

A special feature from our archives at WeaveAndSpin.org

from the RQ Archives

RQ Issue #103 - Unfinished

Completed sections from the final issue of RQ!

We were working on issue #103 around 2012, when it became clear that finances would not cover another print edition. C'est la vie.

We share here the sections that were completed:

- Nonviolent Communication
- The Pearl Pentacle – a tool for personal transformation and one of Reclaiming's core classes
- Spirit Mapping: Sacred Cartography
- Electronic Music & Ritual
- Reviews Section



Find the previous 102 issues and much more on our RQ Archives pages:

WeaveAndSpin.org/archives

also available from the RQ Archives

Our Magical Ancestors – an Illustrated essay

How did we get here? Where are we coming from? We'll examine familiar and obscure sources ranging from magical to political to cultural, looking at what each offers to modern practicing Pagans.

This 40-page illustrated essay surveys our magical and spiritual roots

from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia to Gardner and Gimbutas.

A second section looks at activist and cultural roots.

“Presents an enormous amount of material in a very attractive and readable way.”

– Michael D. Bailey,
Associate Editor: *Magic, Ritual, & Witchcraft*

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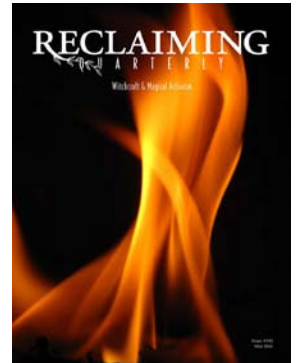
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Reclaiming Music CDs

Chants & Music available online



Reclaiming has released five albums of Earth-based chants and music.

Albums feature many favorite witchcamp chants, including songs by Starhawk and others, recorded by a mixed chorus plus conga, guitar, fiddle, and more.

Listen free at all streaming sites.

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Communicating Nonviolently

RQ presents four articles on Nonviolent Communication by Meagan Malachite and John Cunningham.

Nonviolent Communication is a worldwide movement started by psychologist Marshall Rosenberg. NVC aims to speak without judgement or blame, but rather to use language that arises from and evokes compassion and a deeper understanding of our shared humanity.

NVC is based on the principle that all humans share universal motivations, or needs, both for survival and for “thrive-al,” and that all our actions are attempts to attend to these needs, albeit sometimes in ineffective ways.

By focusing on needs in a challenging situation, we can find solutions to conflict that work better for everyone.



Nonviolent Communication

Fighting the Republican Terrorists

by *Meagan Malachite*

A few years ago I had an amazing experience. I was standing in line at the movie theatre with my partner, waiting to see *Avatar*, and the woman behind us started talking to me about politics.

It seemed we generally disagreed at first, but I did something I'd wanted to do for a long time — I used my empathy skills to try to connect with her fears and concerns.

With the tools of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) I was able to do this without indicating agreement or disagreement, simply giving her the experience of being heard. If I noticed points of agreement, I made sure to highlight those. Once I sensed openness in her, I occasionally inserted a question or perspective of my own that was somewhat challenging her ideas on how to deal with the country's problems — and I had the miraculous experience of being listened to instead of argued with! She met my respectful listening with the same.

By the time the line started moving to go into the movie, I had the sense that I had just had one of the most meaningful conversations of my life. I had dreamed of this for years, ever since I heard of NVC — using empathy to navigate political conflicts — but until that moment I hadn't really applied it.

This was partly because I tend to surround myself with friends who agree with me politically, so there was never a chance. It wasn't until a year and a half later that I would actually seek out this kind of challenging conversation.

This was when some local Tea Party activists were trying to pass Measure A in my town, which would have changed the election dates for city council members to a few weeks after finals — discouraging university students from swinging the vote towards the liberal end of the spectrum. My whole town was fired up about this: name calling was spewing from all sides, and my roommate who was working on the “No on A” campaign could vent for hours

I had the miraculous experience of being listened to instead of argued with – she met my respectful listening with the same

about the evils of the Republicans.

At the time I was partnering with Jonah, my boyfriend from paragraph one, to facilitate a group called Grounding Spirit, which was designed as a safe space for people to process their overwhelm and other feelings about the state of the world. After one particularly cathartic evening, it came to me that the best thing I could do was approach the Measure A proponents and attempt to converse with them nonviolently, to reconcile with each other's humanity even if we disagreed politically.

I went up to their booth at the next Farmer's Market and had a very pleasant interaction, despite firmly stating my intention to vote No on the measure. These people were actually quite friendly to me and I enjoyed talking with them.

One member, who was also the president of the university's Republican club, agreed to meet with me to discuss how we could make local politics more respectful and collaborative. Although nothing immediately tangible came of it, I feel that I made a very friendly acquaintance, and we continue to chat amicably with one another when we run into each other around town or on campus. I am hopeful that I can build more relationships such as this, and that this work can contribute to a peaceful revolution — one where, through dialogue, we — liberals, conservatives, anarchists, and everyone else — can admit that things are not working very well for most

people, and together find new ways of doing things.

I find myself discouraged when the same people who are opposing war with bombs and bullets abroad wage war at home with verbal attacks. I wonder how we will ever have peace if we don't find a way to respond to conflict peacefully, no matter how passionate we are about a cause.

When “fighting the Republicans” becomes as sacrosanct a mission as “fighting the terrorists,” I don't think we are really changing anything.

Meagan Malachite is a member of NorCal NVC's teaching team (norcalnvc.org) and a graduate of BayNVC's Leadership Program (baynvc.org). She blogs about Nonviolent Communication, ecopsychology, and social justice at tormentedandblessed.blogspot.com

Nonviolent Communication

Beginning a Practice in Empathy

by John Cunningham

In being human, each of us is gifted with universal human needs. An awareness of these needs grounds us in our common human experience and offers us a vocabulary to unlock a hitherto hidden dimension of human experience. It is a vocabulary that reveals and celebrates that each of us is simply in the process of becoming and doing the best we can.

From our first breath to our last, these human needs are rising: the need for meaning, understanding, connection; for safety, autonomy, integrity; the need to matter, to be seen, to be heard, as well as the profound need we have to serve life, to enrich life and to contribute to others; and, of course, the need to play. These needs come to presence in, and form a vocabulary for our becoming. They are alive within us at all times and stir us to action. As we gain literacy in reading these needs, we see with new eyes.

Our feelings are rooted in our needs and let us know how our becoming is going. They ground us in the present and, with practice, can become cognitive, a way of self-knowing. Together with needs, they form an archetype of human experience. As we practice Compassionate Communication, we discover that when seen in terms of our feelings and needs, we feel understood and connected. In that, empathy awakens.

We can choose how we listen to, and make sense of, what comes to us. If we reflect a bit, we see that our choices have quite different results. For most of us, we respond out of habit, and as onlookers to the other. Through Compassionate Communication, we have a choice to participate with them.

For example, suppose someone says to us, “Do you have any idea how thoughtless you’ve been?” What are our choices?

When I hear this comment, I can choose to respond by...

Taking it personally. I internalize the judgment, blame myself for being thoughtless, tell myself I should be more thoughtful, and begin a free fall toward shame, guilt and depression. I choose, “I’m at fault and to blame.”

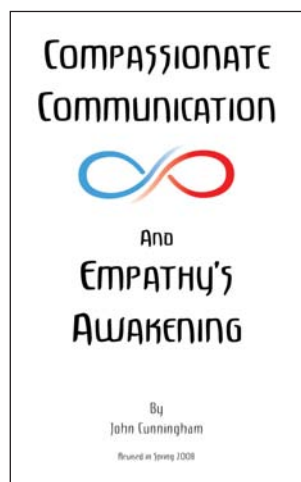
Concluding I’m under attack. I interpret what’s been said as a critical judgment and react defensively. “That’s not true. What about what you did!” I choose that the other person must be wrong and therefore to blame.

Or I have another option. I can choose to respond by...

Sensing my own feelings and needs. I can take a breath and connect to whatever might be stimulated in me when I hear what the other person is saying to me. I ask myself, “What am I feeling: frustrated, confused, scared? What am I needing: consideration, understanding, respect?” I choose to empathize with myself. This is self-empathy.

Sensing the feelings and needs of the other. I seek to sense what the person is feeling — frustrated? What the person is needing — consideration? I might guess to see if I understand them as they would like. If my guess “lands,” the person will feel understood. If not, they will say it again, or give me more information. It’s not about me guessing correctly. I can try again. I am choosing to empathize.

As we bring our intention into how we choose to participate in life’s arising, we cultivate the “inner faculty of allowing the impressions of the outer world to reach [us] only in ways [we] have chosen” (Steiner). We gain self-mastery.



The articles on this and the following page are excerpted from *Compassionate Communication and Empathy's Awakening* by John Cunningham.

This clearly-written 20-page introduction to Compassionate Communication is dedicated to the work of Marshall Rosenberg, author of *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*.

Available as a free download at:
www.empathy-conexus.com



Nonviolent Communication

A Choice Before Us

A change in the way of seeing means a change in what is seen

by John Cunningham

Compassionate Communication gives us a body of organizing ideas that enable us to see and read new meaning in our encounters with others and in the dialogues we have with ourselves. It gives us greater ability to foster understanding, connection, and compassion. That is its intention, goal, and possibility.

Compassionate Communication gives us tools to move from Onlooker Consciousness to Participatory Consciousness.

See preceding page for more information on Compassionate Communication.

ONLOOKER CONSCIOUSNESS

Being Right, At Odds, and Alone

INTENT TO CORRECT — Goal is to analyze situations, find what's wrong, and correct it.

LIFE-ALIENATING — Tends to alienate us from what is alive in the moment in ourselves, in others and in the world.

HEAD — Thinking, speaking and listening from the head. Making judgments.

DEFY OR COMPLY — Reacting to external pressure. Conditioned to authority.

ALREADY BECOME — What's already become is intellectualized into discreet 'Its' and bits.

EXTRINSIC MOTIVES — Conditioned to act for reward and approval, or to avoid punishment.

POWER OVER OTHERS — Creating relationships where one person exerts power over another through fear, guilt, or shame. Solutions are imposed.

MORALISTIC JUDGMENTS — What's good/bad, right/wrong.

"JACKAL" — Packs are organized based on the "top dog," enforcing a dominator/dominated hierarchical social structure, an us/them gang or faction mentality.

PARTICIPATORY CONSCIOUSNESS

Fostering Understanding and Partnership

INTENT TO CONNECT — Goal is to create mutual understanding, enabling all needs to be met.

LIFE-SERVING — Tends to reconnect us to what is alive in the moment in ourselves, in others, and in the world.

HEART — Thinking, speaking, and listening from the heart. Sustaining connection.

CHOICE — Self-initiated activity in line with my own feelings, needs, and values.

BECOMING — Life is a process of becoming. We participate in the coming-into-being of life.

INTRINSIC MOTIVES — Creating our own meaning and purpose while honoring the choices of others.

POWER WITH OTHERS — Creating relationships where everyone's needs matter and are considered. Lasting solutions address everyone's needs.

VALUE JUDGMENTS — Based upon values and needs.

"GIRAFFE" — Has the largest heart of any land animal; its long neck suggests courage, vulnerability, and a broad view; and its saliva digests thorns into life!

Nonviolent Communication

Anger -/- Violence

by *Meagan Malachite*

Today I went to see a counselor I am currently working with, and we talked about how, in my family, people are pretty scared of anger — so much so that if I express any anger, my aunts get pretty triggered and start talking about only wanting to be around happy people.

During our discussion I remembered an insight I had a few years ago, about how for most people anger and violence are so linked that they seem almost synonymous — so much so that I have caught myself saying, “I want to slap that person,” when I was angry, even though I didn’t really want to. I had just learned (mainly from another aunt who frequently made such statements) that that is how you express anger.

But if you look at it, they don’t have to be linked. They are not the same thing.

WORKING WITH INTENSE EMOTIONS

In doing social change work, part of the journey is working with intense emotions. Anyone who has gone to a big rally of any sort will know that. There is yelling on both sides, from the protesters and counter-protesters.

(Anger is not the only feeling present for activism — there are others just as important hidden underneath the anger, such as fear and grief and pain for all those who suffer at the hands of our current economic/political systems.)

Activists who embrace nonviolence have already realized that although they are angry, they don’t want to express it in ways that perpetuate more and more pain.

We tend to think, though, that violence is only a physical act. However, most activists would agree that when a president gives an order for bombs to be dropped on civilians living near an alleged terrorist hideout, the president was being violent. He did not participate in the physical violence. His words led to it, along with the thought process that led him to think that bombing people was the best response to the situation.

