The Druids' Progress

Report Number Seven

Fall 1990 C.E.

Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship, Inc.

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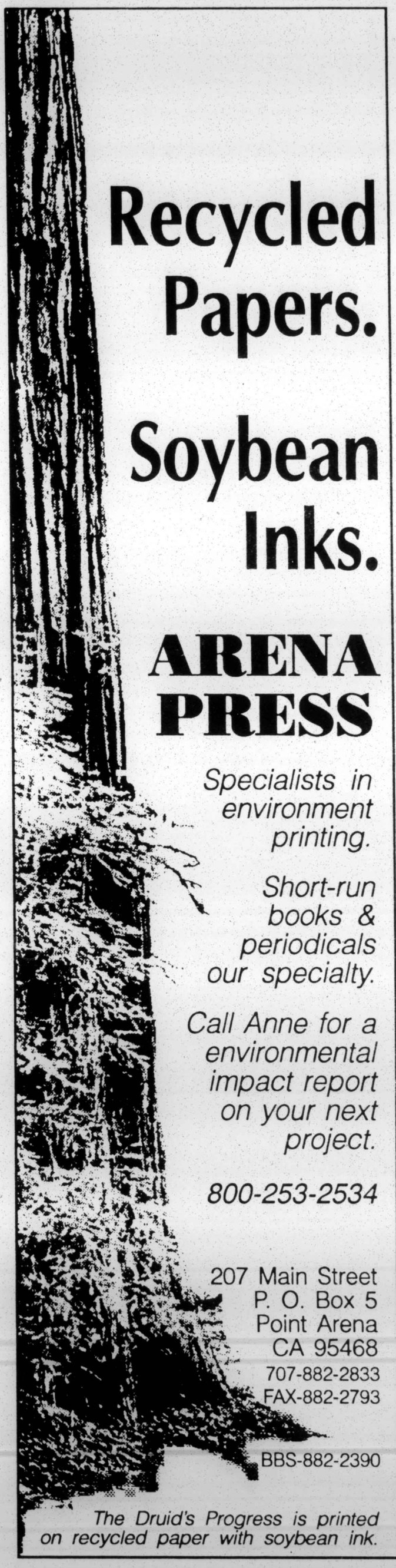

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Electronic Submissions

For those of you with computers, you can submit articles electronically to any A.D.F. publication (please, please, please). Send them to me, Nancy Thalblum, Assistant Chronicler. For full details on how to, see "Electronic Submissions" in *DP #6* or call or write for a copy of the page.

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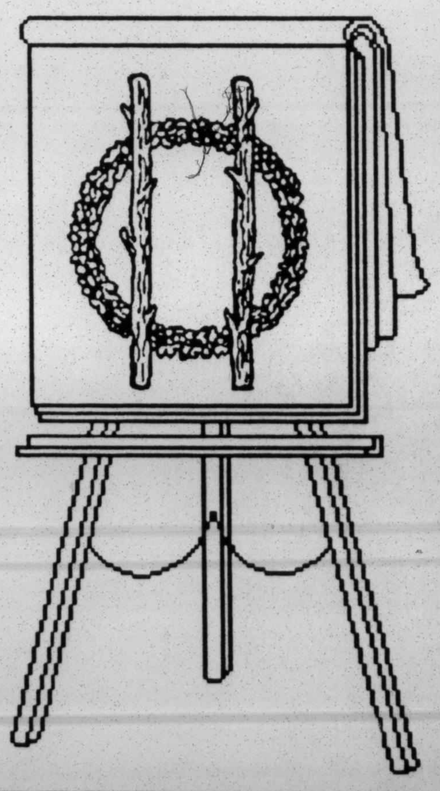

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A Word from the Archdruid

On Making Moral Decisions

This morning I received a letter from a very unhappy member. She had been talking with a couple of local grove organizers and told them about having been bullied into getting an abortion by a crazy boyfriend a few years ago. Their response seems to have been that Druidism is anti-abortion and that the Earth Mother would punish her for having had one. I haven't had the chance to discuss this with those grove organizers, so I'm not certain that what she heard is what they think they said, but even the possibility of such a response brings up organizational, moral, and polytheological issues that I have to address.

First off, Neopagan Druidism (at least as practiced in ADF) places a heavy emphasis on immanent deity. That means that ultimate moral authority resides within each and every one of us. No one else – not a local grove organizer, not an officer of ADF, not even the Archdruid himself – can make your moral decisions for you. Naturally, we all have opinions which we will cheerfully share, but that's all they are – opinions. As Archdruid, it's part of my job to offer my personal opinion on spiritual, moral, and ethical matters. I generally try to do this by articulating either what I see as the community consensus (when I agree with it) or else what I think it should be, on any given issue. But the only way I can "enforce" my religious opinions is through convincing large numbers of people to agree with me, who will then exert peer pressure throughout the community.

The only moral, ethical, or spiritual opinions that are binding upon all the membership are those that have been officially declared by the Mother Grove and/or have been enshrined in the By-Laws – the "no human sacrifice" law for example. But if the majority of the membership want me to start declaring real dogmas (as distinct from the Doctrine of Archdruidic Fallibility, for example) *ex quercus,* then I suppose I could. Do let me know.

Abortion has got to be better than infanticide...

Secondly, Neopagan Druids are polytheists. We try to avoid monotheistic – that is to say, dualistic – approaches to moral questions. One of the reasons that I have never written an essay on the abortion issue, for example, is that it is difficult to avoid the dualistic extremes that this issue has been forced into. No matter what I say, some folks will try to label me as belonging to the one extreme or the other. I had the same problem with the essay on Pagans in the military – many military Pagans were convinced that I was a pacifist and/or communist and that ADF was "anti-military," because they could only see the issues in dualistic terms.

If people really insist on knowing, my personal opinion is that abortion is a terribly sad event, and that most abortions are the result of a lack of access to contraceptive technology and proper sex education (both caused by conservative Christian attitudes towards sexuality and women) as well as a lack of decent financial and medical support for the poor. I believe that the ultimate moral decision about an abortion is between the pregnant woman and her deities. That would seem to place me squarely in the ranks of the "pro-choice" movement, except that I also believe that abortion is killing a human being, and should never be done casually or for mere convenience (as, contrary to what some in the pro-choice movement say, it sometimes is). Nonetheless, there are times when killing is more moral than not killing. Wiser minds than mine have debated throughout all human history as to whether capital punishment, euthanasia, killing in self-defense, and abortion are morally justifiable. Certainly abortion has got to be better than infanticide – a custom practiced throughout human history, and especially in those times and places where abortion was ille-

gal and unobtainable. I can't give any simple answers to these complex questions. However, since I am a man, and will never experience the misery of having to decide whether to bear a deformed, incest-begotten, or simply unaffordable child, I really don't think that my personal opinions on the issue are that important in the long run – nor are those of any other male, whether he's a religious leader or not.

However, since this is not the first time the question of an "official" policy on abortion has come up, this afternoon we discussed it at a Board meeting. The Mother Grove has decided that:

ADF officially endorses individual reproductive responsibility and the right of every woman to make her reproductive decisions after consultation with her Deity(ies), her medical practitioner, and with others she may deem significant. The choice to carry a child to term, to keep a child, to release a child for adoption, or to abort, is hers alone. While ADF recognizes that there are polytheological implications to this freedom, we have no official doctrine on the polytheology of abortion.

Finally, Neopagans do not generally believe that our deities are omniscient, omnipotent, or vengeful. Most of us seem to believe that if you don't deliberately bring your actions to a deity's notice, that She or He is unlikely to reward or punish you for it. We don't work with a rewards and punishment model of human/divine interaction anyway (unless we still have leftover attitudes from our monotheistic childhoods). Karma, in the sense of cause and effect, is much closer to our approach. If your matron deity were Brigit, for example, and you committed a crime against a bard, a healer, or a blacksmith, then your relationship with Her might be permanently damaged. If a woman were to have an abortion in the middle of a ritual in which she had invoked a fertility goddess, then she might be the target of divine wrath – as much for the insult as for the act. But it's absurd to think that the Earth Mother, who is a Goddess of Death as well as of Life, would vindictively punish every Pagan woman who has ever had an abortion.

So let me sum up: (1) No one inside or outside of ADF can make your moral decisions for you – all they can do is offer advice. (2) ADF didn't have an official position on abortion until today (Nov. 10, '90 c.e.), but the one it has now is pretty much "pro-choice." (3) It takes a lot of work to offend the Gods, so don't do it. ☥

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The Enemies of Our Enemies

by Adr. Isaac Bonewits © 1990

In DP#6 I discussed the phenomenon of fundamentalist Christians starting religious freedom groups, and suggested that it would be unwise for Neopagans to assist them. Elsewhere in this issue you'll find some responses to that essay. This time around, I'd like to lift up the fundamentalist rock and see what's crawling around underneath it.

I've been inspired to write this essay by the astonishing news that a civil liberties coalition of Neopagan and other occult groups in St. Louis, Missouri, – The Alliance for Magical and Earth Religions, or "AMER" – has Michael Aquino's Temple of Set (an ultra-right wing offshoot of Anton LaVey's Church of Satan) as an active member and his wife Lillith Aquino as one of their directors! Surely, I said to myself, they've got to be kidding...

Like most Neopagans, I believe that toleration in general is A Good Thing. Unlike some, however, I also think it can be foolish, when exercised too much towards those who would like to destroy us. For example, when I go to a Pagan festival, I don't mind Buddhists, agnostics, or liberal monotheists showing up to check us out. Yet I feel violated when fundamentalists arrive with intent to spy upon us, to convert us, or to interfere with our activities. I have much the same reaction when I see Satanists at our festivals or in "our" bookstores trying to recruit new members.

Some Satanists will claim that, like Neopagans, they are an oppressed religion, that they are misunderstood, that they are the victims of the Christian press. They will quote the old saying, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend," and argue that we should become their allies. All of which makes sense only if you are ignorant about both Satanism and Neopaganism.

As I have written elsewhere, there are several kinds of Satanist: One type is the Liberal Heterodox or punk Satanist. These are the anarchist sorts, generally young, who stress the revolutionary or Luciferian side of the Satan myth. They are essentially rebelling against subservience to the Christian God, the sickness of Christian morality, and their parents. A sizable proportion of them might have become Neopagans if they had heard of us first, and some of them convert later on. As far as I can tell, they seem to grow out of being Satanists when they finish adolescence.

