

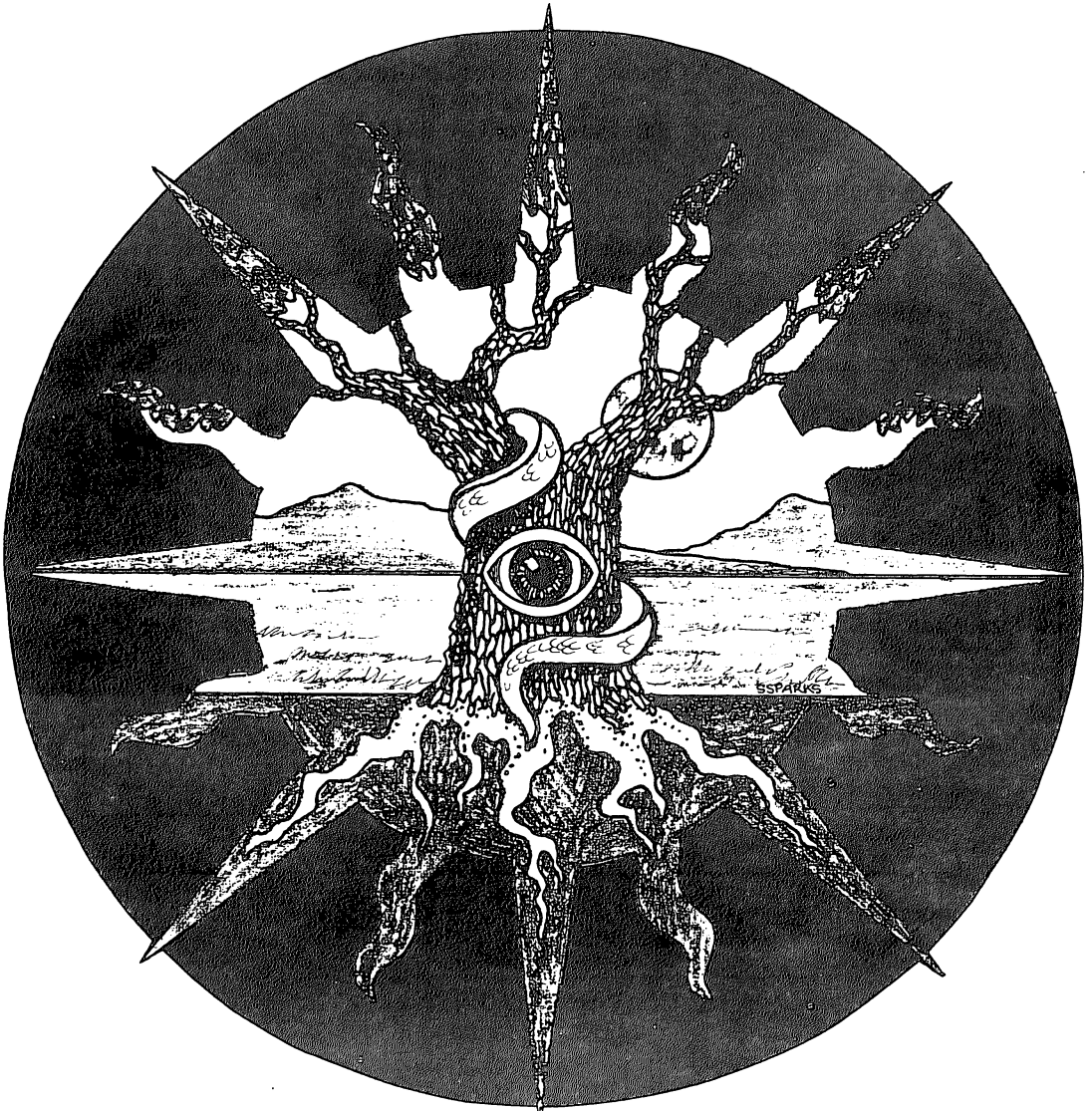


# Reclaiming NEWSLETTER

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SUMMER 1989      NUMBER 35

\$2.00



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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.

FALL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS AUGUST 4, 1989!!!!

**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.**

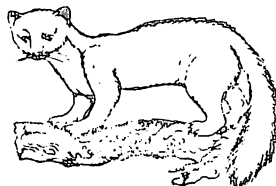
☎ RECLAIMING EVENTS LINE ☎  
(415) 849-0877

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

Roy was away, Mercury was retrograde, but we did it right anyway!  
Anne, Rose, Karen, Sophia, Vibra, Rosemary, Laurie, Rhabylt, Cam,  
Pandora, Kimjack, and Susan K. Y'all come help us next time.

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# MY FIRST BLOOD RITUAL

by Aurora

Before my period came, I was really excited about it. I started bleeding at a friend's house so I couldn't show how excited I was, but I was so happy!

I really couldn't share my feelings with my friends, mainly because most of them aren't pagan. I only know two other kids that I actually talk to about it. They're both girls. But somehow they don't seem interested in any sort of ritual or magick at all. In fact one of them thinks it's extremely stupid. (But she's kinda preppy anyway.)

Well, so we started planning right away but since we are no different from any other pagans everything was slow. The invitations went out late, and the ritual started late.

You're probably wanting to hear what happened, so I'll tell you. But I must say that I am a young teenager in San Francisco and that most of the people at my school freak when they see my pentacle ring. So I keep my religion a secret and disguise myself as an average Christian teen.

Anyway, first of all on the ritual day a group of women that I had chosen came to my house for Women's Mysteries.

We went to a special place by the ocean where we performed ritual. At one point my mom and I were bound together and ran around some. Then my grandmother cut the bindings and I ran on my own. I ran down a hill, across an intersection, and into a park up to an Artemis statue. (That was the worst part because I was out in public in my funky ritual garb.) There I sat and waited for the other women to come and thought about my life.

Then they did a little sort of welcoming for me (out by the road with people watching!!) and we chanted and I left an offering of flowers by the statue.

Then one woman, Kimchi, used our special magical circle-picker-upper and we all went to the store for some food. Then we drove to my house, ate, and everyone told their first blood stories. That was really great. Sad because of the way their mothers had reacted to it but also extremely cool.

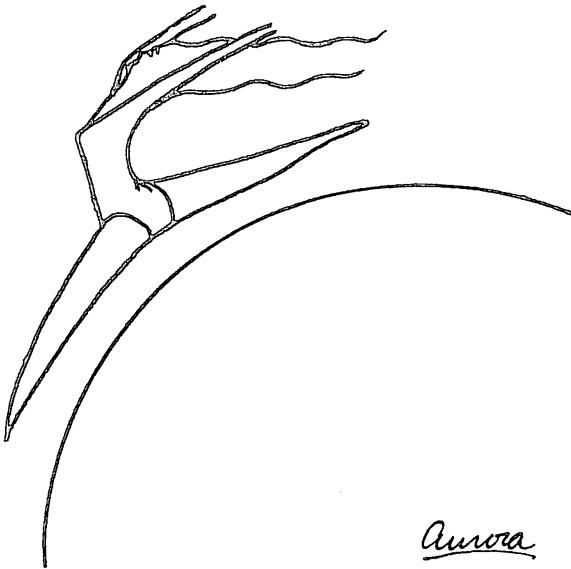
We finished up in a hurry and dashed around like weird people until we were ready to go to the community celebration. That was held in a hall at the Women's Building in San Francisco. We got there late (naturally). Then after a few minutes the ritual started.

My little sister and a boy her age were the gateway. We grounded like always before a ritual but this was exceptionally good. There were many children there and as our "grunder" said to feel the energy as fire coming up into our bodies a little boy exclaimed, "There's no fire in us! If there is, it'll burn us out!"

Anyway after that I sat in the middle of the circle with a basket and each person gave me a bead which they had charged with wishes for me. Then in return I danced for them. (Mostly improv. because I had only had 1/2 hour to work on it that morning.) Then Starhawk led a Spiral dance. It was very orderly, (unusual for us) -- women then men, oldest to youngest, then youngest to oldest.

At the center as the cone of power was being raised suddenly I was picked up by the women and I sat at the top of the cone. It was great!! I felt secure, warm, and full of powerful positive energy.

After that we had a gift giving ceremony. It wasn't really a ceremony, but it was somehow like one. I'd like



*Aurora*

to mention some of the gifts I got. Three arrows, a very elaborate athame, a crab claw, and LOTS of jewelry.

Well after the circle was open we ate and danced.

The only regret I had was that I wish I had mingled more. Even now as I write I feel like hitting myself for not communicating more. Instead, I sat with two of my friends mostly. All those people were there for me and I was so mean not to talk to them. I really really really wish I had communicated more.

Well, after all the ritual and partying was over and everyone had left, except for my family and my three friends, I asked to go out to a movie with my friends. I was so happy when my mom said yeah because it was late and it marked that she trusted me. Now I won't go into detail about that night because it's not something that I'd like hundreds of people to know about.

Well that was my First Blood. I'm very glad I had it. I will always remember every part of that day (and night hee hee!)

I hope that I'm only one of many girls to have First Blood rituals because they are great. Special, powerful, memorable, and something to cherish. Now I'll be expecting to see many First Blood reviews in the next few years so please encourage your kids to have First Bloods 'cause they are something not to miss. Hell, even ask your neighbor's kids! It's great!

love-peace-and magic  
Aurora

## GROWING UP PAGAN (An Open Column)

[Ed. Note: We invite Pagan children of any age to send contributions for this column, which we hope will be a regular feature in which kids can air their experiences, good, bad, exciting, puzzling, etc.]

by Margit, age 10

I always thought it would be easy to hide that I am a Pagan, because so many of my friends are Christian. I have one Pagan friend. A few of my close friends know I'm Pagan, but not many.

This year, I'm beginning to realize it's not so easy. For one thing, if I'm going to a ritual and one of my friends calls, I can't really lie and say I'm going to a party or something. It's like I feel they have a right to know, but how can I explain?

It's not that I don't like being Pagan or anything. I'm ten and I think I already have a feeling for the religion. I guess I'm still young though, and I have time to adjust. Who knows?

Maybe I might decide not to be Pagan. Or, just not care what other people think. I think it's just my choice.





I have been talking with my lawyer recently, and he thinks I should probably explain to you all how much respect I have for all beliefs and religions, and how I would never think anything bad about anybody's beliefs, even if they did think that they created their own reality, and even if I did think it in a moment of evil possession I would never write it in my column so you must have been mistaken. Because I have been hearing from a lot of you recently who read my last column, and partly I am gratified that so many of you are reading my column, but partly I am miffed because none of you get half so interested in my actual true household hints, which are the Main Important Thing in this column and the rest is just filler of the sort that columnists write to get your attention. And anyway I think I will just remind you all that it is Not My Fault.

Now I have been very busy these days, trying to figure out how to help you all with your terrible problems with the plumbing. Because I wasn't paying attention to it for a while, as I thought that that nice plumber had fixed everything when he came over to visit a while back, and if anything was wrong you would write me some letters, but now I have discovered that the entire inside of your house is rotting away even as we speak, and the reason you haven't written to ask me what to do is that you are so concerned with how to hide the dust from your mother without having to get out the vacuum cleaner that it never occurred to you that maybe if the house floats away everytime you take a shower there is Something Wrong.

Well I am considering just quitting and giving up on all of you and going to live on the East Coast where people pay attention to details like have the pipes burst because if they didn't they would be having to live over at their father-in-law's house in about a week, and there is never any room on account of the cousins. But here we are in the sort of place where the pipes never burst but only drip slowly into the wall, and you all have the impression that everything is fine if it looks ok.

So. I know that you can't any of you

afford one of those big books on how to fix everything in your house, the sort that I have in my living room and will show you the next time you come over, on account of you have to spend your book money on all the literature that explains to you how nice people were before they invented Cheetos and only had bread and honey. So I will explain to you the important parts of how to fix your plumbing.

First, do not let your candles burn down in the sink, even though it seems like such a good idea for fire danger on account of keeping the flame away from the kitchen curtains, because it only gets the fire that much closer to the fumes from the liquid plumber you had to pour down the drain yesterday.

Second, be very careful when deciding which elementals to call when working on the plumbing, as the water ones are a bit exuberant when they finally get noticed and might like to see you a little closer up, and the air ones get stuck in the pipes and make noise. The earth ones are pretty good, if you are using copper pipes, but not for steel, on account of the corrosion. Fire are safest, mostly because they get sort of confused, so this keeps them in line.