Over the past seven years I have become convinced that how we think about conflict, as well as every word we utter, has a profound impact on the degree of violence we experience in our lives and in the world. That is why I am so inspired when I sit with a group of people who have committed themselves to the path of

Nonviolent Communication, for example the NorCal NVC Steering Committee, of which I am a part.

When I sit in a circle with these people, whether for empathy or business, I sometimes get this thrilling feeling that is a cousin to falling in love — the thrill of having hope for the world. This is because I have seen how we respond to conflict nonviolently, or at least try our damndest, with each other and others in our lives.

If what is true on the microcosm is also true on the macrocosm, then forming more circles of people such as this gives me hope for a miracle.

For information on Meagan Malachite’s work, see first article of this section.



SPIRIT MAPPING

CREATING A SACRED CARTOGRAPHY TO EXPLORE THE WORLDS

by Donald L. Engstrom-Reese

Recording my journeys throughout the Worlds takes many forms. I have come to most commonly use prose, poetry, images, and spirit mapping. I particularly enjoy spirit mapping.

I first started to explore spirit mapping in the late 1980s and early 1990s. I had come across photos of ancient picture maps recording shamanic trips into a variety of different realms while researching the tribal spirit arts of the northern polar circumference people. These sites were not just limited to the Arctic. There appeared to be sites with spirit maps around the world: South Africa, Siberia, the American Southwest, Japan, Australia, and Scandinavia.

The very idea that one could make a map which could help guide someone else to a site in the spirit realms that one had visited intrigued me. I began to work on a set of symbols and a mapping system to share with my communities. This project, I hoped, would give us yet one more tool to share our adventures and growing

understandings of the multiverse. Through the sharing of the explorations and escapades of many folks, those symbols have and are continuing to grow and blossom. A way to share a sacred cartography of the worlds is once again an evolving art form and is thriving in Midgard.

I am still actively practicing the arts of spirit mapping regularly. Here are a few examples of my own spirit maps.

If you are interested in those symbols and in joining us on this adventure, please go to:

www.wearewalkinginbeauty.org/Walking_in_Beauty/Spirit_Mapping_Symbols.html

You may also like an installation piece by my dear friend and art partner Philip Blackburn and myself that we called "Spirit Maps: A Learning Project," at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=_WrGvfKMyVM

I would be delighted to hear about your experiences with spirit mapping. I would also like to see your spirit maps and any symbols that are coming your way. This cartography will only

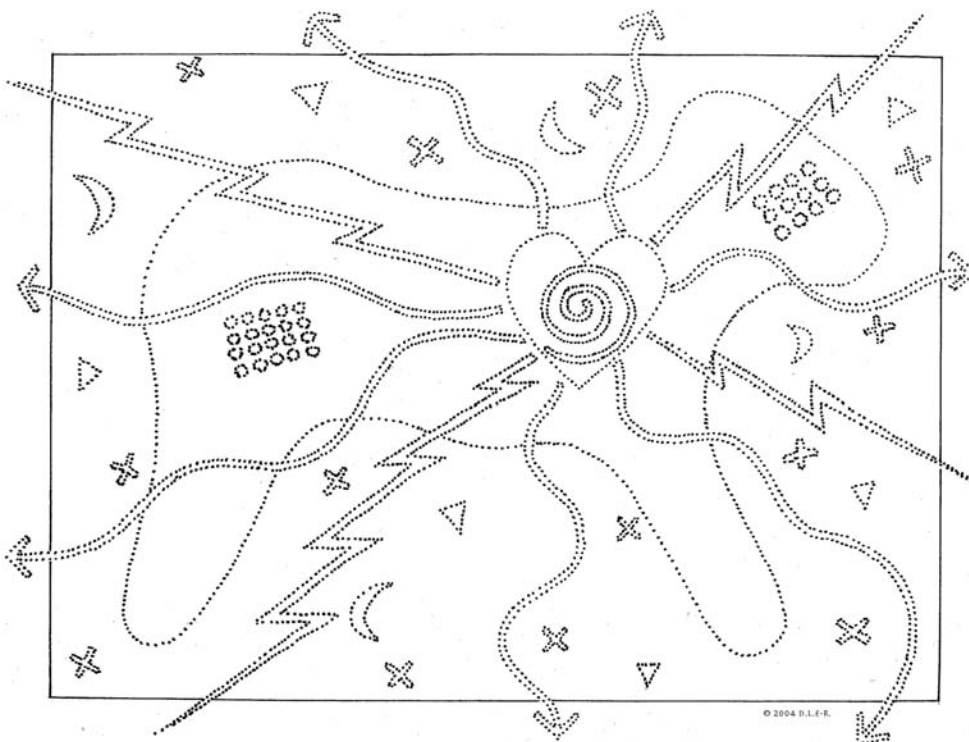
continue to thrive and flourish as we feed and tend it, tweaking it to meet our own and our communities' needs.

May we all dare to dwell in beauty, balance, and delight!

Bless the Bees!
Bless the Bears!
Bless the Cherry Trees!

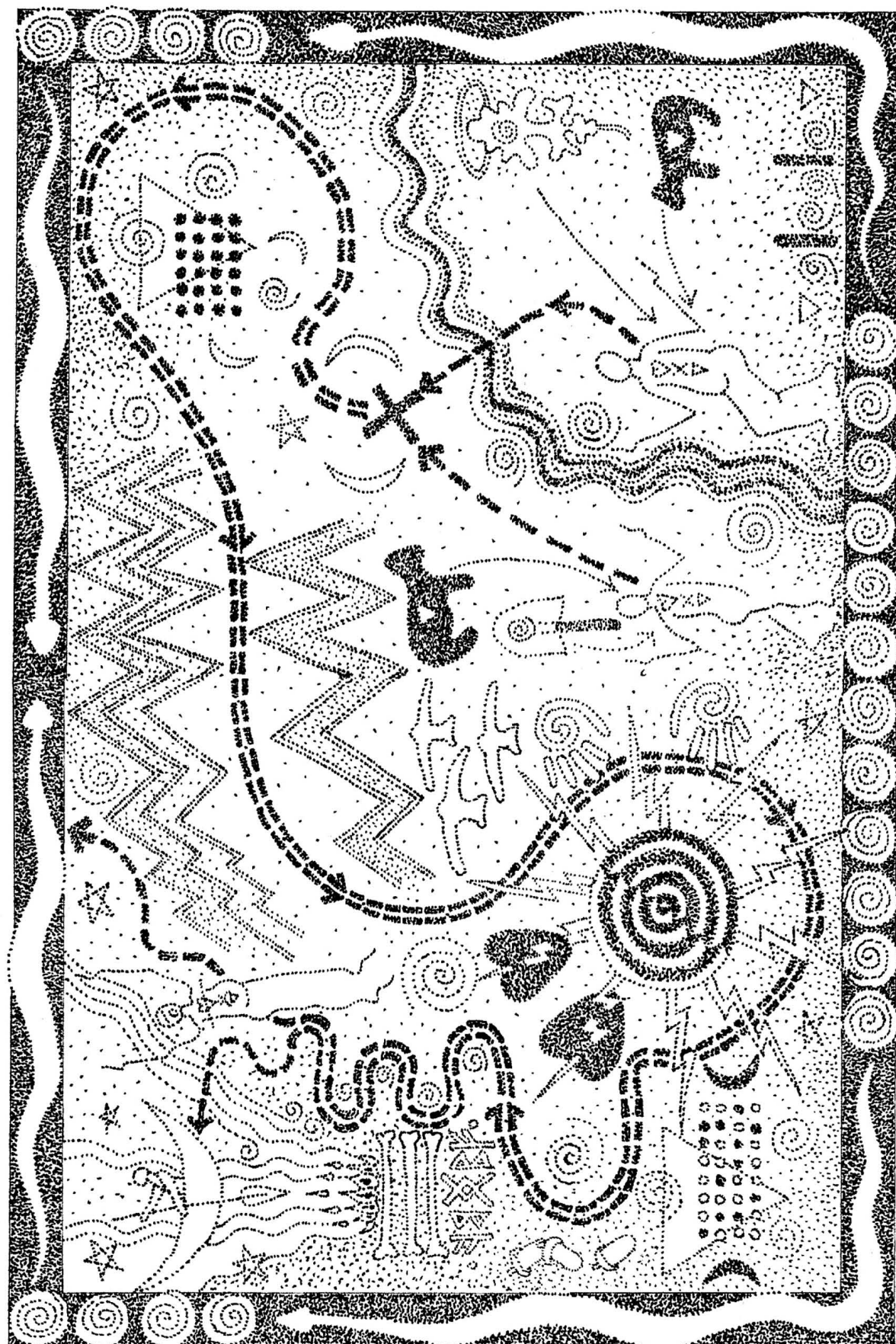
Journeying Out From the Sacred Heart of Grandmother Bear

Donald L. Engstrom-Reese actively explores a living blend of Queer Spirit, witchcraft, Heathenry, and other primal magics, hand in hand with pers husband Mark, while dwelling in their home (Hector House) rooted in the sacred lands and holy waters of the Upper Mississippi Valley.

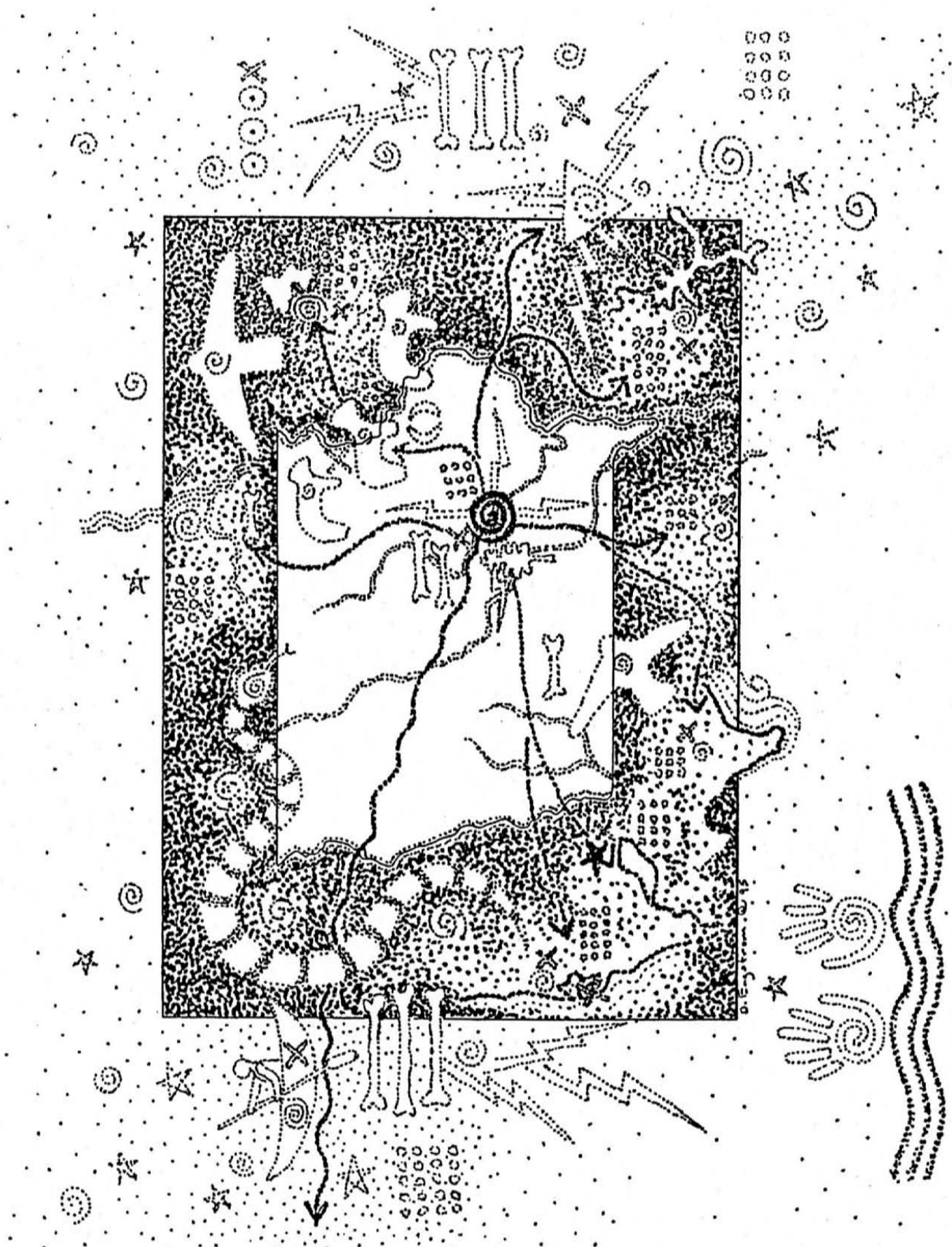


Journeying Out from the Sacred – by Donald L. Engstrom-Reese

More Spirit Map images on following two pages



Spirit Mapping: A Widow's Journey Begins – by Donald L. Engstrom-Reese (see page 34)



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Spirit Mapping: Searching for a New Home - by Donald L. Engstrom-Reese (see page)

from the RQ Archives

Pearl Pentacle Features

Theme section from the final issue of RQ!