Another type of Satanist is the Conservative Orthodox or fascist sort, generally older, uneducated, and unsuccessful (the basic KKK or American Nazi Party recruit), though their leaders can be quite clever and successful. These are the right wing Satanists who like to stress the might-makes-right, dictatorial side of the Satan image. Major denominations would include the Church of Satan and the Temple of Set, both of whom are careful to distinguish themselves from the other types.

> *Satanism as an organized concept was created by Catholicism*

A third kind of Satanist is the "sincere sociopath" (Paul Suliin's term), or crazy kind. These folks are obsessed with the death, torture, rape, and madness parts of the Satan archetype. Usually from extremely dysfunctional families, these people have grown up being told that they are evil, so they try to fulfill everyone's expectations. They tend to commit various horrible crimes in Satan's name, and sometimes belong to one of the other sorts of Satanism as well. Right wing Satanic leaders, when speaking for the public record, always deny that the sincere sociopaths are "real" Satanists, much as other Christians disown criminal behavior by people calling themselves Christian.

Another category of Satanists (who seem to be mostly imaginary), is the supposed global conspiracy of child-molesting, kidnapping, human sacrificing, cannibalistic, multigenerational criminals who haunt the dreams of fundamentalist Christians and Geraldo Rivera. The primary evidence for this conspiracy comes from people who believe themselves to be "ritual abuse survivors" and from Christian preachers who claim to be ex-leaders in the conspiracy. Of course, the accusations of incestous orgies, human sacrifice, and cannibalism have been laid against many minority religions over the centuries, including the early Roman Christians themselves, Jews, "witches," and various heretical groups. These claims serve mostly to whip up public hysteria against the chosen target groups, in this case modern Satanists, who can be easily and deliberately equated with Neopagans and New Agers.

Some of the survivors do appear to have been through some kind of horrible experiences that their minds have chosen to interpret as Satanic rituals, just as others with similar stories have interpreted their experiences as encounters with UFOs. Unfortunately, hard evidence, in the form of actual bodies or the names of real people who could be arrested and charged with crimes, just doesn't exist. I suspect that the survivors were actually molested and tortured by their own parents or local religious leaders, and their memories became distorted by their childhood ideas about evil, in order to explain their suffering to themselves. One telling example of how this process can work is that of an Orthodox Jewish abuse survivor, who believes she was tortured by people in Nazi uniforms (in the U.S. in the 1960's). She had no mental equation that "evil people =

Satanists," so she inserted the images of what she did have: "evil people = Nazis." On the other hand, the sorts of crimes reported are well within the might-makes-right morality that many Satanists promote, and I have no doubt that more than a few Satanists have taken advantage of their "moral freedom" to commit atrocities, even against their own children. I just don't believe that these psychos constitute an organized conspiracy.

As for the professional "ex-Satanic High Priests," they seem to be short on evidence of their claims too. Oddly enough, although some of these preachers have confessed to multiple felonies on nationwide television, none has ever been arrested, nor have any of them gone to local police and confessed their crimes. Subsequently, none has ever served prison time for deeds that would normally put them away for the rest of their lives. Apparently, if you claim to have reformed yourself and become a good Christian, you no longer need to pay your debt to society, no matter how terrible the crimes you've admitted. Any of you attending public lectures by such "ex-Satanists" might want to bring this up with local law enforcement officers and, if possible under local laws, make citizen's arrests – I for one would love to see such liars forced to testify under oath in a court of law.

This brings us to the last, and by far the largest, category of Satanists: the fundamentalist Christians themselves, who spend all their time inflating the image of Satan, feeding psychic energy into the archetype, and publishing detailed descriptions of the sorts of evil acts that devil worshippers are supposed to engage in – descriptions that other sorts of Satanist are only too eager to imitate.

We Neopagans are constantly having to explain to the general public that Satan is a figure in Christian mythology, that our deities are far older and more powerful, and that you have to be a Christian or a Moslem in order to worship the Devil because nobody else believes in him. We know full well that the fundamentalists are actively working to blur the distinctions between Satanism and Paganism in the public mind, and we should know that having a cozy relationship with Satanists is going to play right into the Christian smear campaigns.

Those of us who interact with the mainstream media can and should refuse to ever defend Satanism.

So why are we tolerant of obnoxious, unethical, or nasty behavior when the people involved are calling themselves Satanists, when we wouldn't cut fundamentalist Christians engaging in the same kind of behavior so much slack? Granted, Satanism is a part of the occult community, since its the "occult" or hidden side of fundamentalism, and advocates the practice of various sorts of ceremonial magic. As we know, the occult/magical/metaphysical community comprises a wide variety of organizations and individuals – good, bad, ugly, and just plain weird. We don't have to be friendly to all of them, nor accept them all as equals or allies. Neopagans have enough trouble interacting with those Mesopagans (such as the Crowleyites, Odinists, and Voodooists) who engage in activities of which many Neopagans disapprove, without allying ourselves with and defending a bunch of jerks, fascists, and psychopaths who have publically and proudly announced their allegiance to the supreme figure of evil in Western culture.

I don't care if it's possible to come up with rational-sounding arguments that the Devil isn't really such a bad fellow, or to claim that you're really worshipping the Norse deity Loki, or the Egyptian god Set, or various Lovecraftian critters, and that they were all victims of bad public relations. Such arguments don't change the subconscious images that most people (including the Satanists) have of these entities, nor the flavor of the psychic energy that they tap into. Nor does it matter that public representatives of Satanic organizations are frequently charming and charismatic individuals – so was Adolph Hitler. And I don't care if some Satanists are really proto-Pagans – we can give them the information they need to mature without having to pretend that their juvenile sophistries deserve respect.

Lets review the facts about the origins, philosophy, and character of Satanism...

Origins: Satan as a demigod was created to besmear the Paleopagan horned gods and to fulfill the necessary role of the Evil God who fights their Good God. A deity of absolute evil makes no sense in a polytheistic system, only in a dualistic one. All the different forms of Satanism now active in the West are branches of conservative Christianity. Satanism as an organized concept was created by Catholicism as an inverted version of itself, with a little help from leftover Gnostic heretics (see the books of Jeffrey Burton Russell for details). It was the Christians who defined the practices, symbols, and beliefs of Satanism in the first place, while the writings of modern Satanists have merely given a "blackwash" to the fundamentally Christian concepts involved.

Philosophy: Satanists are obsessed with forcing everyone into simplistic Christian/Islamic dualism, just as other fundamentalists are. That's why they insist on lumping the "White Witches" and Neopagans in with their official enemies, the Christians, whenever they're not trying to recruit us as

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allies. LaVey's latest propaganda book (*The Church of Satan*, supposedly by "authorized biographer" Blanche Barton) actually goes so far as to denounce several well known Neopagans (including yours truly) by name in the same paragraph with fundamentalist Michael Warnke and competitor Michael Aquino (who stole most of LaVey's membership). Most Satanic "philosophy" simply consists of turning Catholicism or other forms of conservative Christianity upside-down and inside-out (as if that's going to be an improvement), advocating hedonism, and adding some warmed-over quotes from Crowley, Nietzsche, or Hitler to the mix. Way down deep inside, it's shallow.

Character: Most Satanists actively approve of behavior, magical and mundane, that Neopagans consider to be unethical and immoral. Some Satanists are just as evil – in every interpretation that the Neopagan community would agree upon – as the members of the Inquisition, Hitler's stormtroopers, Stalin's secret police, or Central American death squads. There is nothing in Satanic belief (left wing, right wing, or sociopathic) to separate the genuinely evil from the merely obnoxious; anything you can get away with is approved of by the God of Evil.

The distinction between crimes with and without victims is not always clear.

Neopaganism is less than thirty years old – fifty years, if we count the early Mesopagan Wiccans. Many of us have deliberately identified ourselves with the historical victims of Christian persecution – witches, magicians, heretics, and heathens – in part, as a way to extend our psychic history. So it's a tempting argument to say that we also have to identify with every other group that gets denounced by fundamentalists, such as gays, feminists, high school biology teachers, communists, murderers, rapists... whoops! Do we really want to defend genuinely evil people simply because the fundamentalists have attacked them? Should we offer support to individuals and organizations who advocate ideas and actions we consider evil, just because we have no legal proof that they have gotten around to acting on their proclaimed beliefs yet?

Over the years, I have met scores of people who called themselves Satanists – I even called myself one for eight months when I was 17 (see "My Satanic Adventure," *Gnostica*, 1975). I learned back then, and subsequent experience has reiterated the lesson, that most people who practice Satanism are fundamentalists in drag. Once in a while I would meet a genuinely nice, if confused, person in a Satanist group, but they usually wound up dropping out and joining some other path. The overwhelming majority of Satanists I have known were sleazy, manipulative, cruel, and unethical. I can't think of a single reason why we should make them feel welcome in our community, or why we should make their activities any easier, or why we should help their groups to grow and prosper. If the Satanists were ever to conquer the world (Goddess forbid!), they would herd us into ovens just as quickly as the other fundamentalists would.

Now, I firmly believe that people are entitled to have whatever religious beliefs they wish, no matter how wrong or foolish I might consider those beliefs, because I want other folks to extend the same freedom to me. I don't believe however, that people have a right to enshrine their religious beliefs into civil law and force religious minorities to live according to the majority's theological opinions. Nor, do they have a right to use their beliefs as a cover for commiting what criminologists refer to as "crimes with victims" – murder, rape, stealing, and polluting, for example (as distinct from "victimless crimes" covered by most sex, drug, and gambling laws). The basic "don't kill, rape, steal, pollute," etc., sort of moral code, necessary for the physical welfare of any group of humans (and the Earth) is not a specifically religious one but is (or should be) a universally agreed-upon set of survival principles.

The distinction between crimes with and without victims is not always clear, since some people have very broad definitions of what constitutes victimization. Some Christians feel victimized when their children are taught evolution, some feminists when they see *Playboy* on sale at their local convenience store, and some Neopagans when not given equal media time to counter evangelical lies about Paganism. In each of these cases, the person feeling victimized objects to a pluralistic society in which others, perceived as both evil and powerful, present ideas the "victims" find offensive. Feeling victimized, of course, is not the same thing as being a victim, although it's usually a component of the experience.

Defining freedom and rights in a pluralistic society is not always easy. Some fundamentalists believe that freedom of religion means that they should be able to establish a theocracy and prevent "sinful" behavior by others. Censorship advocates believe that freedom of expression does not include the right to disseminate ideas and images they consider evil. Many people believe that freedom to assemble is only for "good" people and causes, or that the right to keep and bear arms is only for state-approved soldiers and police officers.

