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Iron Mountain: A Journal of Magical Religion

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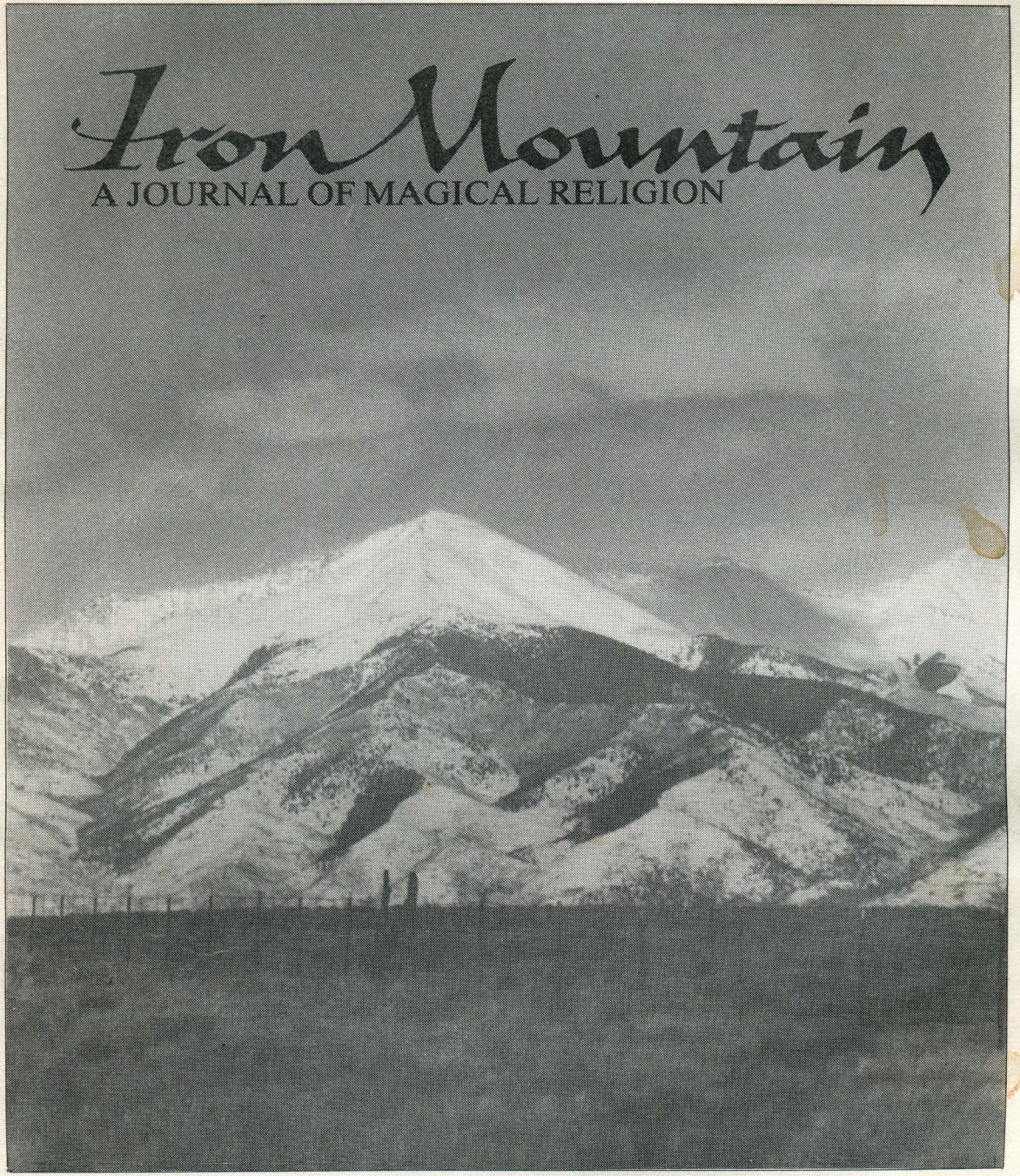
Iron Mountain

A JOURNAL OF MAGICAL RELIGION



SUMMER 1984

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On the Slopes of Iron Mountain

Welcome to the first issue of *Iron Mountain: A Journal of Magical Religion*. We plan that this journal will become a different kind of religious studies publication, serving as a forum where people of different concerns—scholarly, spiritual or operative—can exchange ideas and information.

Iron Mountain will be a semi-annual publication, devoted to the exploration of religious forms and practices, both ancient and modern, which emphasize the magical, shamanic and metaphysical elements. A well-worn definition of "magic" says that it is the art of effecting change in accordance with the Will by "non-material" means; to that let us add that we are primarily interested in those aspects of religion that thus include magic—which also could be taken to mean those that hold however loosely to the concept that "mind creates the universe."

Iron Mountain is non-dogmatic and non-sectarian in its focus. We welcome original essays, in-depth journalism (like Joseph Bruchac's piece beginning on the facing page), re-examinations of traditional stories and myths, reviews of books and contemporary events, letters, poetry and artwork. Another topic of perennial interest to us is the relationship of magically oriented people and the larger society in which they live.

And, of course, we welcome responses to the material in this and subsequent issues.

Spinning the Medicine Wheel
The Bear Tribe in the Catskills

Reprinted from *Akwesasne Notes*, Fall 1983

by Joseph Bruchac

The Taconic Parkway is an old four-lane highway. It winds its way down from just below Albany (that place called Skenetati, "the opening in the trees" by the people of the Longhouse) towards New York City. Closed to truck traffic, its shoulders grassy lawn, it seems part of another era. From its scenic outlooks I could see the Catskill Mountains ranging towards the heavens on the other side of the river now named for a Dutch explorer. The sky was clear. There was no rumbling—either from the Thunderers or those little men of European-American legend who rolled their bowling balls in a game that led to Rip Van Winkle's long sleep.

I turned off the Taconic on a road that led east and stopped at a hardware store to ask directions.

"Camp Kinder Ring," said the old man with the friendly voice who stood behind the counter. "Ah-yeah, that'd be the one they used to call Circle Lodge. Turn left at the A&P up the lake road."

As I drove that lake road I saw many evidences that this was a summer country. Summer camps and tourist-oriented signs were everywhere. I was entering that famous area called the Borscht Belt. There during the summers children of upper-middle-class families came to learn crafts at camps with fanciful Native American names, returning

to city perhaps with a small headband, the knowledge of the names of a few birds, a balsam pillow. Billboards advertised resorts where Zero Mostel and Jerry Lewis once told stories. and the Catskill Game Farm. Performers on a stage, animals in a cage. The Catskills. Here, though, the houses and signs and summer camps looked slightly run down, reminders that this was no longer a golden age for resorts, even if a "New Age" was somewhere just around the corner at the Medicine Wheel Gathering.

The yellow flier with brown print had arrived a few weeks ago. EAST COAST MEDICINE WHEEL GATHER, it read. A GATHERING TO REUNITE US WITH THE EARTH MOTHER, THE SKY FATHER AND THE PEOPLES OF ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE EARTH, SEA AND SKY. It was the sort of wording I was beginning to become familiar with—a mixture of "Native American" ideas, expressed in a cliched language whose Latinate diction was first to be found in the early translations of famous speeches by Indian orators.

"A gathering born in the vision dream of Sun Bear, a Chippewa medicine man. Learn through the teachings and join in CEREMONIES for the HEALING of the EARTH MOTHER."

It made me think of the Omega Institute, a "New Age" program offered by the Sufis where one could, for a week or weekend (and a fee), study Buddhism, natural healing, flower essences, t'ai chi, crystal consciousness and more. A mixture of sincerity, simplicity, very real knowledge and very diverse theologies—some more than a little shaky. The flower children of the 1960s two decades later. No longer wearing long hair or listening to rock music at a muddy Woodstock, but still seeking. Even though many of them had now become the middle class, even the upper class. With cars, condos and degrees, they could afford to pay $100 for a three-day stint with "Medicine People/Teachers" as the Bear Tribe flier put it.

CHECKING IN

I rounded a corner looking for a sign and finding none. I was not looking for a medicine animal or a gyring hawk, just a sign that read Camp Kinder Ring. But I was coming from the north and it was apparent that most of the expected visitors would not be coming by the way I was taking. I looked again at the instruction sheet I'd received a few days earlier along with my ticket. It informed me what I should wear and bring—a poncho, a flashlight, a blanket, and "if you want to bring a SPECIAL ROCK to put in the Medicine Wheel, the Spirit of your rock will be renewed and you will be able to take the rock and the Spirit home with you." I had brought my rock.

As I went round another corner something at the edge of my vision caught my eye. I backed up. It was a driveway with an arch over it shaped like a partial rainbow. CAMP KINDER RING CIRCLE LODGE. On one of the supporting poles was a smaller sign and an arrow pointing the way to the Medicine Wheel Gathering. Fifty yards further down that driveway I ran into the first thing that almost made me turn around and head back to the Adirondacks—tent, ticket, poncho, flashlight, unrenewed rock and all. It was a traffic jam. Several harrassed-looking young men were directing traffic and checking tickets.

"Camping? Lemme see your sheet. Gotta park over there. Then walk up to the lodge and register. When you come back you can drive your car up to the field and set up your tent, then bring the car back and park it here."

People were streaming out of the parking lot and heading toward the registration office 200 yards up the road. They were all well-dressed, although casually so. Alligators on their polo shirts, Gucci's name on their loafers. None looked Indian; none looked poor. Ages varied, but the average was surely in the early 30s, and there was an equal number of men and women. They seemed friendly, perhaps a little nervous, but

in a mood close to celebration. They were returning to Mother Earth as they walked up that road to register. I walked with them.

The registration office was chaos. Close to a thousand people had come. Quick mental arithmetic—at an average of $90 a head (early registrants were given $15 off), that would mean about $90,000 without taking into account the extra $17.50 for a cabin paid by non-campers. After taking out the costs of renting the facilities, providing the six means served each registrant, and the fees paid to speakers, it seemed obvious to me that a Medicine Wheel Gathering could be a profitable venture.

There was a sign-up sheet at the registration desk for the sweat lodge. A sign-up sheet for a sweat lodge. That was the second time I controlled the urge to turn around and walk away.

THE MEDICINE WHEEL

Camp Kinder Ring covered a space of perhaps 20 acres. Areas had been set up around the camp for the various lectures and presentations, each marked by a neat sign bearing a picture and stencilled label: Eagle, Butterfly, Frog, Coyote, Buffalo. Near the lake the Medicine Wheel was being constructed. A circle of string had been pegged around an area 100 feet or more in diameter. Following the instructions of numerous Bear Tribe people, men and women were making tobacco ties and attaching them to the encircling string according to instructions.

"We need more ties over here."

"Put the yellow ties there."

"I think we got enough white."

Beneath the ties personal stones were already being placed: water-smoothed creek-bed stones, pieces of fossil-bearing sedimentary rock, machine-polished pebbles, bits of turquoise, gem stones. People were quiet, even reverent. It mean something to them. There was no lack of sincerity around the Medicine Wheel. Larger stones had been placed to mark the cardinal points within the circle. Cans of Bull Durham tobacco were scattered around for people to take pinches of tobacco from. I watched a mother help her small daughter tie a green tie to the string and then place a stone. For them, I thought, for those who really are here to help make the balance right again, let this be real.

Among the hundreds of people around the forming Medicine Wheel I began to see ethnic diversity. Two or three black people, a Buddhist monk with shaven head, a couple who looked to be Japanese, expensive cameras over their shoulders. Scattered among the crowd were a number of Indian people as well, perhaps 20 or so. Near the western edge of the circle I saw Sun Bear's familiar relaxed face. He was not saying much to the peple who kept coming up to him. Hands folded in front of himself, he mostly nodded and smiled. He was wearing a black cowboy hat with an eagle feather and a fringed deerskin jacket. It was obvious from the looks in the eyes of some of those who came up to him that he might just as well have been dressed in a long white robe and sandals. "Jesus," a friend of mine once said, "must have been an Indian. The things he said and believe in sound just like the things Indian people have always said and believed in." And today, without understanding the social commentary and ironic humor implicit in such a remark, a great many non-Indian people are ready to agree with a statement like that and take it one step further. An awful lot of people seem to expect Indians to be teachers and messiahs.

There is a great longstanding longing in American culture to learn from the Indian. I was see it in many shapes over the next 48 hours, from the young man just arrived from Germany who wanted to "spend the rest of his life living like an Indian" to those who would join in the "chants" to consecrate the Medicine Wheel the next day. Learning from the Indian—and loving the Indian to death in all too many cases. There is, I feel, a danger in simplifying things too much, in generalizing the experience of a diverse and complex range of peoples in or-

der to graft yourself onto roots that are not your own. That was part of the reticence I felt as I stood near the circle of tobacco ties and white string. It was compounded by the "organization" feel of the Bear Trive in their catalog, which contained such ads as "WE WELCOME YOU TO OUR VISION MOUNTAIN. For complete information on dates and prices write to the Bear Tribe..." and "COLLECTING KACHINAS? If you are interested in kachina dolls we will do our best to locate the doll you want..." and "MEDICINE WHEEL CONSULTATIONS ... find out what clans and totems compliment (sic) and/or are compatible with yours. Only $50.

Native American people have always been interested in doing business. I still smile when I remember the day at the Albany Public Library when Kakwirakeron, the spokesman for Ganienkeh (the settlement of traditional native people who had taken over an abandoned Scout camp and were holding it despite the threats both of local rednecks and the state of New York) finished his lecture on Iroquois autonomy and then smiled.

"You know," he said, "we Indians always like to trade. So we've brought along a few things on that back table there to raise money to help support Ganienkeh."

But the things on that table were baskets of ash and sweetgrass, beaded earrings and bracelets. They were not designed explicity (with the exception of some copies of Akwesasne Notes) to promote the spiritual wellbeing of the purchaser. At the Medicine Wheel Gathering a long line of tables was set up on the floor below the dining hall. There one could buy turkey feather fans, bear claws, tobacco, bundles of sage, cassette tapes containing lectures by Sun Bear and sacred songs—even healing crystals. The message was fairly clear—become an Indian and find salvation. Salvation is a message we all need to listen to, especially in this decade of Reaganomics, pollution and nuclear terror. Yet I remembered the outraged words of a Penobscot friend as he looked at the Bear Tribe catalog: "You can't sell sacred experience!" For all their sincerity, I though, there is the possibility that the Bear Tribe might be giving the right ideas the wrong slant.

THE SWEAT LODGE

From the dirt road that led from the Medicine Wheel to the tent camping area a small lane ran off to the right into the trees. I walked down it and it opened into a clearing. There, near wood piled for a fire, four people sat making tobacco ties as another young man, his long hair tied back in a pony tail, split wood. Just past them were two large sweat lodges. Their doors faced west. Whoever was running the sweats had been trained by a Sioux or was Sioux himself from the orientation of those doors. The place felt good, away from everything else. It was quiet and there was nothing commercial. I stood around, gradually becoming part of the conversation going on between the two Indian men who stood next to the fire. One of them was John Perrote, a Potawatamie medicine man whose teacher was Wallace Black Elk. We had in common an acquaintance with Leonard Crow Dog and each of us told a few Crow Dog stories and laughed.

"What is that Medicine Wheel thing down the hill there? " I said.

"The man had a vision," John Perrote said, standing in front of the fire with his hands held out almost touching it. "I was asked to do sweats here so I came to run them."

"I'd be glad to help out," I said.

For me the center of the whole gathering was the sweat lodge. I spent most of my time there from the late afternoon until the small hours of the morning, working. The sign-up lists were brought to the sweat lodge area, but they were not used after the first few hours. Not everyone showed up and whenever a sweat was ready those who were there went in. The lodge ran not by the clock but by the older cycles of fire and hot stones, steam and prayer. Seven of us spent most of

our time with the sweat lodges. Three were Indian, four non-Indian. And though he may have come, I did not see Sun Bear near the sweat lodge.

The sweat lodge was not without its problems. It was not easy explaining what a sweat lodge is to someone who has never heard of one before, much less seen or been in one. Explaining to some of the women why they were not supposed to sweat during their time of power—their moon— also was not easy. On the last sweat of the night, after it was over, one of the women who had been inside told John she was in her cycle. Somehow I was not surprised, just as I was not surprised by her inability to understand why he was upset.

"Women," he tried to explain, "have special power, strong power which doesn't go with the sweat lodge when they're in their moon. The sweat lodge is for purification. Women don't need to sweat because their bodies go through a cycle of purification each month. If people don't respect the sweat lodge and that power, then bad things can happen."