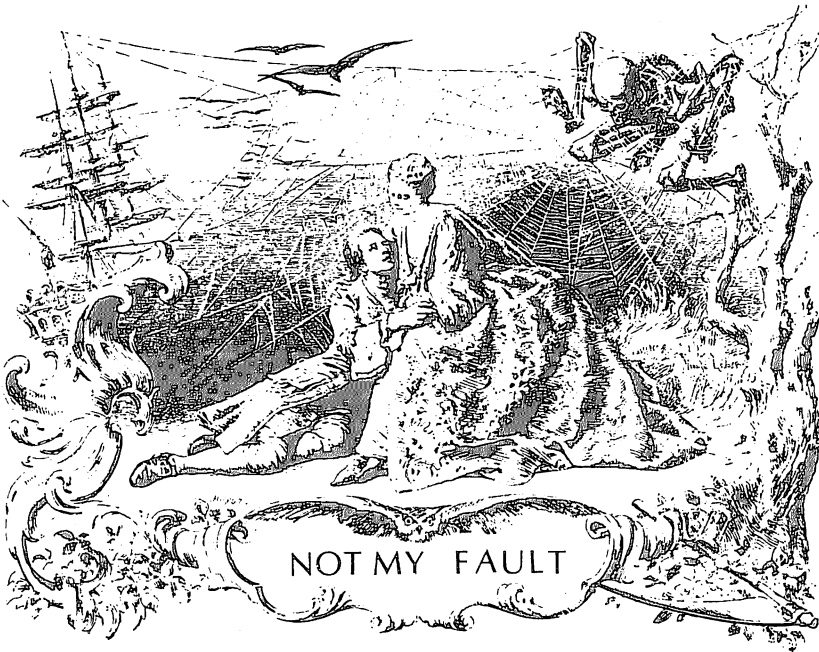
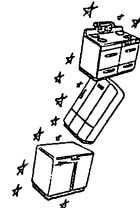
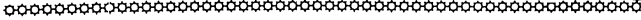
Thirdly, I tell you from the bottom of my heart out of my great love for you, only take one thing apart at a time, especially if you're fixing important things like toilets, because the plumbing is a mysterious thing that cannot be controlled and predicted, and if you try to do everything at once you will end up having to use the toilet over at the neighbor's house.

My advice really is to call the plumbing priest, who knows all the secret and arcane words and signs. I have tried to figure them out this week, as I say, so I could be very clear and helpful, and I have discovered that this is the sort of priesthood that has about five degrees of initiation, and if you haven't passed about three of them you will end up breaking the toilet tank Even Though You Are Not Touching It At The Time, which is depressing.

Now for some of you, I won't say who, this will be a good opportunity to meditate upon the meaning of a reality in which the workings of the created are hidden from the creator, in which case you might also wonder why you put in steel pipes in the first place, before you were born, and figure out how to have better plumbing in your next life, but for others of you this will be a wonderful opportunity to realize that you have no power over the pipes and the toilet tank is unmanageable, in which case you can make some phone calls, one of which should probably be to the plumber.

Still others of you will take the opportunity to lie on the sofa and whine and eat cake, in which case let me tell you that Divorce Court is great but Peoples' Court is better.

Love, Hannah



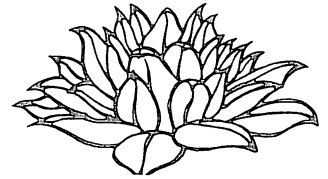


Dear Reclaiming,

I have enjoyed your newsletter and was especially moved by the letter from Bruni, about the CALLING WOMAN statue dedicated to the persecuted in the witchburnings.

I also read about Z Budapest's 1st ever Goddess video. There is Goddess video in LA. I have been producing the "Goddess in Art" cable TV series for the last four years. I have interviewed scholars such as Marija Gimbutas and Riane Eisler and artists Mayumi Oda and many others. The show is dedicated to the oldest tradition in art- the Goddess in art.

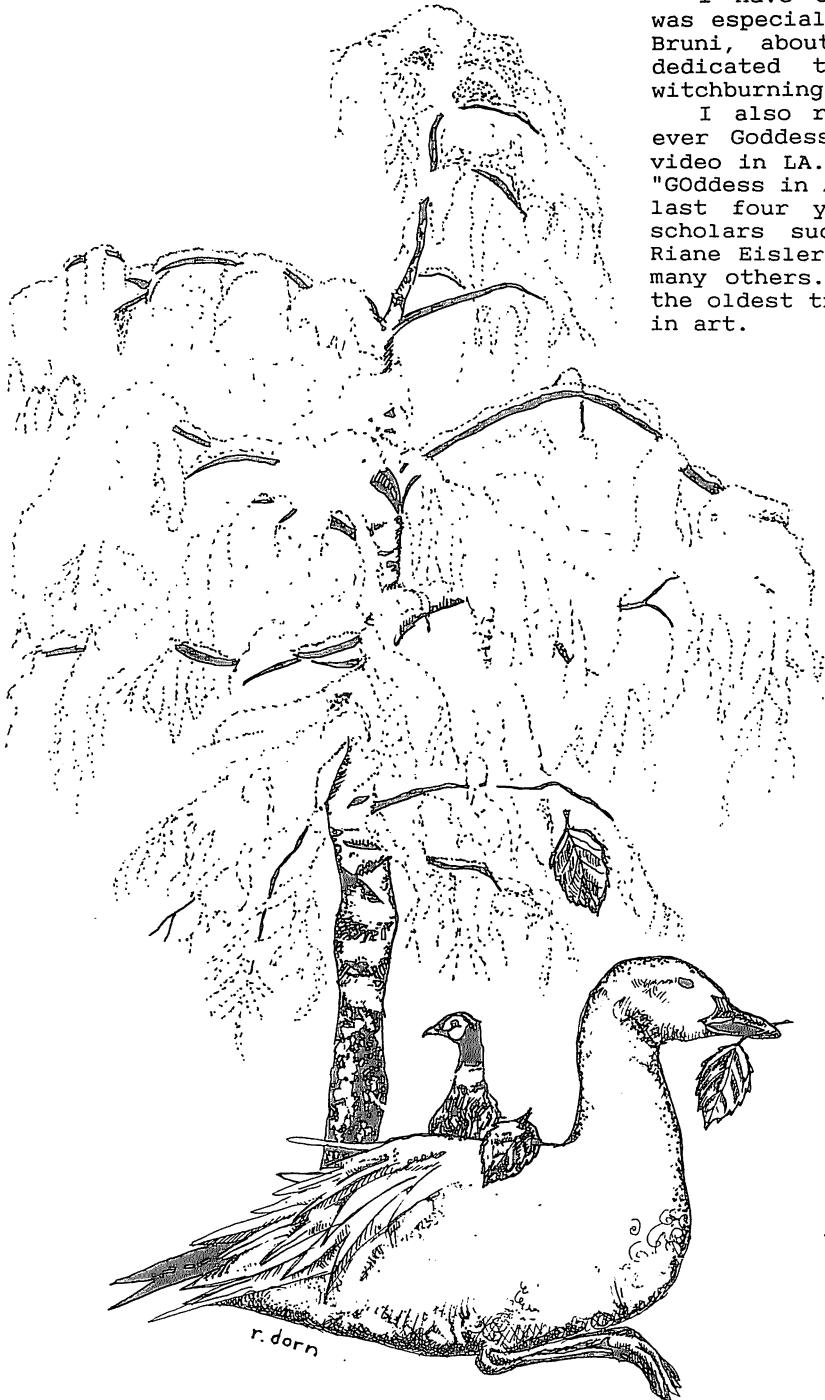
best,  
Starr Goode



Storm

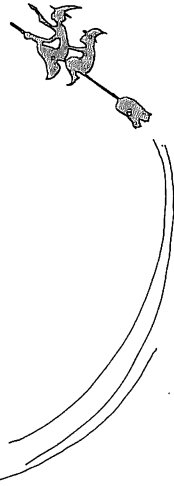
Poise, lightning,  
dancer on crags,  
collapse in thunder  
down mountains  
drown senses  
in torrents  
then over cliffs  
dangle me braided  
in pillars of falls  
into crystal halls of water  
where wordless choirs echo  
and the white fire of foam  
burns over stones.

Richard Hawk  
1945-1987

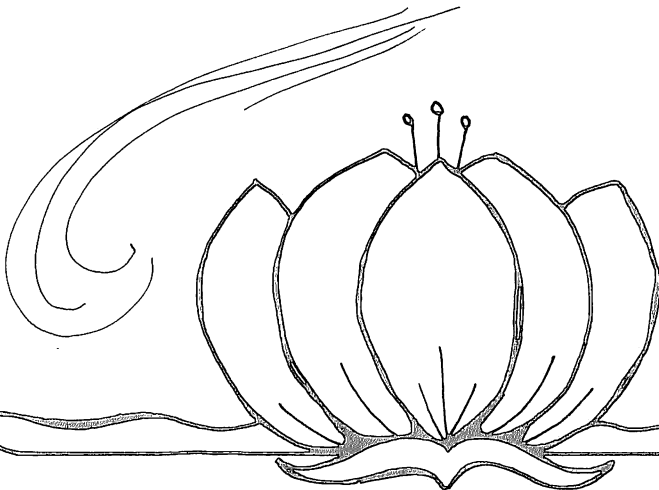


☆ ☆  
☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆  
out of my pantry ☆

jet haired, jade loving witch  
on a jet streaming broom  
tended to nap the length of those long  
jouncy July afternoons, in her pantry  
and prance out when evening was playing  
scarlet strains of Buffy Saint Marie  
To change me to a purple dwarf, whereupon  
she stole me away to the popped  
palace painted on the summer sky  
which is the perfect place to pleasure yourself  
on strawberry rhubarb pie, apportioned  
by the Goddess of Play  
whose Lover lives in the House of Mouse  
and composes poetry about  
jet haired, jade loving, jet streaming witches  
who prance out of pantries, and pull  
purple dwarfs out of little boys  
who shall be their playmates  
(for witches age backward and are soon little girls)  
on flowering lakes that are there for a moment  
when sunset glances through the horizon . . .  
So we sailed in a pan, the purple dwarf making lady and I  
swirling in ripples and splashing verses  
which invoke Spider to dance Her starry web



*Paul Meyers*



SSPARKS

TO MERCURY, WITH LOVE:  
THERE'S A LESSON IN HERE SOMEWHERE  
by Rosie Attitude  
Love Slaves of Gandhi Affinity Group

Recently I traveled across the desert to Mercury, Nevada, a tiny "company" town 5 miles in from the main gate of the fenced Nuclear Test Site. I traveled in dark clothing, weighed down with trail mix and water bottles, in the dead of night, with my Attitude Sister and Brethren, similarly attired and accoutremented (not a word). We wanted to go because we were told not to by the government. The Shoshone elders had encouraged us to reclaim their land, but really we needed no encouragement. A barbed wire fence is enough for some of us. An aversion to weapons testing is enough for the rest.

Now an Affinity Group is a group which does actions together because they have some affinity. Our affinity group, the Love Slaves of Gandhi, (Attitude is just our family name), has affinity around cynicism, wildcat religion, irreverence, pleasure, and low tolerance for posturing. Unfortunately (or not) we have been performing direct action, in various formations and locales, for a long long time and have been sometimes worn down, not by our opponents in the governments and corporations, but by the long meetings held by our allies and our selves, and by the rules and codes our subculture has created to replace the ones we're confronting. We got Attitude.

Too much attitude to want to sing lots of lovely songs inside the jail pen and busses, too much attitude to not secretly complain about our fellow actionists who wear our patience, too much attitude to tirelessly experiment with openness and lovingness on the cops and guards for hours on end, too much attitude to be enthusiastic about getting arrested or going to jail. We would have liked to walk to Mercury, bowled a few lanes, and hitched a ride out, figuring that would have been a fine way to Reclaim the Test Site.

However, our little walk was interrupted by the rising of the sun (at which time my dark camouflage became what it was -- bright purple) and the arrival of the Wackenhut rent-a-nuclear-guard dune-buggies. In short order, Annie and I (we had separated from

Janie's-Love-Slave Attitude, Billy Joe Attitude, and Scooter Tude, in order to evade the infrared heat detectors) were delivered to the women's side of a big pen at the main gate of the Test Site, where we found 7 or 8 other women who had also taken night hikes onto the site. This pen was equipped with fencing all around, two port-a-potties, several sandbags (which we used as pillows), dust, gravel, two kegs of water and a few paper envelope-cups to hold the water, and about four feet of shade (at 6:00 AM).

Annie and I looked at the bound-to-fade shade (made by the board wall separating us from the men,) looked at all the vans of arriving officers, looked at the sun, and realized that in the worst case scenario we could be in the pen for a long time, throughout the entire rally (scheduled for the morning) and subsequent mass arrest action, and then could be put on busses for a three-hour trip to Tonopah, the town at the edge of Nye county where "actionists" were driven the previous year. We did not want that. We wanted breakfast.

We decided to pray to Mercury, the Trickster, whom we had already invoked as the guardian for our travels. There were a few strands of yarn hanging on the back fence, where guards had torn down the decorative weavings of other trespassers. We wove Mercury's sign. We said, Oh Mercury, if you only get us out of here, and quickly, we will write tributes to you (I promised a poem), and we will deliver sexual favors to your human proxies.