The Pearl Pentacle is a tool for personal transformation and one of Reclaiming's core classes, taught in the Bay Area and other communities.

Adapted from the Feri Tradition, the five points of the Pearl Pentacle as currently taught in Reclaiming are:

Love (Head)

Law (Right Foot)

Wisdom (Left Hand)

Liberty (Right Hand)

Knowledge (Left Foot)

Three interviews and articles with Seed, Robyn, Gwydion, Rose, and Brook convey some of the mystery and magic of working the Pearl Pentacle.

This class is also taught online at WorldtreeLyceum.org

Download PDF or read online: WeaveAndSpin.org/pearl-pentacle/

also available from the RQ Archives

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How did we get here? Where are we coming from? We'll examine familiar and obscure sources ranging from magical to political to cultural, looking at what each offers to modern practicing Pagans.

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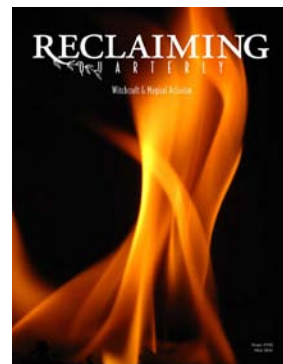
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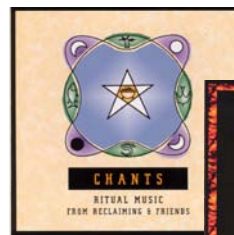
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The Pentacle of Pearl

An RQ feature coordinated by George Franklin & Abel Gomez

The Pearl Pentacle is both a tool for personal transformation and one of four Bay Area Reclaiming core classes — see below for more on core classes.

Reclaiming's Pearl Pentacle class, like the Iron Pentacle that preceded it by a few years, was adapted from Victor and Cora Anderson's work in the Feri Tradition of Witchcraft.

The five points of the Pearl Pentacle as currently taught in Reclaiming are: Love, Law, Wisdom, Liberty, and Knowledge. Some of these points have other attributes as well.

The interviews on the next several pages convey some of the mystery and magic of working the Pearl Pentacle.

What is Pentacle Work?

Pearl Pentacle classes focus on each of the points in turn, devoting a session each to Love, Law, Wisdom, Liberty, and Knowledge. The work might include discussions, meditation or trance, embodied exercises, games, dyad or small group encounters, singing and chanting, etc.

We also “run the pentacle” through our bodies. The five points correspond to the head, hands, and feet. If we stand with hands and feet outstretched so we form a star, we begin from head/Love and send a ray of energy to right foot/Law, then back to left hand/Wisdom, across to right hand/Liberty, down to left foot/Knowledge, and back to the head to complete the cycle.

Begin by grounding and centering your own energy. Then let it rise to a point just above your crown so you can feel it floating like a small ball of colored light, like an iridescent pearl. Focus on “Love.” After a short bit, let that energy drop on a breath to just above your right foot. Focus on “Law.” Then across the body to left hand/Wisdom. And so on.

When you have run 3-5 cycles and have returned again to head/Love, run the energy around the outer ring – head, left hand, left foot, right foot, right hand, head. At each point, focus on the corresponding pentacle point. End again on head/Love.

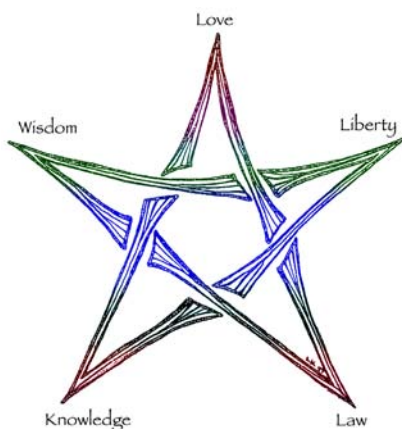
Finish by returning your energy to your center. Ground excess energy by touching the floor or your own center and breathing.

Pearl Pentacle Magic: the Oyster Trance

One common Pearl working is the Oyster Trance. We journey to the depths of the ocean to explore how the oyster anchors itself, how its body is shaped, how it feeds, how it lives.

A pearl begins to develop when an irritant penetrates the oyster's shell. It attempts to expel it. If this fails, the oyster secretes layer upon layer of nacre, gently washing the wound over and over again. Eventually the irritant is completely coated with nacre, accepted, and transformed into a precious pearl.

In the same way, we learn to work with our own irritants and wounds, whether from the outside or from within, gradually transforming them into our own unique pearls.



What is a Core Class?

Core classes are the basic curriculum of Reclaiming, laying the foundation for advanced magical work.

Bay Area Reclaiming core classes:

- Elements of Magic – an introductory class in Reclaiming-style magical practice.
- Iron Pentacle – Sex, Pride, Self, Power, Passion.
- Pearl Pentacle – Love, Law, Wisdom, Liberty, Knowledge.
- Rites of Passage – plumbing the unconscious via dreamwork, trance, and story.
- Tending the Community Temple.

Although each offering varies, there is a basic curriculum for each class.

Over the years there have been other classes suggested as core: Power and Mystery, Pentacle of the Great Turning, Advanced Elements, deity-based classes, priestessing skills, and more.

If you want to see any of these classes offered, contact the CRAFT teachers cell, which offers classes and workshops in the greater Bay Area and around California.

You can find complete class listings at www.Reclaiming.org/classevents/ — or email quarterly@reclaiming.org

Reflections on the Pearl Points

Men's Pearl Pentacle class ♦ San Francisco 2010

Love

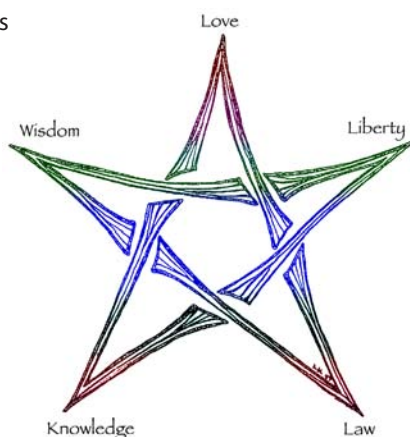
My Law is Love unto all beings
Affection
My Love is poured out upon the Earth
Trust
Passionate
Nurturing
Divine
Aphrodite
Eros

Liberty

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness
Liberation
Free Choice
Free Speech
Transformation
Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose
Power-with

Wisdom

Insight
Intuition
Gnosis
Athena
Discernment
Integrity
Wisdom of Fools
Earth Wisdom
Paradox



Knowledge

Know myself in all my parts
Know thyself
How do I know what I know?
Gnosis
Arcane knowledge
Tree of Knowledge
Common Knowledge

Law

Respect
Before the Law there came a man from the country...
Dharma
Law of Gravity
Consensus
Law of Threefold Return
Murphy's Law
Jupiter
Do as thou wilt is the whole of the Law

Pearl words harvested from Men's Pearl Pentacle class, San Francisco, Spring 2010: Gwydion, Alphonsus, George, Jason, Michael, Chionesu, Jonathan, Kevin, Henri, Ross, Abel, Leif, Mark. For more information contact quarterly@reclaiming.org

the energy of deep healing ...

... to be present with our wounded places ...

... oceanic ... the full moon ... deep mother energy

An RQ interview with Seed

How/when did you start working with Pearl? What draws you to it?

I was introduced to the Pentacle of Pearl in the mid 1990s as a Reclaiming initiation challenge: to run the Pearl Pentacle every day for a month and a day. Once I experienced its power, I kept on running it every day for over a year.

My initiation took several years, and during that time the Pearl Pentacle became a “boon companion,” a medicine. It sank in so deeply that I didn’t know if I was running it or it was running me – I would just recognize it continually arising.

It seemed to be laid out so beautifully — the points matched the natural way that my thoughts arose and my spirit worked in the world.

Was Pearl a core Reclaiming class at that time, or did you help introduce it into Reclaiming?

At that time it was not a core class, but it was being taught occasionally. I had taken it with Beverly Frederick, and others were teaching it. I was one of those who supported it becoming a core class. It is such a lovely balance to the Iron Pentacle, which was already a core class.

Tell us about your early work with pentacles.

I came to pentacles as a student, as an initiate. I stepped into a tradition that was already teaching pentacles. I accepted them on their face and began working with them. Those who studied directly with Victor and Cora Anderson may have a deeper sense of the origins of the pentacle practices.

What came to be meaningful to me — a personal meaning — is that the five-pointed star is such a deeply potent form in nature, and for us as humans.

A great number of the foods that we eat, the fruits and vegetables, are from plants with five-pointed flowers: berries, apples, pears, cherries. It makes sense that the pentacle is a symbol of abundance, nearly essential to the worship of the feminine divine.

The five-pointed star flipped, with point at bottom, is the sign of the horned god, much maligned by Christian culture. This is another primordial symbol of nurture and abundance — the hunt.

The human body itself is a five-pointed form. So, it makes so much sense that to honor ourselves and to honor the abundance and fertility of the Earth, we would be drawn to work with the five-pointed star.

What does working the Pentacle of Pearl mean to you?

Pearl energy is the energy of deep healing — the ability to be present with our wounded places in such a way that we can reclaim them and turn them into jewels. It feels very oceanic, with the influences of the the full moon, of the deep mother energy.

When and how have you found it useful? Do you have specific Pearl practices?

The Pearl Pentacle is inside all of my practices. This is one of the beauties of Pearl — I’ve never had to set it aside. Certainly, whenever there is crisis in my life, Pearl tends to arise. At these times, it is mainly a tool for contemplation and for clarity. Holding the crisis in each point in turn: How is love manifesting in this situation? How are the laws of human emotion and of nature shaping it? What wisdom is being revealed? What possibility/liberty is opening up? What knowledge is gained and how can it be of service?

What is the relationship between the Pearl and Iron Pentacle?

Iron Pentacle energy tends to be brighter, more jagged — it evokes individual power, how we show up in the world. Pearl is more about embracing and integrating this power. It’s often said that Iron is more about

continued on next page



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the individual, and Pearl about being in healthy community. I think Pearl is also deeply individual, and Iron at its best is a blessing for community. There's a universality to both.

Some have said that Pearl as a new-agey, "goody-goody" Pentacle – I completely disagree. There is plenty that is challenging in each of the points of the Pearl Pentacle, as there is in the deep ocean and deep mother energy. We teach it in a way that plumbs those resonances, working with the irritant, the piece of grit that creates the pearl, and with the challenges of compassion.

Some teachers feel Iron should be taught before Pearl, but that hasn't been my personal experience. I've taught Pearl first and found it to be a complete working. I have observed that sometimes when people have taken Iron, they are eager for Pearl as a balm. I feel that anyone who wants to study either one would benefit.

How do you run the Pentacle-points?

There are so many ways to run pentacle energy! Here, it's good to mention that within Reclaiming, there are differences in the order in which the points are named. The way they are named in *The Spiral Dance* is Love, Law, Wisdom, Power, Knowledge, and this is how I was taught them.

Another permutation reverses the positions of Wisdom and Knowledge. I find it really evocative to place Wisdom before Knowledge. Our culture has such a bulimic relationship to knowledge. We seem to feel, as a culture, that we need to have "ingested" all kinds of data before we eventually come to wisdom. It can be useful to first explore our own wisdom – to know what is calling to our spirit and what is deeply and most important, in order to then know what to study, what knowledge we want to gather and to share.

The word "wisdom" comes from a root meaning "to see," close in meaning to the word "vision." This is an exciting way to run Wisdom energy. I like

running Knowledge as "service." At the end of the road, what is worth sharing with the world?