"Do you mean that women are unclean?" she said.

The next night we helped him run a special sweat to counteract the effects of having a woman in her period in the lodge. It had happened, he said, because people didn't understand. But it was more than that for me. It was part of a feeling I could detect in some parts of the Medicine Wheel gathering— a feeling that all it took to be "Indian" was a weekend at the conference, that you could make up new rituals as you went along, just as long as you were sincere.

CONSECRATING THE MEDICINE WHEEL

The next day, Saturday, was tightly scheduled. The program read:

6:30 a.m. Traditional East Indian Fire Ceremony at the Medicine Wheel with Vasant.

7:00 a.m. Conscious Movement exercise at the Social Hall with Vyasananda.

7:30 a.m. Breakfast at the Dining Hall.

8:30 a.m. Smudging Ceremony, Making of tobacco ties for the Medicine Wheel.

9:30 a.m. Medicine Wheel Consecration.

10:30 a.m. Pipe Ceremony and Blessing of the Medicine Wheel.

11:30 a.m. Break

12 Noon Lunch at the Dining Hall.

But things didn't run as neatly as they were scheduled. The dining hall was poorly organized for feeding a thousand medicine seekers. The lines of people stretched 100 yards, down the steps, past the Frog Area, to the lake and the Medicine Wheel itself. At 9:30 a.m. people were still waiting in line to eat. A public address system had been hooked up. As people put on the tobacco ties or placed their rocks, members of the Bear Tribe—none of whom looked to be Native American—walked around carrying sea shells full of burning sage, fanning the smoke over people to cleanse them before entering the area near the Medicine Wheel. A woman with a sheet of paper in one hand and a fan in the other approached me.

"Can I smudge you off?" she said.

"Isn't that an owl feather fan?" I asked.

She looked at the fan in her left hand. "I think so," she said. "Why?"

"It's OK," I said. "I'll come back later."

I walked halfway around the large circle of people and entered by another "gate" where a young man holding an eagle wing fanned smoke in my general direction.

In between explanation of the Medicine Wheel, several "chants of the Bear Tribe" were being taught by someone over the P.A. There was something familiar about those

chants. I listened more closely to one of them:

I am Capable,
I am Loveable,
I am Beautiful,
I am Smart!

It had the ring of pop psychology to it. Primal Scream, est, whatever the newest fad was. I'm OK, you're OK.

Today Sun Bear was in more traditional regalia. A large Plains-style headdress was on his brow and he held a buffalo skull. He looked around, nodding benignly as the consecration of the Medicine Wheel began, appropriately enough, with the handing-out of instruction sheets to everyone. I took one. It contained the various songs for each of the directions to be consecrated. Each direction had an animal representing it and the songs seemed to be all very much the same, with such words as:

I am the Snake,
I am the Snake,
On my Medicine Wheel.

There were also plants and stones for each of the directions. It was all spelled out in Sun Bear and Wabun Bear's book *Earth Astrology*. (Copies on sale in the dining hall.)

As each song was sung, a person would dance out, dressed and masked as the animal for that direction. They would make a little speech about their various attributes, then sit on their stone. It seemed that in this Medicine Wheel there were at least 30 or 40 directions in addition to the standard four of north, south, east and west. One person and one song for each. It took a long time and it, too, had a strange familiarity to it. Then I recognized what it was—fourth grade and the school play ("I am Old Man Winter: I bring the snow...")

It was in this ceremony that the most Indian people were visible. A third of those in the Medicine Wheel consecration were clearly of Native American ancestry. Were they, like the many non-Indian people here, looking for new ground to stand upon? Was it better to be a totem in a Medicine Wheel than a semi-invisible minority in American culture? A minority discriminated against so thoroughly and subtly that most of the whites and "return to Earth Awareness" were unaware of what it meant to be an Indian today. Would they want to be an Indian, I thought, if it meant accepting the highest suicide rate among teenagers, the highest incidence of diabetes, the highest rate of death from alcoholism. If it meant having your homeland contaminated by radiation, flooded by government water projects, cut in half by roads? If it meant having to prove to people you were really an Indian? ("If you are a real Indian, then where are your feathers, where is your tribe, why do you have a mustache, why isn't your skin red, how come you are talking English...?)

I liked, though, the way some of these Native people danced through that circle. John Peters, for example, Director of Indian Affairs for Massachusetts, whose Wampanoag Indian name is Slow Turtle. He was Coyote. The spirit of Trickster was in him as he danced. Later that day he would give one of the strongest seminars I heard there, speaking clearly and straightforwardly about "The Modern Native American." As they danced, I looked around for Mad Bear Anderson, who had been listed as a participant and leader of a seminar on historical perspectives. He was nowhere to be seen. Later I learned that he never showed up at Camp Kinder Ring. Aside from Twylah Nitsch and her contingent of young Seneca dancers, the Iroquois people were conspicuous by their absence from the Medicine Wheel.

When the consecration ceremony was completed, the P.A. announced that people could come and get their stones. They had been blessed. Further, people should keep an eye on their kids and not let them get into the lake. Moreover, one of the gem stones that had been placed on the Medicine Wheel had been taken, so if parents could "shake down their kids to see if any of them picked it

up..."

I left in mid-morning the next day. I didn't stay for the Child Blessing or the Giveway or the Formal Closing. I left feeling both moved and troubled by what I had seen. I was moved by the trust and sincerity I'd seen in the eyes of the non-Native American people who came to the Medicine Wheel gathering. Some of them were medical doctors. They were interested in healing, in traditional American Indian ways. Yet much of what went on at Camp Kinder Ring had only peripherally to do with "traditional American Indian way." I wondered about such things as reflexology and crystal consciousness, ideas popular a generation and more ago and then forgotten after they swept through Germany in the 1930s (another time and place of great spiritual searching). Those ideas were new again for this generation. Seeing them cheek by jowl with Native American ideas seemed to lend them new credibility. For some reason I thought of the old Apache story about the boy and the rattlesnake. The snake is freezing when the boy finds it, picks it up, and places it in his shirt to warm it. But when the snake is warm enough, it bites the boy.

"But I saved you," says the boy.

"Yes," says the rattlesnake, "but when you picked me up, you knew I was a snake."

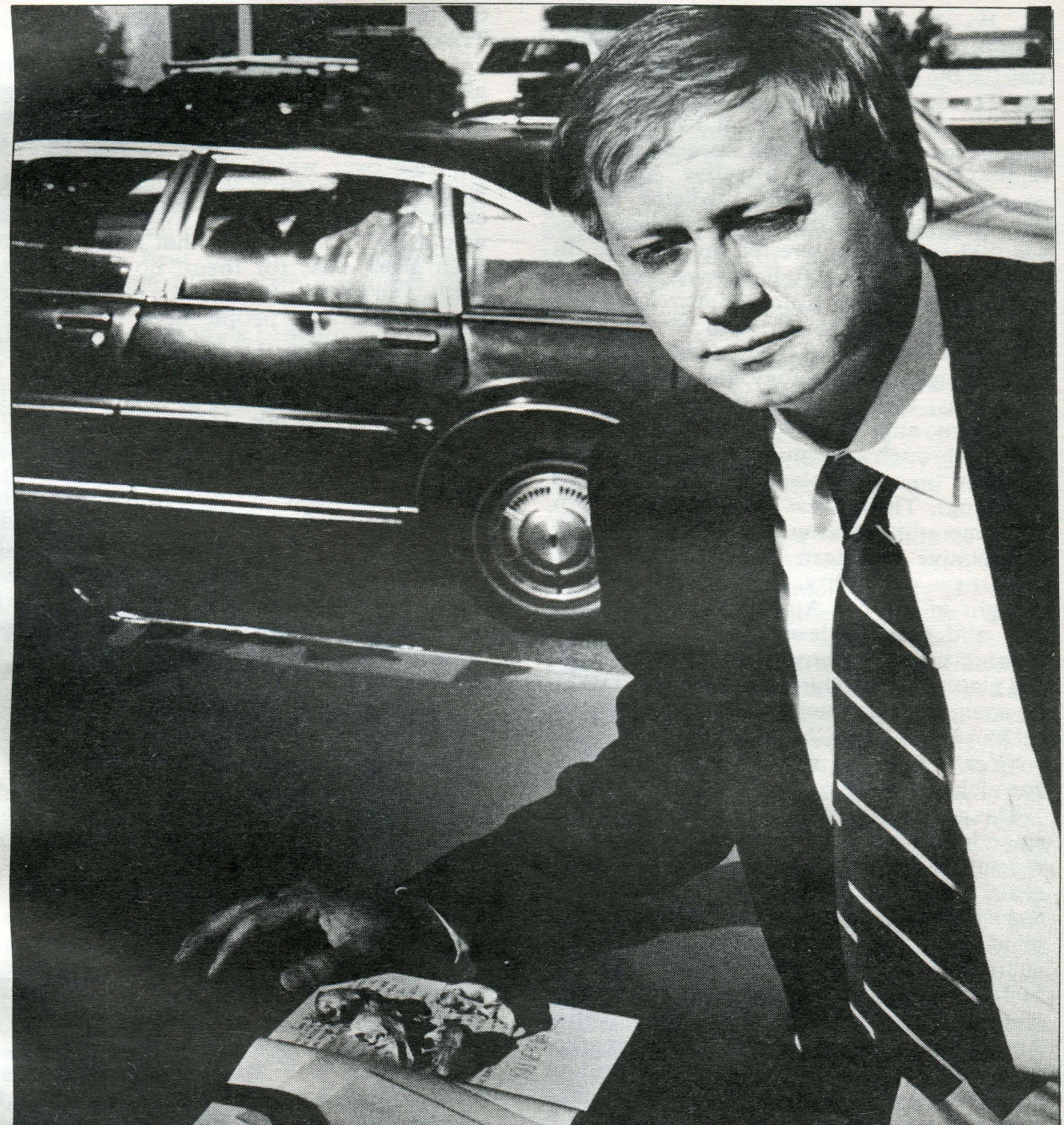
Things were said at the Medicine Wheel gathering that were worth hearing. Contacts were made that I was sure would be of use to some people for many years to come. Yet there have also been questions raised in my mind about some of the things I had seen and felt there. Was Sun Bear becoming the Maharishi or Sun Myung Moon in a war bonnet? Will commercialism turn Native American sacred objects into supermarket items? ("How much for half a pound of sage? I'll take two pounds of consecrated tobacco and half a dozen eagle feathers." "No, don't bother to wrap them, I'll eat them here...") Those and other questions were in my mind as I drove away from Camp Kinder Ring and I was worried that those questions were NOT in the minds of the Bear Tribe.

Books have been written about cults, about the dangers of accepting their teachings without question. It seemed to me that the Bear Tribe stood perilously close to an edge over which they might tumble. I wondered too how those sincere people who came to the Medicine Wheel Gathering would feel if they found that what they had been given was, for them, not really THE truth. I thought also that this is a time when Native American people need real friends, people who will try to understand them and—more than helping them—not stand in their way or expect them to be something or someone they are not.

I do not want to be too hard on the Bear Tribe. When you are sincere and innocent, you can still make mistakes. I remember the good feeling and peace I felt within the sweat and in the circle of people who sat afterwards around the fire. I want memories such as that to stay with them, to guide them, to keep them from becoming bitter or confused about what they have begun, perhaps, to learn.

It is not easy to be an Indian in America. Being a Native American means many things, some of them contradictory, some of them tragic, some of them full of the potential for inspiration and hope. People can still learn from the "American Indian way," even though what they learn may turn out to be far different from what they expected. If the Bear Tribe can keep that complexity in mind, make the kind of balance that is needed, they might indeed function as a meeting place, a useful bridge between cultures. I think that is what they are trying to do.

However, as I drove north along a way once followed by white missionaries and fur traders who brought centuries of confusion to Native people, I wondered if a new kind of confusion might not be coming from the other direction now.



CHAS S. CLIFTON

Religious consultant Jim McCarthy with bones of squirrels killed by teenage "Satanist" and kris-style ritual dagger.

High School Magic: *An Interview with religious consultant Jim McCarthy*

In October 1983 Iron Mountain editors Chas and Mary Clifton interviewed Jim McCarthy, director of Sanctuary Institute Inc. of Boulder, Colorado, about "occultism" and "magic" in the minds and lives of Denver-area high school students. McCarthy, who has lectured and worked with groups as diverse as police departments, universities, high schools, religious hierarchies and isolated cultic sects, is one of the region's best-known religious consultants.

IRON MOUNTAIN: You expect to see an upsurge or a resurgence of interest in magical religion as this age group matures. Could you explain?

McCARTHY: The kids are not going to be satisfied with playing Dungeons & Dragons forever. The symbologies of Paganism—and Satanism—are becoming accepted as normal parts of their realities. That's especially true for the bright ones, the creative ones, the bored ones are going to want to go beyond what they have now and seek something that has a historical base, that's more "in touch with reality." They can get this through informal classes, and as they get into college, religious studies courses perhaps. I expect that the surge of interest will come from that group.

IRON MOUNTAIN: So you expect a surge of undergraduate interest in magical religion?

McCARTHY: And graduate-level interest as an academic subject.

IRON MOUNTAIN: Has there been any scholarly interest in what you're describing?

McCARTHY: No. I'm dealing with it on an immediate hands-on basis. I think it'll be several years before it gets into academia and they start realizing that it's even happening and decide to send a team of sociologists out to research it. They're not even aware yet, for the most part, and the ones who are don't realize the extent of it.

There is a tremendous amount of material [about magical religion] being presented to kids today. It's happening in the movies, in the record albums; it's happening in the lyrics, on the record covers; it's happening in the [video] games, it's happening in their literature, it's being presented through their peers, through TV shows, in their comic books It's presenting them with a rather bizarre, ragged notion of a number of things—"the occult," as they call it: traditional forms of Paganism mixed up with make-it-up-as-you-go-along occultism... and Satanism and the Hollywood version of all of the above.

IRON MOUNTAIN: How widespread do

you think this is just in Denver?

McCARTHY: I would say that three-fourths of the student body of any high school is aware of it. The kids I've dealt with can be traced to eight or nine high schools, with groups in each school made up of, say, 10 to 15 kids. Those are the ones we're aware of. This type of mentality is very prevalent among both junior and senior high school students. Unfortunately, almost everything magical is identified with "Satan"—that's the evangelical Christian influence. Anything having to do with psychic phenomena has been identified as "satanic" by them. But it's growing and it has been growing phenomenally over the past year.

A lot of kids already feel knowledgeable about the whole subject. They feel very accomplished in terms of ritual and ceremonial magic, the development and use of talismans and amulets.

IRON MOUNTAIN: You say you feel that the natural psychics are likely to be drawn into this — whatever you define a "natural psychic" as.

McCARTHY: That happens when a kid manifests some kind of psychic ability, and it's then done publicly for some sort of personal recognition, and judged by their evangelical or fundamentalist Christian classmates to be "satanic." They're then stigmatized, and they either face the rites of exorcism by their classmates or their parents or their family minister, or they begin to seek their own level and some kind of understanding, in a situation where psychic ability has been institutionalized and is recognized as legitimate.

IRON MOUNTAIN: Are most of the teenagers coming into the situation you describe coming out of the Dungeons & Dragons and science fiction/fantasy realm?

McCARTHY: Yes, or the "heavy metal" rock crowd.

IRON MOUNTAIN: Overall, do you think this wave of do-it-yourself magical practice among teenagers is more likely to produce genuine interest in "new" religions" or do you think it's more likely to degenerate into just out-and-out criminal activity?

McCARTHY: Both will happen. It'll follow along lines of class and education, to some degree, just like anything else. The more intelligent ones might be drawn to something more formal, whereas the ones who see it primarily as excitement or a justification for hedonistic activity will do just that.

IRON MOUNTAIN: You of course tend to be called in when "things go wrong," by families, schools, police departments. Tell us about some of these instances.

McCARTHY: We had three cases of suicide between October 1982 and March 1983 by kids—and one father who had introduced his son to this whole realm ended up blowing his brains out when he found out what his son had done with the knowledge he introduced to him.

IRON MOUNTAIN: Were the kids white, black, hispanic ... what were their social backgrounds?

McCARTHY: There was one hispanic; the rest were caucasian. We then started checking out their associates; we started checking out gangs. There are two "satanic" gangs, as they call themselves, now operating in the Denver metro area.