But quickness is tricky. Time wore on, alleviated somewhat by our conversations, through the wall, with our brother Love Slaves. More prisoners trickled in, some of them very nice. Some not. We realized how diverse a movement we were, as various fellow actionists, out of boredom, laid their trips on us. We were captive audience.

Oh there were moments. We were proud when two women were brought in from hiding for three days and nights deep in the Test Site, although we were concerned to note how the geiger counter zinged when run over their equipment.



We liked it when we hounded the guards into giving us each a piece of fruit, at around 11:00 AM. We liked it when we tried to leave when the porto-pottie truck drove in. We cried a few tears of inspiration when the Shoshone women were the first to enter the pen after the mass line and fence crossing began. (Like the perfect hostesses they were, these women took up position at the entrance to the pen, greeted each activist as she was marched in, and eventually said goodbye to each as she left for the bus.)

But in general, we were quite tired by the time the pen began to fill, the shade was gone, our little brains were fried, we'd been up all night, and the fuel afforded by the piece of fruit was spent. Women tried to organize us into singing and meeting and all the things people like to do when they are not tired and fried and cynical. Had Mercury forgotten us? We threatened him. Ok, dude, no sexual favors, no article, no poem.

At two in the afternoon, the guards made sure that we early birds were taken out first onto an air-conditioned bus. We were relieved, but it did look as if the fun was finally beginning, because one of the early bird women had dug a tunnel under the wall separating the men and women, and an affinity group clad in little but mud had sent its men to the women's side and vice versa. At the time we left, both the men's side and the women's side were engaged in big spiral dances, and from our bus-seats we could see the guards trying to dance into the circle of men to apprehend the very muddy women who were leading the spiral. It was nice to watch this from the bus, because it distracted us from the loud woman behind us, named something like Growth or Om or Love, who was trying to organize singing, window-escape, bus-rocking, and non-stop explaining to the sheriff and guards. We thought, Mercury, if we have to ride for three hours in front of this woman, the last vestiges of our non-violence will rapidly follow our sanity out the window.

I read somewhere once (Starhawk or Z?) that when we ask something of a God/dess, we ask from a human perspective, but the Deity answers and gives to us from its own omniscient viewpoint. Perhaps if we had been booked and transported shortly after our capture, we would have received serious

charges for "deep penetration" of the Test Site. As it was, lumped together with almost 1100 others, our charges were the same as everyone else's, and it was impossible to take our names or imprison us. We were driven for one hour to Beatty and released. Finally.

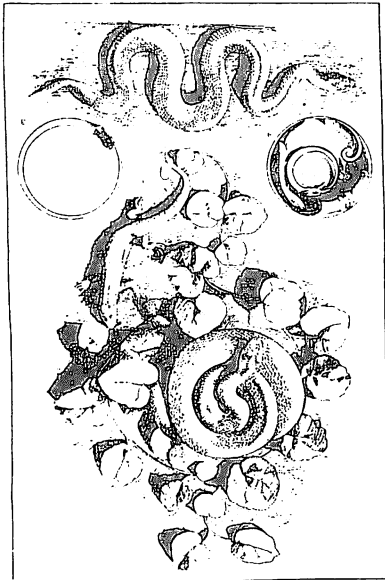
Janie was waiting outside the door for us, with food food food and smiles and all the care-taking we needed. We grudgingly admitted that Mercury had finally gotten us out of the sun. Soon we were reunited with the Attitude Brothers, our fellow Love Slaves, and we repaired to a hamburger salon at the edge of town, since the local casinos in the heart of Beatty were being unfriendly to "the protesters" because "not to be prejudiced, you know, but frankly they don't smell like other people".

We got back in camp in time to support the other half of the Love Slaves of Gandhi as they set out on their night hike, and were able to give them some good pointers on sneaking around the desert and hugging yuccas for camouflage. Mercury, ever tricky, saw to it that these Attitude Sisters, Killer, Mary, Marian and LaLa, got to sleep peacefully alone in the pen Saturday morning, and that they were released, after only three hours, right at the peace camp. Furthermore, old Herm let Hugh and Buck Attitude sneak back off the Test Site unmolested, although they did not get to go bowling on site.

However, just to make sure he could get creative with travel arrangements, as is his wont, Mercury had encouraged us to make elaborate plans for the support of those four aforementioned Attitude sisters. Billy Joe, Scooter and I had no sooner gotten back from our release in Beatty than we drove Killer Attitude's car, along with another car to bring us home, back again to Beatty. (One hour drive each way, late at night, remember we had had no real sleep. Who is the god of sleep and what is his address, for next time?) We left Killer's car there so we would not have to figure out when to drive back to Beatty to pick the women up. We assumed they would be released there after their arrest. Furthermore, Buck hitched into Beatty the next morning so he could go out to breakfast with the women. But as I said, Killer, Marian, Mary, and LaLa received the gift Annie and I had begged from Mercury, a speedy release, and he

threw in a convenient release at camp as an extra. So of course as soon as they got back to camp they had to borrow a car and drive to Beatty to rescue Buck and get Killer's car. Mind you, Mercury wasn't even in retrograde. Yet. Just tricky for the hell of it.

I'm not really complaining, it's just my attitude. We had a great action. By the end, nine of the Love Slaves of Gandhi had made it to Mercury, other Love Slaves had made art on the Test Site. We had seen the organizing of Circle A, our cluster, bear fruit and even be appreciated. There had been 1551 arrests. We had lived in an amazing peace camp, peopled by activists from all over, and of many stripes, living in harmony with the land, and for the most part, each other, and working together to create something terrific. We had taken part in a lovely ritual action, the Princesses' "Mask-o-Rage", a night procession with torchlight and thunderous drumming, in which hundreds of masked revelers danced and raged in the roadway and gate of the Test Site. We had tranced on the desert, and poured waters from all over the world (taken from the ritual well at Reclaiming's Brigid) onto the roots of the yuccas on the land that the Shoshone want back.



So I guess we owe the old Trickster. Annie wrote her article. We did deliver the sexual favors to Mercury's proxies, but his proxies, appropriately enough, had to wait a while to receive these gifts. All that's left owing is the poem. Will this do?

Dear Mercury:

I wove your sign upon the fence  
In hopes that you'd be quick.  
But then the hours wore on and on  
So I called you  
an inappropriate name.

But get me out of jail you did,  
E'en if you did move slow.  
So here's the poem I promised you.  
Though rhyme and scansion  
are askew --  
It's only 4 weeks overdue.  
As above, so below.



?taht tuoba yas ouy od tahw oS  
.erac t'nod I tuB  
edargorter ni s'yrucreM  
.erac t'nod I tuB  
edargorter ni s'yrucreM  
.erac t'nod I tuB  
edargorter ni s'yrucreM

esoR yb  
)nroC kcarC ymmiJ  
fo enuT eht ot gnuS(  
MOEP



## A Quick Quiz on Non-Violence

by Anne  
Hill



Recently a group of anarchists and witches from San Francisco visited the Nevada Test Site for the big "Reclaim the Test Site" week of direct action activities. The following scenarios are based upon actual events, as experienced by myself and other actionists from my affinity group, Love Slaves of Gandhi. I hope all you readers give these challenging situations serious thought, because next time they may happen to you! I'd like to thank the American Peace Test (APT) for providing all of us actionists with such thought provoking non-violence guidelines.

1) After a beautiful midnight hike through the desert, you and a friend are arrested inside the test site by security guards. One of the guards, angry at having to patrol all night looking for protesters, handcuffs you behind your back and tells you to "assume the position". After a moment of non-violent reflection, do you:

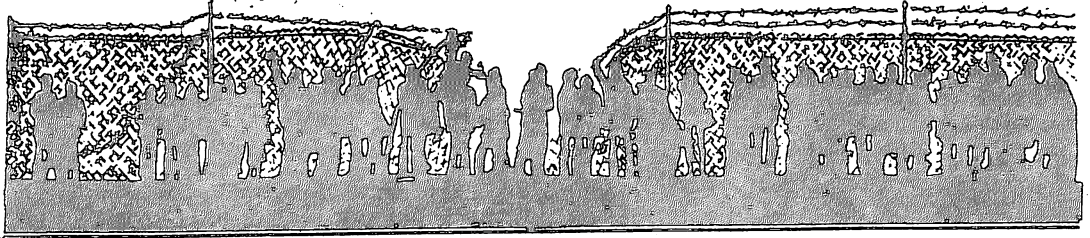
- A. Bend over and let him kick you;
- B. Tell him you work for the ACLU and would he please speak directly into your tape recorder;
- C. Assume your favorite yoga position;
- D. Begin to recite in a loving way tales from Mahatma Gandhi's life.

2) You are detained for eight hours after arrest in a lovely fenced enclosure under the hot sun, and to pass the time you begin chatting with the guards. One of the guards, you notice, is in a very sour mood and seems to become more agitated the more you talk. You realize that you enjoy making her miserable, but wonder if by doing so you are violating the non-violence guidelines. Do you:

- A. Quickly put out a call for other protesters to help you learn to love the guards;
- B. Decide it's okay to enjoy this conversation as long as you feel guilty about it;
- C. Re-channel your cruel feelings by striking up a chorus of "We are a Gentle, Angry People";
- D. Begin to recite in a loving way tales from Mahatma Gandhi's life.

3. It is very late at night by the main gate during an extended blockade of the road. Actionists have been arrested, have held meetings and are now trying to rest there at the gate before the next wave of workers try to enter the Test Site. Someone from the Rainbow Family has brought his congas to the gate and is presently drumming very loudly in order to heal the hearts of the guards inside. After a moment of non-violent reflection, do you:

- A. Order the guards to arrest this person for disturbing the peace;
- B. Walk up to him and begin reciting tales from Mahatma Gandhi's life directly into his ear;
- C. Ask peace camp personnel to seize the drum because there are supposed to be no weapons in camp;
- D. Leave the blockade and go back to your tent, but vow to make fun of him the next morning in the non-violence training you are leading.



4. After eight grueling hours of being caged in the hot sun with little food, you and the other captive actionists are put on buses and driven to a nearby town where you will be released. Suffering from heat stroke and exhaustion, you collapse into your seat, grateful for the shade it provides. In the seat behind you is a well-rested, well-fed, recently arrested woman who is trying to engage the whole bus in a sing-along. As she perches directly above your head, singing in a piercing soprano, "No one can stop me from singing...", do you:

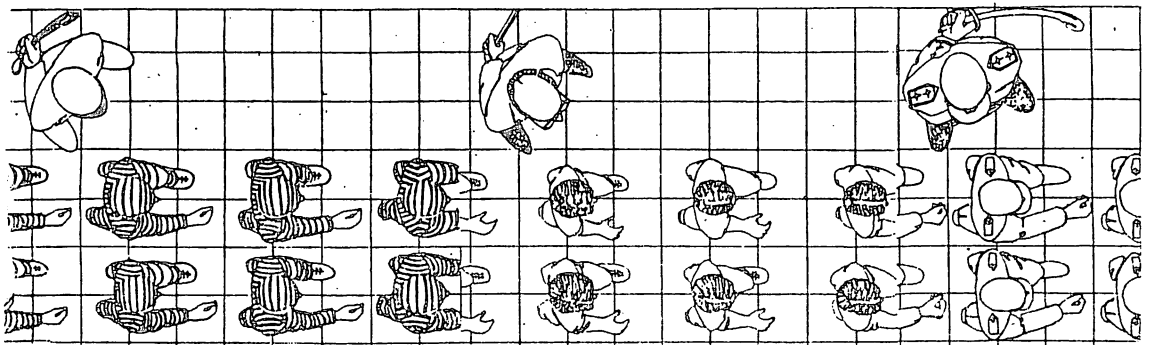
- A. Break down, sobbing uncontrollably, and beg to be put on another bus;
- B. Suddenly adjust your seat all the way back so she's pinned and can no longer sing;
- C. Offer to help her escape through the emergency exit while nobody is looking;
- D. Tell her in an authoritative tone that singing that song to a captive audience is in clear violation of the non-violence guidelines.