More recently, the point named "Power" has been taught as "Liberty." I have begun to teach it this way. We explore "choice" within Liberty. The word "choice" goes back to roots meaning "to enjoy" and "to taste," or "gusto." I love linking liberty/choice to intuition, to what feels and tastes healthful and good.

What are some skills and techniques you use to strengthen and balance the points?

We use trance, story-telling, healing, shadow work, enactments, scrying, an ddivination, among other techniques. Healing work comes in more with Pearl than with Iron. The specific exercises arise out of the energy of the points themselves.

Any "cautionary tales" from your experience?

To me, the energy of Pearl is like a tonic herb – there are certain plants that are just good for people. I guess if you did nothing but run Pearl, it might be a little out of balance. If someone were running Pearl as a watery, deep energy, and what they needed was to balance with fiery, bright energy, they would need to create that balance. Each of us is so unique in our needs and our creative paths. That said, the Pearl Pentacle is a wonderful tool, a deeply healing practice.

Seed has been teaching Reclaiming classes in the Bay Area since 1995. Her teaching is characterized by warmth, mischief, sensuality, and emotional depth. She has been involved in community building in many forms, including providing open circles, conflict resolution, mentoring, and working to promote inclusiveness throughout the community. She is an initiate of the Reclaiming tradition and a longtime member of the San Francisco Bay Area CRAFT Teachers Cell.

RQ interview by George Franklin.

Some thoughts from Rose May Dance

Why do you work the Pearl Pentacle?

I run both Iron and Pearl Pentacles daily. Pearl completes Iron. Not that Iron doesn't stand on its own, but Pearl is a nice complement. I work inside the pearl, as if I am the seed that the pearl is covering. It's like my aura.

What is your experience running Pearl energy?

It's a soft and beautiful practice. Pearl softens the Iron – it sits inside it. I get a 360-degree experience, like a round pearl. I like whorling with color – pearl is iridescent.

How does it fit into your daily practice?

My daily practice also includes the Ha Prayer. I send my breath to my aura and to my God-self. Living in San Francisco, my world often looks grey. It's easy to see this world as a pearl.

What do you mean by working "inside" the pearl?

Actually, I am inside and outside it at the same time. That kind of mystery appeals to me.

There is some variation of the Pearl points, How do you run them?

Instead of Knowledge I sometimes find myself saying "History." And I say "Liberation" instead of Liberty.

Any last thoughts?

I think it's good that we developed Pearl as a core class, but it needs to grow and have more practice.

Rose May Dance has a lifelong eclectic spiritual practice, and has worshiped the Goddess since 1979 (in Reclaiming since 1981). She is a devotee of the Laughing Goddess who lovingly spins the universe.

Pearl Pentacle

and the Roots of Reclaiming

An RQ interview with Gwydion

How and when did you start working with the Pearl Pentacle?

I was introduced to the Iron and Pearl Pentacles as part of Feri Tradition when I first began studying the Craft. Most of my work for the first five years focused more on working the Iron Pentacle. I explored the Pearl Pentacle occasionally during that time; I think that you can't help but work the Pearl Pentacle when you are working Iron. I think it happens whether or not we are conscious of it.

My work with it really deepened when Thorn Coyle and I began teaching Pearl Pentacle together more than fifteen years ago. When I work on teaching a topic, the process challenges my perceptions about it and transforms how I work with it. Part of the teaching process for me is figuring out how to articulate my thoughts and experiences with it, which in turn deepens the work for me.

What does the Pearl Pentacle mean to you? What is its special significance compared to other magical tools?

Someone at work recently described the process of self-reflection and self-improvement as being like that of a pearl. It is taking qualities or experiences of ourselves which we find unpleasant or uncomfortable and choosing to accept even these aspects as part of our being (even though we might wish we could just spit it out); of allowing ourselves to be transformed by it and ultimately to find strength in it. For me, this is what Pearl Pentacle is all about. It is a tool to

I was taught that Reclaiming has four core roots: the psychology movement, anarchist politics, feminism, and Feri Tradition

aid us in this work of self-reflection and self-improvement.

When and how have you found it useful? How is it different from the Iron Pentacle?

For me, Pearl Pentacle is a tool that helps me in my relationships with others, whereas Iron Pentacle helps me in my relationship with myself. Of course there is overlap, but when I'm having difficulty in my relationships with others I eventually manage to remind myself that I can only change myself and how I choose to interact with others.

Pearl Pentacle has given me the tools and courage to face myself and be willing to make changes. I'm not always able to do this right away, but eventually I come back to "what do I own in this situation, what can I do differently?"

In preparing for a class on the Wisdom point, I read an ancient proverb that said that wisdom comes to those who risk making mistakes and then learn from those mistakes.

What is its significance within the Reclaiming tradition? Why is it considered a core Reclaiming class?

I was taught that Reclaiming has four core roots: the psychology movement, anarchist politics, feminism, and Feri Tradition. I see our work in Reclaiming with the Pearl Pentacle being influenced by both the psychology movement and Feri Tradition.

The Pearl Pentacle is inherently a tool of the Feri Tradition; it comes to us through the teachings of Victor and Cora Anderson.

The psychology movement influences this work through its strong focus on self-exploration, reflection, and self-improvement. This gets back to the concept that Pearl helps us in this work of self-reflection and self-improvement.

This, too, is an integral part of Feri Tradition, not only through the use of the Pearl Pentacle, but also the Iron Pentacle, and work with our shadow selves. Much of the focus of the core work we do in Reclaiming and Feri is actually focused internally on our own healing, empowerment, and self-improvement.

I see the Iron Pentacle as "how do I relate to myself" and the Pearl Pentacle as "how do I relate with others." I realize that this is an over-simplification because both are inextricably intertwined, like a ten-pointed star or web; you pull one string and the entire system is affected. But if Pearl influences how I relate to others, through love or laws for example, then the Pearl

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Pentacle also influences or acts as a tool to help us in the Reclaiming roots of anarchist politics and feminism.

Let's take feminism first: at its core principles, feminism is about how we value, respect, and treat one another regardless of our differences (especially those of gender and sexuality).

Ultimately, it is the manifestation of the principles of equality and liberty. And yet, how can we achieve these principles if we do not reflect on our own relationships with ourselves and with those around us? How can we treat our co-workers, lovers, friends, and family with respect, seeing their inherent value (even when we are angry with them or feeling hurt by them) without expanding our own capacity for Love? Through our own work on self-liberation and learning from our own mistakes, we gain the capacity for compassion and empathy.

Reclaiming's structure and decision-making process derive from roots in anarchist politics. In order for a network of semi-autonomous cells connected to a central hub to work, there needs to be trust, empowerment, and acting from a place of stewardship of the community. Through the Pearl Pentacle, we are able to come to agreement on our core values and make agreements on the processes we will use to work together.

Can you share a few Pearl stories from working with other teachers in the Reclaiming and Feri Tradition?

One of my favorites is the Devotional Dance movements that Thorn created for each of the Pearl Pentacle points. These are simple repetitive movements that really help to anchor each of the points, the qualities of those points within our bodies.



This transforms abstract concepts into physical manifestations, which I think makes the points more accessible.

Another favorite is some of the workings Alphonsus, George and I did in the Men's Pearl Pentacle class (San Francisco 2010). We worked to push the boundaries and take risks even when one or more of us found the exercises challenging and uncomfortable. I found it challenging, healing, and powerful to be playful, physical, and intense in a diverse group of men.

What are some skills for strengthening and balancing the points? How do you strengthen the weaker points?

I think the best way for strengthening and balancing the points

is simply to run the energy through the points and around the circle on a regular basis. Not only does this work to strengthen and balance the points, I also find that it energizes me.

Anything else you'd like to share?

I once heard someone in Reclaiming say that what is missing in our tradition, our community, is the power of forgiveness. I've often felt this way

as well. I think Pearl Pentacle is a strong tool to aid us in the power of forgiveness for it teaches us that though we take risks and may fail, we learn from those mistakes and act differently. Through this process we gain the knowledge to discern when we are wrong. Through our own empowerment we gain the strength and courage to apologize to those we may have hurt, and forgive our selves and others.

Gwydion is a queer witch and a science geek. He is a Reclaiming priest and has taught Reclaiming classes,

workshops, and witchcamps locally and abroad for nine years. Gwydion has been a member of the San Francisco Bay Area Reclaiming community for over 20 years.

RQ interview by Abel Gomez.

For further reading

- *Evolutionary Witchcraft*, by T. Thorn Coyle
- *The Spiral Dance*, by Starhawk
- "Reclaiming and the Iron Pentacle" — articles from the RQ Archives — visit www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org

Pearl Pentacle:

Our Collaborative Creation

by Ravyn Stanfield

Natural pearls occur when a grain of sand or debris is trapped inside a mollusk and is rubbed against the inside of the shell, irritating the soft inner sanctum. Eventually, the edges of the particle are smoothed and an iridescent pearl is formed. The pearl's energy is also associated with the moon and mirrors, the ocean, the shimmering interior faces of sea shells and all reflective surfaces.

The Pearl Pentacle is a teaching of both the Reclaiming and Feri traditions. Many say that this Pearl energy resonates at the same musical notes as Iron Pentacle, but one octave higher. Sex vibrates up to Love, Pride vibrates up to Law, Self vibrates up to Knowledge, Power to Liberty and Passion to Wisdom. Pearl has been said to be the work of many lifetimes. The energies of Pearl have more potential to be shared amongst people who hold similar values. Iron creates a solid core of a being, an individual star in the body of the Star Goddess. Pearl creates a collective vision of the way that we can live with each other, many star beings shining in the same galaxy. It is softer but in some ways, stronger and more absolute.

The longer we work the Iron Pentacle, the more responsibility we

Editors' Note – this article works the Pearl Pentacle with the Knowledge and Wisdom points reversed from the diagram on page 38: Knowledge in the left hand and Wisdom in the left foot.

Like the Moon

Like the moon reflects the sun

You and I reflect each one

There are forces we cannot see

They're inside us,

They remind us to be free

– Jeffrey Alphonsus Mooney

take for our own lives and choices. We begin to stop shaming ourselves; we also discontinue blaming others for our own feeling states. We recognize our attempts to maneuver other people and contrive all aspects of our environment. We take charge of our resentment and search for the places where we can forgive the harm that has been done to us and find ways that we can thrive. The intention of Iron Pentacle is to stop submitting our will to others; it is also about relinquishing our need to control what others do. Instead, we learn to formulate statements about ourselves, to request that our needs be met rather than make demands of others or ignore our own needs entirely.

After we have run the Iron Pentacle energies in our bodies and lives for some time, it is common to notice disturbances, and perhaps conflict as we change familiar patterns that have kept us small and safe. It is not always easy. Keeping a strong connection to Sex and the life force can fluctuate with changes in health, weather, work, relationship.

As we realize our Pride in our abilities, we may take on more visible efforts and receive difficult feedback from the public that sends us into a shame cycle. The multiplicity of roles we take on in our lives exert pressure upon us that can make it difficult to show our true core Selves all the time. If we choose to exert our influence, we may get some push back from those around us who are not used to our full Power or fear that we may be trying to dominate them. When we express our Passions, we may experience disappointment when things we care about are not shared in exactly the way we had hoped. Staying current with the Iron Pentacle energy is a process, not ever a finished product. As we integrate Iron, we will fumble and bumble, hurt the feelings of others and get lost. Iron makes us whole and human; it does not make us perfect. Perfection is not ever the goal.

I experience Iron Pentacle energy as the progression from Birth to Love--- our gift, our human birthright. When we work Iron, it hopefully leads us to love of self and others from a place of recognizing ourselves more fully. That Love initiates the Pearl Pentacle, and we gain experience of these Pearl energies through exasperation, mistakes, loss, and aging. I see Pearl pentacle as the progression of Love to our eventual Death- the Pearl energies of Love, Law, Knowledge, Liberty and Wisdom being some of the gifts we gain along the way if we are lucky.

If we continue to revisit our creation

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myth of the Star Goddess making love to Herself in the black mirror of space, we learn by heart that all creativity comes from self love and the dance with ourselves reflected in another form. Collaboration is a place to unearth new inspiration. We get out of our own heads and share space in the creative void, using the chemistry of two or more to shape something that we would not have formed by ourselves. Creative partnerships or group work can open us to worlds of possibilities that we would never have considered alone. Time in community can also create even more conflict, projection, competition, emotion and opportunities for growth and change. This is why we practice Pearl in community. It takes the irritation of other people being their imperfect selves and rubbing up against our imperfect selves to really polish our rough edges. When we dedicate to the Pearl Pentacle, we are willing to figure out what will work for all parties involved and care for ourselves at the same time.