One of the groups of kids that we deal with is upper-middle-class, in Cherry Hills [a prosperous suburban area]. One of these "gangs" is middle class and the other is lower-class hispanic. The group that one young man we talked to belonged to was located in a lower-middle-class part of Denver, where they were actually involved in a Black Mass in a Catholic church in the Montebello area. They [the church authorities] are not yet aware of this themselves. The kids posed as a Baptist prayer group and got into the church legitimately, but then they set up their little thing.

IRON MOUNTAIN: That's taking ecumenicalism a step farther than usual!

McCARTHY: A lot of churches let other groups use their churches. Anyway, they posted guards, the whole bit. They actually did some ceremony on the altar over the body of a naked 15-year-old who was really stoned out of her mind, according to my informant. From one of the suicides we were able to trace a whole group that were covertly practicing this thing that extended over about seven or eight senior high schools in Denver. And their parents had no notion of it.

IRON MOUNTAIN: Based on my experience as a teenager in Denver and other cities, you doesn't meet students from schools other than your own that easily, so where are they meeting?

McCARTHY: Some had transferred from one school to another, but maintained their old contacts through Dungeons & Dragons groups. Some were meeting at sports events, at public athletic facilities where kids hang out, and video arcades or one or another of the occult supply stores. Some kids had mentioned going into [_____ _____] (a Denver occult supply store) and getting information and instruction on an individual basis. Now whether they were attending formal classes, I don't know.

IRON MOUNTAIN: How do the numerous police departments you've worked with respond to the idea of "15-year-olds doing black magic"?

McCARTHY: The police in Denver originally called me in because they ran into a situation where "Satanism" was being used as a social bonding mechanism among juvenile prostitutes in the [downtown] Capitol Hill area. This was being led by an adult, and being taught by a 17-year-old American Indian boy who had learned to use this practice as a bonding mechanism in a number of living situations. The police had no idea what it was they had run into when the kids started describing ceremonies. This group was nasty: they had a 10-year-old boy they were selling on the street and they were telling him that if he didn't come back with the money Satan would get him.

IRON MOUNTAIN: But are all the groups of teenagers you've dealt with necessarily involved in illegal acts?

McCARTHY: To the extent that almost all are involved with drugs. The ones that are dealing with Paganism, no. The ones who know what they're doing, no. But those are the exceptions — most of them that are making it up as they go along, yes.

IRON MOUNTAIN: Which do you think came first, the drugs or the so-called "occult" involvement?

McCARTHY: I don't know that I could answer that. I never asked that question. One young man that we talked to—16 years old—said that the adults and the other kids in this Satanic group were interested in pushing drugs through the group. We know, for example, that one of the gangs we've been watching also has adults in it. The adults' payoffs are drugs and sex with minors and things like that. There will always be that element to be dealt with.

The suicide cases all had a drug angle that usually expressed itself as a belief by the individuals themselves that they were "possessed," and in one case of an almost-suicide, a belief that "Satan" was telling him to kill his father. In one case of an actual suicide we believe the young man was protecting his family against the chance he might kill them.

IRON MOUNTAIN: Nevertheless, this sort of thing does happen sometimes without any sort of occult trappings.

McCARTHY: What bothers me, however, is that people who know better, such as the owners of some metaphysical bookstores and occult supply stores, are capitalizing on this situation. Recently I sat down with a kid, his family and two police officers to talk—his friend had committed suicide and there was a fear that he would also. When we discussed others who were involved in this make-it-up-as-you-go-along magical practice he got up, marched into his

bedroom, and walked out with a $50 book of invocations, leather-bound, that [_____] had sold him. Why? What did they sell him that for? Ceremonies from the Golden Dawn—he doesn't know what that stuff is! He wouldn't know how to use it then, or maybe ever.

I had a whole bag full of stuff that two or three kids had purchased at [_____ _____] that was just totally useless. One kid went in and spent about $7 on marigold leaves. He had a ton of them in this little packages with the shop's name on them, because a book of spells he bought there involved the use of marigold leaves.

IRON MOUNTAIN: The other side of that, however, is the whole issue of censorship. If you're going to start telling people what they're not going to be allowed to buy or sell, who's going to make that judgment, and on what grounds?

McCARTHY: I'm not talking about censorship; I'm talking about responsibility. There was one instance where I went in to [_____ _____] and I said to the owner, "Look, I'm dealing with a family right now that have a son who's a junior in high school who's been doing stuff in the basement that is very inconsistent with the parents' Lutheran beliefs and he has gotten all his supplies from you: books, candles, incense, everything. The family knows this and the family is prepared to take legal action against you."

IRON MOUNTAIN: I doubt they'd have a case. The owners are merely engaging in free enterprise, not breaking any laws as such.

McCARTHY: You're probably correct, but it was that the family was prepared to do something drastic that I felt obliged to tell her. I just felt I should pass on the information.

IRON MOUNTAIN: It doesn't say much for the parents' faith in what they've allegedly taught their children, but perhaps the analogy could be made with the video arcade owner who forbids school-age children to come in during school hours as a means of placating the families who see his legitimate business as some sort of threat.

It's a sticky thing. I don't like to see kids buy some of these so-called magical books that I, personally, dismiss as silly, but they probably aren't very silly to them. But I'm equally sensitive to the issue of censorship. I don't like to see kids buying certain books, I but I don't want to be responsible for telling them what they can and cannot buy.

McCARTHY: Who should be responsible?

IRON MOUNTAIN: Their parents, probably.

McCARTHY: And if their parents have no notion what they're doing? I don't know if there is an answer. All I know if that when you have to deal with the real-life situations and you sit down with some kids who's telling you that "Satan" is telling him that he has to kill his father or himself to prevent it, something has gone amiss.

IRON MOUNTAIN: I think something even more effective than trying to regulate the buying of certain books would be education. If the Denver schools are really concerned about this then maybe they should get somebody like you to teach courses. Those same "social norms" treat the entire subject of magic as forbidden fruit and hence lie at the bottom of the problem. That's the crux of the problem, not the accessibility of any kind of books.

McCARTHY: Of course, if you offered a course on magical religion, every kid would be there--and the school would last about a week.

IRON MOUNTAIN: To that extent, they've created their own problem and they're going to have to get out of it. I don't like to see any kind of knowledge or power being abused out of ignorance without education being used as a remedy.

It sounds as though what we're saying is that this is a problem created by the structure of Society, and Society's structure will have to change before it goes away.

Notes on Ritual Drumming

By John Vye

Other than tabletop drumming with hands, chopsticks or plastic spoons, my introduction to ritual drumming waited until the big Midwestern Pagan festival, Pan-Pagan '80. Someone lent me their drum one night as the dancing began around a fire. I found a place for myself within the rhythm, and the energy we raised took over my fingers; all the world beyond the light of the fire simply ceased to be. The power, complexity and depth of the rhythm in the sound of our drums, the tamborines, zils (finger cymbals) and hands clapping; of the bodies of the dancers and of the flames, was all the world I wanted or needed, was something eternal and not a circumstance of transient time.

Since then I have bought my own drum——a Middle Eastern dumbeq—and each year attend some large festival where I have helped the same magic to return once and again. I have listened from outside the ritual circle to others drumming and learned something new each time.

It seems to me now that there are two

kinds of drumming, which I label "shamanic" and "ecstatic." I have come to see many differences in technique, use and purpose between them, and believe they are clearly distinct and do not fit together at all.

The "shamanic" mode, first, is characterized by a "single beat" style; that is, the repetition of beats all more or less of the same time value—half notes, quarter notes, etc. The constant tempo varies only occasionally. It uses no syncopation and no change in pitch—the only common variation is that one beat may be louder for emphasis: Dah-dah-dah-dah, DAH-dah-dah-dah (almost invariably in 4/4 time). Usually there is only one drummer, and if more, they follow the lead and match the beat exactly, as in some American Indian ceremonies where three or four drummers play simultaneously on the same large drum.

"Shamanic" drumming is for trance induction, for "interior" working, to bring calm and quiet. Its listeners are either physically at rest or engaged in repetitive dance movements. The chants or songs accompanying it are also repetitive. It is intended to be "hypnotic," to lead one away from the outside world and into an interior realm. The instruments used are often broad-headed— the broad, flat drum of the old Eurasian tribes whose westernmost manifestation is the Irish bodhran, the cottonwood log drum of the western Indian tribes.

"Ecstatic" drumming differs from shamanic style in each of the above points. It is characterized by great variety and improvisation of best; it is repetitive only as a temporary rest from invention. It often increases slowly in tempo or goes in cycles of such change. It makes great and characteristic use of syncopation, uses as great a range of pitch as the instrument(s) make available and much variation of emphasis. Tempos vary from 4/4 to jazz-like 5/4 or 7/4 or other variants. A single drummer is less usual than a group; the more the better is the rule, and each to their own devices and imagination.

"Ecstatic drumming means emotion-working, bringing things from the inside out. It is used to excite and inspire not toward anything known beforehand but for whatever can be imagined, discovered, invented. There need be no "leader" unless it is the momentary example of any participant in the flight of inspiration. The audience is almost always in motion, perhaps free-form dance around a fire. The chants or singing can be loud and riotous. This style of drumming is less of a "sonic driving" towards a goal, but is more intended to help all participants enter into their personal and collective unknowns, to make the unmanifest manifest, to be cathartic and unbinding; at best, to reach even further behind one's unconscious contents and bring out divine madness. I feel this technique to be so ancient and instinctual that in any age people who do not know can still "accidentally" rediscover it.

Although I may have exaggerated some of the points above the better to contrast the two styles, the best example of their difference is how and why they do not work together but rather against each other. If the syncopated, complex and improvisational style is introduced to a shamanic session, it brings a distracting, fidgety energy working against calm trance and turning-inward. If the repetitive single-beat style is used within a session of ecstatic drumming loudly enough to be heard, it diminishes the sense of variety and free-play by example and contrast and grounds some of the energy, especially the desirable fringe currents.

There may yet be one coming together of the two streams, for I have observed that in the ecstatic style there can develop a certain back-and-forth, swaying undercurrent in the rhythms produced by alternating reversible patterns. This may create a trance-induction similar to that of the shamanic style within the ecstatic style and without grounding its energies or reducing the essential sense of free motion.

Remedy for Drought

Donald Levering

Osha
Root of the Chuskas
A gift strung
On bead thread
Hung above the threshold
House talisman

Ambrosia
Steeping in my tea

Your compass flower
Nodded south, drew
Dragonflies, bees
Stitching thistle
Blooms, a Zuni woman
Toting a bag of roots

Your burled toes
Stretched deep under desert
Into mineral waters
She yanked &
Held your string of rhizomes
In her calloused hands

Emetic brew

Flushes the pheasant
From the tongue's
Underbrush
(thus the woman was named
She Who Finds Fowl)

The ventriloquial
Owl calling
Is Osha presence
Its tremolo
Falls as cactus
Blossoms close

Emollient
Softens hooves

The Man Who Wanted to be an Owl

By Joseph Bruchac

There was a man who wanted power.
One day someone came up to him.
I hear you want to be a wizard.
I guess that's so, the first man said.
Then you come back tonight and meet me
at the old dead hickory tree, said the other.
It's just up there on top of the hill.
At midnight the man went to the tree.
He looked around. It was dark, blue dark
and he saw no one. *Up here,* said a voice.
A big screech owl sat on a broken limb
stuck out like an arm from the old dead tree.
How can I get up there? said the man.
Just try to come on up, said the owl.
So the man tried. He jumped and landed
on the limb next to the other owl.
Now what should I do? he said.
He was feeling pretty proud of himself.
Just follow me now, said the teacher,
spreading his wings, wide, wide.
Then he swooped down off the hickory tree,
floated across a little valley—Whooo—
Ooosh! And landed on another tree.
Then the man who wanted power
spread his own wings and Whooo—
Ooosh! He glided over the little valley
and landed right next to his teacher.
Hunh! said the other, *That's pretty good.*
Then he opened his wings. *Follow me again.*
He floated over another valley
and landed up on another tree,
followed by the man who wanted power.
Hunh! said the owl. *Good. Now one more time.*
Then he swooped across yet another valley
to another dead tree and the man came after.
The man was feeling really good.
This getting power wasn't hard at all.
The teacher looked down at him them,
turning his head all the way around.
Take this, said the owl, holding something out.
Eat this right up. It looked like rabbit.
So the man took it and swallowed it down.
But just as soon as it reached his stomach
he knew what it was—it was human flesh.
He got real sick and started to vomit.
When he woke up again it was morning.
He'd turned back into a man again
and was lying naked on top of a hill.
To get back home he started walking.
It took him a day to cross the valley
and get back to the third dead tree.
He walked one day more to reach the second
and another day to reach the first.
He was sad and sore when he got back home
and he never spoke to anyone
about wanting power again.

TOM SHANAHAN

Typical altar of Neopagan Gardnerian Witchcraft priest and priestess.

Inventing Witchcraft
The Gardnerian Paper Trail

by Aidan Kelly

The current religious movement known as "Gardnerian Witchcraft" is important not because it is large, because it isn't, but because its members claim that their religion is derived historically from the witchcraft of the Middle Ages, and that such witchcraft was derived in turn from the ancient Pagan religions of Europe, specifically from an ancient pre-Christian religion that focused on a great Mother Goddess as its supreme deity. If these claims were true, they would have important implications for our understandings of Western religious history, and of religion and human beings in general. But I have had to conclude that there is no historical basis for these claims at all—and I mean not "very little," but "zero to the 99.9 percent confidence level," that is, none.

On the other hand, the movement does exist now and is a genuine religious movement, entitled to be judged on its merits. It is somewhat harder to deal with than many movements, partly because its members tend to be secretive, partly because it is hard to define the limits of the movement. On one hand, is it reasonable to call this movement "witchcraft" at all? It has almost nothing in common with what scholars call "witchcraft" in early modern Europe or elsewhere. Still, its members do call themselves "witches," and call the movement "witchcraft," or more often simply "The Craft" [1]; so that is reason enough to use the term. On the other hand, there are plenty of people around who call themselves "witches" but mean something entirely different by the term; these include members of LaVey's Church of Satan, folk witches and curanderos, palmists, Gypsies and herbalists. However, "Gardnerian witches" consider themselves to be members of a broader religious movement usually called Neo-Paganism [2], and there is relatively little disagreement among members of the Neo-Pagan movement about who is or is not a member of it. I believe that sociologists generally recognize such self-definition of membership as a valid and reliable way to delimit a social group, so I will adopt it here.

The movement is called "Gardnerian" [3] because it was founded by a retired British civil servant named Gerald Brosseau Gardner, who published in 1939 a novel called *High Magic's Aid*. This was a fanciful and rather detailed description of the beliefs and practicies of an English witch cult in about the 15th century and even gave a step-by-step description of several initiations, but it attracted virtually no public interest. In 1950 Gardner bought a witchcraft museum on the Isle of Man from a Cecil Williamson, and used it to display the magical and occult curiousities he had been accumulating all his life. In 1951 the very last anti-witchcraft law—which had been enacted in 1737—was repealed due to lobbying by Spiritualist churches, and in 1954 Gardner published another book, *Witchcraft Today*, which was much more successful, and has remained in print ever since. In this book Gardner claimed that the religion described in his novel still existed, that he had been initiated (in September 1939, according to later statemnts by other Gardnerians) into a coven whose ancestry, beliefs and practices went back to Elizabethan times, and ultimately to the Stone Age religions of Europe. In 1958 he published *The Meaning of Witchcraft*, which elaborated on the ideas of the preceding book. He died while on a sea voyage in 1964.

Gardner and his followers, especially Doreen Valiente and Ray Buckland, have always claimed that he merely renovated and augmented the fragmentary traditions of that coven he was initiated into in 1939, and built them into a viable system, which he then used to found new covens during the 1950s. His position was that, despite his eclecticism, he was preserving the essential concepts and practices of an ancient religion; and this has ever since remained the position of almost all movements of the movement he founded [4].

A steadily growing stream of books appeared after 1958, dealing with witchcraft in general and with Gardnerian witchcraft in particular. Most of these were written by Gardernians, who accepted all of Gardner's historical claims as being simple fact. The scholars who touched on Gardner usually dismissed his claims out of hand, and asserted that he must have made the whole thing up, but did not present any sort of evidence or argument to support this assertion. A few, such as Elliott Rose, took what seemed to be a moderate position and thought that Gardner might have had some data from an older coven or covens, but doubted that such data went back past about 1875.

