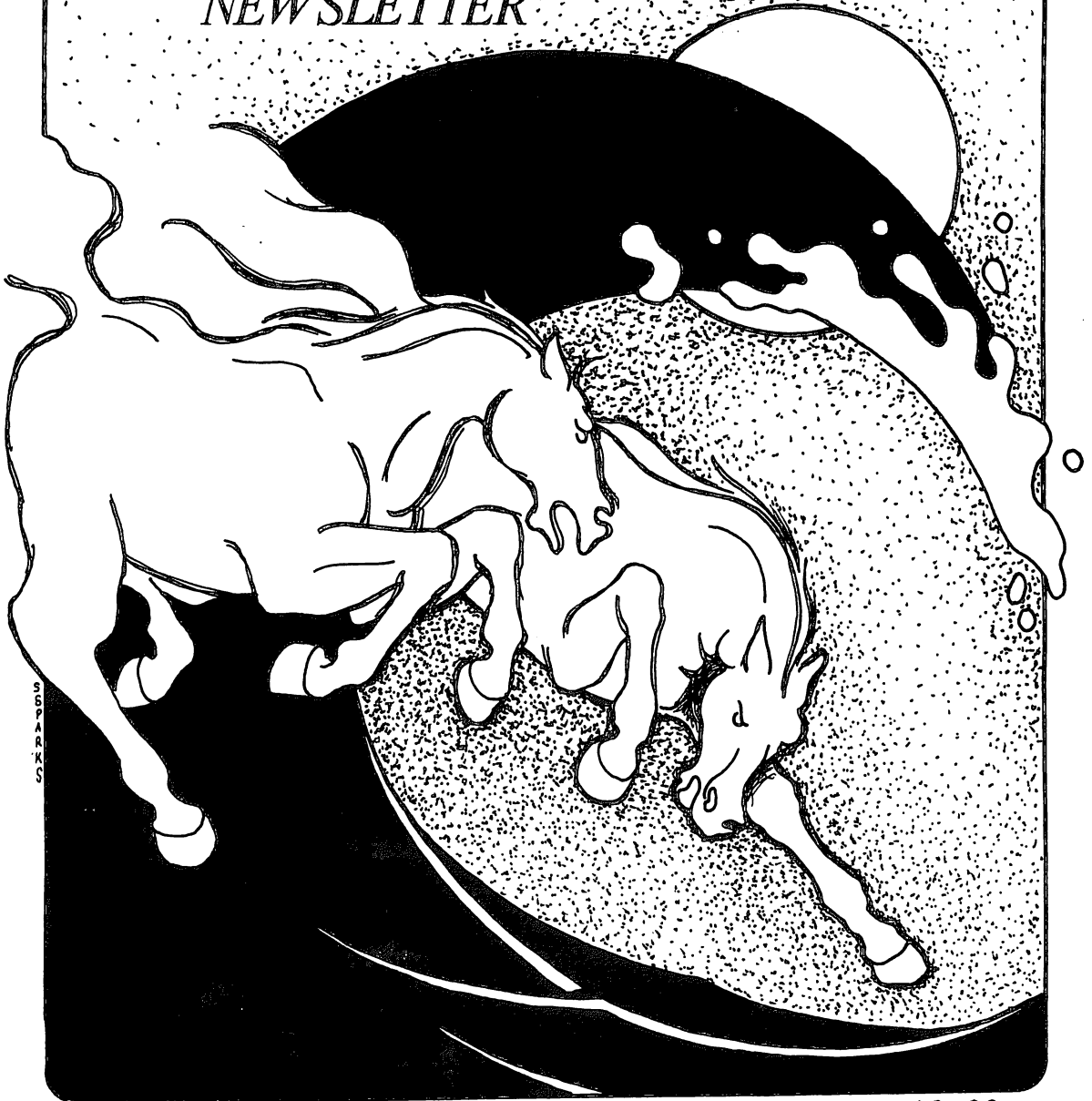
SPRING 1989

NUMBER 34

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Reclaiming

NEWSLETTER



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NUMBER 34

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

Newsletter Submissions:

The Newsletter encourages people to submit articles, letters, or graphics related to political, pagan or spiritual issues and happenings. **GRAPHICS ALWAYS WELCOME!**

We may edit for length, spelling, punctuation and grammar; we do not alter poetry.

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

All submissions, whether we print them or not, eventually find their way into our cauldron, so keep copies for yourself. Please do not ask us to return your work.

Submissions are due on or before the deadline, camera-ready if possible (4" columns, justified, 5-space paragraph indentation). The Newsletter staff has sworn off its lamentable co-behavior and will not chase down late submissions. We really mean it this time.

The views expressed in articles and advertisements in this Newsletter belong to the authors and advertisers...not to the Reclaiming Community or the Newsletter Staff. Some of us don't like some of the stuff we print.

SUMMER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, APRIL 21!

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.**

☛ RECLAIMING EVENTS LINE ☛
(415) 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 that we can't always reply quickly). Call us with events and announcements to add to the message. Messages can also be sent to the P.O. box. Please remember to say where we can reach you with questions, and allow plenty of time.

- The Recording Faerie

This issue was made by Anne, Karen, Karen, Laurie, Macha, Pleiades, Raven, Rick, Rose, Rosemary, Roy, Sara, Sophia, and Zies.

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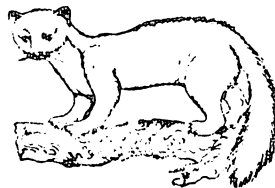
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Reclaiming

After a long year and a dark winter, Reclaiming is once again risin' up out of the soil of deep compost (process) and getting ready to sprout again.

Reclaiming sustained a deficit this winter brought about by the tape, the newsletter and the Spiral Dance. The deficit has made us look real hard at money and our energy. We decided not to expand into other projects and to keep on doing what we're doing.

This is what we do.

Teaching

Reclaiming started out as a teaching collective and we will keep this up. Each quarter we offer classes which you can find in the center of each newsletter. There are the major three (Elements, Pentacle and Rites of Passage) but we are constantly evolving and creating more classes. We usually teach in pairs but there are only seven of us (six women and one man) so this is subject to change, especially with the new classes.

Before the classes, teachers get together to plan each class. We take care of registration and then teach the class. From the total income received we tithe 13% to the collective. We also get together once a quarter to plan for the next quarter (or two).

On top of this we teach the summer Intensives (also known as Witchcamp). This summer we're doing three of them (the West, Midwest, and Pacific Northwest). We feel very committed to bringing our work out into the world.

Newsletter

We are also very committed in producing a quality newsletter. The newsletter comes out quarterly (before the equinoxes and solstices). Some of the jobs associated with this project include subscriptions and advertising, typing, graphics, paste up and layout, handling the printing, collating and stapling (1200 copies), and bulkmailing and local distribution.

This project is seriously understaffed and we can always use your help. If you have experience and time, please drop us a line to our P.O. Box, attention: Newsletter Help.

The newsletter has always run at a deficit but we're committed to its ongoing struggle to become self-sufficient. You must admit there's nothing else quite like it.

Tapes and Workbook

Two years ago some of the songsters in the collective and community got together and produced a tape we call Chants. We did it to help support the newsletter and other projects. It's selling very well but mailing is slow. There is only one person mailing out our tape. We're sorry it takes so long. We are now looking into a distributor to take care of this large task. There are also shops interested in carrying our tapes but we haven't had the time or energy to move in that direction yet.

We might be producing another tape called 2nd Chants. And we are now pulling together music from the ritual The Spiral Dance and hope to have that tape ready by Samhain '89.

Rose May Dance is working very hard on the Reclaiming Workbook, a teaching tool to help others in their own studies. Proceeds for this project will go to help support the collective's projects.

Events Line and Web

Several years ago Reclaiming started an Events line to let people know what classes and rituals were going on in the Bay Area and elsewhere. This line is cared for by one person.

Some of you might have wondered what happened to the Web. It has been unspun and is in the process of respinning. It was originally a more private and controlled mailing that went out monthly to inform participants what was going on (such as Birthday parties, closed (but open) rituals, etc.). In its rethinking we found that the mailing



was too time consuming. So it will be changing to a telephone format. People who subscribe will be able to call and find out what else is going on.

Public Rituals

As always we will continue doing open public rituals at the cross quarter days and solstices. There are open full moon rituals happening monthly. And a small dark moon group is just now starting to meet. Some of our public rituals are benefits for others as well as ourselves. We are also involved in community building and teaching in schools and universities.

Administration

Believe it or not there is only one person processing all of the mail coming in. He processes checks and then gets the mail to the people who need it. He answers letters and requests for information. There is also only one

person who takes care of the banking, bookkeeping and check writing. Thus, we apologize for our slowness but we do our best.

Which brings me to the last point.

We are just people like yourselves, we work full-time jobs, we nurture our lives full of lovers, husbands, wives, children. We eat and try to sleep. And each one of us is involved in at least three different projects. We have no offices. We work and teach out of our homes. We do alot. And at last count there were only nine of us at work with six on sabbatical.

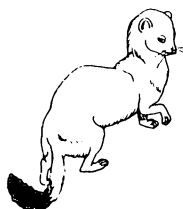
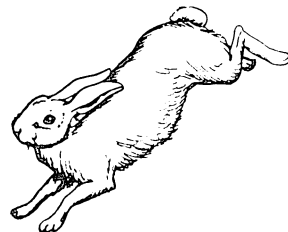
We hope this will help you to understand how we work and what we do. We will not grow much in the next year but will keep up our work in what we're doing here and now.

Blessed Be,
Raven

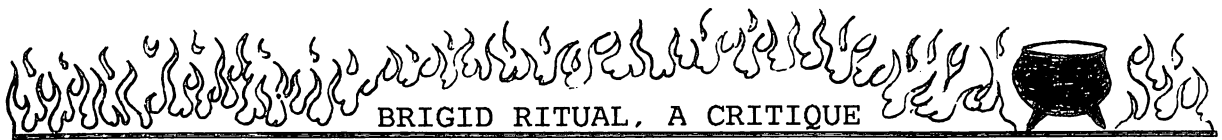


Mother Flame

Mother flame--
Birth us in passion.
Sing us in delight
And dance us joy upon the sunrise.
Color our days with hope
And our dreams with power.
May we name ourselves trusting.



Susan Soule



BRIGID RITUAL. A CRITIQUE

by Rose May Dance

The Reclaiming Community knows how to put on great public rituals, and has done so for big crowds, indoors and out doors. However we recently held a Brigid ritual which was flawed, a little more than usual. This is not to say that much work and artistry did not go into its making, individuals pulled down a lot of power, and many of us, community folks and strangers, were able to do good work inside the ritual. It was not without its powerful moments. But many people had to leave before the ritual was over, and many of us shifted in our seats, bored or tired, during parts of the ritual. I criticize myself, because I was on the ritual planning committee. These words are offered in the spirit of love and learning.

The first time I made public ritual was with Starhawk at the Diablo Peace Camp. As we strolled away from the ritual site, under the full moon, after the last cone died and the circle was open, she said to me, "well shall we tear apart the ritual and say what worked and what didn't?" I didn't know her very well, and she was my teacher, so I averred, although I really wanted to bask in the power, the moon glow, and the satisfaction of my own performance. I felt quite let down when she proceeded to ruthlessly tear the lovely ritual apart, and to suggest what might have been done instead. She was used to doing just this after every ritual with her coveners in Raving, because they were breaking ground and creating new public ritual forms, and were eager to learn how to perfect ritual. I have since gotten used to this method, and no longer feel shocked by it. (Likewise we are less likely nowadays to criticize the ritual immediately after the circle is opened.) Many of us in the community have talked together about the Brigid ritual, and the following thoughts are influenced by those conversations. To those of you who helped plan and make the Brigid ritual, I say, grit your teeth. It's all for the best.

A number of us, old hands and new, got together to plan Brigid. We wanted to encompass some of our traditional activities at Brigid, which has been for some years now a time of political and

spiritual dedication for the pagan and pagan/direct action communities. Three of the ritual components seemed important to include, because they had worked before and are building power over the years. One was the call and response invocation to Brigid, a chant of "Holy Well and Sacred Flame". Another was convening into small groups to share what has made us feel powerless, and what makes us feel powerful. The third was the sharing of pledges to Brigid, at Her well, each pledge punctuated by a strike on Her anvil.

For several years previously we had used some litanies to Brigid, written by Starhawk, outlining the ways in which the earth and the people are threatened, and mentioning the ways people were working for change and empowerment. But the planning group thought that these litanies, recently published in TRUTH OR DARE by Starhawk, and read by her at a number of public gatherings, should be laid to rest for a while. Yet we felt the stage needed to be set for deep inner work in the small groups and in the pledging.

We decided that the setting up of sacred space should be more thorough than usual, and should be, in itself, the first third of the ritual. The calling in of the elements and the Goddess and God should be trance-like, and create a pathway to the inner work, by revealing that which needed to be healed, and naming our strengths, and calling on the helpful attributes of the elements and Deities.