Neopagans are duotheists and/or polytheists. Our religious beliefs usually approve of pluralism and toleration, and most of us don't seem to have too much trouble living surrounded by people of other faiths, as long as they aren't trying to interfere with our freedoms of belief and practice.

After some long, emotional discussions with my spouse (who is a fervent civil libertarian) I'm forced to reluctantly admit that exactly the same

reasoning holds whether we're dealing with Satanists or other fundamentalists. We don't have the right to exclude them from our public events, nor to prevent them from shopping in our stores, nor to keep them from talking to the media, much as we might like to. We must honor their constitutional rights to practice their religion. But we don't have to be helpful to them in the process.

If a Satanic group or individual is being discriminated against in such a way as to make legal action appropriate, they can always call in the American Civil Liberties Union, who will defend just about anybody with a good constitutional case. If they are having a public relations problem, they can bloody well hire an advertising agency to explain that black is white and evil is OK. Either way, there is no reason for us to spend our miniscule funds on defending them.

So. How exactly can we make it clear to Satanists that they are not wanted in our community? As Deb puts it, "How do we express our disapproval, and give it clout, without violating their rights?" Her solution: "We do it just as our Pagan ancestors did — by shunning. We don't have to be respectful or friendly to Satanists. Shunning is ethical and legal, and no one has a civil right to be liked."

What does shunning as a tactic mean? Here's one example: Neopagans who own occult shops should not sell copies of *The Satanic Bible* or other Satanist literature, provide tools that can normally only be used for magical malpractice (granted, a tricky judgement sometimes), nor allow local Satanists to use our stores to teach classes or to recruit new members. Of course, we can't keep Satanists completely out of our shops. We have to allow them to come in and buy other books and products, just as we would allow Christians, Jews, or Buddhists to do so, because to discriminate against them economically would violate their constitutional rights (besides, some of those proto-Pagans might be among them). But we don't have to make the practice of Satanism easier for them.

Unfortunately, we can't simply exclude Satanists from attending public Pagan festivals, for reasons both constitutional and practical (as Deb puts it, "What are you going to do, have attendees all sign oaths that they aren't Satanists?" — and Satanists would hardly be bothered about lying, now would they?). But we do not have to go out of our way to make Satanists feel comfortable or respected, and we do not have to give them space on our program schedules. If a group of Satanists want to set up a recruiting table at a Neopagan festival, an anti-Satanist table should be set up right next to it, with large signs indicating that the festival organizers do not approve of Satanism. Knowledgeable people should talk to anyone who seems to be being taken in by the Satanists. The same procedures would hold for other Christians showing up at public festivals. (As I understand it, the only way that you can legally prevent attendance at an event on the grounds of religion is when that event is a private, invitation-only party. Those of you with a background in civil rights legislation may be able to determine if there really is any way to exclude fundamentalists from Pagan festivals.)

Those of us who interact with the mainstream media can and should refuse to ever defend Satanism. We can and should publically take the stand that Satanism is stupid, unimaginative, ugly, and destructive — and that just like the fundamentalism of which it is an integral part, Satanism is the enemy of the Goddesses and Gods we worship.

We sure as Hades shouldn't join in public relations or civil liberties coalitions with Satanists any more than we would with the Inquisition or the Klu Klux Klan (join the ACLU if you like, I did). Such coalitions can serve only to benefit the Satanists who will cheerfully hide behind the (very slightly) superior public image that years of hard work have won us, and the fundamentalist Christians who will point to such coalitions as further "proof" that Neopagans and Satanists are identical. We have absolutely nothing to gain from letting the Satanists ride on our coattails, and everything to lose.

At least some of the enemies of our enemies are our enemies — not our friends. It's about time that the Neopagan community closed our ranks against them. ADF already has provisions in the By-Laws to enable us to legally exclude "individuals practicing creeds inimical to Neopagan Druidism" such as "varieties of conservative monotheism, atheism, demonism, racialism, or other such faiths," from our activities and our membership. As pluralists, we're perfectly willing to let our members, guests, and even our clergy, belong to a wide variety of other religions. But in ADF, as I think it should be throughout the Neopagan community, fundamentalists, whether they are wearing crosses or goat heads, are simply not welcome, and never will be.

Is *nothing* profane?

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An Open Letter to Selena Fox

by Isaac Bonewits

Dear Selena:

A few months ago I received a mailing from Circle in which you asked for (a) money to finish paying off the mortgage for the land Circle has been buying for many years, (b) suggestions for fundraising methods, and (c) "ideas and suggestions" as to how Circle should grow.

I also read the mailings put out earlier this year by the "revolutionary" members of Circle, including the transcript of the meeting between them, yourself, and your lawyer. Confused, puzzled, and pained, I talked to you and to your supporters and opponents, including former workers at your headquarters. The more I learned, the more disturbed I became.

Apparently, you are an intensely private person and have always resented people looking at what you consider your personal business. Yet my concern for Circle is not gossip, nor is it (as you put it to me) "sticking my nose where it doesn't belong." Circle is large, international, and has served a unique networking function in our community. If you don't know by now that what happens to you matters to us all, and that you have become a "public figure" in our community, then you've seriously underestimated your own importance.

For many, many Neopagans, Circle was a doorway to the Goddess and to Her people. Our community would be considerably smaller if it hadn't been for the work that Circle did for so many years. That you have been one of the most widely respected, loved, and trusted leaders in the Neopagan community, makes this letter especially painful to write.

Circle was one of the first groups to buy land for Neopagan use. For years I championed your cause, both because I felt that land purchases were an inevitable evolutionary step for our community and because of the undeniably good work you had done as a networking organization. I recommended you to correspondents who wanted contacts and pointed you out as an example of a Neopagan group that had obtained real estate without getting corrupted.

I no longer feel that I can support you or Circle, or advise others to do so. The change in my attitude has come about slowly, over a period of several years, with the recent events crystallizing my perceptions. Things add up...

After years of correctly telling folks at gatherings not to take photographs of people without their permission, especially during rituals, you still run around during ceremonies (ignoring the spiritual energies being raised and focussed), or even at skyclad bonfire dances, snapping pictures for your slide collection and *Circle Network News*. Some of those slides have been shown to strangers all around the country, other photos were published in *C.N.N.* and even in non-Pagan publications – at least some without the consent of the people depicted. This is only one example of an apparently pervasive attitude you seem to have that the rules you impose on others simply don't apply to yourself.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been donated to Circle over the years, yet no one seems to know where it has all gone, and you're not saying.

Other examples: After refusing to pay the expenses of other Neopagan teachers to attend and speak at Circle's well-financed events, you demand red-carpet treatment for yourself and your husband to attend and present workshops at events held by others. Despite being constantly recommended by other Neopagan individuals and organizations, you seldom recommend any teacher or group other than yourself and Circle. After building the "Church of Circle Wicca" as one of the most famous Wiccan churches in the world, you unilaterally decided this year to drop "the W word" – a position I tend to support for the community at large, but one which seems to leave your thousands of Wiccan members without a voice. You then attempted to declare a copyright on the wide-spread concept of Nature mysticism.

Circle has a reputation as an all-inclusive Neopagan networking organization, yet former Circle workers agree that, for at least five years, you discouraged them from giving networking contacts to inquirers, instead having them sell the *Circle Guide to Pagan Groups* and ads in *C.N.N.* Apparently this was originally because doing referrals took too much time out of the limited number of volunteer-hours you had available, yet you never announced to the community that you had stopped providing local Neopagan contacts, or what you had decided was a higher priority. Worse, after a loud argument with one of Circle's critics, you censored his organization's listings out of the 1990 *Guide*. Even if this was done with his consent (as one witness claims), it was grossly inappropriate for a reference work that many people believe to be a complete listing of Neopagan resources.

You bought Circle Sanctuary with donations sent by thousands of Neopagans, originally claiming that it would be open and available for general use by the community, and then fenced it about with so many restrictions that it has become essentially your private property. A half-dozen ex-workers at Circle agreed

that it was nearly impossible for ordinary Neopagans to visit "their" sanctuary for religious purposes without providing money and/or free labor to you at the same time. Amazingly enough, one couple on the West Coast claims that after donating over $5,000 to Circle they were refused permission to visit the land because they had a small child with them!

Circle's by-laws have never been published, so no one knows for sure who is or isn't a "member" of Circle for voting purposes, nor how your Board of Directors gets elected. You told me that there have been and are other members of your Board of Directors (besides yourself, your husband Dennis and your lawyer), but declined to give me the current names. Your opponents tell me that this "secret Board of Directors" is a story you've told for years, but I was able to verify the names of two people who have been Directors in the past. Apparently your policy is simply to have the Board consist of you, your spouse (first Jim and now Dennis) and one other person – a handy way to make sure that you retain majority control.

There are also legitimate questions about the enormous sums of money that have flowed through your hands over the years. I have been informed, by extremely reliable sources, that you have used one of Circle's checking accounts as a personal one, that normal financial books don't exist and never have, that Dennis' education has been paid for in large part out of Circle's general funds, and that he forbid workers at your headquarters to open the mail because they had been asking questions about incoming bank statements. Further, Dennis has been quoted mentioning a secret fund that would provide for your personal survival, should Circle ever fold.

When I brought some of these allegations up to you in our conversation, you denied a few of them directly and evaded responding to others. As an investigative journalist and a concerned member of the Neopagan community, I have no way of knowing how many of these very serious accusations against you may be true – but without published financial reports, neither does anybody else! Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been donated to Circle over the years, yet no one seems to know where it has all gone, and you're not saying. You told me that neither federal nor Wisconsin law requires you to file or publish financial reports. Yet hadn't it ever occurred to you that sooner or later the people who had been giving you all that money would want to know what you had done with it – and that they would have a moral right to know?

> *I no longer feel that I can support you or Circle, or advise others to do so.*

When the broken-hearted people who thought they were members of Circle tried to confront you over these issues of power and accountability, your response was to bring in a lawyer who reacted to all criticism and questioning with threatened lawsuits. At that meeting you danced around the issues that people brought up, never giving a straight answer to any question. Instead you focussed on your anger towards those who had used Circle's mailing list to share their fears and concerns. Your comments on all of this in *Circle Network News* omitted most of the serious criticism that had been laid against you and Circle, and implied that nothing negative was happening. Your phone conversation with me consisted of a few direct denials, dozens of evasions, efforts to pump me for my sources, and repeated threats of unspecified legal and other troubles for me and ADF if I persisted in my plans to publish the results of my investigation.