As long as no independent evidence was available, any opinion about what Gardner did or didn't do had to remain merely an

opinion. An argument from probabilities cannot be convincing, because history is full of things that were highly improbably but happened anyway. It is not impossible that a few rural British families might have maintained some sort of Pagan religious tradition into this century; likewise it would not have been impossible for Gardner to have concocted everything out of whole cloth. Just as a sidelight on British history, it would be interesting to know what really happened.

Despite their small numbers—perhaps up to 100,000 serious adherents worldwide—the Gardnerians' claims to historicity have been made the basis for claims that are beginning to have serious effects on religious scholarship and on various political movements. These claims therefore cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged.

Many radical feminists who are active in the current Goddess movement never mention Gerald Gardner in their writings [6]. Perhaps their position is that if one form of their religion was passed down through Gardner, another form could have been passed down independently of him. Also, many current attempts to reconstruct the supposed ancient Goddess religion are based, in part, on an intuitive argument of the form, "Since I know from my own experience how this religion feels, I also know what bits and pieces of ancient culture might have been part of it, and what could not possibly have been part of it." This is a perfectly sound argument in itself. It is used by adherents of all religions to some extent in unraveling the history of their faith and, kept within the bounds of common sense, it can provide rough guidelines for historical research. But its cogency here depends on the assumption that there is an unbroken historical continuity, however slender, between the current movement and the ancient religion. I will argue that there is no continuity because there is no historical basis for the Gardnerian claims to historicity.

Let me emphasize that I am not arguing from silence. I am NOT saying, "There is no evidence to support such claims." I am saying that there is a great deal of evidence, adding up to a virtual impossibility that such claims could be true, and that it is of the type that historians prefer—documentary.

I became curious more than ten years ago about Gardner's claims. Specifically, I wondered what had constituted the traditions of that older coven, and what Gardner's contributions had been. At the time I was actively involved in a more or less "brand-new" Neo-Pagan group on the West Coast, an involvement that began in 1967 when I was at San Francisco State working on an M.A. in creative writing. It was not until 1971 that members of my group began to meet any other Neo-Pagan witches, almost all of whom had come into the Craft by the more conventional procedure of being initiated and trained in a going coven, and who were therefore amazed that our core group had been able to divine the "essence" of the movement, and to reconstruct its practices for ourselves from the relatively sparse hints in the then-available books. It was about this time that I began to get into heated discussions with these new friends about how seriously Gardner's historical claims could be taken. On the one hand, it was obvious to me that if our Order had been able to reconstruct the Craft's practices from the data available to us, then Gardner could very well have been able to construct it from data available to him. On the other hand I was then very partial to the idea that at least some of his data had been traditional, and did go back to Native British traditions of Goddess workship, but the question was, how much?

The Gardnerian historical claims focus on their "Book of Shadows" (BoS), which is essentially the liturgical manual used by each coven, although it contains some other materials as well. The claim to historicity is specifically a claim that some aspect or level or bits or pieces of the rituals and other data in the Book of Shadows is historical, that is, comes from the older coven. I therefore

asked myself if it might be possible, by careful critical analysis, to distinguish Gardner's additions from the older body of data he was working with.

The problem here is that the Book of Shadows is more a concept than an object. It is supposed to be handcopied by each Gardnerian witch after she or he has been initiated, and therefore exists—even in this era of xerography--only as a family of manuscript traditions. (The situation is exactly analogous to what one faces in trying to do New Testament textual criticism, a fact that oddly enough provided a crucial step on the way to solving this problem.) The published versions of the Book of Shadows [7] are actually only the versions in specific manuscripts and have been further edited by their commercial publishers. Therefore one could not derive reliable historical conclusions about what Gardner did from these published books. Instead I would need access to original documents: to the "master" copy of the Book of Shadows and to whatever books or documents Gardner might have had from the older coven. In 1971 I had no idea whether such things existed. If they did, they were probably the very private and secret property of a Gardnerian coven somewhere and it was extremely unlikely I would be allowed to see them, so I thought my questions would have to remain unanswered. To my surprise all the necessary documents became available to me—indeed all but fell into my lap—within a few months in 1974. Since then other bits and pieces of published evidence and oral-historical sources have served to refine and confirm my basic conclusions.

Let me now list exactly what these documents comprise. They fall into the following three groups:

1. Gardner's three published books: *High Magic's Aid* (HMA), 1947; *Witchcraft Today* (WT), 1954; and *The Meaning of Witchcraft* (MW), 1958.

2. The Weschcke documents: a set of 18 typewritten documents owned by Carl L. Weschcke, president of Llewellyn Publications, St. Paul, Minn., along with various handwritten and typewritten letters from Gardner that allow the documents to be indisputably identified as being from Gardner's hand. These documents, sent to Weschcke by a former member of one of Gardner's covens, turn out to be versions (typed between about 1958-60) of documents written between 1953-60. (The pamphlet *Witch*, published in 1964 by "Rex Nemorensis"—Charles Cardell— also falls into this group.)

3. The Ripley's documents: the documents and letters bought about 1971 by Ripley's International Ltd., Toronto, as part of Gardner's witchcraft museum, which Ripley's bought from Gardner's heirs, the Wilsons. Of these, the single most important item of all is a manuscript book entitled "Ye Bok of ye Art Magical" (BAM), which turns out to have been written between about 1944 and 1953.

It is of extreme methodological importance that I thought Gardner's claims were basically true, and that I was looking for evidence that would prove them to be true. I will return to this point, and elaborate it, as we go along.

The Craft Laws

It was also in 1971 that I first saw a full text of the document usually called the "Craft Laws;" they appeared in an appendix to June Johns' *King of the Witches: The World of Alex Sanders*. The document fascinated me. Internally it purports to have been written in the mid-18th century, and to include materials dating back to the 16th. My intuititon was that the document must somehow be the key to Gardner's historical claims, and this has turned out in an odd way to be quite correct.

In 1972 Llewellyn published *The Grimoire of Lady Sheba*, which was the first time that an almost complete copy of the Gardnerian Book of Shadows had been published [8]. I had been reading Bruce Metzger's *The Text*

of the New Testament, so it occurred to me to try comparing the two texts of the Craft laws in Johns and Sheba. Doing so, I discovered that the texts differed in more than 150 places, often in ways for which no immediate explanation was obvious.

The Weschcke Documents

In March 1974, when my friend Isaac Bonewits was preparing to leave for St. Paul to become editor of Llewellyn's periodical, *Gnostica*, I mentioned the essay I had done on the Craft laws to him, and he encouraged me to send it to him. When I did so in May [9], he showed it to Carl Weschcke, president of Llewellyn, who was thus reminded that he had a file full of Gardnerian material, which he thought I might like to see. Bonewits, upon reading through the file, recognized immediately that the materials would interest me and promptly send me photocopies of them and of some relevant correspondence. When I read through them I could see immediately that most were pages for a Gardnerian BoS, since by 1976 two different versions of the BoS (both later than the Weschcke documents) had been published: Lady Sheba's, as mentioned before, and Stewart Farrar's *What Witches Do* [10]. I was delighted that two of the 18 documents comprised the oldest copy I had yet seen (and as it turned out, perhaps the oldest copy in existence) of the Craft laws. Furthermore I was immediately able to deduce that the materials were typed and/or handwritten by Gardner himself, and thus to discover that Gardner was dyslexic: despite his personal intelligence, which I do not discount, the fact that he could not spell or punctuate (and had only a shaky grasp of grammar) means that he could not by himself have produced the books published under his name. The help he needed might have come from the publishers—I have certainly provided many authors with similar help during the past two decades—but that it did would need to be proved, not assumed.

The documents, which I examined personally in 1974, came into Weschcke's possession as follows.

In 1968 a man in Britain with whom Weschcke had been corresponding for several years casually mentioned in a letter, "I could offer you some copies of the late G.B. Gardner's rituals that he sent me for opinions from time to time, but they are not of any commercial value." Despite their probably lack of value, he did suggest that Weschcke might be interested in publishing them. Weschcke replied that he would like to see them and about a year later his corespondent managed to bundle them up and post them. When they arrived, Weschcke looked them over, decided (I gather) that they were rather messy versions of information that had already become available, and, except for publishing some cleaned-up extracts in various Llewellyn magazines, left them sitting in the file.

When we were talking I mentioned casually that the documents had been typed by Gardner himself. Weschcke, greatly surprised, stopped me in mid-sentence and asked how I knew that. Surprised in turn that he hadn't known, I explained that although Gardner had not signed the documents, his authorship and typing could be established by the internal evidence and by comparison with the typed and handwritten letters from him that Weschcke also had.

Just to be sure, Weschcke wrote his correspondent, who replied, "Yes, the MS. I sent you was Gerald's own; his corrections, etc., should prove it. I think I told you at the time how rare they were. Please treasure them." But in fact he had not mentioned this crucial point, that the documents were Gardner's "autograph" copies. If he had, Weschcke would surely have published them immediately—and a copy editor would have cleaned up all the messy details that constitute the real historical evidence.

If I had looked at the 18 documents and asked, "What in these can I be *certain* came from an older tradition?" the answer would

have been "nothing," and no progress could have been made. But if I asked, "What in these can I be certain is recent?" a procedure became possible: I could (a) identify passages that are quotes from or directly dependent on published sources, and set these aside; then (b) ask whether what then remained made sense as being from anything like the sort of native Pagan tradition that Gardner claimed.

As I carried out this procedure, I was able to discover some interesting facts.

First, some of the drafts were different versions of the same basic ritual, and sometimes incorporated revisions of another piece of writing. I could compare these to establish a relative internal chronology ("A is a revision of B, hence was written after B"); I could also establish some absolute dates based on which versions of these rituals and verses had been published in Gardner's books. I was thus able to establish that (a) the 18 Weschcke documents were typed between about 1954 and about 1960, most of them probably about 1958 or 1959; and (b) many of the BoS rituals did not exist in 1954 (when *Witchcraft Today* was published), but instead were still being written). If a Gardnerian coven is one that works the basic Gardnerian rituals, then no Gardnerian coven could have existed before 1955, since the basic Gardnerian rituals did not exist before 1955.

Second, I discovered that the major published sources from which the rituals had been constructed included: MacGregor Mathers' edition of *The Greater Key of Solomon*; Aleister Crowley's *Magick in Theory and Practice*, Leland's *Aradia*, and some Masonic rituals akin to those of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (aside from those transmitted by Crowley). There were minor sources as well. Once all these had been set aside, what was left could conceivably have been a Pagan tradition, true, but it could just as well have been constructed from such obvious sources as the works of Margaret Murray, C.G. Leland, Jane E. Harrison, Gilbert Murray, James Fraser, and the other great classicists and mythologists of the 19th century.

The Gardnerians themselves have never claimed these rituals to be traditional; they admit the rituals are exactly where Gardner did the most reconstruction work. Rather, they claim the pre-1939 stratum is one of concept, customs, traditions, laws and, in brief, the sorts of things incorporated in the Craft laws, which is the only piece of writing in the BoS that claims to be(and, *prima facie*, could be historical). I had felt that the Gardnerian claim to historicity must stand or fall on this document ever since I had first scene it, and my analysis of the typed parts of it among the Weschcke documents simply left the question open. Because it was typed in two parts, which exhibit some curious internal parallels, I thought both parts might have been derived from an older, common source document—and it was that hypothetical older document I hoped to find when I went to Toronto to examine the Ripley's holdings.

The Ripley's Holdings

In September 1975 I visited the headquarters of Ripley's International Ltd, in Toronto for three days to look over the books and manuscripts that Ripley's had acquired in buying the contents of Gerald Gardner's former museum on the Isle of Man. There I met Derek Copperthwaite, then vice president for research and development, who had arranged the purchase of the museum in 1971 from Gardner's heirs, Monique and Campbell Wilson. Much of the following history is based on what he told me about that experience.

Gardner had purchased the museum, located in a building called the "Witches' Mill" in Castleton on the Isle of Man, from Cecil Williamson in about 1950, and had used it to display his collected curiosities. At some point in the 1950s, probably after Mrs. Gardner had died, the Wilsons came to live with Gardner, essentially to take care of him

and help mind the shop; so, when Gardner died childless in 1964, they inherited the property. However, they could not keep up with the work of the museum and after a few years offered to sell it to Ripley's.

When Copperthwaite and Charles Bristol, Ripley's treasurer, arrived on the island to discuss the possible sale, they found the Wilsons, although desperate, had not yet hit bottom—there was still one pub on the island that would serve them [11]. As it was, they couldn't keep the ancient building in repair enough to protect the museum's contents from the winter rains that storm in from the Irish Sea almost continuously from November thrugh May, so, Copperthwaite said, if Ripley's hadn't bought the museum, probably much of its contents, especially the books and manuscripts, would simply have perished.

Packing the museum's contents for transatlantic shipment was an enormous task in itself, since items were crammed into every conceivable nook and cranny in the building. It was necessary to dismantle furniture and remove wall panels in order to find everything. Hence, Copperthwaite assured me, he was certain nothing had been overlooked.

I asked if any Books of Shadows had been found among the manuscripts, since several comments had been published about Books of Shadows (including one supposedly in Crowley's handwriting) that Gardner had had on display.

He assured me there were no such books, and described some of the abusive mail he had received insisting that Ripley's had no right to own such books and demanding that he turn any such books over to the writer. "These people always describe themselves as the High Priest of Muckety-Muck, or some such nonsense. I can't imagine why they think I could simply give corporate property away."

"Perhaps," I suggested, "the working copies of the Book were removed from the collection before the Wilsons called you in."

"Perhaps so," he said, "but not likely. The Wilsons had no idea what was valuable in the collection and what was junk, and were very reluctant to let anything go, so I can't imagine their willingly turning loose such obviously valuable items. Anyway, the one thing we found that might be a Book of Shadows is this. We found it stuffed way in the back of a cabinet. I haven't been able to decide whether it's a Book of Shadows or not; it's rather odd. I'd like to know what you make of it."

And with these words he handed me a manuscript book titled "Ye Bok of ye Art Magical." Gardner began it as a magical journal, probably during World War II, and in it he copied many things, including precisly the passages from the *Greater Key of Solomon* that I had already identified as sources of his rituals. Late in the book suddenly appear the initiation rituals published in *High Magic's Aid* (1948), and from there on the materials become more and more relevant for the Craft. The latest materials include drafts of passages that appeared in *Witchcraft Today* (1954). I deduced that the materials appropriate for a Craft Book of Shadows had been copied into a new "master" Book about 1953, and this old notebook had then been retired to the back of a cabinet to be discovered by Derek Copperthwaite. The Wilsons, who came later, probably didn't even know it existed; thus it was preserved, to provide the clues to unravel the puzzle. The answer to Copperthwaite's question therefore is that book had not begun life as a Book of Shadows, but had become one—in fact, the very first one—by the time it was filled up and retired.

Through Copperthwaite I was able to look at Gardner's entire personal library. It represented a healthy selection of what had been published on witchcraft and the occult between 1890 and 1950, and included precisely the books—Murray, Crowley, Leland, etc.—that I already knew he had used as sources for his rituals.

Gardner had saved correspondence from

the 1940s or earlier, but there were no mentions of the Craft except in a single file of correspondence, dating from 1957-62, which seemed to be complete. (I can now deduce that Doreen Valiente took all the correspondence from before 1957 with her when the coven was divided in February 1957). Most of these letters were from such well-known Gardnerians as Patricia Crowther, Lois Hemmings, Jack Bracelin, and the Wilsons, as well as from the man who sent the 18 documents to Carl Weschcke. There was also a very odd letter from "Ameth" to "Dafo;" since I thought "Dafo" had been Doreen Valiente's coven name, I could imagine who "Ameth" was. One letter in this file, from Jack Bracelin, dated June 1957, turns out to be especially important; I will refer back to it.

There was a typescript, titled "New Light on Witchcraft," which was the carbon copy of the unedited, prepublication manuscript of *Witchcraft Today*. Glancing through it, I discovered it was in excellent shape, and, contrary to Francis King's assertions [12], had not needed any heavy editing and rewriting before publication. But obviously Gardner—who, as I said, was dyslexic—had not produced this MS. by himself; he had had some very competent help, and I guessed then that it might have come from his wife. I now know that Doreen Valiente was the silent co-author of the book.

There were 18 notebooks filled at random with Gardner's notes on his reading, mainly in preparation for the writing of *The Meaning of Witchcraft*, but these also contained a few first drafts of materials that later went into the BoS.