Our planning ran into trouble because there was not enough overview. We formed planning groups to take care of various components of the ritual, and what developed was enough material for three rituals. There was not enough communication between the group which cast the circle, grounded, and called the elements and center, the group which called the God, and the group which called the Goddess, and much material was replicated. It seems to me that the circle was made three different ways -- by the casting, by the elemental invocations, and again by the center invocation. The ills of the world were mentioned at least twice, sometimes more, by those who called the elements

and center, and again by those who called the Goddess. Somehow "thorough" invocations got translated to "longer than usual" invocations. All of these components were very beautiful, but unfortunately because of lack of "Crows" - the overview - the creation of sacred space had us all sitting on our butts for more than an hour at the ritual's beginning. I deeply appreciated the fact that the folks invoking the God inserted an unplanned drum-chant-dance interval before they called him.

I feel that if people were, in general, less burdened and overscheduled, more planning meetings could have taken place and we would have known what each other was doing. But it was much easier to divide the responsibilities and meet or talk in smaller groups. I would have rather been played alive than gone to more meetings in December and January, and I know I'm not alone.

What we ended up with was a partially scripted ritual, because we wanted to make sure various things took place. If we had had enough skill (which we may have) and enough confidence to ad lib the first third of the ritual, it might have been shorter. I also think that as we get more experience with public ritual, more of us will develop the priestessly sense that however much is planned, if the energy in the room is restless, one sacrifices a portion of one's own planned part. And we are learning.

We need to remember, in public ritual, that many participants are not familiar with our forms. When we do a long meditation, grounding, or invocation, we should try not to slip into the language and metaphor we use for more intimate settings, and it should always be clear to the participants what we are doing. This can be done without saying "Now we are going to ... " as if we were in a school assembly or church service. Repetition is powerful and important, for example - "Keep breathing down into the ground, keep bringing fresh earth energy back up through your body" can be mentioned over and over in different ways throughout a grounding and interspersed throughout the poetic imagery. In this way the meaning of the meditation does not get lost.

I was on the committee which designed the Goddess invocation, so that is the process I can best criticize. Three of us met with pen and paper and

discussed the plan which had been made in the first large planning meeting. What was wanted was a Brigid invocation which contained the Holy Well and Sacred Flame Chant, the fire of the heart rhyme used as a repeating litany, mention of areas in our lives and world which needed healing, and mention of our strengths and victories. The three of us proceeded to make a laundry list of the world's ills, and a laundry list of our strengths. We became, to my mind, too involved in writing the exact text at that time. Then I was sent home with the text, and I showed it to two other individuals who could not be at the meeting; one of them wrote several more sections, and one of them helped with the fine polishing. I took all of our material and edited it, finished writing it, and arranged it into a litany including the rhyme and the chant. I ended up with a six page document.

In retrospect, I think the three, or five, of us should have met and brainstormed about the ideas we wanted in the invocation, without writing too much down. Then we should have met with the people who cast, grounded, and invoked, to make sure nothing was duplicated. One person should have written the entire invocation, afterwards showing it to the Goddess group and to the Sacred Space group or its representative, to make sure all would be concise. The invocation we wrote together was lovely, but by the time it was delivered, it was too long for the energy of the crowd.

I think each of the pieces of the first third of the ritual could have worked beautifully, independent of each other. And I am glad we broke into small groups to share with each other "what makes me feel powerless/what makes me feel powerful. Likewise, I find listening to each person, half of whom I know, make their pledges to Brigid at the well a transforming and profound experience. If I am going to endure something long, however, I think I prefer it to be at the end, when the pledges take place. Perhaps there could be a way to move or stretch during this section. One idea would be to have a group of people slowly moving in a circle around the edge of the room. When you needed to stretch, you could take a turn at "turning the wheel", and return to your seat after a while and be replaced by someone else.

Perhaps there could have been an simple, short creation of sacred space,

and scrolls in each direction could have been posted listing the strengths of each element and the areas which needed healing. Perhaps there could have been just one litany of defeats and victories. Perhaps the ritual should have been scheduled for 6:00 PM. Perhaps the ritual should have started on time (HAH!)

Since the pledging, and all that went before, took such a long time, it was necessary to end the ritual before everyone finished pledging. This is sad, because some people were left out. Furthermore, we should have raised a cone of power at the end, even though the security person was eyeing her watch. It would only have taken a few more minutes, and the ritual ended too abruptly. I am the person who jumped right in and began dismissing the circle before a cone could be raised. Bad Rose, bad Rose! Many have said they felt a lack of closure. Several of us were grumpy and wiped out that night and

the next day, and we feel it is because of this lack of completion. We had witnessed some amazing pledges, and needed to acknowledge this in some way.

Because this community is struggling with issues of leadership and how it is shared and passed, it is understandable that no one got pushy and did what was necessary to shorten the ritual, nor asked that people give up the parts which they had planned, or demanded to review the script and/or plans. Nevertheless, we need to struggle further so we find solutions to these problems, and bravely grasp the thorns on the leadership berrybush, or we will never get any fruit.

Again, many thanks to all who planned and helped, and all who attended. Especial thanks to Judy on props, Robin and Arachne on childcare, and Diane F. for the flyer. Let's have a great group to plan next year's Brigid -- the old people, the new people, the same people, wiser than before. Blessed be.

LETTER

Dear Reclaiming,

I was deeply moved by Sophia Sparks' essay "Babies" in the Winter '88 Reclaiming newsletter. It is a bold and brave statement and one that must be addressed.

I salute her courage for this is not a popular position -- even among those who consider themselves environmentally concerned. We cannot afford the luxury of continued personal fecundity -- for the sake of those with whom we now share the planet as well as our ever increasing descendants.

The choice is perhaps still ours, but for how long?

Robin Dorn

Dear Reclaiming,

I enjoy your magazine very much, even though I don't live in San Francisco. It must be nice!

I wanted to comment on the article "Babies" by Sophia Sparks in No. 33. It was certainly very good and thought provoking and important. My only question is with congratulating "industrialized" countries for low birthrates and handy birth control

"technology" and the disparaging news of the "developing" countries with their 3.9 billion people.

The Animal's Agenda, November '88 and December '88, had pertinent articles on this dilemma by Patrice Greanville. To quote: "While the industrialized countries -- showing low-population rates -- gobble up resources and tax the biosphere at an intolerable pace, in the Third World the precise opposite occurs" ... "In terms of how much we burden the atmosphere, the U.S. citizen is worth 16 times a Third World person; more than 3 times a Western European; 2.5 times a Japanese; and 1.5 times a Soviet citizen" ... "Frances Moore-Lappe, author of Diet for a Small Planet (and others) support the view that the roots of "overpopulation" are really far more political than biological" ... "For them, the decisive factor is not how many people we have on the planet, but the manner in which individuals consume resources and interact with the environment -- thereby burdening the biosphere..."

I think this is where we could begin to re-focus perhaps.

Mary McMahon

three died on Tuesday
[for Trish]

Death
black robed
sliding down dirty hallways
at the Ambassador Hotel
yesterday beckoned three
three
souls there
down on their luck
sick with HIV
people I'd talked to
about their needle use,
their lovers,
their poverty.

J, mother, fighter,
hard to talk to.

R, free from the hell
of Vacaville AIDS ward,
41, looking 70,
harmless lonely once-sexy
gentleman -- we liked each other.
what do you need, what can I do for you
I said.
just somebody to talk to,
play cards.
if I had a small refrigerator
I could keep some milk
and stuff.
(We can take the ad
off the events line now.)

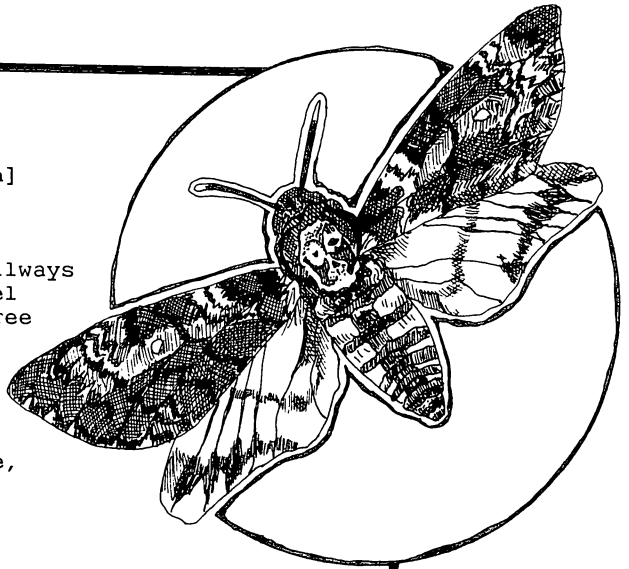
the third,
a name I don't recognize,
I see so many people every month.
Which one was he?

Tonight I'll stand
on the low-down street
passing out needles,
new rigs for old.

No one can stop me.

Aiiiiieeee!
Aiiiiieeee!

-Rose May Dance



by Eire Clutterbuck

Having suffered the death of two close friends from AIDS in September 1988, the Samhain ritual at the Women's Center in San Francisco was enormously therapeutic and moving for my lover, and for me. The veil between the worlds was indeed thin that evening, as I felt the energy and the memories of my departed friends on the Isle of the Dead. I was in denial for a very long time before Tim and Ken died, because I had not until then experienced the death of someone close to my age, however, I knew it was only a matter of time before I would. Their departures awakened me from a disturbing slumber of non-involvement with AIDS activities and charities.

Before Samhain time, I decided to do something about it. I felt it was necessary -- no, vital -- that I go to Washington, DC for the Names Quilt Display in October. Needless to say, I was overpowered by the experience.

Washington, DC, October 8-10, 1988

I originally wanted to Monitor or be an Unfolder, but those jobs were already filled. I volunteered to do "Media Support" instead on Saturday, beginning at 5am. I rose at the ungoddlessly hour of 4:30am to dash to the Ellipse for registration. My veins were howling for warmth and coffee as I stepped out into the desolate District to catch a bus. I was still somewhat groggy when I reached the Display site and was astonished to see, in total darkness, over 1000 people dressed in all shades of white either running around, standing in line to register for the early shift, taking huge sections of Quilt to the grid for the unfolding ceremony (read ritual) or talking and laughing in small groups. Unbelievable! The mood was cordial, almost festive, an unusual energy for an occasion so solemn, serious, and politically important. But leave it to gay men, lesbians and enlightened straight folks to provide a loving atmosphere for Quiltworkers to work in.

I was assigned to operate a cherry picker that would boost still and video photographers some 40 feet above the Quilt for photo shoots. The Moon was

resplendent as she rose around 5:30, the sliver of Diana peeking over the vacant, cold marble monolith of the Department of Commerce complex.

Just before dawn, the Quilt unfolders took their positions around the walkway grids. Project Director Cleve Jones spoke briefly and the unfolders began to systematically open the enormous Quilt. Seeing men and women dressed in brilliant white, opening each 24 x 24 foot section in what can only be described as the utmost in reverence and respect, rotating the section 360 degrees, and gently fluffing the section into the air like a parachute before setting it down on the grass was so intense that spectators, who now surrounded the entire Quilt, joined hands and wept. It was magical. I cannot accurately convey to you my state of mind at that moment (sorrow, happiness, despair, rage? -- all of the above) but the energy level began to rapidly rise as more of the Quilt was opened. A few minutes later, the unfolders were finished and returned to the perimeter.

After a moment of silence, the names of the 7296 panels were read, one by agonizing one. People gently stepped onto the walkways of the Quilt and began their communion with the Dead. The sun shone brilliantly as visitors walked the Quilt, mourned the Dead and shook their heads at the senselessness in which this health crisis is being ignored by the government. From anywhere on the Quilt, one could raise his/her head to glare at the White House, its uncaring, fastidiously-kept facade silently watching.

Unfortunately, the Names Project's Media folks weren't too together and assigned eight additional workers to operate the cherry picker. Not wanting to be a Keystone Quilter, with nine of us bumping into each other to load four passengers and operate one switch, I left, instantly appointed myself an Emotional Support worker, and began to work the Quilt. Even though we were outside, with planes flying overhead, and buses whizzing by, the silence was deafening. The Quilt drew more and more visitors, and when I went off-Quilt for a cigaret break, the energy wall I

passed through at the perimeter made my hair stand on end.

Most of the time I worked my section, I tried not to look down, because there was always the possibility that I'd lose it, looking at and reading someone's panel. I was attempting to monitor other people's energy in case they needed me so I didn't need my own energy fluctuations interfering. But it was unavoidable. I lost it several times, blew my nose and continued.

As in all Quilt Displays, there are signature sections for people to write names of those who have recently died but have no panel at the display, for eulogizing people who have died, to rage at the government, or to offer hope and strength. I noticed a significant number of namastes, and Blessed Be's on the signature sections. Portions of the written memories left on the fabric were blotted with tears. This is perhaps the most unpredictable area of the Quilt, as people try to maintain their stoicism, but when given a magic marker and a section of fabric to write on, the emotions spill out in torrents.