6. After the action is over, you decide it would have been a lot more fun if some of your favorite activities (like yelling, running, cutting fences and spraypainting) had not been prohibited by the non-violence guidelines. In order to remedy the situation next year, you decide to:

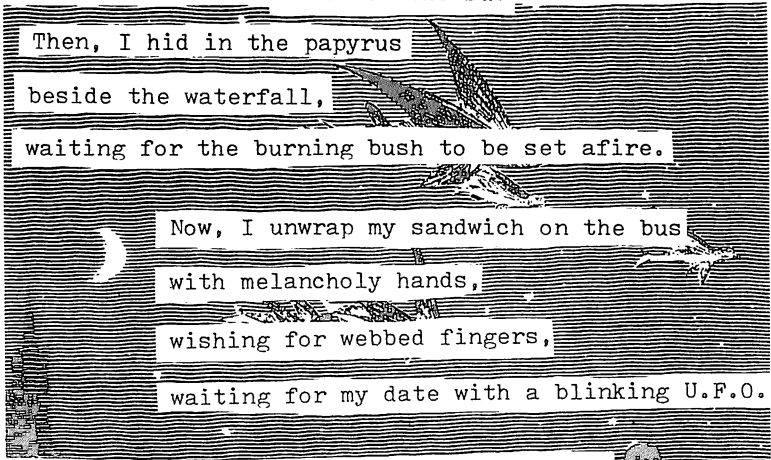
- A. Attend all the planning meetings and try to get the guidelines changed;
- B. Boycott all the meetings on the grounds that the organizing group is ineffectual and should disband;
- C. Go to the meetings and hold a continuous drumming vigil outside to heal the hearts of the organizers;
- D. Stay home, but send your Psychic Spirit Action Helpers to all the meetings so at least something interesting will happen.

5. A. True or False: Psychic Spirit Action Helpers, those Beings whose job it is to help you and your affinity group make difficult decisions in tight circumstances, will often offer suggestions which run counter to the non-violence guidelines for any action.

B. True or False: If you or your affinity group get in trouble for following these suggestions, it is okay to use your constitutional right to freedom of religion as an excuse.



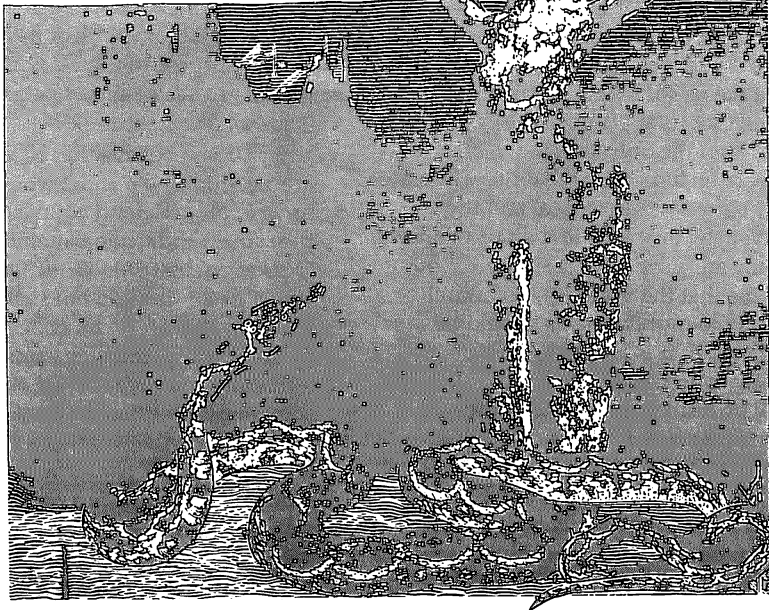
Alien on the Bus



Then, I hid in the papyrus  
beside the waterfall,  
waiting for the burning bush to be set afire.

Now, I unwrap my sandwich on the bus  
with melancholy hands,  
wishing for webbed fingers,  
waiting for my date with a blinking U.F.O.

Seems I've been waiting a thousand years,  
do you suppose they will arrive  
before I'm fifty-five?



The Breach

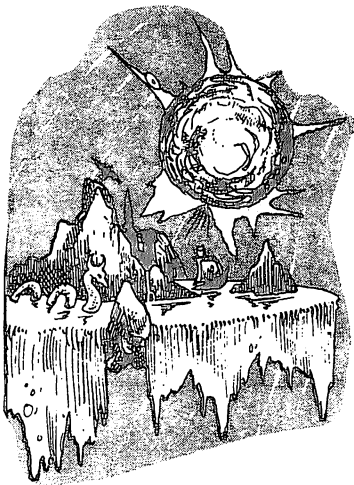
Treaties signed  
"for as long as birds sing  
and rivers flow", lie broken.  
By stagnant streams,  
birdsongs cease.

Rain

Skin tingles in fine drizzle,  
and the sweet smell of rain  
opens like a rose.

Richard Hawk  
1945-1987





## MAGICAL ETHICS OR MAGIC USERS WITH ETHICS?

PART I

by

Rita Rippetoe

Judy Harrow's article on magical ethics has obviously touched on issues which are of deep concern to the Witchcraft community. Ethics are a vital part of the way we relate to other people. However it seems curious to me that ethics seem most often to be addressed with regard to the use of magic. While it is true that the use of magic is one of the primary mores which set us apart from the dominant culture it is certainly not the only area in which questions of ethics arise. Judy states that there is "no difference ethically between the magical and the mundane." However she proceeds to discuss magical ethics as though they are a separate category.

It seems to me that the same rules of moral behavior which apply to mundane acts should be applied to magical acts. If it is wrong to hit a man with a brick it is equally wrong to construct a spell to cause a brick to fall on him. And for the same reasons. Whether you believe in a justice dealing deity who will know and punish your sins; an abstract "law of karma"; a psychological theory that if you hit people with bricks you will eventually become and insensitive person and less capable of feeling good emotions because you have been forced, for self protection, to repress the bad; or a theory of social good which requires you to refrain from brick throwing **that** others may do the same, does not matter. Once you have determined that an act is wrong it does not matter what means you might choose to effect that act.

With this proviso in mind I would like to examine some of the categories of magical acts which Judy defines and warns about in her essay.

Baneful magic is defined by Judy as "magic done for the explicit purpose of causing harm to another person." It is the magical equivalent of hitting a person with a brick. Therefore baneful magic falls under the larger rubric of force or violence. Assuming for the purpose of the essay that we believe it is wrong to attack another person I will discuss only defense.

If you believe that all violence is wrong, if you are a committed pacifist who would never raise hand or weapon to defend yourself, then you must apply the same standard to baneful magic. A committed Quaker pacifist would not shoot Hitler, a committed Witch pacifist would not strike Hitler down with a spell. If, however, you believe self defense is a right or even a duty, then the same rules will apply both to mundane and magical self defense. I believe that if someone has initiated violence against me I have the right to use whatever means are necessary to stop or restrain them. If someone attacks me with a knife it would be nice if I were a trained martial artist who could disarm the attacker without hurting them. But they don't have to right to expect that. The attacker forfeits the right to personal safety by attacking.

The right to self defense must of course be restrained within reasonable limits. Responsible persons don't punch someone for jostling them on the subway; they don't use deadly force except to protect their own or other lives or to prevent serious crime; they don't endanger innocent bystanders, etc. Most immediate physical threats will not, of course, be met by magic. (Wizards who flash blue bolts of raw energy from their staffs will not be asking me about

magical ethics!) After the fact of an attack it is probably true that most baneful magic would be revenge rather than true self defense. If the conflict was purely personal it may be best to let go of it. Review your defenses, your techniques for staying out of trouble, renew your shields and get on with life.

However an exception must be made for community defense. What about the aggressor who may be expected to prey on others if not stopped? If a trained artist were raped would she have a duty to sketch her attacker, increasing the chance that he would be caught and kept from raping other women? Most of us would agree that she would have such a duty. Logically then a Witch who is a victim of a crime also has a duty to use her training to help stop a criminal from harming others. Such actions should probably not (except in emergencies) be attempted alone. Some traditions specify that workings be discussed with one's coven so that all may discuss the consequences of various courses of action. The advantage magic has over the mundane in such situations is that the emotional imprint left on a victim can target the perpetrator for magical purposes even though there may not be sufficient physical evidence for the police to identify and arrest someone. In other words, magic takes its traditional role of filling the gap between need and technology.

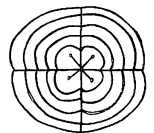
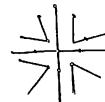
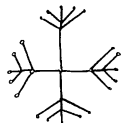
The specific method to use for community protection is not the subject of this article since it is a matter of effectiveness, not ethics. The main point I wished to make is that baneful magic should be forbidden or permitted under the same rules as physical force. If it is moral to shoot in self defense, it is equally moral to hex in self defense. If it is moral to jail thieves it is equally moral to bind them psychically. Such magical acts do violate a malefactor's autonomy but not his or her rights since they brought it on themselves by violating their victims' rights first.

In the matter of psychic attacks I agree with Judy that good shields are the best method of dealing with the problem. Accusations and counter-accusations of psychic attack only fuel *paranoia* and result in harm to people's reputations and general ill will in the community.

Judy defines "manipulative magic" as the opposite of baneful. Instead of harming we are helping people against their will. In this area also it seems to me that codes can serve the magic user. The relation between healer and patient should be based on mutual respect and trust. For the medical profession this goal is set by laws requiring informed consent and establishing a person's right to refuse any or all treatment. Admittedly doctors do not always respect personal autonomy to the extent we would desire. The exaggerated respect our culture gives experts combined with our religiously based horror of suicide account for many cases of medical attention forced on those who would wish to refuse it.

Pagan standards of respect for the individual may need to be higher than those presently expected of doctors, but the principles involved are not unique. Blood transfusions forced on a Jehovah's Witness or penicillin forced on a Christian Scientist are the same ethically as magical healing forced on a fundamentalist. Keeping someone alive with magic is no different than using I.V.'s and respirators and the decision to stop maintaining life in a body in which the person we knew no longer seems to exist is going to be difficult for whoever has to make it.

So for both baneful and manipulative magic it seems that the problems of ethics differ little from similar situations handled in mundane fashion. Coercive magic however does not seem to be as clear a case and I will discuss the concerns Judy has raised concerning its use in Part II of this article.





## SUMMER SOLSTICE



in the night trees join hands over the road  
the houses are quiet, expectant  
what are we waiting for?

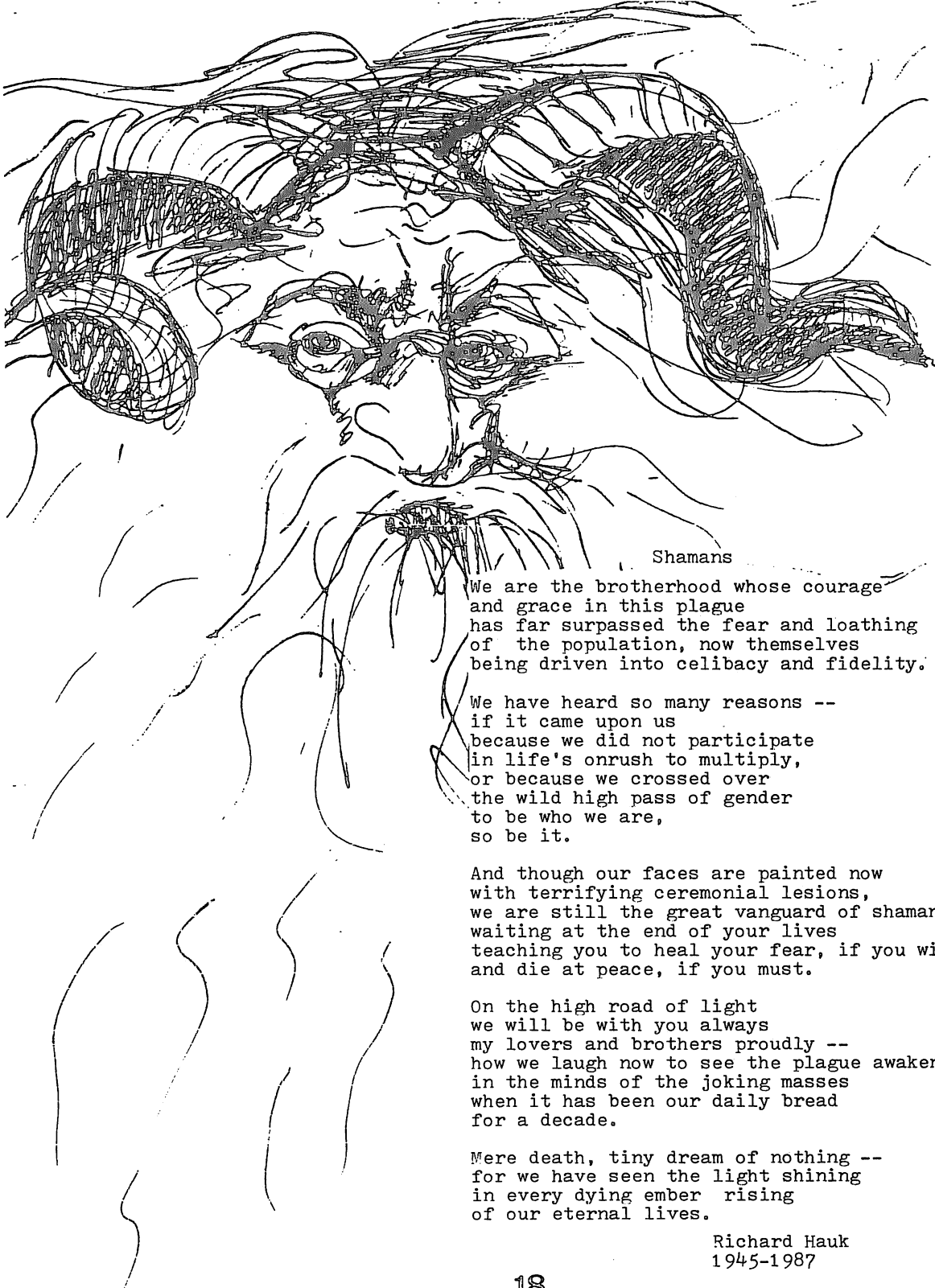
some silences are not preludes to anything  
I have been reading about war  
and i have been reading about after the war  
a kind of aimlessness in the world  
men and their machines going through the motions  
random cars drive in the night  
their lights veer erratically  
not pausing long enough to illuminate much

over the whole world, a ball of air  
the moon's image comes to us from space  
when it gets here, it is bright and fuzzy  
a quarter of soft light, a cat's eye  
gazing imperturbably, calmly,  
out of the black fur of night  
the stars curve so far away  
they pull my thoughts out into the dark void  
and i am a peasant, a child on a dark road  
in a dark wood  
i cling to myself, and walk,  
knowing somehow that fear and grace shape us,  
powerful emotion throws us into the water

it has been a long day  
the longest in fact  
and though there is a distance at the heart of things  
and enormous distances everywhere  
we still venture out, still stroke the fur  
of the night cat, still match gazes  
trying every day to be alive

jacques lapin  
key west, 1988





Shamans

We are the brotherhood whose courage  
and grace in this plague  
has far surpassed the fear and loathing  
of the population, now themselves  
being driven into celibacy and fidelity.