LOVE

In Pearl, we begin with Love. This version of Love cracks the heart open; it's the way my being moves toward something and makes room for it, the welling up of tears in my eyes when I am truly touched. Love is the warmth in my belly or chest, the joy, communion and the ineffable magic inherent in contact with another being. This is not the love we find in greeting cards and it is not solely about romance. This Love is based in Iron and so it is fierce, not ethereal. When we have repeatedly connected with the life force of Sex to the point where it rises unbidden in our bodies, that life force energy can expand beyond our edges. We form energetic connections of Spirit between ourselves and other beings; we

begin to accept our interdependence.

With this kind of Love, we start to forgive ourselves for all the errors that we have made. We also let down our defenses, even when others make mistakes that hurt our feelings. We believe that we can recover from hurt and even thrive. Love unlocks the gates of the heart in a healthy way; we relinquish the thoroughfare that opens so wide that anything can overwhelm our being and the fortress that protects us from every harmful potential. Instead, our hearts have uncomplicated gates that



open and close as situations determine whether we use our boundaries more and less. Love occurs when we are strong enough to return to life force, to run it through the parts of life that feel painful, like death and loss. Love comes when we can get a sense of humor about our life struggles and the rigorous expectations we have of ourselves and others. Love appears when we are willing to act on the behalf of the life force and stand up for what is essential to us. Love is about the self interacting with another, whether this is an animal or plant ally or the relationship with our planet or another human. Love approaches when we restore the

flow of life force or Sex within and outside ourselves. Love claims our collaboration.

LAW

This energy of Love flows into Law. Law lives in the way that following our Pride creates a personal code of ethics, in the beliefs that we must follow for our health. Law expresses my private definition of integrity, as well as natural law, the inevitable cycles of life: birth/growth/harvest/death/rebirth. Law is about living in right relationship. This

Law is born in Pride, all that we can do and accomplish. We recognize our gifts and we begin to share them. We notice the events that happen to knock us off balance; we catch ourselves when we start to think obsessively about our mistakes. We no longer hold our past responsible for our limiting beliefs and we stop blaming others who do what we are afraid to do ourselves.

In the octave between Pride and Law, we develop

our own code of honor based on what helps us feel within our integrity and what encourages us to feel proud of our behavior. In Law, we strive for congruence between our actions and these codes. We are curious about the principles of other people and we ask questions about their motives. We describe the impact of others' actions and ask for reparation in a way that recognizes the worth of each person. We honor the places where other people cannot do exactly what we want and

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we are able to negotiate. This energy of Law is a Fire that we build and tend together so that it can warm us all. We do not necessarily hold all people accountable to our personal codes but we strive to find the agreements between ourselves where we can all benefit. We can collaborate within our communities here; what do we accede is vital; what is inevitable? How will we base our lives on the natural laws we experience? What are the agreements that we celebrate together? What are the boundaries that we hold sacred? How could accountability to each other feel supportive of our individual talents and Pride? Law helps us determine when we prevent someone from doing harm if we see actions that do not acknowledge the laws of our planet or the worth of each human.

KNOWLEDGE

Law flows upwards into Knowledge. Knowledge is the awareness in my bones, what I intuit, what I have spent time learning, my life's lessons. Knowledge includes my intellect but is not limited to this as there are many ways of knowing. Knowledge is the truth that I understand enough to speak/teach/impart it to another. We so often ask How do I know or When will we know? The work of diving deeply into Self and repeatedly asking the questions of who we are give us these answers by building trust in our bodies, our intuitions, our lessons. We acknowledge our shadow and our potential for acting unconsciously from fear. When we have this kind of knowledge rooted in the

Editors' Note – this article works the Pearl Pentacle with the Knowledge and Wisdom points reversed from the above workings: Knowledge in the left hand and Wisdom in the left foot.

self, we catch ourselves when we act from shadow. From the experience of realizing the Self, we construct Knowledge of the world. We integrate information and put it into practice.

Knowledge, like Air, is all around us and welcomes our inspiration and conspiracy with it to choose, teach and share it with others. When many people who know themselves come together and work on a project, it is refreshing. The conflicts and agitations that come up in the community have a much better chance of providing fodder for evolution. Knowledge spreads from the individual to the group: This is where we were successful, this is where we got stuck, this is how we moved beyond the conflict. Knowledge helps us move forward and answer our ancient questions of Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

LIBERTY

Knowledge moves through the heart and across the chest into Liberty. Liberty is the freedom from constraints, collective life force in motion, the transformation from solid to liquid to gas, unfettered power rushing. Sometimes it is even the way that knowledge allows us the ability to make another choice, sometimes it is our sovereignty. Liberty is not one person's magic and this can be incredibly challenging. The strange fabrication of uninhibited freedom to do whatever we want, whenever we want is not the kind of Liberty that we can ever realize if we expect to live around other beings.



Sometimes the work of Liberty is to negotiate our needs within the needs of others and compromise for the good of the whole. Sometimes, Liberty occurs when we refuse to release our beliefs completely, even when we hold a vision that seems unpopular. Liberty is sometimes asking the folks who oppose our views how we could better take their concerns into consideration. Other times, it is advocating for the desires of a group of allies who is not at the negotiating table. Other times still, it is admitting that we do not know what is best for anyone else unless we ask them.

As a result of time spent with Iron, we no longer inflate ourselves to control others nor deflate ourselves to please them. Our Power from within increases and so does our influence. We live in a world where people use power over to destroy the planet and feed their own greed. Is it any wonder that we are suspicious of Power itself? Yet, there are many places where we desperately need more Power being used for healing the damage on our planet, not less. When we learn to trust that our power with others is happening even if we are not in the physical proximity of our allies, we are on our way to Liberty. When we learn to use the Power that corresponds with our level of responsibility and

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allow our influence to benefit others, we adopt Liberty. When we listen to as many voices as possible, as well as the one within ourselves to make decisions, we are beginning to create the song of Liberty.

Liberty by definition is not the magic of one person, it is much more like an ecosystem. A tree and a lichen and a waterfall can all be powerful within the same ecosystem. A river and a rock wall and a great wind will negotiate their relationship over time, finding their roles and shaping each other. We have to trust that humans will cooperate in

trying to move things with our will; we no longer force things to go our way, instead we look for the leverage, the power points, the places where we can assist fruition or give into it. Wisdom invites us to surrender and rely on a watery flow that defies purely rational training. Wisdom comes through our life initiations, our passage from one state of being to the next. We acquire it at the end of the lifelong alchemical transmutation of our patterns; it is knowledge we have performed over a period of time. The more we pursue our Passion and have varied and deep encounters with life, the more Wisdom we receive.



this way again. We could do our parts to communicate lovingly and clearly and act in integrity with our Laws and use our Power to heal and create beauty. It seems more difficult these days to create societies based in Liberty, but perhaps we are just out of practice!

WISDOM

Liberty opens to Wisdom. Wisdom is the gift of following Passion to its end, the integrated and polished teachings of life experiences. Wisdom asks us to become an artisan of life, to develop the ability to honor mistakes as our best teachers. With the energy of Wisdom, we stop

Wisdom is best held in a group. No one person's life can offer them every single experience. The practice of listening to the wisdom of the group before making a decision is one we could stand to recreate in our communities. We can also give ourselves the opportunity to sit a little longer with our emotions before we speak to others, crafting responses that are based in our wisdom and offered with Love. What might change about our feedback to each other if we were involved in that level of magic?

And Wisdom surges back to Love and the Pearl energy streams through us unbounded and vast as

we move through this cycle together, building and reforming culture. We keep experimenting with new faces of humanity and moving towards the predestined end of our lives. And after Death, both ours and the eventual collapse and rebirth of culture, we may be reformed back into the nourishing Dark of the Star Goddess. Death and Darkness will lay together until the spark of Love and Light that is our reflection in the curved mirror of space brings us into being again. Our orgasm and the reformation of matter from nothing creates us anew as Iron pentacle shaped humans, each of us singular stars in the gown of the Star Goddess.

We will never change the world with only our own efforts. The lone warrior is useful to push or direct us in emergency moments and in those times when we need one voice to offer us revelation or example. Collaboration is crucial. Our cumulative effect is rooted in our relationships with ourselves and our connection to each other and the Earth. Our irritations become valuable, even beautiful over time as they yield gifts. We can soften our hearts towards each other and still emanate our strength. Pearl reminds us to tell each other how amazing we are as often as we tell each other how much we could improve. It gives us the opportunities to laugh at ourselves, smooth our edges and like the moon, reflect the shining powerful light of the sun and influence the tides of our human changes. The tide will indeed be turning when we finally allow ourselves to grow in our shared power and glow in our lucent magnificence, each of us an iron star, each of us an iridescent pearl.

Gerri Ravyn Stanfield is a healer, author, and educator dedicated to liberating the sacred leadership abilities and super powers within each of us. Ravyn creates ceremony and ritual art, weaving poetry, music and performance into contemporary offerings of the human imagination. Visit www.gerriravynstanfield.com

...and a brief addendum...

After we finished production for this feature, we received two additional posts from Reclaiming teachers, which we include here.

An addendum from Rose May Dance

See short interview with Rose May Dance on page 40 of this issue. — RQ

I learned a lot about the Pearl from Reclaiming classes I took in 1980 and 1981. I remember my teachers, Star and Lauren Gale, arguing about which way everything went and that is where I heard Lauren say, “it is if the Goddess were drawing a pentacle on the front of your body.”

I think *The Spiral Dance* uses Knowledge on the left hand and Wisdom on the left foot, an edit because some early teachers thought Knowledge should come before Wisdom.

Now that I am older and perhaps begin to enjoy a bit of wisdom or at least perspective, I find Wisdom opens the way to Knowledge, which I work as “Knowing”. Anyway, the Reclaiming way is sort of “any way that works for you,” (Amusingly, in *The Spiral Dance* Star quotes Victor Anderson as saying something like “White Magic is pure poetry, Black Magic is anything that works!”)

In early Reclaiming classes, all our trances were inside a pearl inside and outside us. I feel my Pearl encircling neck, heart, breasts, and solar plexus.



Some thoughts from Brook

I was first introduced to Pearl Pentacle through Feri study, not through Reclaiming (though I was and remain, of course, very much Reclaiming in conjunction with Feri).

My mentors gave me the points and suggested that I run energy through my body-as-a-Pearl-Pentacle, and then meditate on each point in turn, doing this in invoking order. Pearl was never “described” to me.

I ran Pearl energy almost daily for about 6 months, I think. I did it consistently until the points developed deep personal meaning, solidified somatic meaning in my body.

Then I added an exercise I had read on a Feri list where one runs iron energy through each point in turn on one's body in invoking order, head/Sex, right foot/Pride, etc. Each Iron point is brought to a bright orange flame, as a piece of iron heated in a fire.

On the second pass, each orange, flaming, iron point is turned into a blue, pearl flame, from Sex to Love, from Pride to Law, and so forth, through an invoking pentacle-in-the-body.

I did this daily for 2-3 months. As the magic worked me, this series deepened not only my personal relations with Pearl but also revealed relationships between Iron and Pearl.

This Feri Pearl work was all done solo. It was a big change to start thinking about pearl work as group work, as community work. It was a big change to (somewhat) disconnect pearl from iron once again as a distinct body of work.

Another anecdote that may be of interest:

I was introduced to Pearl with Wisdom at the upper left point of the pentacle and Knowledge on the bottom left point.

Later, when I started to work with Reclaiming Pearl, I had to re-do these associations, as my co-teachers typically had these two points switched: Knowledge on the upper left point, Wisdom at the bottom left.

My associations built up over years with the flow of Pearl and with the relationship between Iron and Pearl points had to be reformed. During this same period, many Reclaiming folk changed Power, as I'd learned the upper right point (just like Iron), to Liberty.

Ah, back to daily pentacle work we go. “She changes everything...”

an advance section from our latest issue

Reviews from RQ 103

Here's an advance section from our upcoming online issue. Save-As to save to your hard drive. Pages should print easily.

The full issue will appear in later 2014, publishing faeries permitting. This section is ready now – so why hold it back? You'll find:

- Reviews In Brief – all sorts of books, music, video and film, social tendencies, and more – 25 words at a time!
- Trancers' Delight – Fabric and Rinse offer hundreds of hours of danceable, tranceable London-based house music.

As a special bonus, we've appended "Witchcraft and the Rave Scene" (RQ #79, Summer 2000). The article parallels the magic woven in Pagan rituals with the alternate environment generated in electronic raves.