San Francisco, December 13-18, 1988

Since Washington, I have become obsessed with the Quilt. I had become a Quilt junkie, ready for more fixes (shifts). This time, however, I went through almost two hours of emotional support training conducted by the Names Project, and was mesmerized by an attractive Emotional Support Coordinator named Judy. My witch-radar hadn't been working up to snuff due to a cold and my emotional state. When fair Judy told us about the problems we would have in grounding visitors' energy in the concrete air hangar called Moscone Center, I perked up my antennae and began to scan. She told us that the energy would be draining, could not be resisted and must flow through us. She suggested fruit, trail mix and other easily stored goodies to munch on to keep up our energy and prepare us to handle the energy of others. The only natural place to ground (since Moscone Center is concrete, top to bottom) was outside in a small park-like area, and in her words we were to "non-chalantly hug a tree" to send the energy into Terra. She commented that several Names Project people thought she was "odd" for recommending the grounding technique (I suppose they like to bounce off the walls for several hours afterwards and get crabby, depressed, etc). Little did

Judy know that there were several of us with knowing smiles on our faces. WE KNEW what to do. We've been in ritual before. And this whole Quilt business was ritual.

One last observation -- the combined energy from all of the panels can be OVERWHELMING!! Think for a moment -- at least each of the 8500+ panels had one creator and in most cases more -- say the average number of contributors to each panel was 3.5 (for statistics sake, and to placate half persons), so $8500 \times 3.5 = 29,750$. You are in the same room with the emotional energy of 29,750 people who spent hours weaving a creation later connected by the Names Project volunteers into a massive Quilt. The energy from it is real, tangible, and powerful. So be prepared if you work it or view it.

One of the most powerful places in Moscone Center was near the down escalator that led people to the entrance of the Display. Some of the curious, who have not had close friends die, came to see this "Quilt thing", and did not really know what they were getting into until the Quilt yawned for acres in front of them. Well, child, their jaws jus' dropped, hard. Their eyes got big as saucers as they stared, transfixed. Yes, Lightning and Thunder can strike you, even when you're indoors and a raincloud hasn't happened along in months. They had not prepared themselves mentally, and were seized by the power of the Quilt. The energy wall on the perimeter probably affected them too, because they resisted it instead of letting it flow through them.

My definition of magic is "shaping reality through intent and will". The panels' creators and the Names Project folks have worked magic! Their combined will (group mind) produced change in those who viewed it, and those who have changed can help change others. Hopefully, those who view the Quilt will walk away with a more compassionate understanding of this horrible epidemic, and view the AIDS Dead as people, not as Gay men and IV drug users, or faceless, nameless statistics. These people were our fathers, mothers, brothers and sister.

Let my experience be a warning to those who have not yet viewed it. It is unique, it speaks volumes and then some, and for me, was the most powerful and uplifting and rewarding experience I have ever volunteered for in my life, bar none. Go see it, and understand.

OR

PREVENTION POINT IS STILL GETTING TO THE POINT

By Les Devlin

[This is a continuation of an article written in the Winter Issue by Hermine Fleet. Please refer to that article for background information on the political, legal, social, and medical implications of needle exchange. The names in this article have still been changed.]

Here it is almost four months later, and Prevention Point still goes out one night a week to exchange needles with IV drug users. If anyone had told us that we would still be doing this four months later, we would have thought they were crazy! A lot of encouraging things have happened to our group to strengthen our commitment and resolve to continue this much needed and long overdue program.

We have slowly "come out of the closet" to organizations or people in organizations who may be supportive and helpful to our work. We now have friends in the inside (you'd be surprised to hear where some of them work) who are prepared to back us if or when we get arrested or threatened. We continue our commitment to make our group multi-ethnic, and we wish to thank the members of our community who have helped us in this regard.

We now have an independent, outside evaluation/research team, who will be evaluating Prevention Point, and adding a large measure of professional and scientific credibility to our endeavors. We would also like to thank them for accompanying us on exchange night.

We have been asked to speak next summer at a national conference, and we have submitted an abstract about Prevention Point to an international symposium, also next summer.

Our "data tart" (this is the person who knows how to put numbers in the computer) has set up a computer program for us which has allowed us to collect simple ethnographic and demographic information, keep track of the number of returned "banded" needles, and compile those all-important statistics. As much

as we may hate them, those numbers are absolutely necessary to validate what we have been doing and will be one of our primary tools for achieving legitimacy within the existing power structure.

Two members of our group will be going to Tacoma, Washington, this month to see how one man has changed the lives of IV drug users there. He has been financing his own needle exchange there since last summer, and has just received funding from the Health Department to exchange needles every day. They will spend two days with him, and will hopefully come back fired up and empowered by his crusade.

The police? We still don't know if they know. We certainly see lots of them, both uniforms and undercovers, and they see lots of us. We are very low-keyed and use the tools of our trade to keep our visibility even lower. We enshroud ourselves in dark and fog, and, as a matter of fact, I have even walked right by the exchangers when I was looking for them. The exchange continues to take place within a sacred circle, cast every week before we go out. Now we ask not to be busted so that our work can continue. (If any police happen to read Reclaiming, why don't you continue your policy as it's a very sane and good one.)

We have been carefully checking out new locations to expand to, and will begin this week in another neighborhood at another time.

At our biweekly meetings we spend a lot of time discussing different communities and community organizations that we would like to inform about what we are doing. We think this is important because of what has been happening in New York politically with the Department of Health's plan to have a pilot needle exchange program there. We all know that drug addiction is one of the biggest threats to minority communities in America, and that drugs are violently tearing communities apart. We suspect

that the government has had a lot to do with the vast amount of drugs flowing through the ghettos of America. Cocaine crack has proven itself to be one of the most powerful forms of social control our government has ever devised. However, the problems of AIDS acquired through shared needles are not going to go away by denying clean needles to people who already use them. It is not the needle that gets people to use drugs, but the high. For this reason, we sincerely hope that the minority communities in San Francisco do not take the same path that some of the New York groups have by not allowing needle exchanges to take place in their neighborhoods. Prevention Point does not condone or encourage drug use. We have never given any one a new needle who did not give us a dirty one in return. People will shoot up whether or not they have a clean needle.

Lastly, the one thing that has not changed since we started are the people, our clients, and the reality of their lives. Most of the ones that we serve are still homeless, and subject to the various and ever changing tactics of the police and City Hall to not allow them to do what they need to do in order to have shelter, to be warm and dry, and to maybe have a good night's sleep. The camps of the homeless are forcibly moved week after week by the police. Often, they come in with a dump truck and simply throw everything away. What is it like to lose your blanket--maybe the one thing that stands between you and death from exposure? This has been one of the coldest winters on record here. And, yes, the mayor has put out a call to the city's churches, businesses, and community organizations to provide more

shelters and beds. Is this in response to the fact that the homeless now have the bad taste to even camp in areas not normally associated with poverty? What does it say about America when our Civic Center Auditorium is surrounded by the homeless literally camping in its door ways and loading docks? What does it say about San Francisco when bus loads of Japanese or German tourists pile out of their tour busses in front of the civic fountain to photograph City Hall while the homeless, including women with small children and babies, line up in front of them to get food served by Mother Theresa's Sister's of Charity? Maybe the tourists think they are in India?

The stories! We have as many stories to tell as we have dirty rigs, and each of us has our own favorites. We always get together afterwards and tell the stories. The two teams, called Clean Sweep and Outfit Girls, remember their customers' faces and hear their thanks. We've been given food. People have tried to give us money and drugs or want to come and work with us. We are asked out on dates. The bottom line, however, is direct action against AIDS. It feels good to go up to someone lying in a doorway and ask them if they need a clean rig. Maybe they don't have a bed, but if they choose to get high, at least they won't have to worry about getting AIDS. We plan to continue Prevention Point until the Department of Health starts a community-based pilot needle exchange program that is of sufficient size to really make a difference. At this point to stop us would pose a threat to the public health of the people we serve. Who's willing to commit that crime?



I have only been to Greenham Women's Peace Camp three times. The first time I was seventeen and most of my visit was spent working out that - yes, they were all lesbians.

The second time, two years later, I had come out, and knew many of the women at Green Gate. Now I felt connected to the camp. I watched the soldiers at the fence grow uneasy as we appeared out of the rolling white mist on Hallowe'en night, keening and cackling and chanting. I ran up Silbury Hill not far from Greenham where the witches used to gather, and thirteen of us danced around a bonfire, burning the painted sign that declared the hill to be private property. I got up at dawn the next day and laughed with Ember as she rattled on about the difference between Blue Gate and Green Gate - "Now you see at Blue Gate for instance we would never have chocolate soya dessert that would last unopened overnight..." she said, proceeding to tear open the packet and empty half of it into a bowl for her breakfast. I left that day only because I had my first job as a professional carpenter to get to. I vowed that when I next came to the camp, I was going to stay.

But the third time I went to Greenham I had an experience that sent me bolting out of there at first light, frantically hitching rides back to London, knowing that it would be years before I could go back. I had gone there for a big demonstration and among the hundreds of women, I met some unexpected old friends from high school. I was feeling tense and uneasy all day but attributed it to suddenly seeing these women, with whom I'd talked about boyfriends in years past, in this very lesbian setting. But after most of the women had gone home, the atmosphere thickened. The soldiers were freaking out, yelling at us and throwing bricks and bottles. I got up from the fire, propelled by a severe sense of alienation from everyone, and walked to my tent. The buzzing noise in my head which had been going on all day without me really noticing it, grew unbearably loud, but when I turned around to identify its source it still sounded as if it was behind me. Voices in my mind

started up a frantic dialogue - "Everybody here hates you" - they screeched and I started to panic - "they hate you, there's no place for you to be, you might as well kill yourself...". I ran to the fire, barefoot, through the thick brambles and December cold, crying. I found that I could barely hear anything except the voices in my head, and that I could not speak. I think that I stumbled back to the tent, I have no memories of the rest the night.

It was two weeks before I could talk about what had happened. Luckily, one of my neighbors had been involved with Greenham since the beginning and had been there at the same demonstration. She told me that the "zapping" had been on that night, and suddenly my experience made sense.

Zapping is the word, used by scientists, activists and journalists alike, to describe the harmful effects of non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation. Because electromagnetic radiation of frequencies including and below that of visible light are non-ionizing (i.e. do not knock the particles off atoms upon impact thus creating a charged particle known as an ion), it was long thought to be harmless. Since the 1950's, however, it has been discovered to bring about changes in living tissue far beyond that of the "thermal effect" which was thought to be its only danger. It is now known that every living thing functions in an electromagnetic field of its own, delicately tuned to the earth's 7.8 hertz frequency, and that when that field is disrupted it can cause biological damage ranging from severe emotional stress to cancer, leukemia and birth defects.

Our microwave ovens, CB radios, satellite dishes, power lines and T.V.'s all emit harmful frequencies, which are causing the breakdown of our immune systems. Believing that the radical changes that would alleviate this situation would result in losses in their profits and a shrinking of their stature as war-mongers, the government and corporations have suppressed the research that has gone into

investigating the biological hazards of electricity. An excellent account of this subject can be found in The Body Electric, by Robert Becker, a scientist at one time employed by the government, who became disillusioned by their suppression of the facts.

Rather than acting on this knowledge by decentralizing the electricity supply, harnessing the renewable resources of sun, wind, and wave, creating realistic safety standards and educating people about the dangers of electro-pollution, the governments of Britain, America and the U.S.S.R. have poured their resources into developing "frequency weapons":

-- A study published in 1972, by the U.S. Army Equipment and Research Center called "Analysis of Microwaves for Barrier Warfare" concluded that it is possible to field a truck portable microwave system that will "completely immobilize personnel".

-- A 1982 U.S. Airforce study hypothesized exposing the enemy to electromagnetic radiation to sensitize them to "chemical or biological agents to which the unirradiated population would be immune".

-- The British Defence Equipment Catalogue 1983, vol. 2, has an advertisement for the "Valkyrie light system" ... "an extremely efficient non-lethal weapon for security forces". (All references to frequency weapons were then taken out of the catalogue by request of the British Ministry of Defence.)

In October 1984, some changes took place at the U.S.A.F. airbase at Greenham Common. New antennae were installed and the soldiers at the fence reduced in number. Shortly afterwards, the women at the camp started to come down with a variety of mysterious illnesses. Some of their symptoms were burning of the skin from the direction of the base rather than the sun, spontaneous bleeding of the nose and gums, dizziness and vomiting, disruption of the menstrual cycle, confusion, depression and paranoia, panic in non-panic situations, post-menopausal

bleeding, disruption of sleep patterns, deafness, and stabbing pains in the heart.

Research led the women to the conclusion that they were being bombarded with high levels of microwave radiation, either to put a stop to their presence outside the base, or to test the effect of this technology on human guinea-pigs, or both. Members of Electronics for Peace, some journalists, and a well-known anti-nuclear scientist, Rosalie Bertell, all made measurements around the fence. Their findings were very similar - at places where women who were sensitive to it could feel the zap, the instruments measured up to one hundred times the level of background radiation. The equipment used so far has not been sufficiently sophisticated to identify the exact frequencies of the emissions, but the tests suggest that more than one signal frequency is being used.