We have heard so many reasons --  
if it came upon us  
because we did not participate  
in life's onrush to multiply,  
or because we crossed over  
the wild high pass of gender  
to be who we are,  
so be it.

And though our faces are painted now  
with terrifying ceremonial lesions,  
we are still the great vanguard of shamans  
waiting at the end of your lives  
teaching you to heal your fear, if you will,  
and die at peace, if you must.

On the high road of light  
we will be with you always  
my lovers and brothers proudly --  
how we laugh now to see the plague awoken  
in the minds of the joking masses  
when it has been our daily bread  
for a decade.

Mere death, tiny dream of nothing --  
for we have seen the light shining  
in every dying ember rising  
of our eternal lives.

Richard Hawk  
1945-1987

Diane Des Rochers, B.A, MEd  
PO Box 384  
Groton, MA 01450  
Tel: (508)448-5584

31 March, 1989

### AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL PAGANS

Employed as an Army Civilian at Ft. Devens in Massachusetts, I have endured constant harassment, humiliation, and attempts at termination for my pagan beliefs. Trained, myself, as a counselor, I was forced to submit to counseling "if I wanted to save my job". The first words out of the civilian "counselor's" mouth were: "You're a witch, aren't you!"

To which I replied, "That really depends on your definition of what a witch is."

From then on it has been all down hill. For the longest time it was a my-word-against-theirs stalemate, but patience won, and finally I have had evidence of the persecutions and the prejudice I have so long been subjected to ..... which I have submitted to a lawyer. He is sufficiently satisfied with the strength of the case to have accepted it on a contingency basis. He

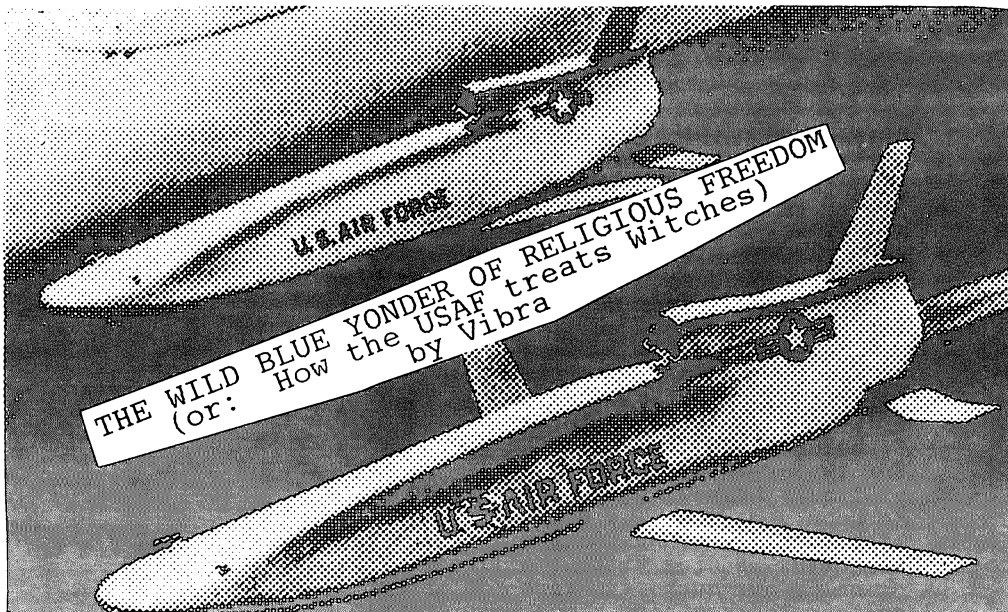
plans to take this to Federal District Court.

Beyond seeking only punitive damages, I want to see this case become a precedent setting public forum (Witch on trial) for all the religious persecutions that non-Christians have been subjected to. We live in a nation whose Constitution promises civil and religious freedoms that must apply to all ..... or they don't apply at all! We have to speak up before there is no one left in a position to speak up. Freedom is not so much a right as it is a responsibility. Nature abhors a vacuum (that's why witches have to ride brooms), "Use it or lose it", She says. Unused, limbs, organs and minds atrophy.

So, I am asking everyone who has been victimized by the ignorance and hatred of mindless bigotry to come forward and send me an account of what you have endured, signed and notarized, if possible. And if you also have chosen to seek legal redress, send me the name, address and phone number of your lawyer so that information can be shared. There is strength in numbers.

Blessed Be,  
Diane Des Rochers, BA; MEd





Airman First Class Patricia Hutchins, witch and physical therapy technician at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, will be taking her religious holidays off from now on, on the same basis as any other sincerely religious person -- with the blessings of the base chaplain, no less.

According to Public Relations spokesperson Bob MacNaughton, the Air Force regulations on religious tolerance could serve as a model for other institutions. They require respect for the religious practice of anyone whose beliefs are "sincere". This means that Airman Hutchins was interviewed by the base chaplain, Colonel David Engler, who then vouched for Hutchins' sincerity.

MacNaughton told this reporter it is not a matter of acknowledging the validity of the religion, but of recognizing the sincerity of the individual's beliefs. He also pointed out that everyone in the USAF is considered to be on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and that people of every religion may have to work on their religious holidays. It's all worked out on an individual basis, and where time off does not disrupt the work, it is

arranged. But sometimes Christians and Jews have to work on their holidays, too, and Hutchins will not necessarily be able to take off all of the sabbats.


MacNaughton said Hutchins has an excellent work record, that patients like her, and that there has been absolutely no adverse reaction from local hospital or Air Force personnel, to her "coming out".

Nor has there been any criticism or objection from the higher chain of command.

In fact, MacNaughton said that the main reactions locally have been surprise and extreme amusement at the reaction of the media to what was seen by Air Force personnel as a routine request handled in a routine manner in accord with existing regulations and policies.

MacNaughton said that in spite of the general reputation of the military for conservatism (!), the teaching hospital at Lackland also has a very progressive policy on dealing with AIDS.

According to MacNaughton, Hutchins has said there are at least four other witches on the base.



## PREVENTION POINT NEEDLE EXCHANGE

Prevention Point, the San Francisco needle exchange program, still unsanctioned by public officials, is entering its seventh month. We still go out for two hours every Wednesday night, in teams of five to eight people, but in the month of July we will probably field two new teams. We currently operate in the Tenderloin and the Civic Center - 6th St. neighborhoods, and will start in the Mission in early June; later in the summer we will explore working in the Lower Haight.

In March of this year, Prevention Point "went public" -- exposed by an article in the SAN FRANCISCO SENTINEL. This article was published in anticipation of a forum the San Francisco AIDS Foundation held on Needle Exchange, and so for two or three weeks we were very much in the news. This publicity helped our customers find us, and business started to boom. We also were cited, on two different nights, for violation of the Business and Professional Code -- for distributing needles without a license. We were not arrested or held, our customers were not arrested, cited, nor held, and our charges have since been dropped. We received word that the Police Chief would not be actively enforcing the laws against us, as long as we operated discreetly.

Meanwhile, debate was happening in San Francisco about needle exchange. The Forum was very successful, and the Health Commission has since held hearings about Needle Exchange. At the first hearing, scientists spoke on the issue, and at the second the Commission heard from the general public.

In San Francisco, as in other cities, there is debate among the Afro-American community about needle exchange. Some leaders argue that to give needles to I.V. users is genocide; others support the program. Prevention Point feels that if official Needle Exchange is part of a comprehensive program which includes many AIDS prevention methods -- more treatment slots, better education, public information campaigns, distribution of bleach and condoms, it will be more acceptable to people who fear that the government will continue to mishandle the drug epidemic in America's inner cities.

Prevention Point has exchanged 4,549 new needles since November. In January we began to mark our needles so we could note the rate of returned needles. Since then we have exchanged 4,101 needles, and 31% of them have been returned to us. We have had 1,374 client contacts since November. The week of May 17, 457 needles were exchanged by 123 customers.

We look forward to our poster presentation this month at the Fifth International Conference on AIDS in Montreal, where we hope to create dialogue about the issue and encourage other cities to begin exchanges.

-RMD

# 10th Anniversary

## SPIRAL



## DANCE

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the original Spiral Dance Ritual, and, not coincidentally, the tenth anniversary of the publication of Starhawk's book, The Spiral Dance. To celebrate, plans are underway for a Spiral Dance this year on October 28. Because this year we want to accommodate everyone who wants to come, we are negotiating to rent Pier 2 at Fort Mason, a space large enough for a ritual for a thousand people.

This is a big step for our collective, and we are, frankly, nervous. Space rental, and Fort Mason's requirements for security, parking attendants, etc. will run \$3000 to \$4000 for the night. The sound system, lights, costumes, childcare, rehearsal spaces, etc. are also costly. If we can sell 1000 tickets at an average of \$10 each, we should be able to cover our expenses and have some left over. We would like to raise some money to help subsidize classes and the newsletter. But can we get 1000 people? We think so, but that's not the same as knowing it.

At the same time, we're very excited at the opportunity to expand the scale of this ritual. Putting it on becomes a real community affair, and is a great way for new people to get involved. Would you like to sing in the chorus, help build altars, help the ritual flow smoothly, or watch the door? At Pier 2, there's enough room so that we can offer many sorts of work exchanges.

We also plan to offer workshops in October where people can make masks, learn chants and songs and dances, and do the preparatory inner work of the season.

How can you help?

Call the Events Line 849-0877 and find out more information about what's needed. As soon as coordinators have materialized, the Events Line will carry their phone numbers. Write Reclaiming, P.O. Box, 14404, and tell us your name and phone number to volunteer.

Buy your ticket early: Ticket prices will be on a sliding scale of \$10 - \$25. If you can pay toward the high end of the scale, you are donating to the collective. And if you buy your tickets now, you will be assured of your space in the ritual, and help provide the cash we need to pay out before the date arrives. Send check or money order with SASE to our box number, mark your letter TICKETS, and include the names of beloved dead who have died since November 1, 1988 and babies born since that time.

Be an angel (or is there some more appropriate term for Witches to use?): Would you like to make a substantial donation? Subsidize a costume, a platform for the dancers, part of the sound system, endow a chair (Fort Mason charges 75 cents each for them).

Donate materials: We need lots of cloth, a parachute, a cargo net, a ship's rope, maskmaking materials, ribbons, and a lot of other odd things.

Donate special skills: Are you a sound technician? A lighting expert? A carpenter? A dancer, juggler, mask-maker, or someone who walks on stilts? Let us know.

With the support of our community, we hope to make this ritual a gift to the wider community, a celebration of the last decade and a visionary beginning to the 90's.

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### New Edition of The Spiral Dance

A 10th Anniversary edition of Starhawk's book, The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess will be published by Harper and Row and launched at the Spiral Dance ritual. It includes her updated commentary on the original text. A small, leather-bound signed edition will also be published as well as the new paperback.







# RECLAIMING



## 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 Mondays, starting Sept. 11, 1989. \$60-120 sliding scale. Call Raven 334-MOON for registration and location.