This behavior is not what we expect from a world-famous Neopagan organization run by someone many consider to be a Neopagan saint. What has gone wrong? I am inevitably reminded of the scandals surrounding the P.T.L. organization and the fact that no Christian leader was willing to criticize the Bakkers until after the media exposed them. The scandal almost destroyed the entire field of televangelism. That might seem good to Neopagans, but now the shoes are on our feet.

Now it's one of our leaders who seems to be behaving in an unethical and irresponsible manner. What should we do, Selena? Should we all be silent and pretend that nothing is wrong, while we hope for your problems to go away by themselves? Should we wait until Circle blows up in our faces, strengthening the biases of those who are opposed to the very idea of large public Neopagan churches? Should we wait until you are investigated by hostile outside forces, making it infinitely harder for other Neopagans to get fair treatment – and no doubt leading to yet another fundraising campaign to protect you from "anti-Pagan persecution"? Most importantly, would such inaction on our part benefit the community or the Earth?

I'm not saying that ADF and I are perfect in regard to all these issues. ADF's finances were confused for several years, first because I was paying out of my own pocket for most of our expenses (and seldom kept receipts), and later because our bookkeeper was an inexperienced volunteer (now we have a professional accountant on the Board). We have not always delivered on time the products or publications that we promised our members. But, by the Gods, when we have made mistakes, we have admitted it. We publish our by-laws so that all our members know the rules to our game, we print financial statements to let our members know how their money is spent, and we make available the minutes from our Board meetings so everyone will know how and why decisions are made. When our members have offered legitimate complaints about how we have handled things, we have listened carefully and then tried to respond appropriately.

I will admit to some envy of you and Circle. When I think of all the good that might have been accomplished by ADF (or by any of a dozen other public Neopagan churches) if we had had one-half of your income, I get both sad and angry. I've spent my entire adult life, as have other Neopagan leaders, living far below the economic level that my skills could earn me, surviving on an income less than that of most members of the Neopagan community – just so I could devote myself to the work I believe the Gods want me to do. It infuriates me to see enough money flowing into Circle to staff three Neopagan churches with full-time clergy, vanishing into fairyland without a trace. Of course it's obvious, to everyone who knows you, that you and Dennis are not living luxuriously. This makes the vanishing money all the more puzzling.

I would be betraying both the Earth Mother and my own principles if I didn't speak out before matters get even worse.

I realize that you are not going to appreciate my criticism and that I am now on your enemies list for the rest of my life. It doesn't matter. I would be betraying both the Earth Mother and my own principles if I didn't speak out before matters get even worse.

You have publicly asked for suggestions as to how Circle should grow. You've said that you want to put the past behind you and concentrate, as always, on "positive energies." OK, here are some positive steps you and Circle could take:

Start by admitting, in your own publications, so that all your followers will hear you, that Circle has made some serious mistakes and that you are a fallible human being.

Adopt and publish a set of by-laws that lets people know who the members of Circle are, and what voting rights, if any, they may have.

Put several more people on your Board of Directors and publish their names, and let us all know how and why they got there. They don't all have to be in your local area – telephone conference calls work just fine for Board meetings.

If you haven't already done so, open a separate personal checking account for yourself and your husband. Have someone other than you or Dennis write the checks for Circle. If you've both taken vows of poverty to the church, and are therefore entitled to be supported by it, say so. Hire a full-time bookkeeper (you can afford the wages), and publish annual financial reports. Hire a C.P.A. to run an inventory on all Circle's property and publish the results. Publish the details on all the land payments you have made and how much is still owed.

Design, publish and implement a training system for your clergy so that someone other than you and Dennis can be leaders someday. Make sure that you both genuinely qualify under the training system standards yourselves.

If you're going to continue to present Circle as a networking organization, put all your names and addresses into a database, add confidentiality safeguards as requested, update the list frequently, and share this data with those who write in and request it. Otherwise you should announce to the community that you aren't doing referrals anymore, and why.

Publish a detailed explanation of your policies for controlling access to the Circle Sanctuary so that people who have donated money will know under what circumstances they may use the land they have paid for.

Except for the last point, these are all things that we in ADF have done or are now trying to do. Many other Neopagan groups have done some of them. They are normal for most mainstream churches, large and small. Your local Unitarian Universalist congregation can probably give you advice on the details. Or you could ask the folks at any of a dozen other large Neopagan groups, most of whom have been doing these sorts of things for years.

When I talked to you on the phone, you said that you were planning on publishing by-laws and financial reports, and making other major changes, before the end of the year. You said that turning 40 (as I did last year) and other brushes with mortality had turned your thoughts towards setting up Circle to run without you. Yet I find it hard to believe that you will take the necessary steps without the glare of a community spotlight being focussed on you – hence this open letter. If you can prove me wrong and make all the organizational changes that are necessary to turn Circle into something we can all be proud of again, I will be delighted.

Perhaps more important than these organizational steps, you might consider taking a sabbatical for a year or two, and turning Circle over to someone you still trust. You need to get back in touch with your roots, with the ideals that brought you to Neopaganism in the first place.

But don't expect people in the Neopagan community to continue sending you hundreds of thousands of dollars until you have proven beyond a reasonable doubt that Circle is open, honest, democratic, and financially responsible.

May the Gods bless, heal, and inspire you.

– Isaac

A PS to my fellow Neopagans:

I'm sure that the preceding opinions have shocked and offended many of you, especially those of you who love Selena. It is only after much medita-

tion and pain that I have decided to publish this letter as widely as possible in the Neopagan community. We need to discuss the issues in depth, both to help heal Circle and to prevent such trouble from happening again to other groups. Perhaps we need to develop a detailed code of ethics for running the increasing number of public Neopagan churches. Perhaps we need a fair and practical listing of what sort of behavior we expect from our leaders — as part of a "Neopagan Common Law."

I hope that you will meditate upon the issues and discuss them with your friends. Ask the leaders of any other large Neopagan group you may belong to whether they have taken steps similar to those I have suggested to Selena. Send your thoughts to Selena at Circle, P.O. Box 219, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572. Send a copy to me at P.O. Box 9420, Newark, DE 19714, marked "Circle Controversy." We will publish a fair representation of the responses in the next issue of *D.P.*, along with any reply that Selena may care to make.

Please don't respond to this open letter by criticizing me or ADF. As I have admitted many times in the past, I have feet of clay going up to my waist, have a gigantic ego, and have made many mistakes in running ADF and other Neopagan organizations over the years. My virtues or vices are not relevant to the situation at Circle, nor is my rudeness in pointing out matters in public that many would prefer to keep private.

Circle's current problems represent an inevitable growth stage, not just for itself and Selena, but for the community as a whole. As our population soars, we are faced with important questions about power, accountability, and ethics. Whether or not Selena is willing to honestly and openly address the issues, it's about time that the rest of us started thrashing them out. Perhaps after discussing this with your friends, you may want to make some changes in your own groups. Indeed, the situation at Circle has already sparked some major policy revisions and new by-laws for ADF and other Neopagan churches as well.

I'm definitely not saying that Neopagans should stop giving money to our growing number of public Neopagan churches. After all, large scale activities do require large scale resources. What I am suggesting is that we boycott groups who ask for large donations (or small ones constantly), until we see their by-laws, financial reports, and minutes of their board meetings. This is the simple sort of common sense that any consumer advocate would advise. If we're going to give financial, emotional, political, or magical support to a group, let's make sure that it's being run in a publically accessible, honest, and responsible manner. Otherwise, we're no wiser than the folks who kept the Bakkers in business for so long.

Let's all pay careful attention to Selena's response to this open letter. Will she send out a mass mailing telling her followers that everything is fine and to "think positive"? Will she try to sue me for daring to voice concerns held by many? Will she publish negative gossip about me (there's plenty available) in an attempt to discredit my criticism and avoid answering my questions? Will she simply ignore this letter, knowing that the vast majority of her support comes from new members of the community who will not have read it? Or will she deal forthrightly with the issues involved and open Circle up to democratic participation by its members? Only time will tell.

On a personal note, I'd like to ask the members of the Neopagan community to stop expecting our leaders, national or local, to be infallible, impeccable, infinitely strong, Neopagan saints. Almost all of us come from dysfunctional families, are survivors of various forms of abuse, and/or have had problems with addiction, obsession, or eating disorders. We are all subject to depression and professional burnout. This is the same profile shared by clergy in other religions and people in other helping professions. As leaders, we need your love, your understanding, and your support (financial, emotional, and spiritual). We also need your compassionate and thoughtful criticism to warn us when we start to go off the deep end. Hubris, the overwhelming pride that offends the Gods, can be caused by uncritical followers as easily as by our own egos, with disastrous results for our whole community.

As Selena has shown us. ⛛

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The Aquarian Manifesto

All intelligent beings have the right to worship who, what, where, when, why, and how they wish; provided that they do not violate the similar rights of others. All intelligent beings have as well the right (some would say duty) to develop their talents – mental, physical, psychic, and others – to the highest degree possible; subject as always to the equal rights of others. It is in this complex interplay of rights that the children of the Aquarian Age may be distinguished from their ancestors of previous ages.

According to astrological tradition, the term "Aquarian Age" implies a time in which there is increased concern with the ways in which each individual can live by his or her own lights, while guaranteeing the same freedom to all others. All those, therefore, who work for the greater evolution of consciousness and freedom may be justly called "Aquarians," regardless of the day or year of their actual birth.

Aquarians – Neopagan, Neochristian, Agnostic or of any other faith – are by definition tolerant of all life affirming beliefs and organizations. They do not proclaim the existence of any "One-True-Right-And-Only-Way" but rather that every intelligent being must find her or his own path.

We will not, however – in the name of tolerance or any other ideal – allow ourselves to be persecuted or exterminated by anti-life individuals or organizations, whether secular or religious.

As Aquarians we do not, in our religious services, magical rituals, psychic activities or in our private lives, engage in the commission or encouragement of felony-crimes-with-victims (as defined by civil law and modern sociological research). We do not therefore engage in murder, rape, maiming, torture of animals, grand larceny, or other heinous crimes; and we will no longer quietly accept accusations that we do so.

Neither do Aquarians use our talents – whether we call them "psychic," "magical," "spiritual," "paranormal," or something else – to achieve ends or through means that, if done physically, would constitute such felony-crimes-with-victims. Accusations in this area will not go uncountered either.