One thing that has puzzled people is the wide range of symptoms that have been experienced, and the fact that some women seem to not feel the zapping at all. The electrical field of each body has its own individual frequency and so the effect of disrupting this field will vary accordingly. The water content of the tissue is an important factor - the more water it contains, the more radiation it will absorb, making women more susceptible than men to its effects, due to women's naturally higher water content.

Some of the coverage that this issue got in England in the more radical media, speculated that these sinister happenings were the result of accidental emissions from the security system. In answer to this I would like to quote from the report put out by Electronics for Peace - "Strong signals recorded on one occasion at Green Gate were found to cover the women's encampment, but to stop abruptly at the road leading up to the gate" ... "it seems curious that a number of strong signals should variously reflect the women's movements and follow a geographical pattern which seems to single out their encampments".

In 1985, women at Seneca Women's

Peace Encampment started to experience the same symptoms, and it is now well documented that it is happening there. The Peace Farm at Amarillo, Texas outside the Pantex bomb factory, the non-stop picket of the South African embassy in London and the Lexington Women's control unit are other possible targets.

Women at both camps have been exploring ways to survive the zapping, drawing on their skills and knowledge as witches and healers. I had a dream a few weeks ago, when researching this article, of a huge copper shield, behind which the air was sweet and uncontaminated. I looked up the properties of copper and found that "copper has long been used to stimulate the body's healing. This seems to be because of copper's ability to balance the body's polarity..." The next day I found someone selling copper nuggets on the street and bought one for \$.50 which I always take with me on BART. I have also learned to overcome my fear of being thought insane when talking about this, and have therefore broken the silence which accompanies this fear. The first draft of this article omitted to mention my own experience of being zapped. I found that I had difficulty breathing when I sat down to write. My lesbian writer's group persuaded me to include what I had been through, and we speculated that this would make the writing easier. It has. Women's experiences of patriarchy have long been denounced as insane. It is of no benefit to us to internalize this lie.

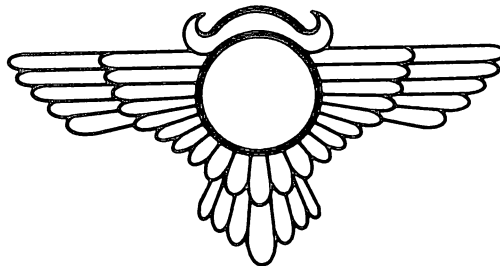
The most effective way to counteract the zapping, however, seems to have been developed by the women at Greenham. They have issued an

injunction against the British and American governments to "prohibit the use of frequency wave weapons". Since filing the injunction at Newbury County Court in January 1988, the women named as plaintiffs have had their homes and cars broken into, papers stolen and mail opened, but the zapping at Greenham has stopped.

Greenham Common was the site of the last witch burning to take place in England. It is surely no coincidence that of all the approximately seven camps around the fence, Green Gate bore the brunt of the zapping, for Green Gate had a reputation for being the witches' camp. I know that it was the first place where magic touched my adult life and it seems that I was to be severely punished for that. As witches and pagans, people who seek to sensitize ourselves to subtle energies, whose spiritual path to heal the earth takes us into many frontline political situations, zapping and electro-pollution are very much our issues.

The battle against these things begins in our consciousness. By educating ourselves about them, by believing the testimony of the women who lived through three winters of zapping and daily evictions that Greenham might survive, we tip the scales in favor of peace.

There are a group of Seneca women, calling themselves the Coalition of Rainbow Light who are working on these issues as a result of their experiences of being zapped. They encourage anyone who thinks they might be targeted, or would like to help or know more about it, to send inquiries, donations or helpful information to C.C.R.L., P.O. Box 4541, Ithaca, N.Y. 14852.





Now if you have been paying attention, you know that I have a new system to let you know which advice is household hints and which is meant to help me run your life, as both kinds are likely to improve your life and your relationships with people who come to visit and don't know that you are the sort of person who calls up ladies like Astarte and ask them to fix your love life, but they are different sorts of advice, and it is nice to tell them apart.

Just recently I have found out that many of you are having a misunderstanding about life, and have got the notion that you are responsible for everything that happens to you on account of creating your own reality. Now, do you really expect that the Great Mother, who is so much smarter than you, would have let you create your own reality when you know damn well you flunked home ec and shop? I mean, here you are, having to get household hints out of pagan newsletters, and you think you're capable of creating your own reality. I am just so perturbed over this I could spit.

Because if you are creating your own reality, let me tell you, you had better get the ring out of the bathtub, because it is just not true that the Great Goddess is concerned with have you manifested your higher destiny, about which she knows so much more than you. No, she wants to know did you clean the bathtub yet, and I happen to know you didn't.

Now if you have been following this column, you know all about Purgatory, and you already know that you get to get out when you understand the movie, which takes a while, on account of the subtitles being misspelled and mistranslated by angels who didn't learn human languages till they got to angel college, so they get a lot of things wrong, but what you didn't know, because I have not told you yet, is that you also get to find out your Higher Destiny. They let you know as you're leaving; it's a sort of lottery.

But the point is, that if you actually figure out your higher destiny now, you will wreck Everything, and the angel ushers will have nothing to do, and get fired, and you know what that Means.

My best advice on this matter is to forget you ever heard about your higher destiny and go sweep the floor, which is a holy sacred act beloved to the Great Holy Mother Goddess, who gave you brooms precisely so you could create less dust on the floor of your reality.

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I was going to tell you more things, especially since I heard that some of you are acting as human telephones for some of the angels who lost their jobs in purgatory, on account of not being able to mind their own business, and explaining the movie plots to people before they could read it for themselves, and so now hang out all over the earth telling whoever will listen about how to create an entire reality even if they can't make pineapple upside-down cake, when actually what they probably need is a new Betty Crocker cookbook.

But I think I will give you a household hint now, as that is actually more important to your immortal soul, so here it is.

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It is time for spring cleaning now, so what you should do is, you should get a new bucket. Many of you do not understand about buckets. You need one that will hold water, and your old one won't, because you took it outside last winter and forgot it, and it has been worked over by the elements.

So you have to get a new one. This is the correct time to get all the glitter off the floor which is left over from the winter festivities, and the vaccum will not be enough, as you have already found out. You are just going to have to wash the floor. Some of my readers have had great benefits from having Dust-Raisings, where they go from house to house in the neighborhood cleaning floors together. This has many benefits, as you are likely to clean the house beforehand, since you know people are coming over, and you don't want anybody you know finding that snapshot of you that somebody took last Beltane, while they are on their hands and knees cleaning under the sofa.

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So happy spring and please try to behave yourselves, as you are all part of my reality,
love, Hannan



[The following is excerpted from a letter to Starhawk, of the Reclaiming Collective, from Bruni, a student from last summer's Witchcamp in Germany. She tells of an event, the dedication of a woman's sculpture, the image of a "tree-woman facing in two opposite directions", at the site of Witchburnings in the village of Gelnhausen.--rmd]

"...For me this event connects directly to the feeling we shared at the workshop about Witchburning and the persecution of Jews in Germany or elsewhere and how the memory and the sadness drew us together instead of keeping us separated...

"Gelnhausen is a small village near Frankfurt. In the middle of the village there is a Witchtower and a Burning Place. In the 16th century about 60 women and men from the village have been tortured and burned to death because they have been accused to be Witches. Every year the town organizes a village festival and in June 1985 they decided to open the Witchtower to the public on that occasion. The town had spent 25,000 DM to restore and reconstruct the torturing tools so that people by looking at them could get the gooseimples (so stated in the daily paper). At the same time they organized for the festival some Witches (from the Carneval Club, most of them men dressed up as Witches) to dance around a funeral pile.

"Some of the women who read about it were terribly upset and consternated and talked to other women about it and decided to organize a silent demonstration march on the day of the festival. The reaction from the citizens varied from consternation to shouting: "The Emanren are spoiling our fun again!"

"But the mayor who was also present was rather disconcerted and talked to some of the women promising that he would donate and install at the tower a nameplate with all the names of those engraved who had been murdered.

"More and more women from different backgrounds -- spiritual, political, social met each other to talk about the event and they started all of a sudden to find themselves involved in a process of entering their own female story.

"They then contacted an artist and together they decided to create a symbol to honour the victims. Eva-Gesine Wegner who up to then had little to do

with the village came across the story of Maria Strupp, a vicar's widow of the village in the 16th century who helped the women and men who had been accused of being Witches, and though being a vicar's widow, she also was tortured and burned to death. Eva-Gesine who is also married to a vicar could identify with Maria Strupp and suggested to create a tree-woman and to call her the RUFENDE (The Calling One). The women met in her studio and had masks taken of their faces and slowly, slowly the features of the tree woman's faces (facing in opposite directions) came to life and the women were thrilled to find reflections of their own features in the sculpture.

"The most difficult part was to convince the town council to buy the Calling One and to set it up in the place of shame in front of the Witchtower. The artist wanted 35,000 DM for the work because she is convinced that women should be paid and valued equal to men and after all, the restoring of the torturing tools cost the town 26,000 DM. Long negotiations with the relevant people and institutions took place. The women often were on the brink to give up but in the end, like magic, all their conditions were agreed upon and they could hardly believe it. The brochure [from which some of this information is taken] is a documentation of this long and involved process and doesn't leave out the fact that also the women often had very different opinions and there was a split especially between politics and the spiritual, but in the end they all realized that somehow they united their different energies and that really worked the magic.

"People from all parts of Germany and Europe were invited to take part in the event of the unveiling of the figure on the 26 Apr 86 and the women also performed a ritual dance and put flowers in a heap of earth piled up on the burning place. There now the speech of the artist Gesine Wegner:

"I am deeply moved and happy to be standing here on this spot with all of you. And I would like you to be aware that this is a historical moment. On the 26th April 1988 we are gathered at the first place in the Bundesrepublik, where people admit to the Witch persecution and remember it with a ceremony -- and that makes it special -- where, by a memorial, the honour shall



be restored to those who were deprived of it in such an inhuman way.

"300 years of Silence and Denial had to pass by in this country. In future you and I and all those willing can at least remember our ancestresses and ancestors publicly and not in secret and eyed with suspicion. Henkel, Breydenbuch or Breydenbach are old Gelnhauser family names, and I could imagine that someone still carrying these names today is amongst us.

"Whilst I speak of our ancestresses I realize that I do this as a woman because I can connect without difficulty to a woman called Anna Petermann, Martha Heinrich or Katherine Holbein. I can imagine the hopes they had for their lives, later on their fears, their despair, their rage and their powerlessness. But you as a man, did it ever spring to your mind that the killed ones are also your ancestresses, that they might have been your mother, your sister, your lover. Therefore I am happy that we are standing here as women and men.

...."A journalist was very astonished after I had described to him the CALLING WOMAN (that is how I call the sculpture) and he asked me: "But then you have not presented the horror of the Witch holocaust but a tree."

"Yes, that is true. This madness of the Witch holocaust really existed in history. And there are enough documents, illustrations and books that can cause you goosepimples. That is enough.

"Whereas I have not the slightest interest to revive and therefore manifest all the horror with my sculpture, I want to go further than this and the tree is a good symbol. On one side it is a very old female metaphor and on the other hand it has been at all times a sign for the power of life that goes on and on.

"Have those who re-constructed and restored a large variety of torturing tools for the Witchtower been aware that by this act of reproducing they do not document the story of horror but revive it. Inform yourself how the whole matter is handled at schools and on conducted tours.

[In answer to the question why was this sculpture created just for Gelnhausen] "...Maria Strupp...was the wife of a vicar and was engaged in fighting against all forms of oppression. She paid with her life. Today I also am the wife of a vicar and

an engaged woman. That is one reason, and the other reason is that Gelnhausen is rich in estimation for those who brought suffering and death to the people. Look at the Witchtower, look at the torturing tools, and in the Marienchurch the worst judge from those times, the village mayor Koch, has been honoured twice, in life size on a gravestone behind the altar and through the fact that the sermon is held every Sunday from the pulpit which he donated to the church.

"After so much worshiping of death and the culprits I think it is about time to set up a symbol of life in Gelnhausen. The mayor Michaelis and I have met in the spirit that he as today's mayor and I as the wife of a vicar today, we want to oppose that dark period of history by putting up a symbol of life.

"...Look at the CALLING WOMAN. She looks towards the Witchtower and the names, but at the same time she faces East, the direction of the raising sun.

"...What does it mean to me to connect to the strength of the women from those times? I know that the Witch persecution was a hysterical hunt for women, and that any woman could be the victim. But I also know that there existed many very independent women at that period, women who were rich in knowledge about life. It was a time when especially women lived in a close and wise relationship with nature. And from this knowledge of the relationship between humans and nature, between cosmic events and the individual they received their strong and healing powers.

"In such a death-addicted, destructive world that we are living in, it is about time that we women connect again to this knowledge so we all can survive.