## PENTACLE FOR WOMEN AND MEN by Cybele and Raven Moonshadow

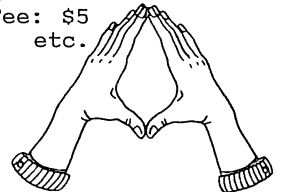
Using our magical skills, moving and shaping energy, transforming ourselves through trance to explore the five points of our inner pentacle: Sex (primal energy), Self, Passion, Pride (self-esteem), and Power (effectiveness in the worlds). Prerequisite: Elements of Magic or equivalent experience/study. Six Tuesday evenings beginning July 18. \$60-120 sliding scale. Call Cybele 648-3908 for information and registration.

## BREATH AND BODY CLASS 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 learn and use grounding practices, movement work, body maps and breathwork. This class strives to connect physical states, emotions and habits of attention to facilitate healing within ritual space. Some magical experience preferred (Elements of Magic or the equivalent). Ongoing support (therapy, bodywork and/or 12-step program) is strongly suggested during this class. EIGHT Tuesday evenings beginning Sept 5. \$80-160 sliding scale. Call Cybele 648-3908 for information and registration.

## ABORTION AND FEMINIST SPIRITUALITY: A Workshop for Healing with Julia and Vibra

In this workshop for women who have had one or more abortions we will use Wiccan practices and feminist process to heal ourselves spiritually and physically. As feminists and Pagans, we believe that abortion is a responsible exercise of the sacred power of choice. For some women, however, it also has psychic, emotional, and physical consequences which will be addressed in this workshop. Call Julia 648-6089 or Vibra 221-7142. Your choice: 4-week series Wednesday Evenings 7 - 10 pm, July 5 - 26, or WEEKEND WORKSHOP in late September (exact dates not set). Fee: \$5 materials charge (no other fee required; barter, etc. optional). Need child care? Call us.



# ASSES AND EVENTS

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

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:

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

## RECLAIMING RECOMMENDS

WITHOUT BORDERS -- Anarchist Conference and Festival, San Francisco, July 20-25, 1989

The 1989 Anarchist Conference/Festival will be our fourth annual gathering. We hope to create an experimental environment where we can live and learn during five days together. Activists, artists and folks who share an anti-authoritarian spirit will come together from across North America and around the world to share experiences and ideas, build community, create social revolution, celebrate alternative culture, and have fun. The five days of workshops, discussions, networking, and skill-sharing will be loosely grouped into theme days. The themes are anti-sexism, anti-racism, outdoor festival & celebration, networking, public action, and a day of action in the East Bay. One and a half days before the official start of the conference have been reserved for a women's gathering, and July 19 has been set for a men's day camp-out. (Reclaiming plans to offer several workshops and a ritual.) For more information, write Without Borders, 1369 Haight St., San Francisco, CA 94117, or call (415)864-4674.

\* \* \* \* \* ANNOUNCEMENT \* \* \* \* \*

AS OF SUMMER 1989 WE HAVE CONSENSUED TO OFFICIALLY RAISE CLASS PRICES WITHIN RECLAIMING. THE LAST PRICE INCREASE WAS SPRING 1984. HENCEFORTH A 6-WEEK RECLAIMING CLASS WILL BE \$60-120, SLIDING SCALE. WE BELIEVE THIS IS ACCESSIBLE, FAIR AND RESPECTFUL OF OUR WORK.



## CHANTS

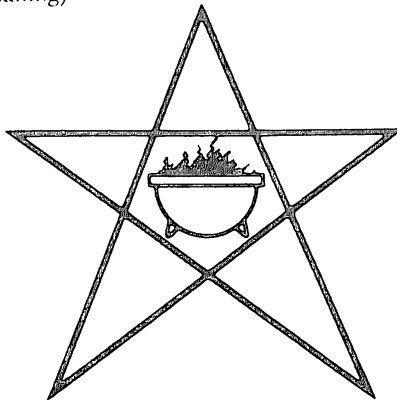
### Ritual Music

#### 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)



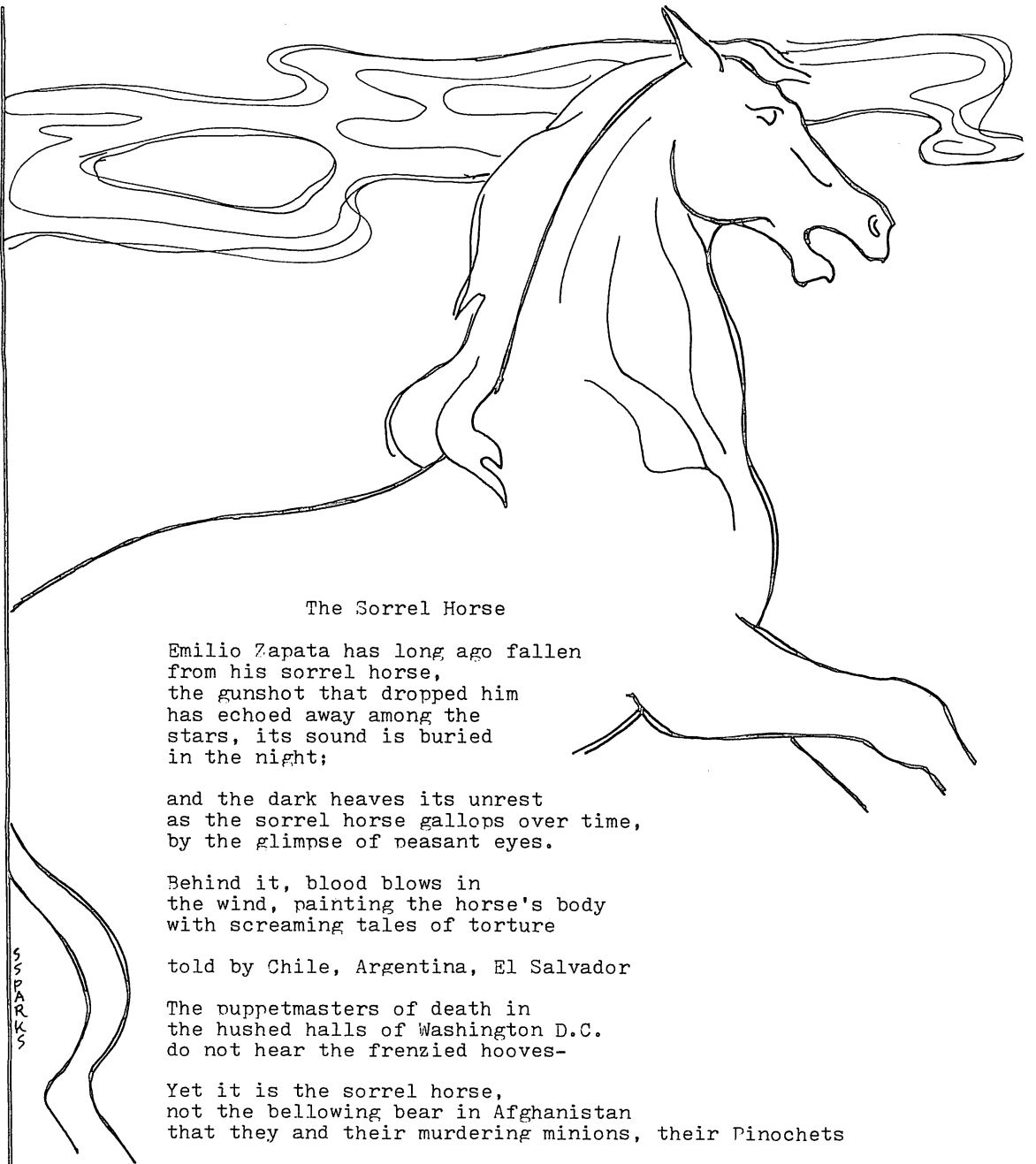
#### Side 1

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





### The Sorrel Horse

Emilio Zapata has long ago fallen  
from his sorrel horse,  
the gunshot that dropped him  
has echoed away among the  
stars, its sound is buried  
in the night;

and the dark heaves its unrest  
as the sorrel horse gallops over time,  
by the glimpse of peasant eyes.

Behind it, blood blows in  
the wind, painting the horse's body  
with screaming tales of torture

told by Chile, Argentina, El Salvador

The puppetmasters of death in  
the hushed halls of Washington D.C.  
do not hear the frenzied hooves-

Yet it is the sorrel horse,  
not the bellowing bear in Afghanistan  
that they and their murdering minions, their Pinochets

must one day stand before  
as the very sky gathers round  
the great galloping spirit...

Paul Meyers

SPARKS



# MEETING THE QUEER GOD



April 27, 1989

Howdy, Reclaiming,

A wonderful letter from Jack Davis in your spring issue of the Reclaiming Newsletter inspired me to send you the enclosed article.... I just got my copy of R.N. in yesterday's mail and noticed that your next deadline was last Friday, April 21st. I'm hoping, nevertheless, that you may be able to include my article in your Summer issue, because wouldn't that be lovely? Of course it would.

A note of explanation: the article was originally intended to clear up some confusion in the fairy community over composition credits for a song (the "Purple Hands" chant mentioned by Jack in his letter), but in the process of writing, it became something else. Of course.

The events described took place during 1986, 1987 and early 1988. Naturally, some of the elements of the tale have changed since then, but it is still a good story and, of course, it is all Perfectly True.

Have fun reading the article (out loud please).

Sparky J. Rabbit



## MEETING THE QUEER GOD

(a true story to be read and sung aloud)  
by Sparky T. Rabbit  
poetry by Donald Engstrom  
music transcribed by Tess Catalano

This is how it started:

Donald was sick. Very sick. And sometimes he knew he was dying. And while he was sick (especially during the dying parts), something Interesting happened. A god began to visit him. In his day-dreams and night-dreams, in his meditations and speculations. A god began to visit him. "What is your name?" asked Donald. His name was the Queer God. And he had come to stay.

Donald talked with the god, but mostly he listened and watched. Donald became excited. He told some of his friends about the Queer God, and they began to talk and to listen and to watch, too.

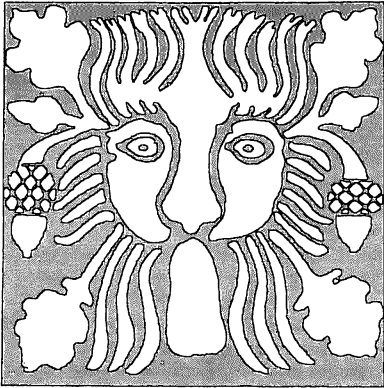
The Queer God showed that he had many faces. Later, Donald wrote this information into a song:

Purple God, Queer God,  
Green God, Faerie God,  
Golden God, Faggot God,  
Come be with us.

And there was an important difference about the Queer God. He wasn't Dionysos, he wasn't Hermes, he wasn't Pan or Cernunnos or any of the other gods they had expected him to be. Those names did not fit him. He was the Queer God. He was quite emphatic about that. He was all queer. And he was for queers alone. He would come only when queer voices called to him. He was Queer for queers. Queer lover, queer brother, queer guide: the Queer God.

And Donald did not die. Instead, he got better.

Then it was May. A gaggle of faerie friends went camping together under the full Flower Moon in the Iowa countryside. Donald Engstrom was there. Michael Blake was there. Peter Soderberg was there. And others -- boyfriends and artists and lovers and friends. They walked in the field of dark earth, they bathed in the cold stream, they ate, they made queer magic, they gossiped in their tents while the rain poured down. They met the Queer



God in ritual; Michael and Donald guided them through. They sang Donald's song to call the god: "Purple God, Queer God, Green God, Faerie God..." They called to him and he came to meet them. They met the Queer God. When they left that place, they built an altar in the sprinkling rain. They sang "...Golden God, Faggot God, come stay with us."

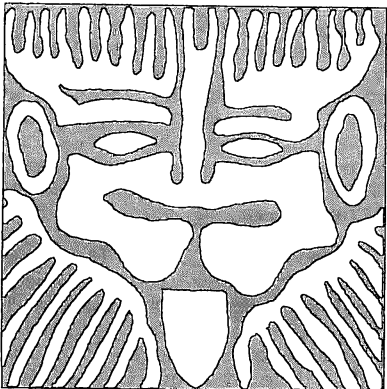
The devotees of the Queer God went deeper in. Michael and Donald and Peter shared the ritual of Meeting the Queer God with other gay men and faggots and faeries. More holy queer faces of the god appeared: in dreams, in music, in fire, in art.

A queer god came to Donald. His name was the Singing Bear. He loved and protected queers fiercely, slashing apart the enemies of queer people with His holy claws.

#### The Singing Bear, Poem #2

He shows no mercy.  
He shreds their lips with their own lies.  
He shows no mercy.  
He blinds their eyes with their own illusions.  
He shows no mercy.  
He burns their hearts on fires of their own hatred.  
He shows no mercy.  
He binds their chests,  
He binds their arms,  
He binds their legs with the ropes of fear that  
they themselves have braided.  
He shows no mercy.  
He bloats their bellies on their own cherished greed.  
He shows no mercy.  
He leaves them to rot in piles of their own shit.  
He shows no mercy to the enemies of His people.