In the file of letters about the Craft I found a document titled "Proposed Rules for the Craft." It could be dated to June 1957 because a letter of that date from Jack Bracelin, Gardner's supposed biographer [13], referred to them as "Ned's proposed rules for the Craft." (Ned was obviously well-educated and wrote with some craftsmanship, so I was curious who he was.) These rules greatly overlapped the concerns of the Craft laws document. In fact, I realized months later they were its first draft. Where later and earlier versions of the same pasages have been published, we can see that the later passages were archaicized by incorporation of obscure words gleaned from the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

The reason "proposed rules" were needed in June 1957 is that then, for the first time, there were two covens of "the Craft" instead of just one, and hence there was an organization, which needed formal rules that all could agree upon.

When I returned home from Toronto in September 1975 I had found all the facts needed to demonstrate that there is nothing in these "Craft laws," or in the entire Bos, that could possibly be part of a tradition received from a pre-1939 coven. This was true despite the fact that I had gone to Toronto as a member of the Gardnerian movement: I wanted there to have been some tradition behind Gardner's coven. Certainly if I had gone to Toronto in the frame of mind of, say, an evangelical Christian doing battle with "Satan" and all his works, the reader would do well to suppose that I might easily have overlooked important evidence and that my conclusions were tenuous. But that was not the situation. I was looking for facts to support the Gardnerian claims and I wanted to find them; if there had been any in Toronto, I certainly would not have overlooked them. The reason I could not find any, therefore, is that they do not exist.

When Doreen Valiente wrote in her book *Witchcraft for Tomorrow* (1978, p.14), that Gardner had initiated her in 1953, some missing pieces of the puzzle fell into place: obviously it was she who was the secret co-author of *Witchcraft Today*, and who helped with the writing of the BoS later on. In fact, she also admitted in 1978 (p.21) that in 1954-55 she co-authored the verse that begins "Darksome night and shining moon," and other materials used in the BoS. But there were still other missing pieces that

I did not expect to be able to find—until they too fell into my lap.

Floyd, an Oral-Historical Source

Later in 1981 I had the pleasure of a visit from a man whom I will call Floyd, who was able and willing to answer many questions I had not thought I would ever get answered. He happened to be in San Francisco on business, and was referred on to me by a mutual friend in the Craft. He is now still a member of Gardner's original coven, into which he was initiated in January 1957 by Gardner and Doreen Valiente, who was at that time, he said, high priestess of that coven. (One reason I knew his statemnts were accurate is that he knew the names—which I knew from reading the letters in Toronto—of the utterly obscure people who had been members of the coven in 1957. It was a great pleasure to ask him, "Who was Ned?" and be told, "Oh, he was someone in the City," which is British for "rich and well-connected.")

The very next month, February 1957, the coven split in half, with Doreen and Ned, as her new high priest, taking four or five others with them to form a new coven. Floyd said those left in the original coven soon decided to use the circle dance, rather than scourging, as their major way to raise power, so Gardner then wandered off to begin initiating new members for another coven more to his liking. This was the situation when the Craft laws were created in 1957; Floyd thought they were the work of Doreen's coven, since they had never been part of the original coven's tradition.

Floyd assured me that all the Gardnerians of his time knew Doreen Valiente had written virtually everything in the BoS, and that the master copy of that book was still in her possession. (She said in *Witchcraft for Tomorrow*, p. 21, that she owns "Gardner's original Book of Shadows, which he gave to me." I think a more precise statement would be that, since she wrote it, Gardner could not prevent her from taking it with her when they divided the original coven in half.)

Floyd believes there *was* a pre-1939 coven, and said he knew several people who had met "Dafo," who had also been a member of it. However, he admitted, she had never been forthcoming with any data about that coven. ("Wasn't 'Dafo' Doreen's Craft name?" I asked. Floyd said, "No, hers was ...Ameth," we said together. And that explained the peculiar letter from Ameth to Dafo I had found.)

Since meeting Floyd I have realized that the logical explanation for Dafo is that she was the secret co-author of *High Magic's Aid*. Apparently Gardner met Dafo during World War II in some sort of magical group and they decided to found a religion of "Witchcraft" that they would claim dated from the Middle Ages. They collaborated on the writing of HMA and on creating the rituals in the BAM MS., which is clearly intended for liturgical use in the circle. They seem to have met with little success until they intiated Doreen Valiente in 1953. She promptly put her very real talents to work for the new religion, rewriting existing rituals and creating new ones.

In fact, none of the circle rituals in use in 1954 were based on a "Pagan" theology; they were all adapted from the Cabalistic procedures of the *Greater Key of Solomon*. Valiente's major work from 1954-57 was the creation of a Pagan theology on which rituals could be based; she also created rituals based on this theology by adapting the cumbersome procedures of the HOGD system to the needs of a small group. As such things go, I must consider this a major advance in magical technology.

As far as I can see, there was no emphasis on the Goddess as a major deity and on the high priestess as the central authority in the coven until after 1957, when Doreen Valiente became the first such "Gardnerian" high priestess and began to adopt Robert Graves' "White Goddess" myth as the official thealogy of her coven, which was worked into the Craft laws as they developed. One can

see the beginnings of this late stage in *The Meaning of Witchcraft*, which Valiente also seems to have helped Gardner write during 1957, after the division of the coven; the "hiving off" of her new coven thus seems to have represented growth more than a schism.

NOTES

1. "The Craft" is actually a Masonic term for Freemasonry, and might be thought a clue to the origins of Gardnerian witchcraft. However, this term appears only in documents as a name for the religion late in the 1950s, perhaps influenced by Masonic works being used for reference. In the 1940s and early 1950s the term used is "the Art," which seems to come from a magical source.

2. Tim Zell, founder of *The Green Egg*, a major Neo-Pagan journal of the 1970s, thought that he had coined the term Neo-Paganism. However, I discovered that Chesterton had used it in *Heretics*.

3. Within the Neo-Pagan movement, the term "Gardnerian" is used in a special sense, to mean those persons initiated in correct apostolic succession into an officially Gardnerian coven. All others are considered to belong to other traditions, called Alexandrian, Druidic, Dianic, Faerie, etc., often supposed to derive from the ancient polytheism independently of Gardner. I am not using the term in this sense. Instead, I call all Neo-Pagan witches Gardnerian witches, because all the current activity results from widespread imitation of Gardnerian practices. The few covens around that might predate Gardner (and had an utterly different theology from what the Gardnerians propose) have borrowed the Gardnerian system almost wholecloth because of its utility, and have thus muddied what other tracks there might have been. Some of Gardner's imitators have acted in good faith; some others, such as Alex Sanders, are simply barefaced liars.

Gardner's mentions of this story are fragmentary and scattered, and the description in *Gerald Gardner: Witch* (Octagon House, 1960), published under the name of Jack Bracelin (see note 13), is brief and vague. The most detailed version is given by Doreen Valiente in the entry for "Gerald Gardner" in her *ABC of Witchcraft* (St. Martin's, 1973), but as we will see, she is anything but an independent witness. The only scholar before now who has considered the Gardnerian claim to historicity is Elliott Rose in *A Razor for a Goat* (University of Toronto Press, 1962). Although Rose supposed the Gardnerian claim to be inherently fraudulent, he makes the strategic error of believing Gardner's claim of an earlier coven, and so becomes lost in speculations about what sort of person might have perpetrated such a fraud around the turn of the century, a point on which there can, of course, be no evidence.

5. The major study is Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, which gives a fairly detailed history of the New Reformed Orthodox Order of the Golden Dawn, based partly on her own research, partly on data I supplied. J.B. Russell, *A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics, and Pagans*, is important as the first serious study of witchcraft as a whole that deals with the Gardnerian movement sympathetically but accurately. See also the articles by Marcello Truzzi in Tiryakian (1974) and in Zaretsky and Leone (1974); the latter gives an excellent survey of the literature to that date. See also Susan Roberts, *Witches USA*, for a well-written popular survey.

6. E.g., Gardner is not mentioned in such popular works as Starhawk's *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, Merlin Stone's *When God Was a Woman*, Naomi Goldenberg's *Changing of the Gods*, or Charlene Spretnak's *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece*. (Two of his books appear in Starhawk's bibliography, but she never mentions him in her text.) All these works simply assume the truth of Graves' hypothesis that there was an ancient Goddess religion, and offer no analysis, proof or defense of it. I find it even more disturbing that essentially the same unexamined assumption underlies works intended to be scholarly, such as Christine Downing's *The Goddess*, and many articles and contributions to anthologies. Even more disturbing is Emily Culpepper's "The Spiritual Movement of Radical Feminist Consciousness," in Needleman and Baker (1978). On pp.222-224, she discusses Feminist Witchcraft specifically, quoting with approval a statement that its tradition goes back to the "middle ages and ... ancient religions and rituals focused on the worship of a Goddess who was a Divine Mother." She never mentions Gardner, and recommends Z. Budapest's *Feminist Book of Lights and Shadows* without mentioning the fact (and it is no secret) that this is merely a rewriting of Gardner's Book of Shadows to eliminate all mentions of males both mortal and immortal. I do not object to advocacy as such; I object when advocacy is passed off as scholarship.

7. In Farrar and Sheba, discussed in note 10.

8. Actually, the first publication was the year before, as *Lady Sheba's Book of Shadows*. The Grimoire should be considered a revised second edition of LSBoS.

9. This essay was published subsequently as "Textual Criticism and the Craft Laws," (*Gnostica*, July 1974).

10. Stewart Farrar's *What Witches Do* contains the full text (EXCEPT for the Craft laws) of the copy of the Gardnerian BoS that Alex Sanders obtained when he was initiated by Patricia Crowther in 1963; there is a letter in Toronto from Pat Kopinski to Gardner giving details of Sanders' initiation. *The Grimoire of Lady Sheba* is slightly less complete, since she apparently

seems baseless. Since I have managed to date every document in the BoS, I have also discovered that the assertion by Crowley's friends (reported by King, *loc. cit.*) that Gardner commissioned Crowley to write the BoS is utterly groundless, since *only* the rituals published in HMA existed while Crowley was still alive.

13. "Floyd," my British visitor, whom I discuss later in this paper, told me that *Gerald Gardner: Witch* had actually been written by Idries Shah, who then decided he would prefer not to have his name on it, and asked Bracelin to take responsibility. Since Bracelin's spelling, punctuation, etc., were as poor as Gardner's, this story makes at least *prima facie* sense.

never received the third degree initiation, but she makes up for that by a burst of uninspired inventiveness.

11. Copperthwaite asked me at the time not to mention the Wilsons' alcoholism. Since I now known and admit I suffer from the same disease, I also know that only harm is done whenever the fact of its existence is denied. Besides, this fact does make the Wilsons' behavior understandable and thus perhaps more forgiveable.

12. Francis King's assertion in *Ritual Magic in England*, p. 180, that "the reader responsible for its acceptance, himself an occult scholar of distinction, managed to blue-pencil most of the rubbishy passages"

CHAS S. CLIFTON

Statue of Diana in Sutro Park, San Francisco.

Pagan Renaissance and Wiccan Witchcraft in Industrial Society
A Study of Parasociology and the Sociology of Enchantment

by R. George Kirkpatrick
Rich Rainey
Kathryn Rubi

The following article is condensed from a paper delivered at the November 1983 meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in Knoxville, Tenn., and, with revisions, at the March 1984 meetings of the Southwestern Sociological Association in Fort Worth, Texas.

Around the first half of this century, the surviving customs and beliefs of European Paganism and Witchcraft publically re-emerged in England [1]. These ecstatic and visionary traditions were subsequently labelled "Neopagan" by Zell [2]. and referred to as such by Isaac Bonewits [3] who claimed they represent polytheistic and magical nature religions typically based on older religions of Paleopagan ancestry.

Margot Adler [4] in her comprehensive documentary refers to the Euro-American Pagan and Neopagan revival, and the mythical roots of Wiccan matriarchy with its ancestral pantheon of deities, not only as the rising of a poetical movement but also, and perhaps more importantly, the story of contemporary Western Pagans who are searching among powerful archaic images of nature, of life and death, of creation and destruction, in order to change their relationship with an anomic and plundered world. Starhawk [5], sharing a mutual affinity, writes of this quest as one of changing one's consciousness to reawaken the starlight vision—a vision that is pregnant with extraordinary rather than supernatural consciousness, that reveals a *poemagogic* mode of perception and comprehension that is lambent, holistic and cosmic. This term, poemagogic, was used by Anton Ehrenzweig in *The Hidden Order of Art,* essentially symbolic of stimulating or inducing an inspirational and creative sense of experiential.

Numerous journalistic, psychological, historical and anthropological accounts of Witchcraft and occult phenomena have been published, but few systematic pieces of quantitative survey research have been done on the emerging or "new" religions, much less on Pagan or Neopagan revivalistic groups. A survey of the literature indicates that Witchcraft is undergoing a revival and renaissance along with increasing numbers of non-Judaic-Christian-Moslem religions, reflecting increased tolerance and pluralism at least in the Euro-American cultures.

Some of these Neopagan groups draw upon traditions and heritages including Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Celtic, Italian, Roman, Greek and Egyptian; some upon science fiction lore, and some identify with the Witches who were persecuted by the Inquisition and its Protestant counterparts.

The three Pagan revivals of the 20th century include one in the 1950s associated with Gerald Gardner. Many of our Wiccan respondents are Gardnerians, products of this revival. Another revival, in the 1960s, we call the Aquarian Age or counter-cultural revival. In the 1980s, the feminists have produced Dianic Witchcraft with shamanistic Goddess worship.

Traditional Witches have been initiated through family connections with another Witch. Revivalist, Murrayite Witches, Eclectic Witches and Gardnerian Witches see Witchcraft as the "Old Religion," a Neolithic nature religion which includes but is not limited to the practice of magic. It also includes ceremony, ritual and worship. In this study we have focused almost entirely on revivalist Witches and have taken our samples from informal networks of Pagans.

Parasociology & Methodology

Parasociology is the sociology of the interruption of everyday reality and it is also the sociology of the occult, secret or hidden reality that transcends everyday life and popular opinion and culture. According to Tiryakian [6], "By 'occult' I understand intentional practices, techniques or procedures which (a) draw upon hidden or concealed forces in nature or the cosmos that cannot be measured or recognized by the instruments of modern science, and (b)

which have as their desired or intended consequences empirical results, such as either obtaining knowledge of the empirical course of events or altering them." Magic is the word the modern Wiccans use to describe such occult practices. So parasociology is the sociology of magic. Magic, when practiced from within Pagan culture or from within the Wiccan religion is called The Craft or Witchcraft, the Craft of the Wise, and the Craft of the Will.

Parasociology is concerned with the description and explanation of social structures of the hidden world, like the coven, and with the symbols and meaning systems of the esoteric culture. The description of the world view of Paganism is part of the task of parasociology.

We have adopted the term "participative sociology" to describe our methodology in which members of the community of focus participate in counseling and guiding the research project from questionnaire design through data analysis and coding. Esoteric knowledge is participatory knowledge, so we needed a participative methodology to study it. We invited the Pagans to participate in the content analysis of our data and in coding them, to eliminate problems often encountered when coding is done by sociologists who impose categories on the data. Participative sociology is a variation of a new French sociological methodology called ' interventionist sociology."

The ideological questions were drawn from those used by writer Margot Adler and published in a now-defunct Pagan journal called *The Green Egg*. Her questions elicited much of the information we needed concerning Pagan ideology, consciousness, beliefs, values, practices, hierarchy, group structures and the impacts of technology, magic, religious mysteries, persecution, secrecy, ethics and matriarchy on the Pagan community.

Results

A majority of our respondents (53 percent) came from the West, and were equally divided between men and women, which did not substantiate the popular notion of Witchcraft as a predominately female religion. The data indicate that a substantial number (43 percent) of our respondents came from farms, rural areas, or towns of less than 50,000 population. This seems to indicate a large rural component, not surprising since the term "pagan" originally meant a country dweller, suggesting that this may not necessarily be an urban movement as some authors have suggested.

As one might expect from the cultural content of the Pagan traditions, such as the Celtic, Welsh, Irish, Scottish, Norse, etc., we found the respondents to be predominantly of Northern European extraction. This may support the notion that they constitute a cultural revitalization movement of Northern European non-Christians [7].