"The CALLING ONE, Woman and Tree, human and nature at the same time, appeals to us to take our part of responsibility in this society for the healing process and women have easier access to the abilities which are so badly needed.

"...Is the CALLING WOMAN a symbol for women's movement?

"As far as women's movement is part of the peace movement, yes! The CALLING WOMAN is my contribution to peace. And in other places more contributions will follow. This may seem strange to you or unusual. What has the Witch persecution from those



days to do with peace movement of today? The Witch persecution has been -- to get down to brass tacks -- a war of gender. Men were afraid of the independence and strength of women, and feared to be at a disadvantage.

"If women remember their own strength and connect to it (everywhere the process takes place) then men are faced again with the question: What about my fear of the strength of women and how do I handle it? The CALLING WOMAN summons men to draw their attention to that part of their story which has been conditioned by fear of the strength of women. If men have the courage to come to terms with their story, by doing so, they might learn a lot for the present. The CALLING WOMAN appeals to men to want to listen to the different knowledge and experience and perception of the truth of women and instead of fearing, learn to trust it.

"MEMORY IS THE SECRET OF RECONCILIATION are the words of a Jewish wisdom printed on that nameplate over there.

"To reach reconciliation and peace, men and women have to remember their mutual story of horror. That means hard work and looks very different for men



and women. Women have to overcome the paralyzing feeling of powerlessness, fear, rage, reclaiming their own powers of knowledge and use them to heal this planet. And men have to learn to look at their fears of women's strength and to trust the different kind of female wisdom and knowledge.

"A great hope, I firmly believe in it.

"In order not to stand here with this hope all on my own, I would like to ask you to join in a song with me which contains this hope for me.

"You can't kill the spirit

She is like a mountain

old and strong

she goes on and on."

[Here ends Eva-Gesine Wegner's speech. Bruni's letter goes on to discuss other matters with Starhawk, and she then closes.]"I sincerely hope you have enough time to read this letter to the end and I wish you that the Goddess may bless you and your work and I hope to see you again on your next visit to Europe.



"Gesegnet Seis!
Bruni"

Easy Way Out

He was still looking for a fast, easy buck
 She was still looking for a really good fuck
 They were both still waiting for their long lost luck
 It was twelve past tomorrow on the night before nothing
 On the detour past dawn, the sun was a blank
 The moonlight lay shattered on the concrete
 The veins of the earth were ripped open, gushing out life
 And they were still blind, still looking for an easy way out

cypress

brooding
 eremite
 tree:

you seek the solace
 of your own kind,
 intertwining roots & branches
 binding you together

yet--
 in your recesses,
 under your
 protective
 canopy,
 I go to
 seek
 my
 solitude.

Roy King



running soar

© 1989



Wheel of the Year
by Pleiades & Pandora



I never have quite understood, in my guts, what some of the Sabbats are about. Why do they focus on the Sun; what happens to the Earth and the Moon? What are the plants and animals doing? What about the elementals? Why are the Sabbats so anthropomorphic? What is the difference between Lammas and the Fall Equinox? Must Beltane be so heterosexual? How can the Sabbats celebrate the Earth's seasons as I know them, seasons which don't include hot sun and cold snow?

I felt the need to reinterpret the wheel of the year, and found that Pandora did, too; simply adding homosexual imagery to Beltane celebrations, for instance, has not made the event, so focussed as it is on fertility, feel less heterosexual to us. Change seems called for at the root level, the conception of the year and its celebrations. Since we have similar views, we decided to attempt to develop one together. We wanted, above all, to keep the anthropomorphic male sun/female moon imagery out of our wheel. And though we would like to keep Western European seasons out of it, too, that was much harder to do. We don't have any conception of the wheel closer to the equator or the poles, and can't manufacture one. Our wheel won't work for all places on earth. But we went through the wheel, asking ourselves, "What is happening at this point? How does it feel? What is the earth doing? We found ourselves focussing on the flow of energy, the communication, between all things, as it happened. The wheel as we present it here supposes a cycle of light and dark which is, in essence, a movement between communicating with the dead and communicating with the living. We don't consider it perfect; we do consider it a beginning. We start, probably as a reflection of the time of year in which we sat down to work this out, with Yule, the winter solstice. So here is our contribution to a redefinition of our celebrations.

Winter Solstice: Here we remember the light, in the depths of the dark. At the point at which we are farthest from the sun, we need to strengthen our feelings of connection to each other, to remember that we are alive in the midst of death. People tend to gather together in large groups to eat and sing, generating their own lights with candles, strands of colored lights, festivities. Sometimes we feel more generous, patient, concerned, strengthening our bonds; sometimes we feel suicidal, depressed, stressed-out, the emphasis on community making us more aware of our isolation.

If we strengthen the web that holds us in our community, we are supported through the darkness, and duly arrive at

Brigid: The feeling of isolation in the darkness reaches its peak, threatening to overcome the now-sputtering flame of energy and hope. Desperation is in the air. In the Reclaiming community, we gather together to make pledges to Brigid for the new year, showing our willingness to commit ourselves to yet another year of planetary existence. Initiation, often associated with this point of the wheel, is also a form of pledge, a channelling of will to a purpose. We give ourselves over to the flame of life, giving it an extra surge of power to get it through to

Eostar: This is a balance point. We become reconciled with the increase of energy. The small social groups that have been operating since just after the Winter Solstice widen, open up. Life quickens: animals begin to reproduce, trees to flower, humans to fall in love. The new self which has been growing in the dark is ready to take out into the world, to try out its new self-sufficiency, try out the strength of its boundaries. This is a time of the beginning of communication with the living.

Beltane: This is the Great Celebration of communication with the living. We bring the force of life into our relationships, communities,

structures of all kinds. Life being so unpredictable, this force manifests itself in the breaking of rules, especially political and sexual rules. We were self-sufficient; we began to communicate with other living folk; now we are fully in conversation, open to others' thoughts and energy.

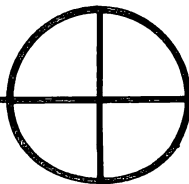
Summer Solstice: Here we remember the dark, in the midst of light. We remember that we are dead in the midst of life. The voice of reason whispers that we should begin to think about the coming cold. We make plans for the future, for fall. Everything is moving slowly; we take time off. We consider. We took in a lot of information during the growth of the light; now we let some of it go. Not everything is going to get done this year. We begin to accept that, and burn a wicker person, being willing to reopen communication with the dead.

Lammas: We make boundaries, set limits. Fires are at their most dangerous. We are willing to take responsibility for what we can control, and let go of what we can't. We are now clearer about what is not going to be able to go with us into the dark, and thin it out ruthlessly and mourn it deeply. What is

left to us will now have the chance to grow fully and lushly. We're as sick of the summer now as we were sick of the winter at Brigid, though we'll feel nostalgia for it when it really dies at the

Fall Equinox: Again we are at a balance point, here becoming reconciled with decrease. Community bonds are strong now. We are working together. As harvests are brought in by people working together, we gather together, starting school, coming home from vacation, beginning night classes, planning community events. The quality of the work is affected by the quality of the communication that's been going on the rest of the year.

Samhain: This is the Great Celebration of communication with the dead. We converse with the dark, the secrets of society itself, our own inner voice. Though we gather in large groups and sing, we are feeling the isolation and silence at the core. It's important to be physically with other people now, so that the conversation which is going on within us is placed in the matrix of community, a web of faith and hope which we will light up at Yule.



WHERE IS MY CHANTS TAPE??

We have not been able to fill recent Chants tape orders because we are out of tapes. And because of financial problems and production difficulties, we have not replenished the supply.

We hope to produce more tapes this spring and to fill all outstanding orders.

In the meantime, we appreciate the patience of people who are still waiting for their tapes.



CHANTS

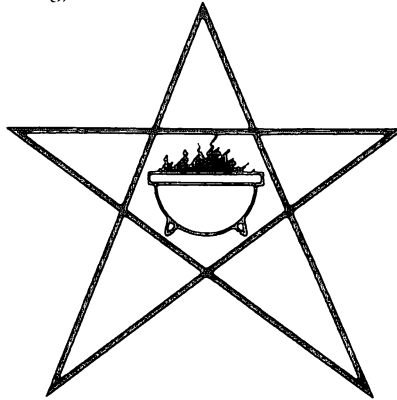
Ritual Music

a cassette tape from the Reclaiming community

A 40-minute tape of chants and songs from various sources, which are frequently used in Reclaiming rituals. The tape is intended as a teaching tool, and a worksheet is included. We hope that you will sing these chants and songs, use them in ritual, and teach them to others. Proceeds from the sale of this tape help to support the work of the Reclaiming Collective.

TO ORDER: Send check or money order in U.S. currency to RECLAIMING TAPE, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Price: \$10.00 each, including postage (add \$3.00 each for overseas mailing)



Side 1

The Beginning of the Earth
Touching Her Deep
Air I Am
Rise with the Fire
Snake Woman
Isis Astarte
We are an Old People
I Am a Strong Woman
We Are the Flow (orig. melody)
Silver Shining Wheel
Where There's Fear There Is
Power
Hecate Ceredwen

Side 2

Return to the Mother
Born of Water
Air Moves Us
Water and Stone
We All Come from the Goddess
Hoof and Horn
Kore Chant
We Are the Flow (folk melody)
Sun King
We Are Alive





ELEMENTS OF MAGIC FOR WOMEN ONLY by Pleiades and Deadly Nightshade

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, Witchcraft, and Goddess spirituality by working with the elements of Magic: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit. Techniques include: visualization, sensing and projecting energy, chanting, trance, creating magical space, spellcraft, and structuring rituals. Beginning 6-week course, 6 Wednesdays, starting May 3. \$45-90 sliding scale. Call Pleiades 648-FURY or Deadly 641-5836 for registration and details.

ELEMENTS OF MAGIC FOR MEN AND WOMEN by Raven and Others

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, Witchcraft, and Goddess spirituality by working with the Elements of Magic: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit. Techniques include: visualization, sensing and projecting energy, chanting, trance, creating magical space, spellcraft, and structuring rituals. Beginning 6-week course, 6 Thursdays, starting May 4. \$45-90 sliding scale. Call Raven 334-MOON for registration and location.

ELEMENTS OF MAGIC FOR INCEST SURVIVORS -- A WEEKEND WORKSHOP FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS by Cybele and Deborah

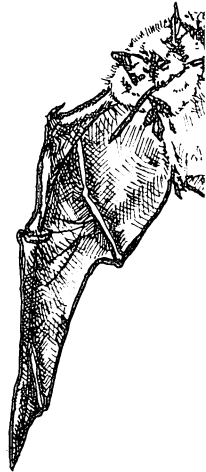
Experience the basics of magical work in a space with other survivors. We will begin the practice of magic, Witchcraft and Goddess Spirituality by working with the elements of magic: Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Spirit. Techniques include: creating safe and sacred space, grounding, purifying, visualization, chanting and sensing & projecting energy. Special attention will be paid to Younger Self and her needs. This workshop counts as prerequisite for future Breath and Body classes for survivors or for other Reclaiming Classes. Saturday and Sunday, May 13 & 14. \$70-120 sliding scale. Call Cybele 648-3908 for information/registration.

PENTACLE FOR QUEERS by Cybele and Raven Moonshadow

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 Mondays beginning April 3. \$45-90 sliding scale. Call Cybele 648-3908 for registration and location.

HERB WALK with Andraste, Beth Bone Blossom and Sophia Sparks

Soaproot, mugwort, artemisia sage, oak, willow, mallow, blue flag; Welcome Spring in person on this field trip exploring the plant life of the Marin Headlands. Walk through the wetlands and into the hills, learning the plants and their relation to the land and to us through medicine, magic and history. Andraste is a plant ecologist adept in word-cunning and lore; Bone Blossom is skilled in the uses of herbs for healing, magic and pleasure; Sophia is a naturalist/reveler devoted to restoration ecology; All three are elder priestesses of the craft who love the green world. Join us for a day in our local wildlands. Saturday, April 1, 9:30am to 2:00pm. Meet at Rodeo Lagoon beside Building T11 on Bunker Road. Bring a lunch and water; dress for the elements Wind and Mud. Donations to benefit Reclaiming. For information call 647-0430 or 454-4411.



ASSES AND VENTS

SHIELDING AND BOUNDARIES by Pleiades and Guest Teachers

Learn or augment your ability to create and maintain protective boundaries around yourself, space, home, etc. Experiment with the many different kinds of shields - rainbows, fire, invisibility, iron, webs, wards, animal spirits, etc. classes will focus on gaining trust in your power and will to protect yourself. There will be an emphasis on exorcises with partners and small groups. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or instructor's approval. 6 Thursdays, starting May 25. \$45-90 sliding scale. Call Pleiades 648-FURY for registration and details.