We know full well that the new witchburners are seeking to once again light the stakes of persecution with the fires of bigotry and hate. Equally well do we know that, despite our innumerable differences with one another, the time has come for us to stand together against the forces of fear and oppression. The very survival of ourselves, our children and our planet depends upon the outcome of our present struggles.

Therefore: we will use whatever means exist to preserve, protect and defend our religious, civil, economic and human rights, as well as our reputations, from all those who would slander, libel, defame, suppress or otherwise persecute us for our beliefs.

We will no longer allow self-righteous followers of anti-life beliefs to prevent us from the free exercise of our human and constitutional rights. We will no longer allow anyone with impunity to publicly accuse us of being "Satanists," "devil worshippers," "charlatans," "lunatics" or any other loaded terms of slander and libel designed to denigrate, defame or prevent us from the peaceful and legal spreading of our beliefs. We will no longer hesitate to bring civil and/or criminal charges against our would-be inquisitors whenever possible, no matter how wealthy or powerful they may be.

Aquarians together – Witches and wizards; Pagans and psychics; priests and parapsychologists; mystics, mediums and magicians; astrologers, diviners, and occultists of both sexes and all races, many faiths and traditions, ages and nationalities – hereby agree upon our battle cry as we declare war upon those who would persecute us:

Never Again the Burning!

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"Friendly Fundamentalists" — Round 2

The next several pages are responses to an essay by Isaac in DP #6, *entitled "Can We Trust 'Friendly' Fundamentalists?" All of the responses are from different organizations mentioned in the original article.*

From *Freedom Writer*

Thank you for the positive things you said about *The Freedom Writer* and *Walk Away.*

I thoroughly enjoyed the essay, "Can We Trust 'Friendly' Fundamentalists?" The answer, of course, is "No!" Your statement that "courts and legislatures have gradually taken away one after another of the fundamentalists special privileges" is an insightful one. Now, with the support of the Coalition for Religious Freedom (CRF) and other groups, they cry "religious persecution," or "anti-Christian bias" whenever one of their cherished, unconstitutional special privileges is taken away.

You are wise to not trust the Coalition for Religious Freedom. They approached us, also, and asked us to join them. Although we have a cordial relationship with them, I have a gut feeling that they are up to no good, and will not support them in any way.

Too many Neopagans, in their legitimate quest for recognition and acceptance, are too quick to join the CRF. We must remember that the other name for the "Moonies" is the Unification Church. Unification can lead to abolishment of diversity, dissent and debate. These freedoms are too precious to jeopardize.

Although I am a secular humanist, and not religious, unlike some of my brethren, I am not against religion. I fight the fundamentalists so fiercely because they think they have a divine right, no, a mandate, to foist their beliefs on everyone else.

Best wishes to you in all your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Skipp Porteous
National Director
The Freedom Writer

From A.R.L.

Your description of our organization, Americans for Religious Liberty ("Can We Trust 'Friendly' Fundamentalists?" Spring 1990), is erroneous. ARL is not a "front group" for any organization. Our board and membership represent pretty much the whole religious spectrum.

Our positions are virtually identical to those of the American Civil Liberties Union, which you praise. ARL president John M. Swomley, a Methodist ethicist, serves on the ACLU national board and chairs the ACLU church-state committee. I myself serve on the Maryland ACLU board and the church-state committee.

ARL's position on religion in public education is the same as the ACLU's. We support science teaching and oppose the teaching of the fundamentalist doctrine of "creationism" in science classes. We support neutral, objective, academic study of religion in public schools, but oppose school mandated or regimented religious exercises, or any slanting of public school programs toward any particular religious position.

Finally, ARL supports the free exercise of religion for all, including Wiccans and Pagans, and insists that the constitutional principle of separation of church and state is the best possible safeguard for the religious liberty of people of all religious persuasions.

ARL (Box 6656, Silver Spring, MD 20916) welcomes inquiries and will furnish copies of our newsletter and statement of purpose on request.

Edd Doerr
Executive Director
Americans for Religious Liberty

From C.R.F. (1)

Understanding the realities of putting out a small publication, I can't criticize you for not talking to someone at CRF before publishing your article. I hope, however, that you will reconsider your statements.

CRF is firmly dedicated to the religious liberties of all Americans, regardless of belief. I would have nothing to do with the organization if it were not. While it may be true that there are some among the supporters of CRF whose concern with religious freedom is opportunistic, this has never been true of the Coalition itself. In fact CRF has occasionally lost support by refusing to endorse "religious freedom for Christians only." Nevertheless, CRF has never compromised its commitment. On the contrary, it has energetically sought to raise the consciousness of the Christian community about the importance of defending the rights of non-Christians.

Modern society expects a "good" religion to be bland and inoffensive.

Nor is CRF concerned with defending the traditional privileges of Christianity. Although this was true to a limited extent prior to 1987, since that time CRF has taken a libertarian approach that treats all religions equally. CRF is not upset over the demise of mandatory prayer and blue laws. (On the contrary, it has championed the rights of Sabbatarians.) Your confusion on this matter may be the result of assuming that because a certain issue is reported in the *Religious Freedom Alert*, CRF is taking a position on that issue. This is often not the case.

I am honestly at a loss to understand what you are referring to when you write that a "recent editorial attacked the ACLU for its pro-separation stand" and accuse the *Alert* of editorializing against the "existence of rights for secular people." Nor do I recall any editorial that asserted that Christians "have the right to promote Christianity as long as they aren't pushing a particular denomination of it." These are not the positions of CRF. Enclosed you will find a copy of every editorial the *Alert* has published in the last year and a half. I do not believe that the picture of CRF which emerges from the editorials is the same as that which emerges from your article.

CRF is a single-issue coalition; so naturally it includes people who have "huge differences in attitudes and agendas." But on the right of believers of any faith to be free of both government harassment and private violence it speaks with one voice.

Having said that, let me respond to some of the specifics in your article. These are not points that I would criticize you for having gotten wrong, but they may help your understanding of CRF.

1) Mr. Lindsey has not been associated with CRF since 1975. Unfortunately, some of CRF's early literature was overprinted in such huge quantities that it is still in use.

2) CRF's opposition to CAN goes back several years, but intensified dramatically after CAN's 1978 attempt to have Congress declare a national "Cult Awareness Week." CAN's attacks on Christian groups have, however, greatly assisted CRF in persuading elements of the Christian community to oppose CAN.

3) CRF is not a "fundamentalist" organization, it is non-sectarian. Thus it cannot apologize on behalf of fundamentalists or anyone else except itself. CRF strongly supports freedom of speech, but if a member of our executive committee or advisory board has gone beyond questions of theology to make demonstrably false statements about an identifiable group, I would like to hear about it.

4) Although the Unification Church contributed generously to CRF in the mid-1980's, and has continued to contribute at a greatly reduced level, it is not fair to characterize CRF as funded by any one organization.

5) In the interest of networking with other organizations concerned with religious freedom, I myself have added a number of minority religious organizations to the mailing list of the *Alert* and, as a result of being on the mailing list, these groups have occasionally received a mass mailing. Had I thought of myself as "inviting them to join CRF," I would have sent them personal letters, or at least a letter addressed specifically to the concerns of minority religions.

CRF's view, and my own as well, is that there are remarkable similarities between the problems facing Christian and non-Christian religious groups. Modern society expects a "good" religion to be bland and inoffensive. Any religion which changes the lives of its believers, influences their values, and motivates them to act on those values, insults the social consensus that religion is something that "doesn't really matter." If a person's religious convictions lead to an unusual lifestyle the conflict is even more intense.

Education bureaucrats don't care which religion inspired a family to choose home-schooling, they just want to prevent the erosion of their turf. If the Neopagan community develops to the point where it can support its own schools, it will face the same harassment now directed at Christian schools. The same arguments that are used to oppose political action on abortion by the Catholic church can be applied to political action on the environment by Neopagan churches.

In the extreme case, any religion that inspires people to deviate from the social consensus can be diagnosed as "mind control" and its adherents "deprogrammed" for their own good.

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Despite their theological differences, such religions would be wise to regard each other as "the enemy of my enemy."

You may not agree with this analysis, but I do think that you should acknowledge it as a position of integrity. The impression of CRF that emerged from *The Druid's Progress* suggested that this organization was lacking in integrity, and on that point I believe a correction is merited.

There is more that I would say if I were writing this letter in my personal capacity, but keeping a single-issue coalition together requires that I maintain a clear distinction between my role as spokesman for CRF and my personal beliefs. If you would like to ask me any questions, I am at your disposal.

Yours for freedom,

Daniel C. Holdgreiwe
Executive Director
Coalition For Religious Freedom

To C.R.F. from Isaac

This is in response to your letter of June 12, 1990. It prompted my wife and I to go through our entire file of back issues of *Religious Freedom Alert*, promotional mailings from CRF, etc.

I must confess that I was in error in attributing certain opinions to editorials in the *Alert* that were actually expressed in commentaries and essays. Since many of those were written by your president Dr. Sills and your chairman Dr. Grant, I think it was a reasonable assumption that those opinions have shaped the attitudes and actions of CRF.

Having reviewed CRF materials going back to 1987, I find myself wanting answers to questions I didn't even raise in my essay in *The Druids' Progress*. Every single opinion column and commentary seems to reflect only the views of the religious right — which is not a group known for its committment to religious freedom. Have you no liberals in your organization at all, or even middle-of-the-roaders? Are all of your members opposed to abortion and in favor of school prayer? Are they all in favor of teaching Christian creationism in the public schools and opposed to scientific theories of evolution? Do they all think Ollie North was a hero? (That fund-raising video ad was quite a shock!) Are they all convinced that conservative Christianity alone represents the values that Americans should live by? Or are these attitudes only true of those who write your promotional literature and newspaper?

Looking over the issues of the *Alert* carefully, it would seem that the only member of CRF other than yourself who is more concerned with religious freedom than with promoting a right wing Christian agenda is the person who writes the official editorials.

I would like to publish our correspondance in the next issue of *DP*. I have already written to the other religious freedom groups and publications mentioned in my essay for their responses to the topics discussed. Since I mentioned CRF more prominently than those others, I would be willing to print a detailed response to the questions brought up in the above paragraphs, as well as your complete letter of 6/12. Our members would probably also like to know:

Who are the people now on your executive committee and advisory board? (One sentence each would suffice.)

How many of these people are non-Christian?

How many of them belong to liberal religious or political organizations? Are you and the editorial writer(s) the only centrists?

How many of them are willing to tell their own congregations that non-monotheists are capable of being kind and decent human beings?