In terms of their religious self-concept, we found that most of the respondents (53 percent) think of themselves as Wiccan. We hypothesized that Wiccans were likely to experience the stress of status inconsistency. Our Wiccan respondents tended to be highly educated and under-rewarded, having relatively high-status occupations. The average occupational prestige ranking of 76.6 indicates a relatively high range of occupations, and they are more highly educated than the general population as indicated by the United States census—66 percent have college degrees and 38 percent have advanced degrees. Our data on income indicate that the Wiccan respondents are under-rewarded as compared with the general United States 1980 census data—80 percent make less than the 1983 median income. According to Lenski [8] seminal discussion of the concept of status inconsistency, the more frequently acute status inconsistencies occur within a population, the greater will be the number of that population willing to support social

movements.

We hypothesized that Wiccans would score high on scales measuring normlessness because many of the "revivalist" Witches may have joined or formed covens or taken up the study of the Craft to give their life the conceptual order and meaning offered by the simplifying ideology of a religious movement. Our data do not support this hypothesis. Wiccans have a mean score of 2.57 (with a range of 5), indicating only a moderate degree of normlessness.

We hypothesized they would have relatively low scores on the California F-scale measuring authoritarianism, but our data do not support this hypothesis. We felt that Wicca was a decentralized religion with each coven making its own rules—representing an anarchistic structure compared to the authoritarian guru-disciple structures associated with most of the new religions that are either Oriental or syncretic-Orietnal. A mean F-scale score of 2.44 with a range of 1 to 5 cannot be considered low, but is average. Radical feminist Wiccans, however, are much less authoritarian than Wiccans in general, who more closely match the Christian population.

We hypothesized that Wiccans would have relatively high scores on social isolation scales and that many would have joined or formed covens to establish primary group ties to reduce felt social isolation. Our data did not support this hypothesis. A mean score of 2.45 on the social isolation scale is an average score.

We hypothesized that Wiccans would have relatively high scores on personal powerlessness, since Witchcraft is a practice oriented toward self-mastery and control over the events in one's environment and personal life. Several of our informants in San Diego covens agreed with Margot Adler that the word "witchcraft" originally meant "craft of the will" with implications toward gaining power and efficacy in the world through occult or hidden sources. This hypothesis also was unsupported by our data. The mean scores of 2.32 on Neal and Seeman's (1964) powerlessness scale indicates only a moderate degree of felt powerlessness.

We hypothesized that Wiccans would have low scores on scales measuring "status concern." Our data indicate that most Wiccans judge their religion to be the most important activity in their life. When asked to rank the following activities—career, leisure, family, religion, community and friendship—more Pagans mentioned religious activities first than any other activity. This hypothesis is supported by our data. A mean score of 1.83 was relatively low for items measuring "status concern."

We hypothesized that Wiccans would score low on scales measuring "traditional family ideology." Some 46.5 percent of our sample were married with no children, and 31.7 percent of our sample were never married, while 19.8 percent were divorced—a total of 51.5 percent unmarried. Our data did tend to support this hypothesis, with the mean score on the scale measuring "traditional family ideology" being a moderately low 1.83.

Finally, we hypothesized that most Wiccans would have relatively low scores on a conservatism scale. Some 30.7 of our applicants described themselves as politically liberal and 14.9 percent described themselves as radical. This hypothesis was supported by the relatively low conservatism score of 1.93.

Religious Ideology

One fourth of our respondents say that a Witch is a Pagan priest [9]]. This implies that a coven is a Pagan congregation. A circle cast is a Pagan temple or sacred space. Seven percent say a Witch is an initiated follower of the Craft. Both of these responses—Pagan prest and initiate of the Craft—imply that Paganism is an established religion and that the Witch has a formal role within it, as priests, coven leader, etc., and that Witches are ordained, rather than being born or self-proclaimed.

Another fourth of our respondents say a Witch is "one who shapes the world to their will." This implies psychic or supernatural power.

In response to the question, "How did you become a Witch?" we see that 78 percent indicate that they consider themselves a Witch even though only 25 percent have been formally initiated into a coven by a teacher.

Since roughly one half of our sample is male, it seems clear that the males also identify with the term Witch. If the mention of friends or family as mechanisms of recruitment into Witchcraft can be used as an indicator or recruitment through existing social networks, then only 11 percent of our sample were recruited through existing networks, while 67 percent report other mechanisms of recruitment. This process is best described by Stewart Farrar in his book *What Witches Do* and is also described by Margot Adler in *Drawing Down the Moon.* Three degrees of initiation often apply and the three-year process of apprenticeship produces a secret "Book of Shadows" original to each Witch. Our field research team observed one initiation from "outside" to "insider" status at a drawing down the Moon ceremony prior to All Hallows in 1982, and we were allowed to examine a Book of Shadows.

A large number of respondents became Witches through a self-initiation process involving reading and study. Six persons said they had always been Witches, but slowly grew to recognize the fact. Five respondents were studying to become Witches, but had not yet been initiated. Most definitions of Witchcraft are organizational rather than mystical or psychic.

We asked our respondent about the common elements of the Pagan world view. About 40 percent either reported vastly different world views that could not be coded into the same (26 percent) categories, or flatly reported that "Pagans have many different world views" (13 percent).

The other 60 percent, however, do share a common world views. Twenty-six percent think that the essence of Paganism is cooperation, 28 percent are naturalists and pantheists concerned with living in harmony with Nature and the planet Earth. Six percent say that Pagans have the right of individual choice of world views, and if such exponents of cosmological individualism are added to those who advocate a plurality of world views we have a total of 45 percent who cannot agree on one world view, and 55 percent split roughly between cooperation and naturalism.

Does being a polytheistic Pagan make one ethical? The first ethical precept of Paganism (and some say the only one, the "whole of the law") is that one may do "whatever one wills," as long as it harms no one. One of the two meanings of the word witchcraft is "the craft of the will." Two percent of our respondents even said, "Freedom of the will is sacred, not to be tampered with."

The other two ethical precepts include the Golden Rule: "Treat others as you would be treated" and "honor life, kill only for survival." Many Pagans mentioned the ethical precept "Live in harmony with the Earth." Pagans consider the consequences of actions more important than the intentions of actions (motives).

They feel that any energy put out, be it positive or negative, returns three times. They see order and meaning in the Universe and they see the fate and fortune of mortals related to ethical actions

Other ethical precepts held in common (34 percent held individual beliefs not related to those of other respondents, indicating a large amount of ethical eclecticism and individuality) were the notions of "belief in self," "openness and honesty," "control your actions but not your feelings" and "be loyal to your coven."

To the question, "What kind of group structure is most suitable for Pagan groups?" we found 18 percent were what we

called "Craft traditionals" who preferred formal positions within the coven based upon degree of accomplishment within the practice of Witchcraft and by implication degree of formal initiation. Sixteen percent, on the other hand, preferred a loose structure. Thirteen percent preferred a small group of close friends, making a total of 29 percent who advocated a loose structure with friendships predominating. Eleven percent felt that the Pagan group structure should consist of the high priestess, the high priest and the initiates: a two-tier structure, with the leaders and the initiated followers represented as levels of group structure. Eight percent felt that the circle was the best structure, with all responsibilities and leadership shared equally. Five percent mentioned "the coven" as a group structure, although we may assume that all responses referred in a general way to the "coven" because that is the term applied to Wiccan groups. Interestingly, three percent said the groups should be either all women or all gay men, representing the radical feminist tendency within Wicca—a small, but vocal and influential minority within the Craft, the members of which have produced a very interesting literature.

Seventy-one percent of the Witches responding said that they did believe in a hierarchy of authority in the Craft, while only 24 percent opposed hierarchy. In general, the kind of Pagan hierarchy consisted primarily of honoring greater experience.

Our findings on the relationship between secrecy and persecution are very interesting. Eighty-two percent of the Witches believe that secrecy is justified. Twenty-eight percent believe that negative public attitudes justify secrecy. Nine percent said explicitly that Witchcraft must be secret because it is a "mystery religion." Six percent said that Witchcraft is an experiential religion—you must learn it by doing it and not by reading about it. Four percent said that Witchcraft is an elite religion and is "not for the masses." Seventeen percent feel that Witchcraft is powerful and dangerous and that it must be guarded lest it fall into the wrong hands or harm people who do not know how to use its power. Only 4 percent of the Witches felt that the Craft should be public. Another 6 percent felt that the only real function of secrecy was to impress the neophytes.

Most of our respondents felt that the belief in and practice of Paganism and Witchcraft improved their lives. The only negative effects mentioned were "attacks from ignorant non-Pagans" and "crowding of daily schedule." Among the most frequently mentioned positive responses were increased personal awareness, accelerated personal growth, increased feelings of peace, positive feelings, acceptance of others, thoughtful actions, control of personal life, and an expanded sense of purpose. Mentioned less often were increased awareness of ecological issues, practice of yoga, increase of self-confidence, and numerous responses mentioned by only one respondent, indicating individual effects of the adoption of Paganism, but not shared or group response to the new religious ideology and practice.

Much has been said about the ecological and naturalistic elements in the Pagan Witchcraft revival. It is frequently implied that naturalism and Paganism are essentially the same, or at least that Paganism is naturalism and implies ecology. Our data, however, indicate that the Pagans are much more technologically oriented than one might expect, and are at least as open to science as they are to mysticism, magic and shamanism. Many regard magic as prescientific "intuitive rationalism" rather than as mysticism. Many feel that the magic of today will be the science and technology of tomorrow. Thirty-eight percent support any level of technology that is appropriate to a given situation, and encourage knowledge of all kinds. Only fourteen percent are explicitly concerned with the integration of

technology with nature, and only 4 percent mention ecologically sound technology as essential for a Pagan life. Another 4 percent advocate "safe" technology. Altogether only 12 percent mention limitations on technology from ecological or naturalistic or safety perspectives, while a total of 42 percent advocate the advanced technological society. Only 4 percent said that technology should be "as little as possible, the less the better," expressing the anti-technological position often associated with the Pagan revival of the counter-culture of the 1960s.

People tend to be curious about the role of sex in any social group, and not less so about sex in Paganism. This is especially true because many Witches perform the Great Rite—ritual sexual intercourse between the high priest and high priestess inside the circle as part of the religious ceremony—each month on the new moon. In some covens, because the roles of high priest and high priestess rotate, each member of the coven will eventually have ritual sex with every other member. The rite can be done "in reality" or "symbolically." Either way, many covens feel that the Great Rite is important at least symbolically because of the origins of Pagan Witchcraft in pre-Christian fertility religion.

A total of 47 percent felt that some sort of ritual sex was justified. They used words like ritualistic, symbolic, magical, sacramental, holy and spiritual to describe religious-oriented sex. Only 17 percent felt that sex had no place in Paganism and only 4 percent felt that sex should be limited to husband and wife.

Contrary to popular belief, 67 percent of our respondents opposed the use of drugs in Paganism, whether such use be ritual, medicinal or recreational. Of the 33 percent of the Pagans who approved of drug use, 21 percent approved of medicinal or herbal use, and only 12 percent of ritual use. Of those who disapproved, only 15 percent mentioned that they were tolerant of drug use and believed in a freedom of choice. In short, the Pagans are more Puritanical about drug use than one might expect from popular stereotypes.

Almost a third of our respondents believe that the persecution of Witches and Pagans in our culture will increase. Fifteen percent believe that persecution will decrease. Perhaps this reflects a real conservative trend in our society, after some 20 years of permissiveness. Sixteen percent believe that the increase of persecution depends on the fundamentalist Christians, the Moral Majority and similar groups. Six percent believe it depends on the politicians and 2 percent on the economy. Only 2 percent link it to the visibility of the Craft in society.

Conclusions

Pagans reject the authority structures of the established society and its religious consciousness to embrace the religion of the oppressed—the Witches burned from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment. Although they are relatively authoritarian within their own covens, the high priestess has less authority than the Eastern guru, but at last as much as the Zen master in her limited range—the coven ideal of 13.

Witches feel social isolation and anomie from the incoherant overlapping normative structures of modern industrial society. They lessen their felt powerlessness through the practice of magic; lessen their isolation with the coven; and lessen their anomie with the folkloric "traditions."

Pagans issue a challenge to the patriarchy in the form of a Goddess religion and to the technocratic scientific world with their naturalism and shamanistic "Earth Religion."

Wiccans recruit from feminists, naturalists, hippies and occultists, while forging an identity as the "Old Religion" of Europe from before the Christian conquest of Rome all the way back to the Paleolithic Age. Witches try to incorporate the few Native American shamans still surviving into their primarily Northern European Pagan revivalist movement.

Pagan Witches are under-rewarded status discontents who care little for money and much for knowledge and the balance of Nature. Partially rural in origin, even those from the city yearn to return to nature, and at least in Wisconsin, have a working utopian community of Pagans living on the land according to their beliefs.

Democrats, mavericks and independents with no politics, they have rejected "politics" narrowly defined, except for anti-nuclear and environmental causes, and feminism. The intellectual force of the Pagan revival of the 1980s is from the feminist Pagan poets and magicians, who are a force toward the re-enchantment of the social world that appeared forever rationalized.

Highly educated and from prestigious occupations, our respondents think of themselves as Pagans, Witches and Wiccans. A modern revivalist Witch is a Pagan priest.

Through the use of symbols in ritual interaction, the Pagan Witches construct forms of extraordinary magical consciousness which are a challenge to the one-dimensionalized secular bureaucratized reality we commonly take for granted in both everyday life and conventional religion. By the subtle use of secrecy, Witches guard tiny pockets of enchanted consciousness in our world of increasinly total secularization, bureaucracy and technological rationality.

Witches use magical consciousness to empower themselves and transform the world as they raise their own self-esteem. They reject conservative political values, while they are at the same time very conservative in their attitude toward the *traditions* of Wicca—the Celtic, the Italian (Dianic), the Irish, the Scottish, the Welsh, etc. They reject the world of money and status for the world of naturalistic religious values, healing and shamanism.

NOTES

1. Or claims of historicity were made—see "Inventing Witchcraft" elsewhere in this issue. Editors.
2. Melton, J. Gordon. 1980. "The Neopagans of America: An Alternative Religion." Paper presented to the American Academy of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio, Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 1980; and at Dallas, Nov. 5-9, 1980.
3. Bonewits, Isaac. 1976. "Witchcraft: Classical, Gothic and Neopagan." *The Green Egg,* vol. 9, no. 77 (March 20, 1976).
4. Adler, Margot. 1979. *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers, and Other Pagans in America Today.* Boston: Beacon Press.
5. Starhawk. 1979. *The Spiral Dance.* New York: Harper & Row.
6. Tiryakian, Edward A. 1972. "Toward the Sociology of Esoteric Culture. *American Journal of Sociology.* vol. 78, no. 3, pp. 491-511.
7. Linton, Ralph. 1943. "Nativistic Movements." *American Anthropologist,* 45 (June 1943), pp. 230-240.
8. Lenski, G. 1954. "Status Crystallization: A Non-Vertical Dimension of Status." *American Sociological Review.* (August), 458-64.
9. Or priestess. Editors.

'Pagan Renaissance:' Responses by the Study Group

It may be unusual in sociological circles for members of the "community of focus," the people under the microscope, to respond in print to published research. Nevertheless, it is part of the concept behind Iron Mountain *that it should bring together "the professors and the practitioners," and therefore we are happy to be able to combine research with response in this way.*

When, as Ann Forfreedom mentions below, word of the San Diego State University group's project began to circulate

among American, Canadian and some British Pagans, responses ranged along the entire spectrum from full cooperation—at least one journal reprinted the entire 18-page questionnaire to encourage its readers to respond—to counsel to ignore these and all researchers, at least for the present. It is probable, however, that Paganism and other "new religions" will be recognized more and more as unplowed fields of research by sociologists and anthropologists as well as religious scholars. We believe, therefore, that "participative sociology" should be extended to criticism of published research, especially before its conclusions have time to gell and become, so to speak, gospel.

Asking the Wrong Questions

More than anything else, Kirkpatrick et al. demonstrate the frustrations of applying sociological methodology—even the vaunted "participative sociology"—to questions of religion or spiritual practice. As Professor Kirkpatrick himself later acknowledged, it is indeed a question of "trying to peel an orange with a crescent wrench." The result in this case is a paper that while straightforward enough, fails to live up to the promise of its own abstract (eliminated here for brevity's sake): "The data portray Wicca, the Craft of the Wise, as an Earth Religion (capitalization the authors') characterized by an animistic and polytheistic worship of nature often with androgynous pantheism."