BREATH AND BODY FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF INCEST & ABUSE by Cybele

This class focuses on your relationship with your body, working with the issues survivors share: shame, self-disgust, fear, lack of boundaries or shutting down and checking out of the body. We will work in sacred space to reclaim our ground, our voices and our boundaries. We will begin to integrate bodily life as a place of pleasure & power. We will use grounding practices, movement work, body maps and breathwork to facilitate our healing process. We will connect physical & attention states (contraction and split attention, for example) with emotions and symbols as we move and draw and sing together. Prerequisite: Elements of Magic (see workshop for survivors offered this quarter) or equivalent experience/study. Ongoing support (therapy or 12-step program) is strongly suggested during this class. Six Tuesday evenings beginning May 16. Possibility of second round or ongoing group forming. \$60-105* sliding scale. Call Cybele 648-3908.

*To explain the higher rates for this class: The challenging nature of this work lends itself to small classes, and I rent studio space to maintain safe & neutral space. This is necessary to the safety and clarity of the work. The increase covers rent & materials. Payment timetables can be tailored to individual circumstance. - Cybele

IT MAKES CENSE by Raven Moonshadow

A Three-session class. This will be a practical hands-on workshop in the making of oils, bathsalts, floorwashes and potpourri. We will explore the historical, magickal, personal and imaginative correspondence aromas, culminating in the making of incense within sacred space. Students keep the scents they make. Three Mondays, beginning June 12. \$35-50 sliding scale. Call Raven 334-MOON for details and registration.

THOSE THAT LIVE AMONG US by Pleiades and Raven

We live in a world that is alive. Stone, Tree, Cloud, Raindrop; each a separate part of a greater whole. As witches we realize that every act of magick strengthens that belief. But we are not the only ones at work here. In this 6 week course we will meet and acknowledge some of those about us. The elementals, divas and helper spirits. Power Plants (not to be confused with PG&E) and Power Animals. The dead (mighty ancestors) and the undead. Thoughtforms and familiars, the animate and inanimate. Peskies and pesties. The Angels (big helpers) and Demons (little helpers). We will open the doorways to all the worlds and welcome the Earth kin back into our lives. 6 Monday evenings beginning April 24 plus 1 party/ritual created by teachers and students to celebrate our renewed kinship. Pre-requisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent experience/study. \$45-90 sliding scale. Call Pleiades 648-FURY for registration or further information.

Dear Reclaiming, _____

I have read Francesca Dubie's letter in the winter '88 newsletter. I agree that the dominant culture has made some of us "other". This includes women, lesbians and gays, pagans and the working class.

Dubie is telling us that we should not be divisive, that we should not engage in horizontal hostility. I agree with her on this point also. But it is hard for me to be supportive of the rest of her letter when she doesn't tell us the details of the incident that occurred in her class.

She says, "an important gay issue

came up concerning the ritual script of that particular lesson". Now I am "other". I am a faggot and a pagan and working class. Frequently I have had problems with heterosexist ritual scripts in classes and ritual planning. And I have said so. And will say so here.

I do not like the phrase "As the athame is to the male, so the cup is to the female and from their union worlds are born". Plunging an athame into a cup and relating this to creating is imitating heterosexual reproduction. Changing the words "male" and "female" to "sky" and "earth" doesn't change the

WE'RE GOING TO WITCH CAMP, WITCH CAMP...

Reclaiming Summer Intensives, 1989

This year, we're offering two intensives, one in the Northwest, one in the Midwest.

Vancouver July 2 - 9th

Once again, we return to our beautiful lakeside site in a Provincial Park outside Vancouver. We will offer an Elements track and a track for more advanced students centered on the Wheel of the Year. The overall focus of the week will be on community building, and linking our spiritual and political work. \$250-\$340 sliding scale.

Teachers: Carol, Cybele, Pandora, Raven Moonshadow and Starhawk

Michigan August 27 - September 2

Former students of our Vancouver Intensive are organizing our first program in the Midwest, also at a site by a lake. Note the dates -- right after the Michigan Women's Music Festival (and only a few miles away) and ending in time to co-ordinate with the Covenant of the Goddess Grand Council (also close by -- we plan to arrange a shuttle.) We will offer an Elements track and an advanced track -- the specific focus of which is still to be decided.

Teachers: Pleiades Akasha, Raven Moonshadow, Rose May Dance, and Starhawk

For more information, contact:

Vancouver: Pat Hogan 604-253-7189
1843 Kitchener, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V5L 2W5

Michigan: Adrienne Young 312-887-4747
P.O. Box 26, Clarendon Hills, Illinois 60514

imagery. Now don't get me wrong, I have nothing against the act of (protected) penetration, in fact its one of my favorites, but there are plenty of other ways to create other than heterosexually and/or through penetration.

And another thing, when the great rite is thought of only as heterosexual and is used in ritual other than for initiation, that is heterosexist also. Now, I will admit right here that I have never been in a ritual with more than one other witch that incorporated the great rite. I have only heard rumors and stories. Like the rumor of a woman and a man performing the great rite the night before a Beltane ritual to consecrate the ground. Or the story of the ritual that was not an initiation, where the goddess was called into a woman and the god called into a man and then they went into a tent and fucked.

So does this mean that the great rite can only be heterosexual? (I do know that there are traditions where queers are initiated by a witch of the same sex). Does this mean that the relationship between the goddess and the god can only be heterosexual?

Now I haven't got anything against heterosexuals, except that they are part of the dominant culture. Some of my best friends, including my parents are heterosexual. I just don't want their culture forced on me, particularly during ritual.

So back to Dubie's letter. Some traditional ritual script does not make room for lesbians or gay men (or for heterosexuals who are not interested in conception). If the point of her letter is to tell queers to shut up and don't question the words in a ritual, then I strongly protest. If she is saying that we all have to work together and

incorporate our differences, not ignore them, then I strongly agree.

One last thing. I do not think it is the job of lesbians and gay men in the craft to "substitute" our words for traditional ones. Nor do I think that it is our job to "interpret" parts of ritual to fit our needs. For example, the union of the athame and the cup, I am told, can represent the union of female and male in each of us. Well, I can tell you that the union of my female and my male does not result from his sticking his thing in her.

Rather I think that it is the job of lesbians and gay men to create our own goddesses and gods. For example, I am a radical faerie and we have a song that celebrates a gay male god:

Purple hands of healing, faggot god,
faerie god,

My love, come to me, fight for me.

or alternately:

My love, come with me, fight with me.

or:

My love, come on me, not in me.

As lesbians and gay men, we also need to create our own roles within the craft. If the ground for the Beltane ritual is to be consecrated with the great rite by a heterosexual couple, then perhaps the May pole should be consecrated by faggots and the goddess figure consecrated by dykes. With our own great rites.

With all due respect and not trying to cause too much trouble,

Jack Davis
Blessed Be!

Greetings!

I recently received my Reclaiming and snuggled in with Crescent Moon Malken, my faithful feline, to enjoy reading the poetry and articles. Living in the Midwest, I always look forward to taking a little mini-trip to the Bay Area as I wander through the pages and observe your world from afar. I continue to be amazed that you seem to

be so open with your beliefs and activities. Not that you shouldn't be, of course. But here in the good old, stable, conforming Midwest your ways could be as far away as Planet X! I thought possibly some of your readers would like to view my world for a few minutes and gain some insight into all the things they have to thank Goddess for.

So here goes...

My son asked a classmate to spend the night not too long ago, and this little one walked into my dining room, looked at my crystal, then exclaimed in shock and horror, "Someone in this house worships the devil!" I tried to explain that we do not believe in a being called the devil, while my helpful child started to go into how Pan received a really bad rap long, long ago, etc... But our little visitor was in the "don't confuse me with the facts mode". Well, we made it through the night and at breakfast heard how little Billy* had seen witches outside of his bedroom window during the night but had managed to battle them away with the power of the Lord. We were all very thankful, that is, when Billy* finally went home!

Another Midwestern scenario...

A new family recently moved in next door and life as we knew it will not be the same. Our first introduction was while my children were engaged in the old-time joy of looking for four-leaf clovers in the grass, a pleasure which they lovingly shared with the new boy. His father came to the rescue during the occult activity just in time to save his son from damnation, and my children were told that "luck" was definitely not to be believed in!

Samhain was preceded by weeks of my children being accused of Satan worship because they wear Halloween costumes and partake of that ultimate evil called Trick or Treating! As we prepared for our annual celebration and backyard gathering, our frightened neighbors hid in their darkened house so as not to become sinners by partaking in the dreaded Halloween Reverie! I was told that this day is considered to be the devil's birthday by their particular denomination of Christianity.

This, my dear West Coast friends, was followed by a most interesting occurrence that caused me to become rather militant in my reactions. I happened to look out the window one beautiful Autumn day to watch my children playing in the yard, and viewed a curious sight. My boys were watching

as the boy from next door repeatedly stabbed the EARTH with a screw driver while chanting "DIE! DIE! DIE!" I opened the door, calling to my children to tell me what was going on. "Ned* is killing Satan, Mommie!" was the innocent reply. Well, this was too much! I informed the little EARTH raper that his Satan did not live in my yard, and I asked him to leave. I then gathered the courage to speak to the parents. They were taken aback at first, but agreed that little Ned* should not be so critical of others beliefs. (I truly considered this a victory!)

Yes, this is life in the Midwest...

Watching a talk show this morning, I found Dungeons and Dragons, a role playing game, being blamed for everything from teen suicide to multiple murders. The reason for this hysteria is that D and D, as players call the game, teaches players about the occult! What does this mean?? Obviously, according to some self-taught experts, mere knowledge of a subject can cause the downfall of our youth. Does this sound like the Dark Ages to anyone but me?

I continue to ask myself why Goddess has chosen to bless me with these opportunities to develop my patience and my understanding of the human psyche. I believe by listening to the children we can begin to understand the values being taught in Middle America, and I find this frightening! Why are children being taught that crystals and our Magnificent Mother Earth are to be equated with the devil? This way of thinking alone will continue to perpetrate the plunder of our planet in America's unprecedented way for generations. Why are people being led to believe that occult knowledge causes suicide and murder? Who is responsible for this mass hysteria? Protection rituals are beneficial, but I feel some sort of political action is appropriate and necessary to protect the Pagan Community from this slanderous garbage.

These are some of my concerns here in the middle of our country. Do any of you Pagan folks on Planet X have any ideas to help me exist in happiness, health, and freedom?

*Names have been changed to protect the misinformed.

a season took the traffic's task
when greying was the light,
a mountain to a redwood asked,
"does fear still wear the mask?
is everything at rest tonight?
what bitterness with the flask
to which the fearful blindly run,
and never seek to cure
the place from where the pain that's come
when long ago she knew no one
existing then, as those who are
the toxics and the loaded gun?"
said redwood to the mountain, "no,
the place is far from tame.
their missiles threaten early snow,
the center of the earth they know
like peace, and know they not their names--
just much despair, and letting go..."

light pours through my window to the floor,
bathing me in colored lullabies,
asking from me anything
i freely wish to give,
and feeding me the rays and ways
of ultraviolet hues and cries,
of warning prophesies,
of mornings tainted by the ash
of toxics in our seas,
of broken and dispirited
withdrawing inward souls,
of dream machines inhibited,
of satiated less-than-wholes
who run against the line of earth,
who do not know the rhyme
of their essential being's birth,
of evolution's steady climb--
a summit there for all of us
who seek the august view
of peace and wisdom, love and trust,
of revolutions that renew
the body-one of us, of all,
now answering creation's call.

william warrior

sol song

out from my window
now i see
the sun on Windy Hill
through motion's immobility,
a gypsy standing still.
my heart's reflection
in the pane
reminds me not to grieve--
the phoenix is a sweet refrain,
believe in her, believe...
she spins in silent
twilight seas,
a dreamer in the land
of waking mad realities,
a lover close at hand.
at dawn i rise to praise her,
at noon to let her in
to splash a rainbow on my wall,
at dusk farewell again
past forests' shadow
in this way
while breaking through the pines
illuminating yesterday
to witness what was mine--
a once-protective fabric
twice damaged at the poles
through suicidal magic
creating ozone holes
is now our former glory
remembered here today,
an old shamanic story
within the present play--
her wisdoms reach
our jail cells
and fashion us the key
to serve the earth
will serve us well,
to live through letting be
will set our spirits free.

Return of the Child

After the semblance of another day
I await the tides of sleep with
Shells of dreams left along a level beach at dawn

But I cannot hold these walls from
Tilting into night white with fear

Beneath this merciless winter moon
I cannot hold the seam of ruptured time

From the rattling dungeon of my ribs
Squeals of the child in silenced wrath rise
Against insistent silence of my ears and
Break into my brain

The headless serpent of my guts uncoils this child
With eyes of iron into my brittle strands of nerve
Ripping the face from the framed portrait of my life
And I am swallowed in his roar of blood-red rage
My teeth are his fangs
My nails, his claws
And I must stalk with him the vicious ways of our betrayal
And wield the fire of his black heart
To rend our torturers to hell

And then to mend the sun

night

the old sun, red and swollen
 falls dying into the jaws of the west
as night is born cold and black in the east
 and dreams escape their coffers and their cells
 and slip up ill lit alleyways
 to lure our wanting hearts
 into the undertow of time
back down with things unseen and feared and longed for
 that rule the wild expanse of our desire
 that smolder in the dreaded, unknown core
 of all that is forbidden and unborn
waiting for the spark of life
 to leap out
 wet and naked
 into the terrible splendor of the dawn



TRUTH OR DARE: ENCOUNTERS WITH AUTHORITY, POWER AND MYSTERY

by Starhawk

reviewed by Eire Clutterbuck

Truth or Dare is a welcome addition to any Witch's bookshelf. As in her two previous books, *The Spiral Dance* and *Dreaming the Dark*, Starhawk's greatest gift to the Pagan community is her ability to introduce the Craft to newcomers in an understandable, innovative and easy-to-read way; and her willingness to share her personal experiences of magic and ritual in real-life situations. The information she provides here is the result of her experiences with many individuals, covens, affinity groups, and protest actions over more than a decade. She admits to triumphs. She admits to mistakes. She's human. She doesn't claim to have all the answers, though she certainly seems to have all the questions.