--Donald L. Engstrom





Peter was a Witch. Years ago, he had written a song to the Triple Moon Goddess:

"Holy maiden huntress,  
Artemis, Artemis,  
New Moon, come to us.

Silver shining wheel,  
Radiance! Radiance!  
Full Moon, come to us.

Ancient queen of wisdom,  
Hecate, Hecate,  
Dark Moon, come to us."

Donald was inspired to take the music of this song and write a new verse for the powerful Singing Bear:

Purple hands of healing,  
Faggot God, Singing Bear,  
My love, fight for me.

Peter loved the new song. He also felt that not everyone hearing it would understand the image of the Singing Bear, so he adapted Donald's lyrics to evoke a more accessible form of the Queer God.

Purple hands of healing,  
Faggot God, Faerie god,  
My love, come to me, come to me.

Then it was October. Peter, Donald and Michael went to the March on Washington. They sang this latest version of "Purple Hands" to other Radical Faeries there, who enjoyed it and sang it throughout the March and beyond. Michael, Peter and Donald were very happy. They came home to the Midwest.

And the Queer God inspired more music and art and ritual. Donald expanded the "Purple Hands" song"

Purple hands of healing,  
Faggot God, singing Bear,  
My love, come to me.

Purple hands of healing,  
Faggot God, singing Bear,  
My love, come to me.



Dance with me, sing with me,  
Hold me in your strong arms.  
Dance with me, sing with me,  
Hold me in your strong arms.

Well..., there is so much more to relate. So many stories. And, of course, this story has boundaries, and can only tell a fraction of What Really Happened. But you already knew that part. Of course.

So --- then it was Now.

The Queer Ones continue to visit. There are so many of them now, like a family or a tribe. So many faces, old and new: Purple God and Singing Bear, the White Wolves and the Turquoise God, the Deep Kisser, He Who Dances..T.. and Queer Goddesses, too! Amazons and Aunts and the Mother of Faggots. So many of them.

Who are they? Who are they? Ask them yourself. Call to them. Call their names. They have so many stories to tell.

So many queer powers spilling out into the world, too many to be held back, deep and potent: allies and lovers, guides and friends. Their laughter fills the world. Their lust fills the world. Their rage fills the world. Their weeping fills the world.

More music, more art, more poetry, more passion. More healing power. More healing power.



The Singing Bear, Poem #1

Lover of cocksuckers,  
Lover of queers,  
Lover of strong arms and sweet songs.

He comes dancing.  
He comes singing.  
He comes with power woven into His hair.

He who sings healing songs.  
He who chants the story of self creation.  
He whose voice destroys cities.  
He whose voice lays new foundations for pleasure  
gardens and sex temples.  
He who screams in pain as another of His lovers  
leaves for an unknown shore.  
He who weeps unashamed at the bier of the one  
who held His cock so tenderly between  
his cheeks.  
He who whispers gently His undying love.  
He who licks the honey from lips, eyelids,  
and warm cocks.

His love is a prairie breeze blowing over the  
plains of queer bodies.  
His love is a deep well refreshing the lives  
of his people.  
His love is a grass fire,  
burning and preserving.

His lavender eyes see through the flaming hearts  
of suns, into the dark healing of the  
Great Womb.

His purple heart keeps the beat of time moving to the  
rhythm of country dances.  
His singing claws rip through the flesh of hypocrisy.

Lover of cocksuckers,  
Lover of queers,  
Lover of strong arms and sweet songs,  
The singing Bear comes to all who dream Him.

--Donald L. Engstrom





PUR-PLE HANDS OF HEAL-ING, FAG-GOT GOD, SING-ING BEAR,  
MY LOVE, COME TO ME.

DANCE WITH ME, SING WITH ME, HOLD ME IN YOUR STRONG ARMS.

PUR-PLE HANDS OF HEAL-ING, FAG-GOT GOD, SING-ING BEAR,  
MY LOVE, COME TO ME.  
DANCE WITH ME, SING WITH ME, HOLD ME IN YOUR STRONG ARMS.



Friends

The ones I understand  
live in never never land  
as pauper princes  
and moustached nuns  
and mystic gypsies  
all climbing hand in hand  
through endless darkness  
to the world's end  
pulling a clown on heroin.

Richard Hawk  
1945-1987

Be Still

Oceans of cricket song  
beating out rhythms of peace.

Growing Sane

Hurled by war into nature's silence  
we escaped the vultures who built their nests  
in the marble orchards where our brothers rest.  
Here, now, under rainbows in the West,  
we sleep beside the rain, loving and growing sane.



# Meditations on

by

Beltane, traditionally, was a holiday for lovers. There was powerful magic in leaping over the fires and lying in the dark fields away from the blaze, fertilizing the earth by offering each other life through surrender to passion and mystery.

Today the magic remains and it is still powerful. In the Reclaiming community, as we leap over the cauldron, we reveal the invisible bonds of love which weave among us all. As of old, lovers clasp each other's hands, run into the center of the circle, and leap together over the purifying flame -- often shrieking or laughing, and supported by the shouts and laughter of the people circling around them.

We are a community not only of lovers but also of ex-lovers -- and of co-workers, affinity groups, children, families, cats, dogs, and friends. We affirm all these bonds as we chant and sing around the fire, each of us from time to time breaking away to seek others to jump the cauldron with us.

So, I join hands with my husband and my daughters and we jump together. I jump with my husband alone. I jump with my daughters together, and with each of them separately. I jump with my Circle sisters, all together, each of them, in pairs, in trios. I jump with the people I've taught with and the people I've fought with; with the Reclaiming Collective; and with the parents of my children's friends. I jump with my lover, and with her Coven sisters, and with the women who initiated me. I jump with a man I just enjoy, with a woman whose secret I know, with a friend with whom I need healing.

And I stand in the ring, singing and watching everybody else with equally rich and complicated lives dance their

own patterns in this ancient rite renewed. Lovers jump with their ex-lovers and with each other's other lovers. Children jump with their friends. The old with the young. Women with women, men with men, women with boys, teen-agers with babies, people with dogs, and on and on until the space within the circle is filled with the woven blanket of our love for each other.

When we snake dance from the cauldron to the Maypole, we join the threads of our circle tapestry with the rainbow ribbons that shine with our hopes and promises for this year, proclaimed in the brightness of the waxing light in this season approaching the Solstice.

Wait a minute. Did I say Maypole?

This is a Problem.

The Maypole, as we all know, or think we know, is a phallic symbol. When we look at it, we are supposed to think of a man's erect penis. Right?

Suddenly, the joy and abandon depart. How can I, a feminist bisexual woman, participate in this male-centered heterosexual ritual? I feel the absence of the Lesbian women who stay away from this sacred celebration because of this very Problem.

The Maypole.

Frankly, I don't think the Maypole is "supposed" to be a penis, or that it ever was. I think the whole idea is -- well -- poppycock. It's another example of the male genital fixation of patriarchal culture, inspired in this particular form by that 19th century Viennese man.

True, the pole is long and thin and stiff. But there are many things in the world that are so, and I simply do not see them all as penises, even symbolically. What about drainpipes, through which rainwater flows from the roof gutter to the ground? What about the central pole laid across the seam of a log cabin's roof? What about floor boards? What about the oars of a row boat, or the pole of a punt, or a ship's mast? Does anybody seriously insist that all these are in some essential way



# the maypole

Vibra

representations of male sexual organs? Or is it only a pole that is on display which is imbued with this characteristic? Surely not totem poles, though?

As for body parts -- well, there are many anatomical structures that are longer, stiffer and bigger than a penis. A thigh bone, for example. Or a shin bone, for that matter. Or even a neck, or an arm.

Magically, however, the Maypole is most like a spine. In the Reclaiming ritual it becomes the nerve cord of our community, with one end grounded in the earth and the other end, topped by the Goddess dolly, reaching into the sky. Through this spine flows our collective energy, up and down, the pole connecting us to the realms above and below.

Thus, the Maypole is the core of our shared body. We dress it, weaving and wrapping the colored ribbons, fashioning a garment of our love and our will, joining our love and our will in the energy surging through the pole.

What about historical fact? Beltane is a fertility holiday.

Yes, and our ritual celebrates and spills every kind of seed, fertilizes every kind of growth -- that born of sexual passion, and of every other kind of life-giving passion.

In fact, I understand from reliable sources (namely, friends of mine who read books about such things) that the earliest pictures of Maypoles show what are basically trees being brought into the village. For example, a tall slender tree would be found and stripped of all but its topmost branches -- creating a "pole" much like our own today, which is decorated at the top with grasses, flowers, branches or any available greenery. So as a point of historical fact, while Beltane is a fertility holiday, the pre-patriarchal maypole is most likely connected to tree-of-life rituals which took place in various places in Europe, and at various times of the year.

Of course it is possible to break with tradition and proclaim that the Maypole today shall represent an erect

penis, and to do powerful magic in ritual focused on it. I have heard that at least one Pagan community in the wider Bay Area does exactly this, working with heterosexual energy at this holiday, and with other aspects of sexuality at other specified times of the year. This group also uses the circle around the pole, and the ritually-dug hole in which it is placed, as representing the woman's body and vagina.

My point is to challenge the notion that the Maypole somehow is inherently and inevitably a cock, and that that is its primary magical energy. I want to point out that, to me at least, this particular emperor appears naked.

I wasn't there at the time the first community erected the first Maypole and danced around it. I don't "know". I can't prove from documents or photographs or field interviews, that what was really going on as this colorful and joyful custom originated was not worship of the penis, though it almost certainly was passionate and sexual.

Practically speaking, if a large group of people want to dance around an image of the Goddess, it makes sense to stick Her up on a pole so that people on the fringes of the crowd can see Her. And once She's up there, why not attach some ribbons to Her as decorations that will form a skirt? And look -- if we each catch hold of a ribbon we can all dance in and out, and weave a garment. What a beautiful dress!

And so She leads us, showing us how to share in Her power through our own impulse toward beauty and fun.

## Blessed be the Maypole!



i went with you because you  
opened the way

\* \* \*

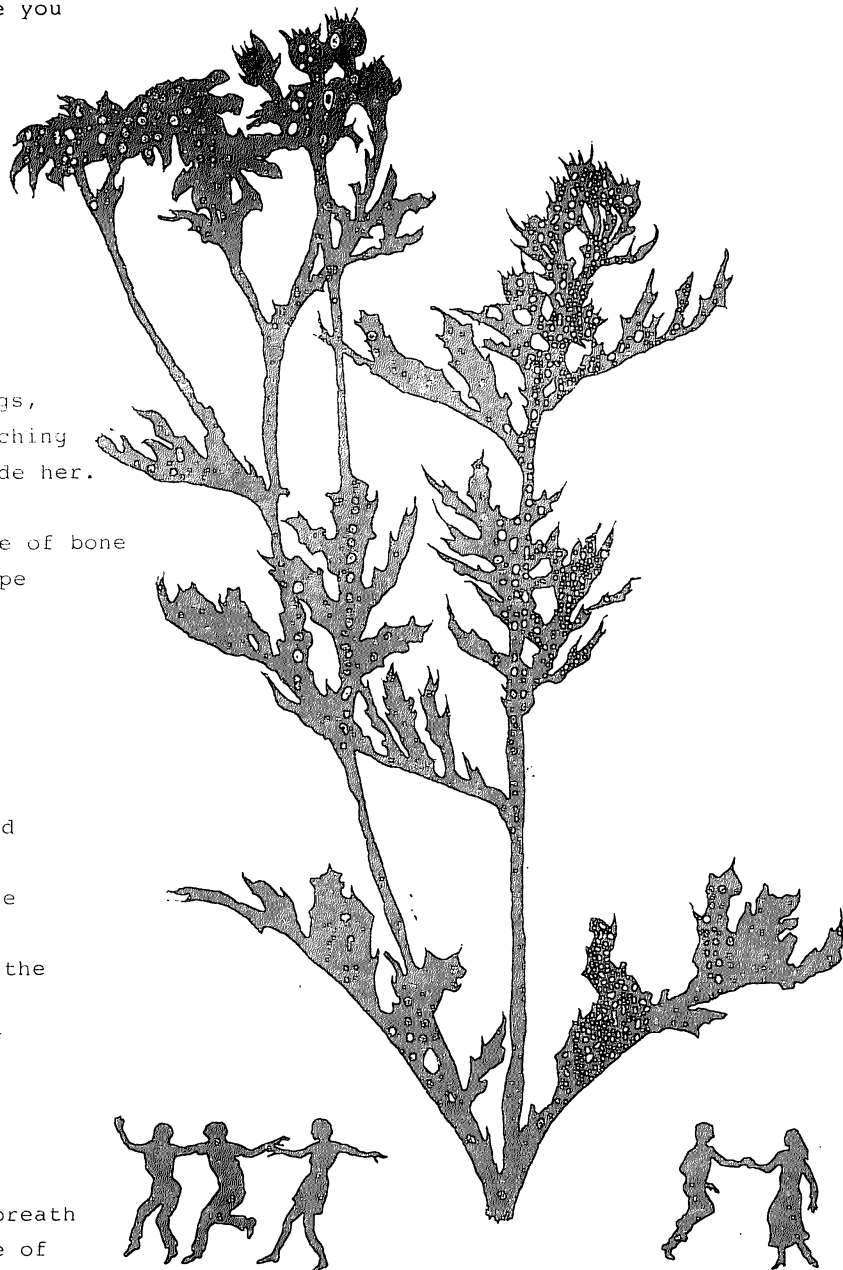
what do you die  
into, die  
towards?

sitting in circle with  
those who you sit in  
circle with, the round  
spine notched with wings,  
each person's song reaching  
out through those beside her.

the air holds the shape of bone  
the bone makes the shape  
that holds the air  
what fragile arcs our  
ribs make, arms sprout  
and beat  
the twisting wind

speaking is just a kind  
of breathing we do.  
the faces in the circle  
change with the years  
faces leaving through the  
five gates, new faces  
coming in. you yourself  
leave and return.

the sameness is in  
the circle  
it breathes its last breath  
the first sharp inhale of  
what is you are  
dying towards



sz rochat/CYBELE  
for CONTRABAND&the Religare  
chorus, for Reclaiming and  
my circle sisters



## STARHAWK'S SUMMER SCHEDULE

### RECLAIMING'S SUMMER INTENSIVES:

Weeklong programs in ritual and magic, linking spirituality, politics and community building. With Starhawk and teachers from the Reclaiming Collective. Both beginning and advanced tracks offered.