This and lots more features – free downloads – visit ReclaimingQuarterly.org

You'll find updates on our latest issue plus downloads of recent issues at ReclaimingQuarterly.org/current.html



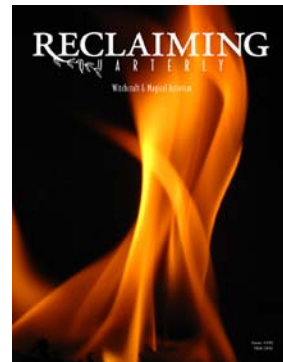
The dance floor at Fabric in London – home of tranceable dance music.

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Witchvox

Witches' Voice is the top networking site for Witches and Pagans online. Everything from religious liberties to the latest local ritual. Events are user-posted and come from every corner of Paganism. An inspiring site to browse. Visit www.witchvox.com

RQ.org

RQ.org carries photo-features and reports on grassroots activism and Pagan events, as well as reports on Witchcamps and other Reclaiming events. Our back-issue archives have dozens of magical and activist features. RQ.org's pages are print-friendly, so you can read offline too. Visit www.reclaimingquarterly.org

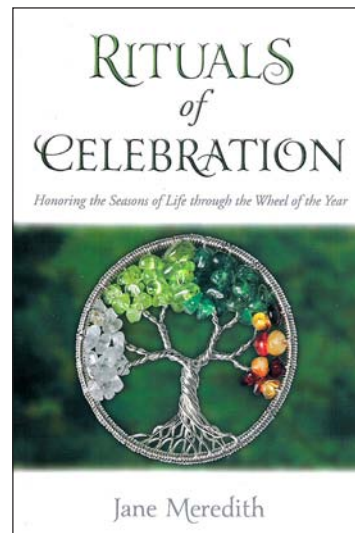
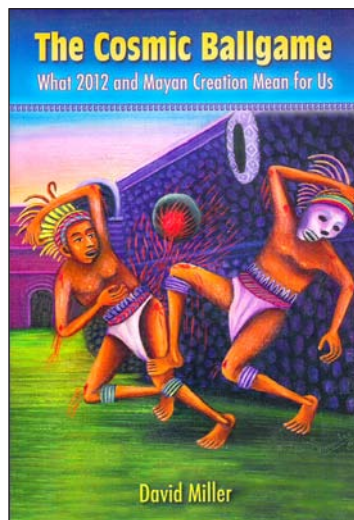
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READING MATTER

What Is The What by Dave Eggers. Eggers rewrites the very real tales of an extraordinary "lost boy" who fled the recent civil war in Sudan and spent years in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya before moving to the US. Hilarious, poignant, slapstick, nightmare, it's a story of love, death, more death, fate, and survival. Plus a ground level perspective on East African and global geopolitics.

Rituals of Celebration by Jane Meredith. Lyrical and practical accounts of creating a cycle of rituals celebrating the Wheel of the Year. Community and family activities as well as personal reflections make this a rich and multi-layered book.

The Cosmic Ballgame by David Miller. Reflections on the rituals of Mayan and American ballgames of creation, the dilemmas posed by the transformation from a Grandmother-honoring culture to a warrior hierarchy — and lessons for today.



Nature & the Human Soul by Bill Plotkin offers a coherent picture of "eco-centric" human development, integrating wisdom from many traditions into a "field guide for creating an elder, starting at birth." An inspiring and priceless contribution to those wanting to re-indigenize ourselves and our culture.

MUSIC/AUDIO

Higher Self by Rod Kinny (CD). Well-crafted, positive music by a sincere and tender singer. If you're looking for music that supports your positive visions, this is it!

Edda: Myths from Medieval Iceland by Snorri Sturluson (CD). Excerpts from Snorri's sagas set to Medieval arrangements — think Icelandic operetta meets Ren Faire instrumentals.

RAP WITH A HEART — 1990

RQ is lovin' on Mackelmore and Ryan Lewis and their hilarious, socially-positive hit ("Thrift Shop").

But when we heard a commentator gush that the duo might have changed rap history if they'd appeared 25 years ago, we had to stop and think about all the circa 1990 hip hop acts that did make music history, only to be buried by the corporate-funded "gangsta" trend. Check out these classic albums:

- Jungle Brothers *Done By the Forces*
- De La Soul *Stakes Is High*
- Brand Nubian *Everything Is Everything*
- Tribe Called Quest *Low End Theory*

VIDEO

Long-buried works by 1960s art-video pioneers: Nam June Paik, Bill Viola, Joan Jonas, Yoko Ono, Bruce Nauman, and many more — now on Youtube.

more reviews on next page

Books • Film • Music • Resources • & More . . .

THE END OF THE WORLD GETS PERSONAL — TWO RECENT FILMS

Hot on the heels of the apocalyptic megamovies of 2012 come a pair of small-scale, personal comic dramas. Funny, insightful, and humane.

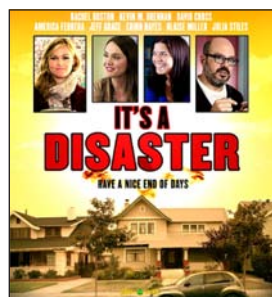
Seeking a Friend for the End of the World questions the meaning of culture and relationships in the face of the obliteration of all human life. Highlight: a disco whose patrons have moved in full time.

It's A Disaster joins eight friends trapped in a suburban house after a nerve gas attack.

A postmodern melange of non-sequiturs and crossed contexts, this is a film to watch at home with the rewind button in hand. Favorite lines:

A: I thought this conversation was hypothetical.

B: No, the conversation is real — the problem is hypothetical.



RADICAL HISTORY

The Suppressed History Archives

— coordinated by Max Dashu since 1970, SHA uncovers the realities of women's lives across time, challenging

notions of patriarchy and slavery, conquest and aboriginality. The site offers a grassroots, global perspective on women's history and how systems of domination perpetuate themselves. Visit SuppressedHistories.net



SOCIAL TENDENCIES

Gentrification (2013) — ongoing performance by San Francisco.

Residents of SF are witnessing an ongoing spectacle of forced relocations, new restaurants, and exodus motivated by evictions and buy outs that use the Ellis Act to force long-term tenants out of San Francisco. Activist response has been sporadic as solidarity has crumbled under neoliberalism (individual blame, corporate gain) and everyone scrambles alone to find their new home.

Thanks for Reviews to; Luke, Keith, Susan, Seneca, Jacques, Meagan, Frida, Baruch.

Consensus & Feminist Process

Free download at RQ.org

This 16-page handbook is distilled from direct action handbooks. Sections cover nonviolence in action and in our relationships, consensus and group process, affinity groups, working amid diversity, and confronting oppression.

Free download: www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org/web/handbook/

25 Years Ago: a Vintage Reclaiming Newsletter

Reclaiming Newsletter, Issue No. 32 - Fall 1988

Note on Page 1: "The Newsletter staff has sworn off its lamentable co-behavior and will not chase down late submissions. We really mean it this time."

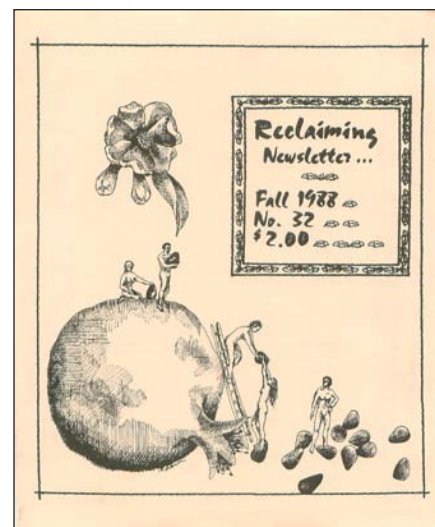
Feature articles included:

- "That Old Black Magic: Magical Ethics," by Judy Harrow
- "What I Learned on My Summer Vacation," by Rose May Dance
- "Singing Down the Rain," by Esther Frances
- "Trance," by Roy King
- "Hannah's Household Hints," by Hannah Clancy

Classes included Elements of Magic and Ritual as a Tool for Freedom.

Reclaiming Newsletter No. 32 was produced by the RQ production cell's distant ancestors, whom we honor here: Ann, Danielle, David, Karen, Laurie, Lisa, Rose, Sophia, and Roy.

You can order copies of the RQ Archives — Reclaiming Newsletters and Quarterlies as PDF files — for just \$25/10 issues! — www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/



RQ Archives — order copies online at www.reclaimingquarterly.org/archives/

fabric / FABRICLIVE

Trancers' delight — London nightspot releases 100+ DJ mixes

by *Malcolm Howell / RQ London Trance Correspondent*

Back in 2000, RQ ran a feature article by Riyana Lilyhawk called “Witchcraft and the Rave Scene” (RQ #79, Summer 2000). The article paralleled the magic woven in Pagan rituals with the alternate environment generated in electronic-music raves:

“Layers of music taper off and blend with one another, although that demanding rhythm — fast, driving drums — is always there... The floor is physically, noticeably moving beneath our feet. Everywhere is energy...”

Outside of raves and dance clubs, the heartbeat pulse of house music still has enchanting power. From bouncy techno to heavy industrial sounds, the pounding bass unifies a genre created specifically to draw us into altered states.

A lot of dance music is dominated by wailing vocals – a trance buzz-kill for some of us. For meditation, instrumental house music is the key. Two cities are pushing the edge of this genre – Berlin and London.

WHERE TO BEGIN?

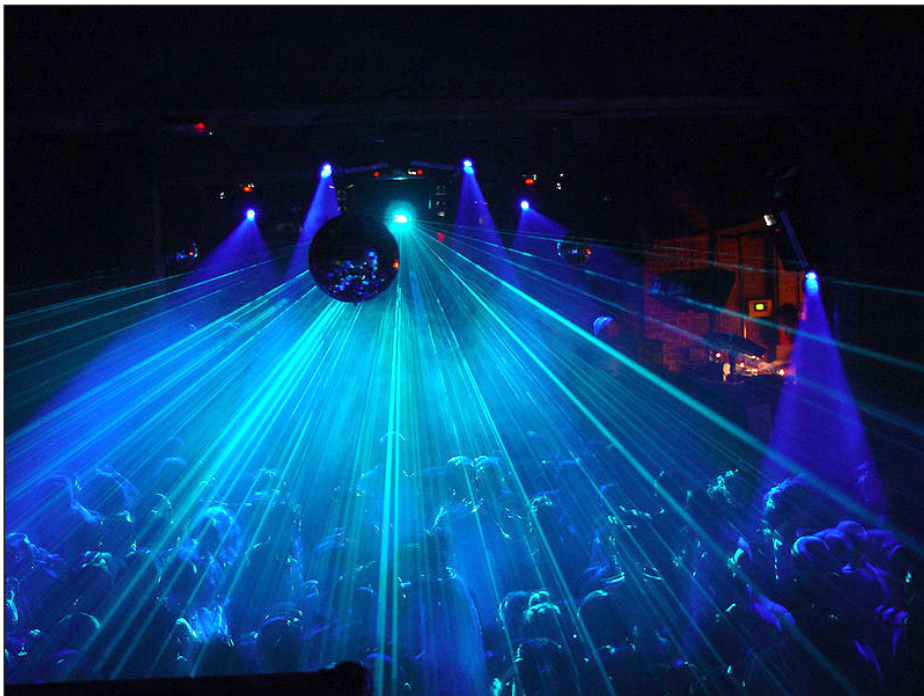
Thanks to the internet, there's no shortage of up-to-the-minute house music. Soundcloud blogs offer free downloads of the latest dance mixes – google “soundcloud house mix” for Berlin or London (or your own city).

But the sheer volume is overwhelming. How to get started?

One option is to find mixes created by proven dance DJs. Let the dancers vote with their feet.



Fabric nightclub, located on Charterhouse Street opposite Smithfield meat market in the London Borough of Islington.



London's Fabric nightclub has done the trance/dance world a great service by capturing dozens of premier DJs in hour-long mixes.

The independent club-owned label has released one album per month for over a decade (see next page) showcasing established and emerging artists.

The result is a stunning collection of 21st century dance music and experimental electronica at affordable prices.

CDs can be found in record stores with electronica sections or online — or join Fabric's download-of-the-month club for five pounds (under ten dollars US) per album, with older mixes at the same price.