The resulting book is an engrossing look at how authority and power have shaped our present world, and the ways that we can recognize them and change our relationships with them. For the benefit of readers who are unfamiliar with Witchcraft, Starhawk summarizes the principles of magic, Wiccan philosophy, sacred space, tools, and the three forms of power (power-over, power-with, and power-from-within). She then sets out on a long discourse on each of the patriarchal archetypes (for lack of a better term) that currently dominate our thought patterns and our society: the King, Judge, Orderer, Master/Servant, Censor, and others. Each archetype is analyzed and dissected into constituent parts to demonstrate how each works alone; they are later integrated to illustrate how they work together to create the restricted, oppressive system in which we live. Starhawk examines the history of each of these archetypes, the ways they work through us and others, and the rituals we can employ to evoke power-with and power-from-within to create needed change.

The present political and social conditions may be hard to overcome, but they're not insurmountable. As in *The Spiral Dance*, Starhawk has included a

wealth of rituals to help individuals and groups overcome oppressive situations by recognizing and reaffirming immanent value and the power that resides within us all. Each chapter is preceded by a story or a litany, which can be used effectively in discussion, visualization, and/or ritual. "The Descent of Innana" (presented in seven parts) and the Brigid Litany ("Litany of the Holy Well and the Sacred Flame") are particularly good examples.

Truth or Dare is a guide created by many, channeled into a cogent, intelligent, and readable form that's useful for existing covens, affinity groups, and political action groups; and by individuals interested in starting any of the above. Both can benefit from the experience of an author who has been deeply involved in political, social, and spiritual change. Existing groups can use this book to diagnose problems, resolve ongoing conflicts, avoid stasis, and rejuvenate goals and purpose. New groups will find working models that can be easily adapted for specific goals, and clues that can help them create bonds between individuals in order to create a group mind that can execute effective rituals, healing work, or political action.

My only difficulty with this book was anticipated and covered in a section appropriately titled "How to Read This Book." On the first read, I skipped around, bouncing from chapter one to chapter five, back to three, on to eight. There's a tremendous amount of information packed in here, and on the first attempt it was impossible to read it straight through from beginning to end. I got much more out of it on the second reading, with less bouncing around; and even more again out of the third reading, in which I managed to read each chapter consecutively.

The book includes an impressive bibliography, and a resource section listing addresses of Pagan and peace groups. However, be warned: this is not a passive book, and all that it has to offer will not come through on a cursory first reading.



WICCA: A GUIDE FOR THE SOLITARY PRACTITIONER

by Scott Cunningham

reviewed by Eire Clutterbuck

The quality and usefulness of Llewellyn's books ranges from the magnificent to the truly abysmal. Scott Cunningham's newest is somewhere in between. I've liked some of Scott's earlier offerings (including *Magical Herbalism* and *The Magical Household*), because his content is generally sound and his writing style is direct. He rarely drones on or digresses into esoteric minutiae, as some occult authors do.

I was anxious when I picked up this book, because there's very little Wiccan literature (and certainly nothing as substantial as an entire book) that addresses the solitary. Much of the literature on Witchcraft seems to concentrate on membership in covens, despite the fact that many Witches began as solitaries, and many remain so throughout their lives. So I eagerly read this tome, hoping to locate arcane knowledge For Solitary Eyes Only.

Unfortunately, there's little new material here, and most of the content will be familiar to experienced Witches. Still, Cunningham writes a good book. Of particular interest is the chapter on self-dedication, which offers techniques for bringing oneself in connection and harmony with the Goddess and God. Though a self-dedication ritual can be spontaneously or laboriously created by the initiate, Cunningham's version is a good and workable one.

Like other non-prescriptive authors (who reject the idea that you HAVE to do it THIS way or it WON'T work), he stresses creativity, originality, and a "do what feels right for you" approach. He discusses

the long-standing controversy of self-initiation: "Some say, 'only a Wiccan can make a Wiccan.' I say only the Goddess and God can make a Wiccan." It's a good point. How many of us delayed our progress as Witches, as Pagans, because we were hung up on becoming a "real Witch" by getting initiated by a third-degree Witch into a "real" coven or grove? I applaud Cunningham's no-nonsense way in dealing with this issue, because some books give the impression that there are no solitaries, and that those without entrance to a coven are out of luck.

The chapter on ritual design is a useful one for experienced Witches. It provided some new inspiration for me in how I plan my own solitary rituals (using Tarot cards to mark the boundaries of the circle was a new one on me). Cunningham devotes almost 50 pages to his "Standing Stones Book of Shadows" of solitary rituals. It contains very useful Sabbat and Esbat rituals. In contrast, I found the chapter on "Exercises and Magical Techniques" mediocre; *The Spiral Dance* has him beat here, especially with Starhawk's visualization exercises.

Overall, Cunningham's book is a good starter book that condenses elementary Wiccan knowledge about the deities, tools, music, dance, books of shadow, recipes, symbols, and so forth in a way that it can be readily understood by those new to the Craft — though, if you're a novice beginning your studies with this book, don't stop with this one! If you've already done extensive reading and are looking for higher levels of knowledge, you can get what you need out of this book with just a cursory look-over.



LADY OF THE BEASTS, ANCIENT IMAGES OF THE GODDESS AND HER SACRED ANIMALS

Buffie Johnson

Harper and Row, 1988, \$34.95

FEMINIST SPIRITUALITY AND THE FEMININE DIVINE, AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anne Carson

The Crossing Press, Freedom, CA 95019, 1986, \$12.95

Reviews by Robin Dorn

A splendid book has appeared, an essential book: **LADY OF THE BEASTS**, by Buffie Johnson. Johnson, an artist and friend of Carl Jung and Marija Gimbutas,

has, over a 40 year period, gathered together and meticulously researched the most frequent and important companions and epiphanies of the Goddess, drawing cross cultural parallels and making hypotheses.

The book is handsomely laid out and excellently illustrated, with both black and white and color plates and has an extensive bibliography. It is composed of 13 chapters, an unplanned but fitting number, each dealing with a particular creature and its relationship to the Goddess. The bird, lion, dog, serpent, butterfly, the ewe and ram, spider, deer, fish, pig, the cow and bull,

scorpion and bear are chosen by Johnson as the most often evoked and significant of the Goddess's epiphanies, (the dog, for example, is seen as the Goddess since Neolithic time and appears as a storm symbol in such diverse cultures as Chinese, Indian and Mayan).

Johnson has a smooth, clear writing style that makes her book eminently readable despite the depth of scholarship that could have, in less deft hands, rendered it dry.

There are a few minor omissions. For easier reference, I would have liked to have the plate number noted in the text where it was being discussed, for, while the connection is usually visually apparent, the images are often close enough to make a distinction confusing. Some important epiphanies are left out (I feel chapters on the bee and frog or toad would have been a welcome addition) and some parallels remain undrawn. For example, there is no mention of Freya in the essay on the pig. (One of Freya's titles was Syr, sow, and a boar,

Gullinbinsti, Gold-Bristle, was a favored steed.) Occasionally a fact is left hanging when further connections or tie-ins would be appropriate and I would have been most interested in seeing some of Johnson's own work; but these are quibbles in an impressive and important work that will serve us all well both as a reference tool and an exciting, pleasurable read.

* * *

Another excellent reference book is Anne Carson's list of 739 books, articles and periodicals dealing with all facets of feminist spirituality. Novels, essays, works of scholarship, newsletters, etc. are listed with author, publisher, date (or volume) and a capsule description. While a book of this type is by nature incomplete (for example LADY OF THE BEASTS, published 2 years later, is of course not included, nor, unfortunately, "The Reclaiming Newsletter"), it is a necessary and valuable addition to any pagan library.



WE ALL COME FROM THE GODDESS -- Rashani
Medicine Song Productions
315 E. O'Keefe St. #32
E. Palo Alto, CA 94303

Review by Gail Montgomery

We are transported with sound to experience the resonant power of the sacred land of our European ancestors through this collection of songs and chants. Rashani sings from her heart in this beautiful tape of Goddess songs that were recorded in ancient sacred places in Southern France.

This songwoman's voice, crystalline and free like the flute that often accompanies her songs, resonates with the tone of each sacred cave, old cathedral or other ancient place of celebration and worship. Molly Scott's voice and Sarah Benson's voice and flute add power to the music. The flute is the main accompanying instrument -- others include guitar, dulcimer, shruti box, rattles, drums and bells.

Rashani, adopted sister of Brooke Medicine Eagle, is a singing shaman with the world for her village. I experience a sense of community with women all around the world as I listen or chant

along with these songs sung in several languages and representing the heart of people from all across the Earth. The music distinctly represents the folk sound of various nationalities.

"White Buffalo Woman
I seek thy vision
White Buffalo Woman
I seek thy grace
White Buffalo Woman
I seek thy wisdom
White Buffalo Woman
I seek thy peace.

Fill me with thy vision
Fill me with thy grace
Fill me with thy wisdom
Fill me with thy peace"
-- Lisa Thiel

I had the opportunity to spend time with Rashani at the Ojai Foundation's 1986 Harvest Moon Council for Women and heard from her some of the outrageous stories behind this tape.

When we think of women in Europe being arrested for worship of the Goddess we usually think of our ancestors who were burned, drowned and creatively tortured to death several hundred years ago. Unfortunately, this

"When every woman in the World
 Has her mind set on Freedom
 When every woman in the World
 Dreams the sweet dream of Peace
 When every woman of every
 nation
 Young and old, each generation,
 Joins hands in the name of love
 There will be no more war."



"Goddess of the East,
 Kuan Yin and Tara,
 Goddess of the rising sun and
 moon,
 Keeper of the sacred crystal.
 Goddess of clarity,
 Breathe your silent, luminous
 breath
 Into our souls, into our
 circle."

-- Rashani

is still a world where women who are not conforming to their accepted roles in institutionalized religions are highly suspect.

Catherine Allport, who wrote one of the invocations for this tape, and Rashani were arrested, interrogated and harassed by the French police for possession of a sacred medicine bundle.

Rashani told me the story. "We had gone into a cave for recording and Sarah had brought her most sacred pouch of sweet medicine. The pouch included two large crystals, a sacred pipe, Tibetan cymbals, smaller crystals, an African instrument, a pouch of sweetgrass and sage and her abalone shell she used for smudging. Some children had located this pouch and turned it into the local police. Next thing we knew we were under arrest and we were going to be put in prison for forty-eight hours. We were interrogated in two separate rooms and questioned about what kind of rituals we were performing. We were told that the arrest was because they found hashish in the abalone shell. That was impossible. Hashish had never been used in this abalone shell. I was allowed to call my lawyer who told me they had no right to be doing this to us. The police then told us that they were going to search our house with guard dogs to find this infamous hashish that didn't exist. My lawyer said they didn't have a right to search our house without a search warrant. The police said that if we did not give them permission to search they would put us in prison. I signed a paper saying that even though I knew it was illegal I was giving permission to

avoid being put in prison. We were renting very expensive sound equipment by the hour and were soon to be late for the five hour time we were allowed to be in an ancient Byzantine cathedral to sing and record.

"Five police cars arrived with the army and a search dog. It was reminiscent of a past life memory. It occurred to all of us that had it been a few centuries earlier we would have probably been burned or hanged, or both. They searched the house and found nothing. It was a very profound violation of all of us and we lost hours of precious time in the cathedral. We were shown, yet again, that somehow spiritual women who perform sacred ceremony are still suspect."

Rashani, a poet, publisher, healer, artist, and mother, has been singing since she was eight years old. She is author of several books and has a background in psychosynthesis as well as shamanism. She currently leads workshops working with the "chakra animals." "My vision is that this tape will touch many people to bring back the energy of the Goddess which is so needed on our planet now."

Molly Scott, Sarah Benson, Catherine Allport, and Ethan Williams were all a part of the making of this tape. What a joy to sing an old favorite like "Ancient Mother" in another language. Some of the songs were written by each of the women involved. There are also selections that originate in East India, and two were written by Siri Darshan (Lisa Thiel). Rashani's eleven year old

son, Matthew Giuffrida, was the drummer for one song.