How many of them are willing to publically denounce the claim that non-monotheists are all secret Satanists who commit horrible crimes?

How many of them who support having Christian creation beliefs taught in the public schools are willing to have Native American, Taoist, Buddhist, African, or other non-monotheist creation beliefs given equal time?

•K•A•M•

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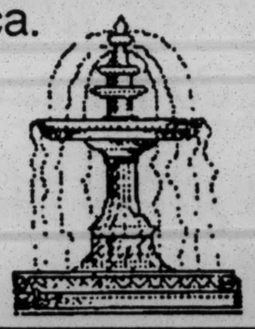

How many of them who are now happy that high school students are now allowed to form Christian Bible study clubs on campus will be actively opposing the formation of Islamic, Buddhist, or Witchcraft study clubs?

Just how is CRF funded? What percentage of your income is from individuals and what from organizations? Who are those organizations? Have you ever published financial reports and are they available to the curious public?

Dr. Sills & Dr. Grant, as well as other writers in the *Alert*, attack the idea of separation of church and state, yet the back page of every issue, as well as your promotional literature, says that CRF is in favor of separation. How do you reconcile this conflict? Are there two sorts of separation, one sort of which you approve and the other of which you don't? Is your approval based on whether the given type of separation promotes or conflicts with the agenda of the Christian right?

Your letter was well written, rational, conciliatory, and made several good points with which I agree. You seem like a very nice person. But I can't tell my fellow Neopagans to trust and network with CRF because it has one nice person in its leadership. For many Neopagans, right wingers such as Drs. Sills and Grant represent the very forces of evil we have dedicated our lives to fighting. It's really hard to see them as champions of liberty.

Daniel, even if you don't have the time or resources to answer all of the above questions, please answer this one: *Why on Earth should Neopagans, or anyone else who belongs to a minority belief system, trust CRF?* The right wing fundamentalists (who seem to dominate CRF) and their predecessors have slandered us, blasphemed our deities, killed our clergy, desecrated our sacred places and otherwise committed religious genocide against us for three thousand years – and they're still doing it today! A few honest articles about non-monotheistic religions and some moderately liberal editorials in the *Alert*, though welcome, are not sufficient to even scratch the surface of our well-founded suspicion. We value news coverage, but that's a different issue from trust.

It's clear now from your letter that CRF wasn't actually asking ADF to join CRF. Perhaps CRF's destiny is simply to educate the fundamentalist masses about non-fundamentalist religions in a context of civil liberties. If that gets them to stop persecuting us, we'll be very happy. After all, they don't have to like us or agree with us, they just have to be willing to accept that we're not drug-besotted, cannibalistic, child-molesting, demon-worshipping murderers and rapists. No matter how "deluded" we might be in the minds of members of other faiths, we think we're good people, doing important work of benefit to all life.

I look forward to your reply.

Never again the Burning!
Isaac Bonewits

From C.R.F. (2)

"Why on Earth should Neopagans, or anyone else who belongs to a minority belief system, trust CRF?" In short, because the potential gains from cooperative action far outweigh the risks. This applies not just to CRF and Neopagans, but to the whole array of minority religions in the U.S., Christian, Neopagan, and other. Alone, they are easy prey for the forces of bigotry and intolerance; in cooperation with each other they are much stronger.

Sadly, the first reaction of most people to persecution is to try to be "good niggers": to appease their persecutors and condemn their fellow victims. The modern American version of this tactic is for a persecuted group to say, "Cult? We're not a cult. Look at those weirdos over there; they're the real cult!" If "those weirdos over there" respond in kind, minority religions are doing the work of their oppressors.

I believe that CRF has formulated a single-issue agenda that people of all faiths can support, but its much less important that minority religions work with CRF than that they work with each other. In my experience, actions in defense of religious freedom are most effective when they are least self-interested. Far more would be accomplished if these groups would defend each other than is achieved when each jealously hordes its resources to itself.

Sadly, the first reaction of most people to persecution is to try to be "good niggers": to appease their persecutors and condemn their fellow victims.

The risk of such cooperation is very small. No one is being asked to surrender their autonomy, just to exchange information and occasionally coordinate their actions on issues of common concern.

CRF was indeed begun by "religious right" Christians, but even in its earliest days it committed itself to being a coalition of "Americans of all faiths" and actively included Jews and Mormons on its boards. (The depth of anti-Mormon feeling in many conservative Christian circles made this no trivial matter.) CRF also involved itself in the troubles of controversial groups such as the Unification Church and Scientology. Some have argued that the Christians who supported Rev. Moon's fight against the IRS were less concerned with the religious rights of non-Christians than they were fearful that the case would be used as a precedent against them; nevertheless, it set a pattern of CRF standing up for groups regardless of their theology. Thus, CRF began with two somewhat contradictory heri-

tages; a religious right provincialism; and a Universalist commitment to religious freedom.

As this tension became more apparent, many of CRF's early supporters (Tim LaHaye, Hal Lindsey, and Jimmy Swaggert, among others) severed their ties with CRF. Others accommodated themselves to being part of a diverse coalition. Dr. Grant has referred to this as "co-belligerency:" the idea that one should cooperate with those of other faiths for a common goal. This made the coalition very diverse in theory, but there was no immediate influx of non-religious-right supporters to make it more diverse in practice. Religious right provincialism continued.

It is in this context that I can address the first set of questions in your letter. What you see as religious-right dominance of the *Alert* results partially from an incompletely outgrown provincialism (although I think you do us a disservice by not acknowledging the change from 1987 to 1990), but even more it results from the selection of articles we receive. The *Alert* would be delighted to run more articles by liberals and non-Christians; we seldom get them. We have many liberals and middle-of-the-roaders on our membership list, but the organizational contacts we have inherited from our early days are not so diverse.

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On the other hand, CRF's commitment to "Americans of all faiths" has led to the development of a view of religious freedom that differs from both left and right. CRF's positions are quite different from those implied by your questions.

– CRF does not oppose abortion, but neither do we see it as a religious freedom issue (many people oppose stealing on religious grounds, but that doesn't make larceny a religious freedom issue). CRF does oppose using trespassing laws to punish demonstrators (anti-abortion, anti-war or otherwise) more severely than other trespassers. Needless to say, this position offends fanatics on all sides of the abortion debate.

– CRF opposes all forms of government-initiated school prayer. ("Government" includes public school teachers; they are agents of the state.) CRF supports the right of individual students to pray (silently or otherwise non-disruptively, and to Whomever they choose) in public schools.

– CRF does not oppose "scientific theories of evolution" but we are sensitive to the misuse of science classes to ridicule religious beliefs and to the rights of non-public schools to set their own curriculum.

Dr. Sills and Dr. Grant write as Christians and I imagine that they do believe that all people should live by Christian values. (Many Neopagans believe that all people should live by Neopagan values – particularly when it comes to the environment, women's rights, etc.) This is one of the reasons their contributions are labeled commentary rather than editorial. Yet Dr. Sills and Dr. Grant have committed themselves to defending the rights of those they disagree with, to convincing other Christians to do likewise, and to working together with those of other faiths.

Your questions, however, were about our members' beliefs; they vary widely in my experience. Many hold conservative beliefs, a smaller but growing number are more liberal. Quite a few are from outside mainstream Christianity. Perhaps the only thing they do have in common is a commitment to religious freedom for Americans of all faiths.

The Ollie North video is another story altogether. One of our supporters, believing that CRF's membership was still as conservative as in its earliest days, pushed it on us as a sure money-maker. Money was very tight, and we didn't have any better ideas, so we swallowed our principles and stuck the flyer in with another mailing. It was a financial disaster and produced more complaints than anything else we did that year. I can confidently say that not all our members think Ollie North was a hero.

Many people oppose stealing on religious grounds, but that doesn't make larceny a religious freedom issue.

Promotional literature has its own problems. Most people, Christian and non-Christian alike, don't get involved until their own ox has been gored. Effective promotional material has to appeal to the self-interest of the target audience. This problem is not unique to CRF; I get regular mailings from the ACLU, and it's not their defense of unpopular religions that they talk about when they need to raise money.

Most of the people on our executive committee and advisory board are Christian ministers. Most of these are theologically conservative, several are Black. The non-clergymen are attorneys and educators concerned with religious freedom. I do not know all of their religious affiliations, but I do know that both Jews and Mormons are represented. I do not work closely enough with all of these persons to comment on their attitudes, but I believe I can speak about Drs. Sills, Grant and Paige, who are more directly involved in running CRF.

I have no doubt that these gentlemen are willing to publicly state that non-monotheists are capable of being kind and decent human beings and to denounce the claim that "non-monotheists are all secret Satanists who commit horrible crimes." I am also confident that none of them would oppose the right of Islamic, Buddhist, or Witchcraft study clubs to form in public high schools. Furthermore, I don't think they would even find such positions particularly controversial – having stood up for working with Mormons and Unificationists, non-monotheists are hardly an issue. While a few radical fringe Christians (the Geraldos of the Christian community) rant about non-monotheists, mainstream evangelicals consider Mormons far more of a threat. I'm told that the Baptists estimate that they lose the equivalent of a congregation every day to the Mormons. Non-monotheists pose no such threat, and few Christians expect that they ever will.

There are indeed two "kinds" of separation of church and state, or more precisely, two different meanings of the term growing out of two very different political traditions. In the Anglo-American sense, "separation of church and state" meant religious toleration and governmental neutrality. This tradition found its expression in the First Amendment and the Virginia Statute on Religious Liberty. But "Separation of Church and State" was also a rallying cry of French anti-clericalism. There it meant forbidding religious organizations from owning property or establishing schools, banning monastic orders, and excluding clergy from civic life. This latter tradition continues to this day in Mexico where clerics (of whatever faith) are denied the right to vote and forbidden to wear religious garb in public, in the name of "separation of church and state." Ultimately, separation of church and state is a simplistic metaphor for a complex issue; its all very well to talk about a "high and impregnable wall of separation," but on which side of such a wall do we put such traditional religious activities as educating children, feeding the poor, caring for the elderly, and speaking out on matters of conscience (whether abortion or the environment)?

In recent years, some Americans have argued for a movement toward "separation" in the European sense: in CRF's view this amounts to a preference for secularist beliefs over religious beliefs and thus violates the neutrality which is central to the American tradition of "separation." At the same time, the regulatory growth of the bureaucratic state continues to erode the "church" side of the wall (most recently in the disastrous *Oregon v. Smith* decision). CRF's guide through this maze of "separationisms" is not the agenda of the religious right, but a commitment to governmental neutrality and maximum religious liberty for individuals of all faiths.