The data do no such thing. They speak of scales of "normlessness" and "authoritarianism," but nowhere is there any attempt to come to grips with what a 20th-century polytheistic religion in a technological society might be.

Although plainly fascinated by a rose-tinted vision of Neopaganism, Kirkpatrick & Co. simply bring the wrong tools to the job, working in haste with those they do bring. Their terminology frequently is inexact: "Wicca" and "Paganism" are often used synonymously, whereas it would be more accurate to say the former is a subset of the latter. To further muddy the waters, after noting that a mere quarter of the respondents say "a Witch is a Pagan Priest" (capitalization and masculine emphasis are the authors'), the researchers decide that they like that answer best and proceed to repeat it without qualification.

The neologism "Wicca" also deserves mention here. Like "hearing-impaired" or "Native American," it represents a post-1960 attempt to find a nice new inoffensive term to replace a word—witchcraft—whose reputation was clouded (not the least by anthropologists). Although ostensibly it is Old English, there is no agreement on how it should be pronounced. Most Pagans and others, being print-oriented, say "wick-uh," although the Old English pronounciation would be "witch-uh." A few even say "wye-cuh." Yet another group, seeking to reintroduce grammatical genders dropped by English-speakers half a millenium ago, insists on masculine and feminine genders, but can't decide whether the feminine, spelt Wicce, is said "witch-eh" or "wick-eh." But what can one expect from polytheists?

Likewise, terms such as "ecstatic," "visionary" and "the starlight vision" are sprinkled about as though (a) readers will know precisely what they mean and (b) the respondents themselves would have agreed on what they mean.

The researches accept without question or caveat the unbroken tradition from the Neolithic to Now claimed by many Neopagans, although modern Paganism's own revisionists are already questioning its historicity.

Finally, I can only be amazed at the cultural notions lurking in the statement, "By subtle use of secrecy, Witches guard tiny pockets of enchanted consciousness in

our world of increasingly total secularization..." Like Brazilian Indians, these people apparently belong in a national park, a sort of "living history of religion exhibit."

Kirkpatrick, Rainey and Rubi, while not guilty of deception or betrayal of confidence, have taken too much for granted while asking the wrong questions. That this happened is due probably to haste, but the result is a product that does not deliver as advertised. Future scholars will have to beware, for while generalizing freely from the results of one questionnaire answered by 144 people, the SDSU team may have saddled a young religion with a sociological harness that in the long term might not fit.

—*Chas S. Clifton*

A Good Survey Turned to Trash

In an age of stereotypes and misrepresentations of Witchcraft and Paganism, R. George Kirkpatrick's sociological study perpetuates even more stereotypes. It misrepresents and denigrates a significant number of Pagans and Witches and it attacks feminism in Wiccan tradition.

Early in 1983 Kirkpatrick and his associates contacted me and a number of other well-known and/or "public" Pagan figures, in my own case through my feminist Wiccan quarterly newsletter, *The Wise Woman,* and asked for our help. They said they were researching Witchcraft and Paganism because of the implications for sociological theories of feminism, matriarchy, ecology and naturalism. My co-editor, Julie Ann, and I gave them all the help we could: we each filled out and returned their lengthy questionnaire, sent them two issues of *The Wise Woman,* and carried an announcement of their survey in our spring 1983 issue. I also had a lengthy interview with Mr. Rainey by telephone.

The draft of the paper I received early in 1984, then titled "Pagan Witchcraft Revival and Wiccan Religion in Post-Industrial Society: A Study in the Sociology of Esoteric Culture," was filled with small inaccuracies—books attributed to the wrong authors, writers' and informants' names misspelled, inconsistent orthography (e.g. capitalizing "guru" but not "high priestess" on the same page) and the like. A typical gaffe was the conclusion that Pagans are ' Puritanical" (capitalized in the original) about drug use. Certainly no more insulting terminology could be employed, since Witches have been persecuted and woman murdered in historical times by Puritans.

On the topics of feminism and feminist Pagan traditions the paper approaches fiction. Feminist Witches, we are told, "are a small, but vocal and influential minority within the Craft," and "The women-oriented or feminist goddess-oriented (sic) traditions of Pagan Witchcraft have produced a series of publications dedicated to exclusive Goddess worship." The study also asserts that Wiccan groups which are "all women or all gay men" represent ' the radical feminist tendency within Wicca."

Yet nowhere is feminism defined, only the linking of all-female (separatist?) groups and all-gay-male groups exists in this supposedly sociological study as an ad hoc definition of "radical feminism." A straightforward dictionary definition was available (*Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* --"feminism: the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes; organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interests." Most modern feminists accept that definition (I do, although I go beyond it, too.)

All of the Craft and much of modern Paganism differs greatly from patriarchal religions in (a) believing in, and honoring, both female and male energies (as the Goddess and god, Priestess and Priest); (b) accepting female leadership in ceremonies and group structure; and (c) encouraging female participation in all areas of spiritual

and physical life. Within the past 1,000 years, Witches and other Pagans have been burned, hanged, drowned and tortured for their beliefs in Goddess cultures, Mother Nature, female leadership and women's rights. Modern Pagan publications, such as *Circle Network News, Harvest* and *Pagana,* have become more, not less, feminist over the years.

Although the study purports to define Wiccan traditions accurately, it fails to do so at least in the case of the Dianic tradition, disposed of in the conclusion as "the Italian (Dianic." "Dianic" is not an ethnic term, but a general term for that part of the Craft focused primarily or solely on the Goddess, (often triply aspected as Diana, Isis and Hecate). Sybil Leek's hereditary New Forest (England) coven was Dianic, as she wrote in *The Complete Art of Witchcraft.* Charles Leland noted in 19th-century Italy, "...it is remarkable that even to-day Diana, and not Satan, is the leader and ruler of Italian witches..." (*Etruscan Magic & Occult Remedies*)

Sources as old as the 9th-century *Canon Episcopi* recognized the female leadership of the Witches and named Diana as the general name for the Goddess in European Witchcraft. Roman sources indicated the widespread nature of such Goddess-worship dating back to classical Greece and dynastic Egypt, and modern Dianic feminist Witches consider their tradition to date back to prepatriarchal days. They assuredly do not refer to the Dianic tradition as particularly European, yet Kirkpatrick and his associates call the Dianic tradition "Italian." Are his other definitions equally inaccurate?

—Ann Forfreedom

Quibbles with Kirkpatrick

Although many of those surveyed openly prophesied a hatchet job, Kirkpatrick, Rainey and Rubi have not done that bad a job after all. I have a sizeable number of quibbles, but that's mostly what they are—quibbles. Dr. Kirkpatrick and his grad students seem to have sincerely (if someone naively) tried to do an honest piece of research, but a few details of fact ought to be mentioned for the benefit of future researchers.

First, the San Diego State University sociologists seem to have been overly diplomatic or genuinely gullible on matters of claimed antiquity for the Neopagan Witchcraft movement in general and the various "traditions" in particular. This is not surprising since quite a few Wiccans are still spreading the same old stories. (Statistic: probably only one in ten of the supposed "family tradition witches" that I've met struck me as likely to be telling the truth.)

To continue some observations in order of their making, magic is *not* always called "The Craft" when performed in a Neopagan context. Only Witches call it that regularly and they are not the only Neopagans around.

"Participative sociology" is a good idea, especially on the coding of questionnaires, however under the name "participatory observation research" it's been around in the social sciences much longer than they seem to realize. It is not, in any event, a substitute for standard research procedures, but should be used as an auxiliary method.

If Kirkpatrick *et al.* got their ideology questions directly from the questionnaire used by Margot Adler in writing *Drawing Down the Moon* in the mid-1970s, how come they didn't simply do an analysis of her results? She had, if not a larger, at least a more representative sample. Were there confidentiality matters involved, or simply a publish-or-perish need to do fresh work?

The question of how representative their sample was is extremely important and very difficult to answer. Several points indicated to me that their population may have been skewed in several ways. The proportion of country-born Wiccans versus those born in the cities may have a great deal to do with the fact that Neopagans now living in the country area so isolated that they are usually eager to participate in *any* form of

Neopagan communication with people at a distances—even with social scientists!

Similarly, it's odd that half their sample was male. I'd say one quarter to one third is more likely the national average in the Wiccan population. Is it just that men have been conditioned to be more supportive of logic, rationality and scientific research, and so they are more likely to be willing to participate? Or, as an "oppressed minority" in the Craft, do they feel more of a need to communicate their visions of what their religion is all about?

Most of the study's results are not too surprising. The "status inconsistency" stress factor may be in part ethical, since most of the better-paying jobs in our culture involve actions and lifestyles likely to be considered unethical by most Neopagans. The concept of "normlessness" is vague, and since Neopagans are better-educated than the general public, they are highly unlikely to have "inadequate conceptual frameworks"—just different ones. The scores on "authoritarianism" are not unexpected, but should be checked to see if there's a major difference between the responses of clergy and laity. The honesty factor on responses in this area needs careful scrutiny, especially among the feminist Crafters, for whom pro-authority responses would be considered politically incorrect, regardless of the actual power structures within their groups.

The efforts at coding "world view" responses seem vastly over-simplified. Most Neopagans share a similar, but very complex, world view—one that will not code easily into statistical dualisms. The discussion of ethics also was simplistic and apparently nobody bothered to mention Aleister Crowley as the original source of the mangled quote. As Crowley put it: "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law. Love is the law, love under will." As Gerald Gardner put it: "An it harm none, do what thou wilt," "an" in this case being a deliberate archaism—an Elizabethan form of "if." As modern Crafters put it: "Eight words the Wiccan Rede fulfill—an ye harm none, do what ye will." Even the briefest studies of Crowley's commentaries will show that the Neopagan Witches have made quite a mutation from the original.

The discussion of secrecy should have been divided into at least two areas: the relationship between secrecy and persecution on the one hand, and between secrecy and effective magic/psychodrama ("the mysteries") on the other.

The discussion of the Great Rite (ritual sexual intercourse between priestess and priest) is also misleading. Apparently no one told Kirkpatrick that many Witches think the full Moon is a better time to do it than the new Moon is. More importantly, no one was willing to admit that sex magic is like the weather in the old joke—"everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything." I sincerely doubt if more than a tiny percentage of Neopagan Witches actually practice the Great Rite or any other form of sex magic, but many wish they did and would prefer it to be believed that they do so regularly.

I'm also curious to know why Kirkpatrick, Rainey and Rubi assumed that "naturism" or a concern with ecology would equate with technophobia. Have they been reading propaganda put out by anti-environmentalists? Most of the Neopagans I know are *technophiles,* not -phobes.

Most of them are urban too, and are routine users of "light" or "recreational" drugs, so I'm not too sure if the study's sample was representational here either. Of course the large proportion of country Witches *might* explain the drug attitude scores.

I hope that Kirkpatrick and his students will be willing to go beyond this preliminary work and will be doing more "parasociological" research—but that brings up the whole messy question of whether the Neopagan community actually wants to needs the outside world to know its inner workings.

—Isaac Bonewits

Myth, Ritual and Symbolism

The following article is excerpted from Janet and Stewart Farrar's *The Witches' Way,* published by Robert Hale Ltd., London, April 1984.

Myth, rituals and symbols all play an essential part in Wiccan practice—particularly in its religious aspect, though the Craft ("operative witchcraft") aspect also is concerned with the last two, since every spell is in effect the ritual manipulation of symbols.

Every religion, of course, is deeply involved in all three, though with various degrees of awareness. Some try to cram myth into the straitjacket of factual history—such as fundamentalist Christians who insist on Biblical literacy from the Garden of Eden onwards. Some debase ritual into a rigid orthodoxy that loses sight completely of its inner meaning, while others react against such orthodoxy by minimizing ritual to a point where meaning is also lost.

Some have forgotten the psychological role of symbols, merely categorizing them into "ours" (and therefore holy) versus "theirs" (devilish), failing to grasp that a symbol may have different meanings in different contexts. Too often those individuals with a genuine understanding of myth, ritual and symbolism who try to express this understanding to others of their own faith are looked at askance as probable heretics by their co-religionists whose "faith" is a rigid structure of conditioned reflexes.

Wicca, ideally, tries to achieve such knowledge, to understand and be honest about the psychological and psychic functions of myth, ritual and symbolism and to make use of them in full awareness, according to the needs and uniqueness of each individual. Its non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian structure not only can afford to be flexible, but actually values this flexibility.

Let us try to define each of these three in turn: "Myth is the facts of the mind made manifest in a fiction of matter." (Deren, *Divine Horsemen*) Or more specifically: "Myths could be defined as extended symbols describing vividly the typical patterns and sequences of the forces of life at work in the Cosmos, in Society, and in the individual ... Because every myth has arisen straight out of the human psyche, each one is full of wisdom and understanding about the nature and structure of the psyche itself. Mythology is dramatized psychology." (Chetwynd, *A Dictionary of Symbols*).

Now one purpose of Wicca as a religion is to integrate conflicting aspects of the human psyche, and the whole with the Cosmic Psyche; while as a Craft, its purpose is to develop the power and self-knowledge of the individual psyche (and in a coven the cooperating group of individual psyches) so that each can achieve results beyond the scope of an undeveloped, un-self-aware psyche—much as an athlete develops and learns about his muscular power and control to achieve feats impossible for the non-athlete.

Myths (and their descendants, fairy tales) owe their durability and powerful effects on our minds to the fact that they dramatize psychic truths which the unconscious mind recognizes at once, even while the conscious mind may think it is merely being entertained. Both mental levels are satisfied at the same time, and awareness of this occurrence affects the conscious mind as a strangely enhanced sense of pleasure. Mere fiction, however good, soon dies. If the work of a storyteller of genius does embody fundamental psychic truths it survives either by being absorbed into the body of myth and perhaps altering its form though not its content, or—in literate eras—by becoming enshrined in a category of its own, midway between acknowledged myth and acknowledged fiction. *Hamlet, The Tempest* and *Faust*, for all their Renaissance or Enlightenment sophistication, are pure myths at bottom, which ensures their immortality.

We have spoken of integrating conflicting aspects of the psyche. This is the basis of all character development, and certainly an essential and continuing process for every would-be witch or magical practitioner—not only to achieve happiness and balance as a human being, but to release and channel those psychic powers a witch hopes to put to work. [1]

Borrowing from C.G. Jung, the central idea of this discussion is that the greater part of our psyche is unconscious, our of each of our conscious ego, but strongly influencing the ego's behavior without our realizing it. The ego may be a late arrival in evolutionary time; the unconscious is primordial, which does *not* mean that it is inferior or that we should have outgrown it. On the contrary, it is in more direct touch with the fabric of the cosmos than is the ego and it often knows better what our real needs are. Because it is an "individual outcrop" of the collective unconscious it is essentially telepathic with other outcrops and has an awareness of

overall situations beyond the ego's immediate reach, in a way that seems to the ego almost supernaturally clairvoyant.

The ego's gifts, on the other hand, are the ability to analyze and categorize incoming data, to think by logical steps and to communicate with other egos by the precise and subtle medium of speech.

The two sets of gifts are complementary, and so ego and unconscious need each other, both for everyday living and for the ultimate liberation of the essential, integrated self. But few of us have reached the stage where the two work smoothly together.

What is needed is greatly improved communication between the conscious ego and the unconscious. The ego must develop techniques, first for being aware of the fact that the unconscious has messages for it, and second for interpreting those messages, which the unconscious can only express in symbols. The unconscious is only too eager to communicate.

This improved communication between unconscious and ego is much of what is meant by "opening up the levels" or "expanding consciousness." The whole content of the unconscious apparently cannot at our present stage of evolution be made available to the ego, but a great deal of it can, certainly enough to remove all major conflicts and to enrich significantly the ego's effectiveness—both by increasing the amount and variety of incoming data on which it can act, and by teaching it the lesson (which many egos violently resist) that is is not the only, or even the most important, function of the total psyche.

Recording and learning to interpret your dreams is one technique for becoming aware of what your unconscious is trying to tell your ego. Another is the study of myths and their enactment through ritual.

Because myths embody universal psychic truths and dramatize them in a way that appeals to the imagination they not only give the ego a healthier understanding of those truths, even if only subconsciously, they also open up channels for the unconscious to transmit the subtler and more personal truths, and put the ego in a suitable frame of mind to absorb them. This too may be subconscious: you may go away from hearing or enacting a myth and then act more appropriately in the everyday world—thinking (or not even bothering to think) that is by the ego's conscious decision whereas in fact it is because both the myth's universal message and the personal messages that have flowed along the channels the myth has opened have influenced the criteria on which the ego acts.