Rashani pointed out the very special nature of the composition that ends this tape. "The last piece on side two, 'Don't you hear her labored breath, Earth is struggling for her life which is unraveling...'", is the last stanza of a poem that my mother wrote while she was dying."

Good chanting tapes are a useful tool for people interested in creating individual or group ceremonies. The powerful songs touch the heart.

"Divine Mother, make me like
Thee,
Part of the sea. Part of the
sea.

I will stand on the shore
Of my heart no more.
With thy grace upon my being
In the ocean of my core"
--Molly Scott



Increase of the Moon

The eye of night watches.

She uncovers Herself

and sets forth

unto the new world.

To look.

To find.

To explore,



that which had eluded

Her time before.

It is not enough to say

"Go with our blessings"

but also,

"Know"

and

"Remember."

by

C.A. Miller

Welcome to the babies: **Nora Stern**
Rodriguez born to **Susan Stern** and **Spain**
Rodriguez. **Vivian Sarah** to **Diane** and
Todd Baker.

ROD WOLFER
(October 19, 1933 - November 22, 1988)

Recently Rod Wolfer (also known as Golden Rod Sun Crystal), my partner of 13 years (1969-82) crossed over to Tir-na-nÓg after a 17-month endurance of an agonizing cancer. With him at the moment of his passing were his two daughters, Lee and Deirdre, and two friends, Claudia and Monika.

My daughter Deirdre and I, as well as Rod's older children, Lee and Ross, would like to publicly thank the following Witches--members of the Reclaiming community and the greater Bay Area Craft community--for their loving and generous help. Some were supportive of me, and of Lee and Deirdre, and some were directly involved in helping Rod to let go, in midwifing him to the other side. Specically, I would like to thank Bone Blossom, Sharon Devlin, Starhawk, Sophia Sparks, Andraste and Coven Tobar Bhríde, Freyja Anderson, and Coven Stone Dancers.

Rod's ashes were scattered, in accordance with his wishes, outside the Golden Gate from the deck of the "Ruby" on December 4, 1988. He will be missed. May the Lady hold him in Her belly until he is rested and ready to return to be among his loved ones once again.

Blessed Be,

M. Macha

M. Macha NightMare

REMEMBERING MEG GRANITO June 12, 194? - November 7, 1988

The Reclaiming Community remembers Meg Granito, who died at Samhaintide. Known to her friends as Megwood of Isis, she was a member of Holy Terror, the first coven to spring from Reclaiming. She was author of a beautiful and sensitive feminist I Ching, and her skill in astrology and tarot inspired many of us. As the Mugwort reemerges this Spring, our friend's spirit rides its wafting fragrance into our dreaming hearts.

--Sophia



STARHAWK'S SPRING/SUMMER SCHEDULE

February 24-26, New York City
Rites of Passage and Women's Mysteries
83 Spring St., N.Y.C. 10012
212-219-2527

March 6, San Jose, CA
San Jose State University Women's Day
Celebration
Women's Center 408-924-6500

March 10-12, Waterloo, Iowa
Day for therapists and Women's workshop
Family Resource Center
2530 University Ave.
Waterloo, Iowa 50701
Elaine Pfalzgraf 319-235-6271

April 7-9, Portland, Oregon
Women's Workshop and
Day for Men and Women
Contact Melody Keller 503-233-7923

May 12-14, Watsonville, CA
Modern Magic - Ritual for Challenging Times
Mt. Madonna Center
445 Summit Rd.
Watsonville, CA
408-722-7175

June 9-11, New York City
The New York Learning Center
212-473-3689

June 22, Nevada City, CA
Ritual and talk for women
Women's Solstice Camp
916-477-1064

June 27-29, Nelson, B.C.
Mid-week workshop for men and women
Menlau Bruneau 604-352-1686

July 1-8, Witch Camp!! Vancouver, B.C.
Pat Hogan 604-732-5153

For more information about Starhawk's schedule, contact Jodi Sager:
P.O. Box 9725 • Berkeley, CA 94709 • 415-528-9433

Announcements



Concerned Citizens Against Contamination, an environmental group that has declared war on industrial pollution, is planning a Renaissance Faire. This two-day fund-raising event will be held in May, on the weekend of the 13th and 14th at the Fairgrounds in Groton, MA.

Help in organizing all aspects of the faire and donations of money and labor are needed. For information, please contact Diane DesRochers at P.O. Box 384, Groton, MA 01450, or call (508) 448-5584, weekdays before 7:30 a.m., or weekends between 7:00 and 11:00 a.m.

"The Myth of the Feminine", a women's conference that will explore the feminine principle both in traditional archetypal mythology and in women's personal mythology, is being planned for June 18th - 23rd, 1989, on the Armand Hammer World College campus in Montezuma, New Mexico. For further information, contact Judy Herzl at (505) 982-2576.



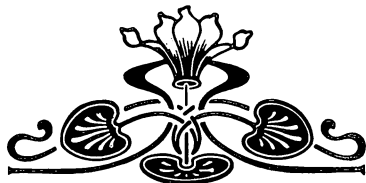
WOMEN'S WELLNESS/WOMEN'S HEALING, a conference for women healers, wellness facilitators, and all women interested in maximum wellness, will be held July 21st-23rd in southwest Wisconsin. Send SASE for brochure: WW/WH Conference, Reformed Congregation of the Goddess, PO Box 6021, Madison, WI 53716, (608) 838-8629.



WOMEN SHARING SPIRIT/SHARING SKILLS: A weekend of "how-to" workshops in women's spirituality will be held April 14th-16th in central Wisconsin. Send SASE for brochure: SS/SS Conference, Reformed Congregation of the Goddess, PO Box 6021, Madison, WI 53716, (608) 838-8629.



Sundays Women! Join us for this monthly lecture series which hosts exciting women artists, ritualists, authors, and priestesses. We meet every third Sunday of the month at the Montclair Women's Club, 1650 Mountain Blvd. (corner of Thornhill) in Oakland. \$5-7 donation requested. Women only. Call the Women's Spirituality Forum, (415) 444-7724, for information.



"13th Heaven" The first-ever Goddess cable tv show, starring Zsuzsanna Budapest and Owen Rowley, will be shown every second Friday of the month at 5:30 p.m. This is free to men and women and will be held at Ancient Ways, an occult supply store, 4075 Telegraph Ave., in Oakland. Call the Women's Spirituality Forum, (415) 444-7724, for information. Don't miss this entertaining and informative show on the Goddess and her celebrations.



Goddess Consciousness Raising Groups for Women

Break out of your personal isolation. Zsuzsanna Budapest will teach you tools and techniques to deal with the challenges of everyday life. Gain a new Goddess perspective on yourself as a woman. Ongoing groups now forming in your area. Call the Women's Spirituality Forum, (415) 444-7724.

"13th Heaven" The first-ever Goddess cable tv show, starring Z. Budapest and Owen Rowley, is now available for distribution. These half an hour shows provide history, entertainment, and ritual on the goddess, plus information on celebrations and holy days. If you would be interested in arranging a viewing of these shows or purchasing copies of it, please write: The Women's Spirituality Forum, POB 11363, Oakland, CA 94611.



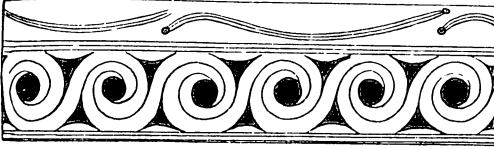
Dear Reclaiming Community,

YOU ARE GONNA BE STUDIED!! because you are an exciting community to those who ask themselves, "how did we create this mess called patriarchy, and how are we gonna change it"? For a Ph.d in Theology (at the University of Oslo in Norway), I am doing research on "Goddess Religion as Practiced by Feminist Witches". I will look into how you build community, how you experience goddess/god in relation to gender, how you work magic/create change, and what you consider to be your spiritual and historical roots. My method will partly be my own experience and involvement, partly interviews with some of you. For my Masters I wrote a thesis on "Ritual Symbolism and Esoteric Teachings in Feminist Wicca", relying especially on Starhawk's books and my experience from Reclaiming rituals. If anybody is interested in reading and discussing my thesis, please call me at (415) 254-8213. You will see me around the community until August 1, 1989.

Love,

Jone Salomonsen





ANSWER COYOTE'S CALL! RECLAIM THE NEVADA TEST SITE APR. 7 thru 16, 1989. Since 1949 the US has been using Shoshone Sacred Ground to test nuclear weapons. Components of Star Wars have also been tested. Without nuclear testing, developing new offensive weapons and confidence in old nuclear weapons would be impossible--confidence only needed if a nation plans a first strike attack. In this beautiful desert, Mother Earth is deeply wounded: sand has been glued down by open air tests; explosions in holes drilled a mile deep carve huge underground caverns filled with radioactive gasses. We have Shoshone permission to visit the Site and Peace Camp on their tribal lands (near Las Vegas); action focus includes recognition of tribal rights to Test Site land. Thousands of people will converge for a 10-day Peace Camp, affinity-group based nonviolent direct action, rituals. SF Bay area call Pamela (415)861-5809. Others call AMERICAN PEACE TEST (702)731-9644.

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The Habitat Restoration Team is a serious, regular corps of volunteers working to promote native diversity of species in our local wildlands, by removing invasive exotic plants, planting natives, and healing erosion damage. Meeting every Sunday at 9:30 am, this team works on a "drop-in" basis. Call the Habitat Hotline 556-4353 for each week's activity and meeting place, and to get on the mailing list. Whether you come just once or always, your work will make a difference, you'll meet good folks, and get a day in the Elements you'll long remember with satisfaction. Talk to Sophia for more information: 647-0430.



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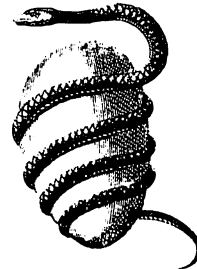
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- Women's Liberation
- Lesbian and Gay Liberation
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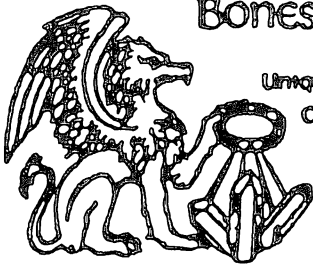
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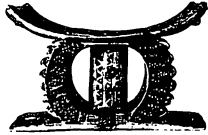
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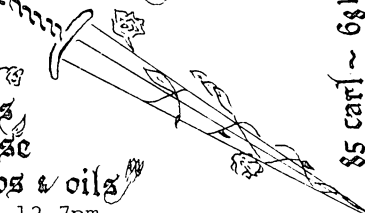
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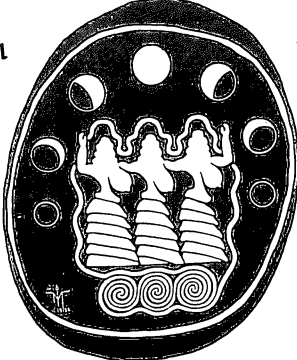
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Historically, readers on the peninsula have had only two options: either drive up to the City to buy a copy of the Newsletter, or subscribe.

With this issue, your options just got a whole lot wider. We welcome four South Bay stores who now carry the Reclaiming Newsletter:



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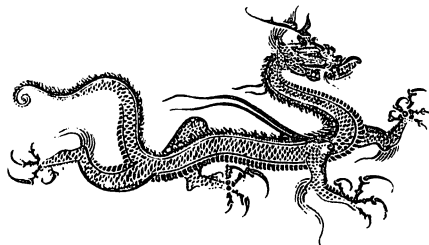
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- Include a contact name and phone, in case we have a question.
- Please do not send dot-matrix printed ad copy. It doesn't print well.
- Remember that we reduce our pages before printing.
See camera-ready ad sizes above.

Although we do print some free brief community service announcements, **if you're charging money for an event or service, please include us as a part of your advertising budget, for helping you make it happen.**

Thank you again
for your support of Reclaiming work.



Sliding scale for subscriptions and events: We use a sliding scale to keep costs low for people with minimal income. We hope people with larger incomes will place themselves higher on the scale to help us in this. Please place yourself where you feel comfortable on the scale, or maybe a little higher.

Canadian subscribers: we would appreciate payments in U.S. funds, as it is difficult and costly for us to cash your personal checks or use your personal cash.

Be sure to tell us **HOW MANY YEARS** the money you send is supposed to cover (sliding scales for one year and two years overlap). If you don't say, we will assume any amount up to \$15.00 is for **one** year.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM
Reclaiming Newsletter

Send to:
Reclaiming, P.O. Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

_____ \$6-\$25 for one year

_____ minimal income,
free subscription

_____ \$12-\$50 for two years

(Add \$4/year for foreign mailing)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

This is a _____ renewal.

COMMENTS:

_____ new subscription.

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

The RECLAIMING Newsletter now costs \$2.00 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.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$6-\$25 sliding scale for 1 year; \$12-\$50 for 2 yrs.; \$2 for sample copy by mail. For foreign mailing, please add \$4 per yr. to cover costs. Free 1 yr. subscriptions available for people who cannot afford to pay.