More information and complete catalog online at fabriclondon.com

See next page for more on Fabric mixes.

fabric / FABRICLIVE

Trancers' delight — London nightspot releases 100+ DJ mixes

continued from preceding page

London's Fabric Nightclub (see preceding page) releases a monthly DJ mix.

Alternating their Saturday night house-music "fabric" series and Friday night's more experimental "FabricLive" CDs, the series now numbers over 130 releases spanning a wide range of electronic styles.

Here are some great mixes from the past decade.

FABRICLIVE: experimental mixes

Friday night's FabricLive shows are billed as an eclectic soundclash, mixing tempos and styles from hip hop through dubstep and drum & bass to indie and electro.

FabricLive 06: Grooverider — Grooverider, with roots in the late 1980s dance world, mixes turn-of-the-millennium drum-n-bass

FabricLive 42: Freq Nasty — cross-genre break beats, heavy on the bass

FabricLive 62: Kasra — up-to-date break beats, jungle, and experimental rhythms

FabricLive 64: Oneman — mix of old-school breakbeats and garage with more recent dubstep and house-crossover



fabric: house mixes

The Saturday night fabric shows focus on house music, with admixtures of techno, electro, disco, dub-techno, and anything else that fits the beat. The basic requirement seems to be that the mix be "Saturday night dance music."

Within that definition, the fabric series is amazingly diverse. Here is a small sampling:

fabric 27: Audion aka Matthew Dear — a multi-layered, polyrhythmic cut-and-paste symphony

fabric 34: Ellen Allien — graceful, noisy, hand-mixed melange from Berlin

fabric 39: Robert Hood — Detroit-born DJ spins hard-



edged techno and deep house

fabric 57: Agoria — weaves 70s funk-jazz with recent house

fabric 64: Guy Gerber — dreamy, layered sounds, ethereal vocals

fabric 66: Ben Klock — hypnotic yet unexpected, from techno gems to the latest Berlin house



RINSE FM — LONDON PIRATE RADIO WITH A LICENSE

Rinse FM, a one-time pirate radio station which now has a broadcasting license, provides London with cutting-edge electronic radio. Lucky London!

Thanks to the miracle of the internet, the rest of us can listen to selected podcasts. Favorite DJs here at RQ include Mark Radford, A-Plus, and Youngsta.

Rinse also produces a CD series featuring experimental mixes by Rinse radio hosts, each one unique.

Listen at 106.8 FM when you're in London, or visit their website — www.rinse.fm

a bonus feature from RQ #79

Trance & the Rave Scene

House music and Pagan spirituality? Raves and rituals?
Together in the pages of RQ?

As a special bonus with our house music reviews from RQ #103, we offer this classic article from 2000 – a feature by Riyana called “Witchcraft and the Rave Scene” (RQ #79, Summer 2000).

The article paralleled the magic woven in Pagan rituals with the alternate environment generated in electronic-music raves:

“Layers of music taper off and blend with one another, although that demanding rhythm — fast, driving drums — is always there... The floor is physically, noticeably moving beneath our feet. Everywhere is energy...”

Thanks to the internet, there’s no shortage of up-to-the-minute house music. Soundcloud blogs offer free downloads of the latest dance mixes – google “soundcloud house mix” for Berlin or London (or your own city).

Rinse.fm offers free podcasts of its round-the-clock electronic shows.

And as per our RQ #103 reviews, visit Fabric nightclub’s website and check out their catalog of DJ mixes.

RQ offers this and many other features from our past and present issues as free downloads – visit ReclaimingQuarterly.org



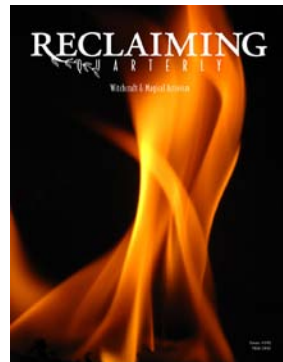
Courtesy M. Young

Latest Issue Online!

The latest issue of Reclaiming Quarterly — 60+ pages of Witchcraft and Magical Activism — is now available as a free downloadable PDF file at RQ.org

Each issue of RQ brings you the latest in activism, spiritual practices, Reclaiming news, interfaith pagan humor, and much more!

Visit www.ReclaimingQuarterly.org



Reclaiming Music CDs

Chants & Music available online



Reclaiming has released four CDs of Earth-based chants and music. All four are available on our website.

Many Reclaiming musicians and teachers have also released CDs. *Witches Brew* is a good introduction to Reclaiming’s musicians.

Visit www.reclaimingquarterly.org/music, or contact quarterly@reclaiming.org

Witchcraft and the Rave Scene

The Magic of Counter Culture

by Riyaana Lilihawk

AN HOUR AWAY from all the cities, 10,000 young people gather to the sound of heavy bass drums, the throbbing of synthesizers and patterned sequences. There are lights everywhere, spanning the entire spectrum of colors, throbbing to the deep bass that surrounds us. A ray of deep violet twists through the mass, brushing across us as we dance. The music is everything: the thick intricacies of the drums colliding with one another, the spinning chant of the MC at the mike, the soulful wailing of woman respun again and again on a turntable. Some people stand quietly, their eyes half-closed; most are dancing. A yellow strobe above us blinks on-n-off, on-n-off — we're just two little sparks of electricity in a huge, rushing current. It's the music that makes us feel that way — it's also the cold desert air pierced by hundreds of psychedelic lights, and the sand beneath our feet, and the people all around us — but most of all, it's the music, and the vibe — pure electricity.

Rave.

It's a word that conjures up images of madness, of chaos, and drugged-out teens cavorting at "one of those rave parties." But there's more there than meets the eye. Many ravers speak of a tangible energy they feel and consciously try to focus at a rave: the "Vibe." Rave organizers use lights and rhythmic music to create a place outside of the mundane world for deep, experimental moving trances. And

ravers around the world are often misrepresented by the media and misunderstood by the public.

In short, it's a lot like Witchcraft.

In many ways, the similarities between Witches and ravers seem remarkable: the creation of sacred space for energy work, the belief in focusing energy for global healing and personal growth, and reverence for the earth.

And it's a connection many ravers embrace.

"We're Pagans," states the author of *Alt.Rave.Faq*, Brian Behlendof. "We worship big walls of sound."

My First Rave

IT'S EASY to get caught up in the slander. When my friend Ryan — innocent, studious, shy Ryan — first told me he went to raves, I raised my eyebrows and backed away slightly. "Isn't that dangerous?" I asked. He laughed. "The worst thing that'll happen to you at a rave is that someone you don't know will come up and hug you," he said. I didn't believe him. He knew it, too.

Then I went to a rave some young adults held at the California Witchcamp two years ago. We came back from an exhausting ritual that evening and somehow still managed to dance non-stop until 3 a.m. The music wouldn't let me stop dancing — I could feel the way every other person in the room was moving, and that we were all in synch

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with one another and with the rhythm blasting out of a tiny boombox in the corner of the dining hall.

If a group of fifty people and a bunch of flashlights could make me feel like that, I could only imagine what it would be like with stacks of speakers, entire systems of lights, and thousands of people. I had to go.

As soon as I got back to LA, I gave Ryan a call.

GOING BETWEEN THE WORLDS: TEMPORARY AUTONOMOUS ZONES

THE RAVE WAS called Urban Phenomenon at the LA Sports Arena. There were over 12,000 tickets sold.

The night before we went to Urban Phenomenon, I couldn't sleep. Ryan had told me a few things to expect, and my older brother Dylan, who also goes to raves, had told me more — but still lingering in the back of my mind were all the things I'd read in the newspapers or heard through the rumor mill.

Raves.

After being searched, my friends and I walked into the brightly lit, linoleum-floored corridor that surrounds the stadium. It was crawling with people wearing everything from glow-in-the-dark jewelry to oversized pants with cuffs well over half a yard in diameter. Their faces were glittered, and many had glow-sticks intertwined in their fingers.

Through the little doorways leading onto the balcony overlooking the stadium floor, I could see the rave. Imagine looking through a window into a psychedelic night sky, where the stars are made of radiant green stripes and orange flashes and violet strobes. I slowly walked out onto the balcony, taking in the throngs of people on the dance floor, the loud music, the cascade of speakers and mechanical equipment hanging on grids from the stage in the center of the stadium. Ryan looked over at me, smiling.

"Wanna go?" he asked, motioning with his head.

I nodded.

We clambered down the balcony steps and found the escalator to go down onto the floor. Slowly, the linoleum and white paint slips away and it gets darker, louder. Somewhere half-way down, you enter another world. It's like entering the circle.

Raves are woven together. The carefully orchestrated atmosphere is intended to create the sense of an alternate dimension: the secluded desert or warehouse locations,

cosmos to come out and play," said Kath, who wrote an essay on raving called "Trance Magic." "Ancient earth drums dance in symbiotic merriment with the metallic inter-galactic beats as the circles of sound expand and astound our imagination with vibratory awareness."

The idea of the TAZ is loosely based on the writings of Hakim Bey, who said that those who attempt cultural change within the boundaries of society will find their endeavors harnessed, repressed, or

destroyed. Because of this, a separate, distinct realm must be created to cradle the change until it grows strong enough to withstand its opposition.

"It is an escape from mainstream society into a utopian world for a few hours," states Eric Steins, author of "Peace, Love, Dancing and Drugs." "It is a

creation of space where love and happiness exist beyond everything else. A rave is a phenomenon that does not exist within the rules of society; it is the creation of a separate space. Beyond the culture of escape, though, is a culture based on hope."

GUARDIANS OF THE WATCHTOWERS: PEACE, LOVE, UNITY AND RESPECT

JUST AS DAWN broke over the jagged LA skyline, the dream ended. I woke up from the heartbeats and the journey next to Ryan, Dylan, my other friends, and the nearly two thousand others who had stayed the whole night. I rubbed the "eight-hours-of-dancing" exhaustion from my eyes, feeling strangely vulnerable, then blinked as a strange girl with face paint and sparkly antenna reached over and squeezed my hand.

"PLUR," she said, smiling.

PLUR is the entire rave philosophy banded into an easy four-letter word: Peace, Love, Unity, and Respect. It is like our Rede; four pillars that buttress the



music programmed by gadgets and shaped by a DJ, glittering lights and otherworldly clothing. It is here, between the worlds, that ravers attempt to get in touch with themselves and the energy that they have created. This is ritual space.

"A large part of the concept of raves is built upon sensory overload — a barrage of audio and very often visual stimuli are brought together to elevate people into an altered state of existence," Behlendorf says. "The hypnotizing effect of techno music coupled with the seamless transitions and thematic progressions of rave DJs can be intoxicating."

More philosophical ravers speak of this space as a Temporary Autonomous Zone, or TAZ, a place where they can be free to explore themselves and the world outside the walls.

"We are creating TAZs for our minds to investigate the mysteries of the universe, as we once again, like our distant ancestors, cajole the spirits of the trees and the sky, the earth and the

connection between hundreds of thousands of people across the globe who are part of a common movement.

PEACE

LIKE MANY Reclaiming Witches, ravers embrace the concept of peace as an action, rather than a lack of action. They feel it is their responsibility not only to create a sense of peace and love during the rave, but to spread peace and cultural justice into the world around them as well.

"If raves can bring about PLUR in total strangers, helping to smash the walls of isolation and ignorance, it stands as a perfect example of how the world could be," says raver Noah Raford. "The potential, energy, and technology are here to bring about sweeping global change. It's enough to give me hope and overlook the uncaring, racist, selfish politics that seem to dominate popular culture and society — the age-old dream of one world, united in brotherhood and peace."

Perhaps this sense of social responsibility comes from techno's roots in rap music; as the folk music of the sixties and seventies gave way to disco, R&B, and Pop in the eighties and nineties, songs about political action and reform all but disappeared in popular culture — except for rap music, where artists continue to revolt against the status quo. Whether you're talking about jungle, trance, house, or hardcore, electronic music is essentially revolutionary in its very construction. Instead of being based on a hierarchy of vocals over lead instruments over rhythm, most forms of electronic music come together in an organic and egalitarian way. Different harmonies drop in and out constantly, creating an integration of sounds. Whereas other forms of music seems to come out of the speakers to elicit some particular emotion, electronic music draws you in — into the music, and into



yourself and your own emotions.

"When we organize parties collectively, we learn how work can be done without hierarchies," Monicat, another raver, says. "Gathering together to create healthy communities in a culture that seeks to divide us, or give us a false sense of community based on MTV and consumption, is a radical and political act. Creating art and play outside of the marketplace is a radical and political act. Every time I rave, I voice my protest."