JULY 2-9 VANCOUVER, B.C.

Contact: Pat Hogan 604-253-7189

1843 Kitchener, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V5L 2W5

AUGUST 27-SEPTEMBER 2 WEST/CENTRAL MICHIGAN

Contact: Adrienne Young 312-887-4747

PO Box 26, Clarendon Hills, Illinois 60514

### INSTITUTE FOR CULTURE AND CREATION SPIRITUALITY

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Starhawk teaches Creating Ritual and Feminist Theologies

### WITHOUT BORDERS -- ANARCHIST CONFERENCE AND FESTIVAL

JULY 20-25, SAN FRANCISCO

(See notice in center section of this newsletter -- let's all go and have a good time)

### INTERFACE WOMEN'S WORKSHOP

WITH MARGOT ADLER AND LUISAH TEISH

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Contact: Interface 617-924-3276

552 Main St., Watertown, MA 02172

For bookings with Starhawk call Harmony Network at 415-528-9433 PO Box 9725, Berkeley, CA 94709

# ANNOUNCEMENTS:

## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SPIRITUAL HEALERS OF AMERICA

Spiritual healing practitioners throughout North America with proven successes are being invited to join a network of Certified Healers, THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SPIRITUAL HEALERS OF AMERICA, Inc. The non-profit corporation's headquarters have been established in Atlanta, Georgia. It is sponsored by British parapsychologist Peter Greene, Editor of "Thought Trends", a New Age newspaper published in Atlanta and circulated in the Southeast. The purpose is to give protection to the public and provide visibility, credibility and authenticity for reputable alternative health care healing practitioners who employ spiritual or holistic methods. Federation membership will be open to Spiritual Healers of any discipline who provide a minimum of three sworn, notarized case-history testimonials from patients or clients who have been healed through the Healer's practice.

The National Federation offers: a national toll free referral service; regional and national directories; professional practice certificates; conferences; group insurance rates; a quarterly publication. Membership will be extended to Holistic healers, Chiropractors, Kinesiologists, Touch for Health practitioners, therapeutic Touch Nurses, Massage Therapists, Reiki practitioners, MarieEl practitioners, spiritual healers, Christian Science practitioners, ordained ministers and pastoral counselors, hypnotherapists, psychic and etheric surgeons, and others who can demonstrate the legitimacy of their claim to heal through psychic or spiritual means.

For further information write:  
NFSHA, PO Box 76476, Atlanta, GA 30358.

## 1989 SCHOOL FOR PRIESTESSES AT CIRCLE SANCTUARY

The 1989 School for Priestesses will be held July 14-18 at Circle Sanctuary. This special intensive training program is open to women who are presently leading groups and/or ritual ceremonies. This year's program will focus on Goddess Communion rituals and meditations, and will include guided meditations, chanting circles, workshops, discussions, and rituals.

Throughout this five-day program, participants will have the opportunity to exchange ideas, information, experience, advice, and support with each other, as well as the chance to take turns teaching Goddess chants and ritual techniques they like. Also, as part of this year's intensive, Selena Fox, the program's director, will present several Goddesscraft workshops and will guide a series of communion experiences, including a Triple Goddess of the Moon evocation rite, Isis healing meditation, Mother Earth communion ritual, and a Bast shrine dedication.

Participants will arrive on Friday afternoon, July 14, and depart on Tuesday afternoon, July 18. The first session will be held on Friday night, following dinner. The program will culminate in a special Full Moon circle on Monday night, and a closing ritual on Tuesday morning.

Advance application and registration are required. Space is limited. Some background in Goddess studies and ritual is required. Program contribution is \$175, which includes meals and instructional materials. For more information, contact: School for Priestesses, Circle Sanctuary, Box 219, Mt Horeb, WI 53572 USA.



## LESBIAN AND GAY PAGANS

Gather in New York City from June 21-25 to  
Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Stonewall

Twenty years ago, New York City cops went about their usual routine of harassing gay bar patrons. But something happened that was anything but routine. Gays and their friends at the Stonewall Bar in Greenwich Village resisted, and a new consciousness was born. For the first time, lesbian and gay people visibly and militantly demanded that we be treated with respect.

Remember, it was not mainstream lesbians and gays who fought back at Stonewall. Our people are made up of drag queens, bulldykes, leather enthusiasts, anarchists, witches, punks, pagans, amazons, shamans, hippies, bisexuals, radical faeries, AIDS activists and other groups who enjoy being themselves. Let's remind everyone of who we are and what we stand for. Our visibility can help create a consciousness for a renewed, more radical culture.

We have decided to gather together in New York City in June in the hopes of creating a group consciousness that will in turn create new visibility and vitality for our political and spiritual lives.

On Wednesday evening, June 21st, we will have a magickal summer solstice ritual in Tompkins Square Park. On Thursday, lesbian and gay anarchists are sponsoring a bash. On Friday, there will be a mock Judy Garland funeral procession and drag sashay. On Saturday, we will "reclaim" the site of the Stonewall uprising. On Sunday, we will all amass for a vibrant, raggle-taggle radical contingent in the Lesbian and Gay Pride March. In other words, we will engage in street theatre, rainbow ritual and outdoor urban camping to let the world know that we have not forgotten the spirit of revolution.

What can we do for you?

What can you do for us?

Contact:

Aqua  
PO Box 1251,  
Canal St. Station,  
New York, NY 10013  
(718) 789-5663

Mickey Wheatley  
337 E. 8th Street  
New York, NY 10009  
(212) 477-1427

## CAW WELCOMES CAMPERS

If you are seeking a visit in the country, we'd like you to know about Annwfn, a Pagan sanctuary in Mendocino county. It is a beautiful place to camp out with your coven and get back to the land. All we ask of campers is \$5 per night (\$6 if you use cooking facilities) and an hours' work around the place for each day you are there. (This is usually pleasant tasks like gathering kindling, and weeding or watering the garden.)

One of the Church of All Worlds priests, Orion, has volunteered to host a Sabbat ritual an Annwfn on the following dates:

Beltane (May 5-7), Litha (June 16-18), Lughnasad (August 4-6), Mabon (September 22-24), Samhain (November 3-5), and Yule (December 21).

Contact Orion to make sure things are happening according to plan. His number is (707) 485-8277. If you wish to visit at other times, contact Ayisha at (707) 462-5031.

## CONTACT LISTINGS WANTED FOR NEW CIRCLE GUIDE

Circle has begun work on the 1990 edition of its popular *Circle Guide to Pagan Resources*, which will be published in Fall 1989. This new editions will include names, addresses, and descriptions of Wiccan, Shamanic, Feminist Spirituality, and other nature religion-oriented groups, networks, centers, stores, gatherings, and periodicals throughout the United States, Canada, and other countries.

Listings are free, but must be submitted in written form. If you are interested in being listed, but have not yet received a listing form with more details, request one right away by calling (608) 924-2216 on weekdays between 1 and 4 pm Central Time; or write:

*Resource Guide*  
*Circle*  
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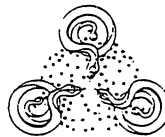
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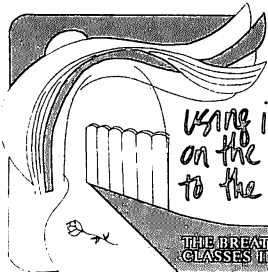
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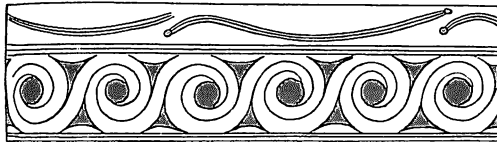
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### *Healing the Feminine*

Make a connection with the Goddess. Cross boundaries. Discover for yourself delight, comfort, guidance, your challenge. I have worked with the dark goddesses as a powerful way to wholeness and empowerment for women. Dark or light, it is a circle. Call Caite Caperton, Certified Hypnotherapist, at 452-1906.

Live-in position wanted: Gardening/Manuscript assistance. Experienced in French Intensive organic method. Writing, typing, editing ability. Former publicity director for non-profit arts organization. Bella P.O. Box 2123, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. (408) 423-9709.

#### PUT YOUR LOVE FOR MOTHER EARTH INTO ACTION!

The Habitat Restoration Team is a serious, regular corps of volunteers working to promote native diversity of species in our local wild-lands, 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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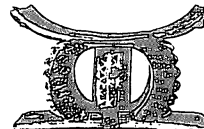
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The Merrymount Messenger is the newsletter of the TMA, an international network of politically active Pagans that work and network for:

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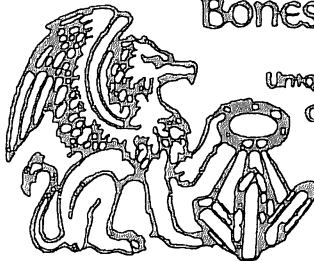
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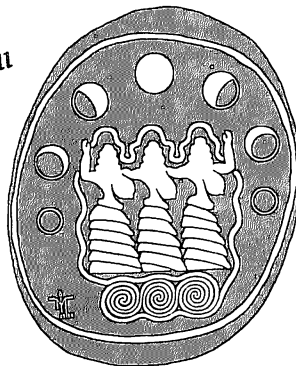
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**THE RECLAMING NEWSLETTER  
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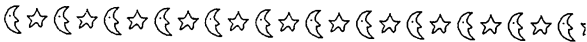
With this issue, we welcome two new Sonoma County bookstores to our growing list of distributors:

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**Clairelight Books**  
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If you know of other businesses in Petaluma, Santa Rosa, and West Sonoma County who'd like to carry the newsletter please call Anne Hill at (707) 823-8410.

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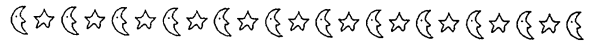
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# Wholesale NEWSLETTER Distribution

We are now set up to distribute to shops outside the San Francisco Bay Area.

Please send us your orders before each Solstice and Equinox for that season's issue.

Please order enough for the season; we can only ship once per issue.

For domestic destinations we will pay outgoing shipping costs.

For foreign destinations we request shipping cost be paid with order by check **directly convertible to U.S. currency**. Each newsletter weighs approximately 2.5 ounces.

We request sixty percent (60%) of sales receipts, to be paid with your order for the next issue.

Unsold back issues may be returned at any time within one (1) year for credit. Merchant pays return shipping costs.

Needed backissues (prior to Fall 1988) are available for \$2.00 per copy wholesale; non-returnable.

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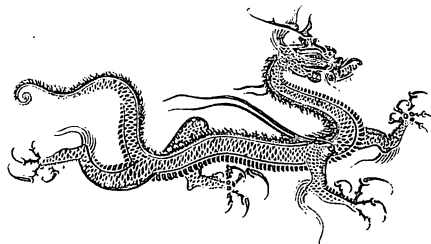
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Although we do print some free brief community service announcements, **if you're charging money for an event or service, please include us as a part of your advertising budget, for helping you make it happen.**

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Thank you again  
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**R**eclaiming 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.

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**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.

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