Many myths and fairy stories dramatize this integration process itself—the confrontation by the hero of the apparent perils of the unconscious, and the transforming of his relationship with them. Consider, for example, the ugly hag who turns into a beautiful princess when the hero persists in his ordained quest. Here the ego comes to terms with his anima, which is unrecognized or rejected will be a source of conflict. The hero's reward is that he marries, that is integrates with, the princess and becomes heir to her father's kingdom—the ego's ultimate destiny, the reign of the undivided Self. And so on [2]. In one sense, the witches' Legend of the Descent of the Goddess can be seen as the story of a woman's confrontation with her animus; in this process, initial revulsion is transformed into understanding and integration from which both emerge enriched.

This brings us to a consideration of ritual. To quote Chetwynd again, "Ritual is the dramatic enactment of myth, designed to make a sufficiently deep impression on the individual to reach his unconscious."

At first glance this may seem to be a narrow definition, but if we think about it, it remains true of much ritual. The ritual of the Mass is an enactment of Jesus' symbolic action with the bread and wine. Whether the Last Supper was an actual historical event or not does not affect the point. A powerful myth may be an historical fiction expressing

a psychic truth, or a psychically significant act in real history may become the seed of a subsequent myth, or of a new version of an old one. Even simple "superstitious" rituals can by myth-based: for example, does not turning over your money when you see the new Moon through glass (i.e. from inside your home) not relate to myths in which the Moon symbolizes the Mother Goddess whose waxing encourages fertility, and thus domestic prosperity?

Ritual, then, performs the same psychic function as myth, but with the added impact of personal participation. Hearing or reading a myth can have a powerful effect; taking part in it yourself, by enacting one of its roles, can be even more powerful.

Take again the Legend of the Descent of the Goddess. The woman witch who enacts the role of the Goddess visiting the Underworld goes through all the processes: her ego is stripped of its personal, her comforting but inadequate image of herself. Naked she confronts the Lord of the Underworld (her own animus) and accuses him of being destructive. As long as she persists in regarding him as an enemy she has to suffer at his hands, but because she does not run away from the confrontation, enlightenment dawns and she understands his true function. "They loved and were one." Integration achieved, they learn from each other, and the ego returns to the everyday world wise and more effective, the supposed enemy, the animus, having been transformed into an ally.

The man who enacts the Lord of the Underworld benefits too. His anima makes her presence felt and at first he tries to dodge the issue by simply appealing to her to be nice to him (Oedipus-like, begging his anima to identify with his mother?) She will not let him get away with this; she replies, "I love thee not"—until he continues with the painful part of the confrontation. Wisely, he does not attack her; he "scourges her tenderly" (in other words, he goes on probing to discover what their true relationship should be). His anima meets him halfway, in spite of the pains of the attempt at integration: "I know the pangs of love." Now they begin the constructive interchange that enriches them both.

In dreams, the necessary communication between unconscious and ego is initiated by the unconscious. In ritual, it is initiated by the ego. Both, however, speak in symbols.

Myth, ritual and dream may all use words, but symbols are their real vocabulary. The words of myth may describe factually impossible events or creatures; the words of ritual may seem paradoxical; and the words of dreams may be surreal and apparently unrelated to the action. Yet in each case, the symbols involved speak the truth.

The most powerful symbols are those standing for the "archetypes," another Jungian term. At first Jung called them "primordial images" or "dominants of the collective unconscious," but later he adopted the Greek word archetypes, equivalent to St. Augustine's "principal ideas." As St. Augustine wrote in his *Liber de Diversis Quaestionibus*, "For the principal ideas are certain forms, or stable and unchangeable reasons of things, themselves not formed, and so continuing eternal and always after the same manner, which are contained in the divine understanding. And although they themselves do not perish, yet after their pattern everything is said to be formed that is able to come into being and to perish, and everything that does come into being and perish. But it is affirmed that the soul is not able to behold them, save it be the rational soul." (Alan Glover's translation)

The archetypes are elements of the collective unconscious, which is that part of the psyche universal to all periods and cultures and common to all individuals. We inherit it from the human race as a whole, not modified through the filter of our parents. The symbols by which we become aware of the archetypes may be culturally or individually conditioned to a certain extent,

but the archetypes themselves are not; they "continue eternal and always after the same manner." As Jung said, the term archetype "is not meant to denote an inherited idea, but rather an inherited mode of psychic functioning, corresponding to that inborn *way* according to which the chick emerges from the egg; the bird builds its nest; a certain kind of wasp stings the motor ganglion of the caterpillar; and eels find their way to the Bahamas. In other words, it is a 'pattern of behavior.' This aspect of the archetype is the biological one—it is the concern of scientific psychology. But the picture changes at once when looked at from the inside, that is from within the realm of the subjective psyche. Here the archetype presents itself as numinous, that is, is appears as an experience of fundamental importance. Whenever it clothes itself with adequate symbols, which is not always the case, it takes hold of the individual in a startling way, creating a condition of 'being deeply moved,' the consequences of which may be immeasurable. It is for this reason that the archetype is so important for the psychology of religion. All religions and all metaphysical concepts rest upon archetypal foundations and, to the event that we are able to explore them, we succeed in gaining at least a superficial glance behind the scenes of world history, and can lift a little the veil of mystery which hides the meaning of metaphysical ideas." (Jung's introduction to Esther Harding's *Women's Mysteries*)

A good idea of Jung's thinking on archetypes may be gained from his book *Four Archetypes—Mother, Rebirth, Spirit,*

As may be seen from this title, many archetypes can be usefully labeled. You can conceive how vast and complex are the ramifications of a single archetype by reading Harding's *Women's Mysteries* and Erich Neumann's *The Great Mother.* Neither of these authors would claim to have exhausted the subject, for by its nature an archetype can never be completely defined. It is too fundamental for that. It can only be related to consciousness by means of symbols, and even they, as Jung points out, may not always be adequate.

The major arcana of the Tarot owe their power, and their effectiveness in sensitive hands, to the fact that each of them is an archetypal symbol. Yet even here the elusive nature of archetypal definition makes itself felt. To take the four examples in Jung's *Four Archetypes* and try to equate them with Tarot trumps: the Mother corresponds most readily to the Empress, though aspects of her shade off into the High Priestess, the Star and others; Rebirth suggests Death, the Tower, and Judgement for a start; and the Trickster is fairly obviously the Magician—but is he not the Devil as well? As an exercise, we leave you to try equating Jung's fourth archetype, Spirit, to a trump.

We tried an experiment ourselves. Stewart wrote the above paragraph, and without showing it to Janet, asked her for her own correspondences. She came up with: Mother—the Empress and the Star; Rebirth—the Star, Death, the Empress, the World, Judgement, the Wheel of Fortune and the Moon; Trickster—the Magician, the Moon and the Wheel of Fortune.

As you will see, our responses overlapped, but differed, which does not mean that either of us was "right" or "wrong." It simply underlines the fact that while the archetypes themselves are unchanging, the symbols by which we approach them (or the order in which we arrange a complex of symbols) may differ according to our personal make-up, gender and experience.

Consideration of the archetypes brings us to one of the most important problems of all, that of god-forms.

A god-form—the mental image in which a believer clothes and through which he strives to relate to, a particular god or goddess—is unquestionably an archetypal symbol; for equally unquestionably, gods and goddesses are themselves archetypes, fundamental to the nature of the cosmos. They are unknowable directly, like all archetypes

("Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." *Exodus*), but when they are approached through adequate and vividly experienced god-forms the consequences may be, in Jung's phrase, immeasurable.

To the age-old question, "Are the gods real?" the witch answers confidently, "Yes." To the witch, the divine principle of the cosmos is real, conscious and eternally creative, manifesting through its creations, including ourselves. This belief is shared by the followers of all religions, which differ only in the god-forms (or single god-form) that they build up as a channel of communication with its aspects. The Egyptian Isis, the witch's Aradia, and the Catholic's Virgin Mary are all essentially humanly conceived goddess-forms relating to, and drawing their power from, the same archetype. We say "humanly conceived," but the building up of a god- or goddess-form is a two-way process; even a partially adequate symbol improves communication with the unknowable archetype, which in turn feeds back a better understanding of its nature and thus improves the adequacy of the god-form.

A non-religious psychologist probably would answer "No" to the same question. He would maintain that the archetypes, though vital to psychic health, are merely elements in the human collective unconscious and not (in the religious sense) cosmic in nature.

We stick to our religious view of the cosmos, which to us is the only one to make ultimate sense. But from the viewpoint of the psychic value of myth, ritual and symbolism, the somewhat surprising answer to the question is, "It doesn't matter." Each man and woman can worry out for himself or herself whether archetypal god-forms were born in the human collective unconscious or took up residence there (and elsewhere) as *pieds-a-terre* from there cosmic homes—their importance to the human psyche is beyond doubt in either case, and the techniques for coming to healthy and fruitful terms with them can be used by believers and non-believers alike.

Voltaire said, "If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him." That remark can be taken as cynical; but it can also be rephrased: "Whether the archetypal god-forms are cosmically divine or merely the living foundation stones of the human psyche, we would be wise to seek intercourse with them *as though* they were divine." Myth and ritual bring about nourishing communication with the archetypes, and because of the nature and evolution of the human psyche, the symbolism of myth and ritual—their only effective vocabulary—is basically religious. Dispensing with myth and ritual cuts us off from the archetypes, which is a dangerous and crippling separation.

NOTES

1. Every witch would be well advised to study the works of Carl Gustav Jung, whose ideas strike a chord with almost every witch who turns serious attention to them. A useful summary, with a forward by Jung himself, is Jolande Jacobi's *The Psychology of C.G. Jung*. His concepts—the ego, the shadow (everything in the psyche apart from the conscious ego), the anima (a man's buried female side), the animus (a woman's buried masculine side), the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious, the persona (the cloak around the ego), the four functions of thinking, intuition, feeling and sensation, the attitude types of extroversion and introversion, and the Self—all seem to us indispensable to understanding ourselves and others. On a wider scale, his concept of the collective unconscious offers a key to understanding telepathy and clairvoyance, while that of synchronicity, or meaningful coincidence, does the same for divination and magic in general.

2. Just after we wrote this section Princess Grace of Monaco died after a car crash. World reaction, especially here in her ancestral Ireland, was understandable; she was much-loved lady, and rightly so. But its intensity was significant. Grace was, literally, a living legend. She lived out a classic myth for all to see—the peasant's granddaughter who become the modern equivalent of a strolling player and was snatched away by her Prince Charming to be his princess and rule beside him over their fairy tale principality. Her story was archetypal right through, so it hit everyone in the unconscious.

Reviews

Earth Power by Scott Cunningham; *St. Paul: Llewellyn $6.95 paper, ISBN 0-87542-121-0.*

Practical Color Magick by Ray Buckland; *St. Paul: Llewellyn, $6.95 paper, ISBN 0-87542-047-8.*

Llewellyn Publications has long occupied a central position in the publication of "applied metaphysics," having published numerous texts on astrology, all varieties of -mancy and divination and—since the early 1970s—an increasing number of both classic and new works on magical religion: ceremonial magick of the Golden Dawn and its successors, Wicca, Voudoun and urban Chicano brujeria.

These two titles are part of the new Practical Magick Series (the additional 'k' derives from turn-of-the-century English attempts to differentiate ceremonial magic from stage magic), which the publisher says is devoted to improving the reader/user's circumstances in the mundane world. To quote from the introduction to *Earth Power,* "While Magick is also concerned with Psychological Transformation and Spiritual Growth, even the spiritual life in today's demanding and complex world must be built on solid material foundations,"—an attitude no doubt shared with the practitioners of "Christian financial planning."

Both Buckland and Cunningham possess a strong Wiccan connection; the former in particular was a leading Anglo-American voice of the English Gardnerian tradition until he did an about-face and, renouncing his former espousal of that lineage's "apostolic succession," formed a new from-scratch "Saxon tradition" and announced that anyone who wished could become part of it by following its practices as laid out in his book, *The Tree.* Since that candid proclamation, Buckland has become even more of a public Wiccan teacher and author; Cunningham, author of a number of suspense novels, also wrote *Magical Herbalism* (published by Llewellyn in 1982), a short work loaded with such rarities as a recipe for absinthe.

Neither of these books, however, attempt to provide a necessarily Wiccan or Neopagan context. Of the two, I found *Earth Power* the more interesti ng because it is the more audacious. Cunningham takes all the folkloric spellcasting techniques of northern Europe and recasts them in a "wholistic" self-help mode: there is not one "abracadabra" in the book. "Natural magic," he writes, is direct and to the point," and so he organizes the work in chapters such as "Air Magic," "Fire Magic," "Knot Magic" and "Rain, Fog and Storm Magic." Unifying the work is ancient hermetic principle of "As above, so below," or in its modern form, " Change yourself and you change the universe."

Imagination, visualization and the development of one's own vocabulary of symbols are stressed, in contrast to earlier collections of "spells" that seemed to say "Do it this way because that's the way it's done." The illustrations—line drawings of youthful magicians—remind me of my old *Boy Scout Handbook.* There may be more to that comparison than is immediately obvious...

As mentioned above, *Earth Power* is described as "folk magic," and hence comes unencumbered by any sort of religious or philosophical underpinnings. This may make it more widely applicable to aspiring thaumaturgists, but could also lead to frustration, incomprehension or even shock

at "results" on the part of the reader/user.

Practical Color Magic is encyclopediac—it applies the symbolic meanings of colors used in most Western religious and occult systems (e.g. red = vitality) to meditation, various -mancies and -ologies, dowsing, and the sorts of folk magic outlined in the companion volume. The basic discussion of the physical and psychological healing (and other) effects of color is interesting, but to me this slim volume was spoiled by the need to include everything plus the kitchen sink: numerology, 19th-century "magical" alphabets, talismanic techniques, biorhythms—they're all here and the effect is rather dizzy.

—Chas S. Clifton

The Magicians, by Gini Graham Scott, Ph.D., *(New York: Irvington Publishers, 1983) Paper, no price given. ISBN 0-8290-0707-5.* Here is another example of the "researcher as secret agent" genre in the sociology of religion. Scott, a Bay Area sociologist, is also the author of *Cult and Countercult* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980), in which she similiarly infiltrated two groups, the Inner Peace Movement and the Neopagan New Reformed Orthodox Order of the Golden Dawn under the guise of a "seeker." In *The Magicians* Scott makes clear that, following in the footsteps of Freud and the tradition of other materialist psychologists and sociologists, all religious expression is merely an expression of the "drive for power," a compensation for feelings of inadequacy. The book applies this insight to the Temple of Set, a ceremonial magic group based in Pasadena, and to an ephemeral coven of Neopagan witches. The magicians "strive for power in its various forms—aggression, control, domination, and expressing feelings of hostility and hatred," she writes (p. 187). Both groups, she says, "are oriented around attaining and using personal power" (p. 165). It is the Setians (here disguised as "Hutians") who come in for the most fear-invoking prose: "...the group can present many dangers to both its own members and outsiders." When, however, the Setians unmasked Scott as a fraud who had paid here fees, attended meetings and services and tried to pass herself off as a sincere seeker "interested in my personal growth and [wishing] to develop my will as a magical being" (p. 45), they merely make her buy a bus ticket home from their mountain retreat—rather mild behavior who allegedly cultivate a hatred of outsiders.

Scott has much less to say about the witches, other than to chronicle a sort of soap opera about a group riven by romantic triangles, where at least in this instance self-interest prevailed over the good of the group.

It is probably time for the "undercover" style of research to be replaced by something more open and substantial that takes into account the perennial outgrowths of the Western Platonic and Neoplatonic traditions. The school of disguised researchers and made-up names for groups and subjects ought to go into the ashcan with the entire 1970s "cults" hysteria.

—Chas S. Clifton

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STEWART and JANET FARRAR'S first jointbook, *Eight Sabbats for Witches* was published by Robert Hale, Ltd., in London (1981) and their second *The Witches' Way,* from which the article in this issue is an extract, will be published by Hale this year. Both are being published in American paperback editions in the near future by Magickal Childe, New york. Stewart Farrar, a former Reuter journalist, has written five "occult" novels, most recently *Omega* (New York: Times Books, 1980). The Farrars live near Drogheda, Ireland.

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