Love

MANY RAVERS also take a deeply philosophical approach to their raving, in addition to seeing it as political. When we come together, it is not simply to begin change, but to feel a common bond with one another, based on compassion and

continued on page 54

Discography @ Discography @ Discography @ Discography

Homogenic, Bjork

Although not strictly electronic, this album is a great transition from mainstream to rave-inspired music. Bjork's melodic voice and haunting lyrics float over knots of violins and cellos and synthetic drums.

Second Toughest in Infants, Underworld

Music that defies category, but with roots in House and Trance. Layers of heavy bass, complex drum patterns, and abstract vocals fuse in a climactic, moving journey.

Last Train to Lhasa, Banco de Gaia

Soft, magnetic ambient trance that brings together tribal percussion — daumbeks, djembes, and tablas — with persistent drum loops and lilting melodies.

Return to Saturn, Goldie

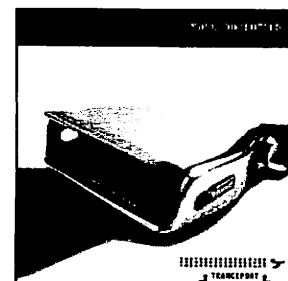
Jungle originator Goldie weaves together a two CD set incorporating many different styles of drum n' bass and live instrumentation into a broad collection of tough streetwise beats and cinematic production.

Decks, EFX, and 909, Richie Hawtin (aka Plastikman)

Quality minimalist techno from track one to track thirty-eight. Hard and fast, Hawtin deftly integrates drum machines and electronic effects into the standard two-table DJ mix.

Tranceport, Paul Oakenfold

Sweet, uplifting epic trance from England's most classic electronic DJ. Simply amazing, this album is a cornerstone in bringing rave music to the masses. Just a taste: "Embracing the goddess energy within yourselves will bring all of you to a new understanding and valuing of life, a vision that inspires you to live and love on planet earth. Like a priceless jewel, buried in dark layers of soil and stone, earth radiates her brilliant beauty into the caverns of space and time."



Queer Camp

continued from previous page

queerness. All of a sudden I realized that I didn't have to come out to anyone. Not only was it assumed that I was queer, it was celebrated! And being suddenly surrounded by queer Witches made me startlingly aware of how my queer self had been hidden away, and how she craved reveling with her kin.

Did Queer Camp completely change my life? Not quite, not yet anyway. But I certainly learned a lot about my queer self, and the power and magic I hold. I have a strong pull to my fellow queer Witches and to the community they provide me. As we sang around the queer fire, "I will know myself in all of my parts, called by the Queer Ones."

Raves & Witchcraft

continued from page 7

affection.

"I have a vision of a future where everyone takes for granted the common path of love, much like today everyone takes for granted a familiarity with the spoken word," said one raver. "When people ask me why I rave, I always think that this is what I want to tell them. This is what the music and people are really about."

In addition, "love" involves not only the feeling that binds people together at a party, but a deeper connection to ourselves. Like ritual and other forms of trance, it is about exploring inner depths, and from there, the mysterious universe we are a part of.

"The dance awakens the soul, and the

memory that humanity is not the end, just a steppingstone. Never stop moving. Never stop the process of evolution. The energy brings inner growth, new faces help nurture this growth with their loving smiles and attitudes," says raver Jason Parsons. "It blossoms. Reaching beyond the moment and building a bridge between Dreams and Reality. This is why I rave. Because I believe. Because I love. Because I live."

UNITY AND RESPECT

ONE OF THE most striking things about raves, once you get past the whole where-on-earth-did-they-get-so-many-colored-lights?-thing, is the how-on-earth-did-they-get-so-many-people-of-different-colors-together?-thing.

Diversity is one of the distinguishing factors of the rave movement, not only in comparison to college campuses, but also to other youth-oriented events. Woodstock '99, for example, turned out to be extremely dangerous for many concert-goers, with several instances of rape and dozens of assaults. In comparison, raves continue to have a surprisingly minimal record of violence. I have never been at a rave where there was any violent incident — quite a feat, indeed, when you consider that "How Sweet It Is" drew over 35,000 young people from all different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

I noticed it even among my own group of friends at that first rave. Most of us were UCR students, and yet, our little crew was markedly more diverse compared to the school population overall (a public college which proudly claims the most ethnically diverse student composition in the UC entire system). Ryan, my best friend Lisa, and my brother and I are all of European descent; Mark is Chicano; Fernando is Peruvian and Darren is African American. Once we got to the rave we ran into two other people we knew — my friend Desmond, who is Asian American, and Fernando's friend John, who is Filipino.

Although male DJs and producers still seem to dominate the rave scene, in more subtle ways, ravers express the ideal of gender equality. For example, rave clothing seems designed to go along with the idea that gender is more of a social construct than a biological difference. Phat pants (very baggy pants, often made of synthetic materials) are worn by guys and girls alike: on guys, the huge cuffs sometimes look almost skirt-like (especially when paired with jewelry made of plastic beads, which is extremely common), while on a girl, they take the emphasis off of her sexuality and the tendency to objectify her.

Another raver relates, "What struck me more than the immense sensory bliss was the amazing group of people who shared this experience with me — six thousand young, beautiful humans having one HELL of a good time



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together. Six thousand brothers and sisters of all raves, classes, and sexual orientations. Living equality. Raving is about unity. The whole point is to get away from the differences between us."

MAGIC: THE VIBE

SANTA MONICA Civic Center, Underworld Concert, Fall, 1999. Fernando, Ryan, Darren and I are squished together, driven to dance by the rhythm, and yet unwilling to step on anyone. Layers of music taper off and blend with one another, although that demanding rhythm — fast, driving drums — is always there. Abruptly the melody breaks and the violet and blue lights are replaced by a flood of pale yellow. For a moment I feel like we have entered some sort of lemonade dimension. The floor is physically, noticeably moving beneath our feet. Everywhere is energy — the Vibe.

Perhaps what separates ravers even more from other types of musical gatherings today, and other forms of social progress, is the Vibe. Various called "essence," "energy," "etherial," and "gossamer," the Vibe is always regarded as a tangible force that can be focused and shaped to bring about the ideals of PLUR — just as Witches might use magic to bring about that "change of consciousness at will."

"Cut through the clouds of trendism and commercialization that attach themselves to any major new mutation in culture — what wants to be invoked is that imaginal, incandescent core out of which all the smoke and noise is generated," says Cinnamon Twist, in "Imaginal Rave." "At the heart of the rave is a modern,

technologically-clad form of non-verbal, ecstatic communion."

Most ravers who say they feel "the vibe" also say that it isn't something new they've created. Much as Witches view magic, they see it as ancestral, old, natural, and all around us. Ravers may not ever refer to a goddess or god, but there is no doubt that many find raving spiritually fulfilling, reestablishing the sacred bond between the physical body, the heart, their community, and the earth.

"At one point, the DJ was perfectly in sync with the rhythm of the approaching waves that were pounding the coast for miles in both directions, the sound of the music blended with the sound of the waves like an intricate fractal," Geoff White said, after participating in one of the highly regarded Moontribe full moon raves. "When we rave, we simulate something that has been going on for millions of years."

GROUNDING: PROBLEMS IN THE RAVE SCENE

AND YET, FIVE young people in Southern California did drive their car off of a cliff last summer on their way back from a rave, all of them high on LSD.

Although ravers do find connection and magic through the atmosphere, music, and dance, drug use (and the right clothes, and the right way to dance, and the right hairstyle) is becoming more and more central to the scene. Ec-

stasy and LSD have always been prominent among ravers for their hallucinogenic and mood-enhancing qualities, but now fewer people rave sober, and fewer still remember the premises that set the scene in motion. Many people at a rave, if you asked them, wouldn't know what you meant by TAZ or "the vibe." Once, when I was talking to Fernando, I mentioned PLUR. "That's so cool," he said — but he'd obviously never heard of it before in his life. Another person I know loves to rave — as long as he's taken one or two hits of E. Otherwise, it's a waste of time. As for focusing energy for the common good of the world, you can forget about it.

"The rave scene has become swamped in commercialism," Steins says, citing an influx of speed, heroin, cocaine, and the recently-emerging drug GHB at raves, non-hallucinogenic drugs that until now have been unassociated with raving. "This is the best defense that society could have ever used against the rave scene. It is because of this that there has been a loss of the sacredness. As the rave scene becomes more popular, fewer people are going to create a temporary loving space, and more people are going to get wasted."

Ryan — the original raver, my guide and

continued on next page

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Raves & Witchcraft

continued from preceding page

inspiration — turned me down when I told him we were all going to M2K for New Year's Eve, 2000. "I don't think I'm going to rave for a few months," he said. "It's just not the same anymore."

Ravers definitely lack focus. At a rave we may be able to create energy — beautiful, strong, "gossamer" energy — but there is no focused place to send it once it is created, even if it is raised in an attempt to promote political change and spiritual development. Throw in the rising tide of irresponsible drug use and the growing crowds who have no interest in the philosophical side of raving, and you find yourself in a diffused, amorphous haze.

In addition, ravers don't ground. There may be a lot of connection and trance-work going on, but there is no anchor down, leaving many people feeling like they are "floating," unable to really take in their experiences. Dylan once explained that the reason he wished he could achieve an altered state without the use of drugs was simply that he felt would get more out of it. "I just want to be able to control it more," he told me. "Sometimes when you're in there, it's all just a rush, and you can't really process everything that's happening. We need a way to process."

THE MORNING AFTER: A CONCLUSION

So, WHERE to go from here? I noted at the top of this article the similarities between Witches and ravers such as the creation of sacred space, focusing energy, and reverence for the earth. And like pagans, ravers face problems with

misrepresentation, commercialization, and people who are involved in the scene for the wrong reasons — in this case, drug use.

On the flip side, the rave scene might be able to teach Witches a thing or two about diversity, especially when it comes to people of color and youth.

Ravers are people who, above all, have heard the Charge of the Goddess in the heavy throbbing patterns of drum n' bass. "...All acts of love and pleasure are my rituals... You shall sing and make music... Mine is the ecstasy of the spirit, and mine is joy upon the earth..." We see the spiral in shards of light dancing on white vinyl screens and take the descent into the underworld on freeways and desert roads, rebirthing more aware and more alive than we were before.

As a raver, I know that we're going to have to choose which way the movement will go from here. But I feel inspired to think that one of the paths before us, focusing on change, energy, and magic, runs right alongside my spiritual path. There are many things that pagans and ravers could learn from one another and, more importantly, many ways we can work together towards common goals.

So perhaps next time you read in the morning paper about "those rave parties," you won't think of just the drugs, because we don't. And the next time you see one of the brightly colored fliers in a record store or laying on the ground, maybe it'll tempt you to try something new... something revolutionary... something magical.

PLUR and Blessed Be.

Riyana Lilyhawk is an avid raver, swing-dancer, and dreamer. She is currently working towards an MFA in film at USC.

continent."

To get involved in the campaign to oppose the genetic engineering of food, contact NERAGE at (802) 454-8493, or visit www.bckweb.com/nerage

For details on Native Forest Network's GE tree campaign, or for a copy of our Special Report on GE trees see story, page 16, or contact NFN, (802) 863-0571, www.nativeforest.org

Vermont Yankee Ritual

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contaminated by the plant, and for the healing of the people and other beings who live in the communities close to the plant. We danced for a solution to be developed to neutralize the radioactive waste and for a transition to other employment for the workers. We danced our visions for what might replace this plant seeing this site once again in balance. After raising a cone of power we grounded, shared some of our visions, and then closed the circle.

Just last week there was some indication that possibly the sale might not go through, more for economic reasons than safety issues, but the fact that this sale is going to cost ratepayers so much more money, and that decommissioning costs will be so much more in a few years, have got some people rethinking the feasibility of keeping the plant in operation.

Contact VT Citizens Awareness Network at (802) 387-4050 or www.nukebusters.org, (413) 339-5781. An action camp will be held near Vermont Yankee in August — see story, page 17.

Composting

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corner of your yard and don't check on the conditions, this entire process can take as long as a year to complete. No matter what, compost will happen!

When your pile is finished decaying, you will have a beautiful dark brown material that I imagine to smell of the sweetness of the goddess. Her luscious, earthy smell may even in-

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"When Women Heal... the Earth Heals"

Boston Biotech Protest

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stated, "this is hands down the largest gathering of people standing up to oppose the genetic engineering of food, trees and life in general, that has ever occurred in North America. This is the beginning of a major movement on this

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