To this day in Mexico, clerics are denied the right to vote in the name of "separation of church and state."

This more than anything else may account for your (erroneous, in my opinion) perception of CRF's positions as "religious right." CRF does stand with the religious right in opposing any preference for secularism over religion; but, unlike many in the religious right, CRF also opposes any governmental preference for one religion over another. This does not please those to whom promoting (or attacking) Christianity is more important than respecting the rights and dignity of individual human beings.

I believe that the cause of religious freedom will be advanced by increased cooperation between Christians, Neopagans, Unitarians, Krishnas, Buddhists, and Americans of every other faith. CRF is trying to play a helpful role in this process, but it is far bigger than CRF. Nevertheless, I think that many Neopagans would find the *Alert* informative and the work of CRF worth supporting, at least to the extent of exchanging publications and sharing information. I cannot prove that CRF is not a secret tool of some international monotheist conspiracy; the essence of such conspiracy theories is that they can never be disproven. But I am forced to wonder how holding present-day Christians responsible for the "burning times" is different from holding present-day Pagans responsible for throwing Christians to the lions, or from holding present-day Jews responsible for the crucifixion.

Whether or not they choose to work with CRF, Neopagans need to begin working with groups from other parts of the religious spectrum on the issue of religious freedom. It is not only good tactics to uphold the rights of people with whom one disagrees; it is morally right.

Yours for freedom,
Daniel C. Holdgreiwe
Executive Director

A Final Note from Isaac:

Well that last letter would seem to put a different light on C.R.F. And recently Daniel and C.R.F. offered help to our local grove organizer in San Jose, California (Debra Wilson) when she was being harrassed by fundamentalist cops. So I'll back off on my distrust of C.R.F. (though not on my distrust of other religious freedom groups run by fundamentalists), and simply suggest that Neopagans choose their allies carefully (see my essay on Satanists earlier in this issue). Always check to see "what's in it for them" before accepting offers of help from groups run by people who are historically our enemies. But when you're genuinely drowning, don't bother to ask the person throwing you a rope why they did it until after you've been saved. Then you can argue politics or theology.

Letters...

Compliments from a Sage Woman

Dear Isaac, Deborah, and Arthur:

Just a quick note to let you know how terribly impressed I am with *DP #6*. I have been printing, reading, and writing for Neopagan publications for years, and I must say quite truthfully that *DP #6* is the finest, most scholarly collection of Neopagan literature I've come across yet. (With the possible exception of *Iron Mountain* – which I understand y'all also had a hand in – many moons ago.)

With all this (totally sincere) flattery over with, I've been inspired to send you a copy of my latest article on divination, with the thought that it might be useful in a future *DP*... Let me know if you have any interest, if so, I'll send it electronically.

Just a couple more notes... on professional clergy and Neopagan religion... I was going to be a Christian minister in my previous (proto-Pagan) life, and have a B.A. in Religious Studies from Lewis & Clarke College, (Portland, OR) and a Master of Divinity (what a title!) from Pacific School of Religion in good old Berzerkley, and from my experience as a student pastor in the United Methodist Church, I think there are some definite pluses and minuses to having professional clergy in a religion. I could go into excruciating detail on my opinions if you are interested, but won't do it here (perhaps a future article for *DP*?) – I'll just compliment you on having the chuztpah to take on some of the major sacred cows (smile!) of the Neopagan community by being willing to even discuss the concept of a trained clergy who take modern scholarship seriously instead of merely depending on "divine revelation" for everything.

As for myself, I'm an ordained/consecrated Priestess through the Fellowship of the Spiral Path, and a public Pagan, but am currently doing all the public leadership I have any desire to do by being on the City Council here in Point Arena. (I wonder how big a headache that is compared to being Archdruid?? Hmm.)

But personal notes aside, I'd really like to compliment y'all on the fine work you're doing – and request more information on the Druidic path and your organization – it might just be something I'd like to join...

After all, my son's name is Arthur, too...

Blessed Be,
Anne Newkirk Niven
Arena Press
Publisher, *SageWoman*

Mithra and Image

I was glad to read the concise and correct summary of MITHRAism in *DP#6*, and I believe that Beth's presentation sets out quite well the reasons for its exclusion from ADF's philosophies.

No sexual exclusivity – male or female – can be allowed to become an inherent part of ADF.

But as I read it I noticed, to my surprise and disappointment, the not-so-faint echos of sexism in the article's last-but-two paragraph. In the first half of one of it's summarization sentences Beth writes that she "makes no claims", but that doesn't really soften the latter half's "it is my belief". C'mon, Beth, just come out and say that you resent that women being left out. Heck, I agree with you: MITHRAism's total exclusion of women has no place in ADF.

And for the same reasons, I feel that Feminist Wiccan features have no place either. In fact, I feel it even more strongly about the Fem-Wics, because MITHRAism could be excused as a product of the cultural prejudices of 2000 years ago, but the Fem-Wics are doing it now. And as Beth so ably points out: any religion that ignores (or bars, or even holds in subservience and/or looks down upon) half of the human race has a blind spot that is not here by chance. No sexual exclusivity – male or female – can be allowed to become an inherent part of ADF.

But as for what individual members do outside of ADF... well, can one's life really be separated into different compartments for different days? Isn't that what we find so hypocritical in the Sunday-only Christians? Isn't that the real question at the bottom of our current warrior/soldier debate? Because, ultimately, ADF needs to be concerned with its own image, which comes – let's be realistic – from the people who are its members.

Don't misunderstand me, I'm not advocating that ADF require "sole allegiance" any more than Beth did. BUT neither can ADF pretend that its reputation isn't being built (and will be carried on) by the reputations built (and carried on) by its members. All of ADF can look bad if we aren't real careful about, not only extreme views, but extremists as well – be they MITHRA-ic or DIAN-ic or any other kind of -ic.

Bill Grant

P.S. Beth, I just read this over and it sounds like I'm accusing you of extremism. I assure you that I do not, nor do I call you a Fem-Wic, nor anything else. Your article was just my starting point. I apologize for any offense given.

Is anyone helpful out there?

Dear Isaac:

I and my house have been members of Ár nDraíocht Féin since approximately April '89. I have written several letters during this period requesting information we could use here, and to date have received two issues of *"News From the Mother Grove"* (one a very old back issue) and now a *"Druids' Progress"* and *Membership Directory*. Since we weren't having much luck getting in touch with anyone helpful, I was ready to allow our membership to lapse. But my husband said that before giving up I ought to give it one more shot. When the *Directory* arrived last week it had your address in it, so I decided to write directly to you. If we still get no response, *then* I'll give up.

Here is our situation. We started out with just the two of us, last April. Then our son started courting a nice Pagan girl, and the two of them joined us. (They were handfasted last Beltane, in a permanent contract.) Then we added a co-worker of my husband's and he is now practicing, and he added another nice Pagan girl. Now we've found four more Celtic Pagans, practicing but un-affiliated, and it looks as if *they* will be joining us. We have been doing our own stuff, not as Ár nDraíocht Féin because we had no information from you on forms and rites and such; also we couldn't recommend you to anyone else, because what could we tell them were the advantages of membership? Meanwhile we are growing, and we aren't even trying. but with all this happening we really need some direction, from *some* quarter. It seems rather silly to reinvent the wheel, as it were, when your organization already exists. We just can't seem to access what you have, despite our membership and repeated efforts to contact someone there who will help. Are you at all interested in us? I'm sure we'd all join, if there were some reason to.

What we have so far are simple rituals cobbled together from lore, reading, and information provided by the Celtic League, which we also belong to. Those sources, and our good intentions, are all we have. I am the only trained occultist of the lot, unless you count my husband, who is a Mason. We celebrate the four Great Feasts. We are now putting into place a "Pagan-Action" (remember "Catholic-Action?") recycling effort for glass, aluminum, paper and plastic. We have an altar up in our house to Cernunnos (represented by a statue of Pan, the only horned-god image we could find) where daily offerings are made, (this being summer, he currently has white carnations, scented potpourri and sea shells,) and are encouraging the rest in the same direction, with some success. We wear, with great respect and devotion, jewelry in the image of the Great Mother and Thor's hammer. We dispose of public litter, run a shelter for ferrets, and belong to the Wilderness Society, Greenpeace and numerous other ecological and conservation-oriented organizations, to which we contribute all we can. We are studying and learning, but we are still woefully ignorant, however sincere and devout.

We generally disapprove of abortion and consider it an offense against the Mother; but in some cases it is wrong not *to; such as when the child is known to be defective.*

So far as our beliefs, we acknowledge the existence of a single, supreme creator-deity, who is most emphatically *not* Yahweh or anything remotely resembling him. To this deity we ascribe no gender nor form, but acknowledge by the appellation "The One". (We think the right name may be Be'al, but we aren't sure.) We consider oak trees sacred to this deity, and the sun a manifestation. We also honor Cernunnos / Herne / Pan (with aspects of Gwyn ap Nudd), Dón the Great Mother, Bridget, the Morrigú (may be the dark aspect of Dón – the name is not a name but an appellation meaning "Big Queen"), Aengus (my eldest son's legal name, by the way) Sucellos / Ruadh Ra-fheasa / the Dagda; Manannan Mac Lir; Lugh Lamhfada; Nodens / Nuadha; Epona / Macha / Rhiannon (the latter already selected as the name to be given to our granddaughter, when she happens) and Govannon / Goibniu (whom we invoke when we are making things, especially out of metal.) We recognize Odin and Thor. Some of these we know what to do with, others we don't. More we know exist, like Hesus, but know nothing else about them. We do not know the proper forms for honoring any of them.

We do not deal in any Christ-figures as mediator, savior or redeemer, as we don't think we need redeeming. We don't need "saving" or "finding", as we are not in any danger and we aren't lost. We consider it absolutely necessary for each person to establish his/her own personal relationship with the Creator; therefore to seek to put a mediator between ourselves and our God would be wrong

to the point of idolatry. The gods are not asked to intercede on our behalf; they have their own proper spheres of expertise and don't need to get anyone's permission to help us; they are (we hope) our friends, our Elder Kinsmen. We believe that we were made exactly as our creator intended, and loves us, and so we are not "God-fearing" people. Our purpose here is to learn, to work, and to be happy. We believe in the immortality of the soul; transmigration, transmogrification and other mutabilities are all admitted as possible future / past states, ways of acquiring knowledge, in a number of forms / places / states. (We do not seek any consensus on this point.) We respect the earth as our mother, and all forms of life as our siblings, as these and ourselves come from the hand of The One and must be cherished. We do not believe in the supremacy and manifest destiny of the species homo sapiens.

We have no concept of "sin", but there is right-action and wrong-action. The things we think of as virtues and vices are not those generally acknowledged as such by the general population, which is heavily influenced by the Judeo-Christian ethos. Christian "humility" and "turning the other cheek" are not characteristics we admire or emulate, but courage, dignity and fortitude are. We do not prize chastity per se but we are monogamous because forming a marriage involves giving our word, and that is sacred. (We do, however, acknowledge term marriages.) "Charity" is not one of our virtues either, but generosity and hospitality are. We consider it a stringent point of honor to pay for goods received, in terms of money or treatment, but we also believe in the Law of Karma. We generally disapprove of abortion and consider it an offense against the Mother, and anti-life; but in some cases it is not only permitted but wrong *not* to; such as when the child is known to be defective, and a soul therefore to be deprived of a proper vehicle for its growth and learning. Or in a case of rape, when conception was *already* a violation against the Ancient Harmonies. We consider caring for our families and responsibilities of first importance. We love Justice.

So that is what we are like, and how things are out here in the remote outposts. We are doing the best we know how, with precious little information to work with. But the lack of data has forced us to our hearts, and the salts of our blood, and the dim memories of other lives, to find our way home. We could do better. Unfortunately, our annual dues netted is 2 *NFtMG,* 1 *DP,* and one *Directory*, and we don't think that is enough. It is all very well for Silverleaf to say that there is a lot we need to do for Ár nDraíocht Féin (he didn't mention what, beyond paying dues,) but Ár nDraíocht Féin needs to give us something to work with, and that hasn't been happening. It's nice to know what is going on in New York, but not really that useful. We need basic information: I've just told you everything we know.

We *can* make it on our own – we have been, and we'll continue, with or without affiliation. We are not interested in dogma, canonical hierarchy (many of us were reared Catholics) and formal organizations is far down on our list of priorities. We are working just fine, because we are all enthusiastic and committed. But we lack basic knowledge. If you are interested, please say so.

Yours sincerely,
Camille Grant

Isaac Responds

Dear Camille:

Now that we've had a chance to talk on the phone a few times, and you have also had extensive contact with Niszsa, as well as attendance as guests at a Board meeting, I hope that you and Bill are feeling better about how ADF works – as fast as an oak tree! You comments and suggestions have been very useful in helping us to design the *New Member's Guide* and to figure out just what our members need from us. Of course, you realize that your polytheology is quite different from mine, and perhaps from that of many other ADF members, so we should be able to get some good arguments going in print! Good luck with your protogrove in the Houston area.

Isaac ⚵

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Waning Year Tree Meditation

Barbara Coontz

Breath deep the smoke filled autumn air
Close your eyes and feel the last rays of summer on your face.
The time has come for us, as trees
To forsake the Bright Lord of Life,
For the nights are becoming too long
For His rays to feed us.

Send your roots down deep into the soil.
Deep into the Earth, your mother.
She will feed you now.
She will nourish you as you draw Her essence up,
Through your trunk, out to your limbs,
Out to the tips of your branches.
Your fingers burst forth in vivid colors of death,
As the last of the green is drained away.
The cool wing rattles the dead leaves at your base.
Your branches brush against your neighbor's.
But, the Grove is not yet asleep.

A tree is an old being.
You have seen many things,
You have heard many songs.
Before you dance the people of this place,
Singing praises for the Gods,
Just as they have always done.
You can see each generation, dancing and singing,
Layered one upon the other.

Allow yourself, as the spirit of the tree,
To step forward and join them,
Merging our voices in song.

(sing "We Are One," by Ian Corrigan)

RETURN (at the end of the ritual)

Breath deep the smoke filled autumn air.
The spirits of this Grove fade from your sight.
Your branches are drawn back.
Your roots are drawn up.
A tree is an old being.
You have seen these people singing praises before,
And you will see them again.
It is time now to walk back to your world.
Let these memories wait in your heart
To nourish you throughout this cold dark season. ϕ

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Conflict Among Pagans: Threat or Necessity?

by Corrainne (Kris Aaron)

Conflict and controversy have become hot topics in the Pagan community recently. Perhaps because of the grisly outcome of most patriarchal religious wars, many Pagans and Pagan leaders tend to desperately squelch any hint of disagreement between individuals, groups or traditions. But the old philosophy of "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all" is more damaging to Paganism than the bitterest argument.

Does this mean conflict is actually healthy for Paganism? Depending on how it's defined, yes. If "conflict" means a punch in the nose or a personal attack, as it does to so many of those raised in a patriarchal system, then the problem is not the conflict but how individuals are unable to deal with frustrations. If conflict means an endless, on-going debate over patterns of thinking and belief, with much quoting from published sources, arguments into the wee hours of the morning (fueled by the Goddess Caffena), and even occasional irate shouting, then yes, conflict is just about the best resource Pagans have.

For Paganism, in its many forms, cannot be a fragile religion if it is to survive. Theology made of spun glass and fairy dust won't survive the brutal realities of day-to-day living. Sweetness, endless positivity and loving-goodness are fine, but it's argument, debate, controversy and conflict that will pound and temper a relatively unknown, untried (and in many cases, new) set of beliefs into strong, flexible steel.

Conflict, controversy and adversity will certainly damage, cripple and even kill off some Pagan philosophies – and even the group energy that created them. But perhaps the group or philosophy lacking the strength to answer hard questions or the wisdom to debate points of reason far into the night deserves to fail.

Theology is not saccharine. Theology is not for the faint of heart. Theology is the endless search for the unanswerable that must be conducted as much in an atmosphere of conflict as of benevolence. No religion or tradition can survive for long on an endless diet of cheery rituals designed only to make participants feel good about themselves. Sooner or later (usually sooner), there will occur a desperate need for hard-edged questions about how the belief structure of the group (and there had better be one) relates to the constants of mundane life. Religions and traditions that avoid such demands will undergo a continual change in membership, as those who can't find answers – or even an opportunity for discussion and debate – will go elsewhere.

Pagans are strong. Weak, frightened people would not challenge temporal religious authorities or a jealous god who will have no others before him. Conflict and controversy may damage and even destroy some Pagan groups, but the movement will survive and thrive on continual debate and questioning.

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Pagans and Fascists: A Word of Warning

by Gerald E. Desmond

Introduction

Since the earliest days of "Pagan reconstruction," researchers have been combing through the texts and traditions of pre-Christian Europe in search of information on the Old Gods. While such work is commendable and necessary, scholars should be sensitive to the various political agendas which often affect translations and interpretations of anthropological, ethnological, and historical data. One of the most fruitful producers of such research in this century was, after all, Hitler's *Ahnenerbe* (literally, "to divine or discover the heritage"), the Nazi institute dedicated to racial and – yes – occult studies.

Hitler's heirs are still in business today, publishing journals and newspapers dedicated to "Pan-European Identity," "Racial Solidarity," and the like. Many seemingly scholarly quarterlies and monthly magazines are, in reality, produced by European neo-nazi organizations quietly dedicated to eradicating what they believe to be the International Zionist Banking Cabal. Hence, beneath the ostensibly respectable rhetoric of Indo-European cultural revival often lurk plain old anti-semitism, eugenicism, and racism.

ADF members and other Pagan people should therefore be aware that several seemingly "straight" journals are little more than conduits for fascist blatherings about race, nation and blood. In fact, many of the leaders of European-based proto-nazi organizations refer to themselves as Pagans, and regard Christianity as little more than a decadent extension of Judaism.

On the surface, some organizations may seem amenable to the tenets of the kind of Paganism practised by ADF. Upon closer inspection, however, it soon becomes apparent that such groups are actively opposed to the universalist and pluralist bent of contemporary Druidism, and sometimes even provide operational bases for right-wing terrorists.

Nouvelle Ecole, Mircea Eliade, and Roger Pearson

Take, for example, *Nouvelle Ecole*, a slick quarterly published in Paris. *NE* had an exchange ad in *Druids' Progress #5*, clearly without the editor's knowledge of the journal's leanings. It's editor, Alain de Benoist, is a highly visible member of the French new right and one of the leaders of GRECE (Groupement de recherche et d'etude pour la civilization europeenne). GRECE is a clearinghouse for authoritarian and anti-semitic intellectuals throughout Europe and the United States and, while touting the glories of pre-Christian culture, also lacerates "Jewish control" of the arts and media. During the 1970's, *Nouvelle Ecole* was represented at meetings of the ultraright World Anti-Communist League.

Among the journal's patrons have been Mircea Eliade and Roger Pearson. Eliade, perhaps best known for his monumental study, *Shamanism*, was an internationally renowned historian of religions and a distinguished professor at the University of Chicago.

In his younger years, however, he was a staunch supporter of Romania's indigenous fascist organization, the Iron Guard. The Guard urged that Romania be purged of Jews, communists, foreigners, and freemasons. When their leader, Corneliu Codreanu, was executed by King Carol in 1938 for his many plots and intrigues, the Guard – also known as the Legion of the Archangel Michael – went into exile. They were restored to prominence in 1940 by the occupying Nazis, and later oversaw numerous pogroms. Eliade mentions his stint with the Legion in his autobiography, *No Souvenirs*, and only in passing.

Roger Pearson, a U.S.-based and British-born racial theorist, once boasted of helping hide Dr. Josef Mengele in Latin America (Mengele, known as the Angel of Death to his victims at Auschwitz, has successfully eluded potential captors for decades). Pearson edits three journals out of his offices in Washington, D.C., which also house his publishing company, Cliveden Press – *Journal of Social, Political and Economic Studies, Mankind Quarterly,* and the *Journal of Indo-European Studies*.

Hitler's heirs are still in business today, publishing journals and newspapers dedicated to "Pan-European Identity."

When Pearson first arrived in the United States in 1958, he was an organizer for the London-based Northern League. The League had been formed by British racialists deemed too extreme for membership in Oswald Mosely's fascist British United Front. Pearson and Alistair Harper edited *Northern World*, a Nordicist and anti-semitic magazine, and the League counted among its more prominent supporters Ernest Sevier Cox, a leader of the Ku Klux

Klan; Hans Gunther, a Nazi race theorist, and ex-SS officer Wilhelm Kusserow.

In 1965, Pearson merged *Northern World* with another publication to form *Western Destiny*, operated with the help of Willis Carto of the anti-semitic Liberty Lobby. During 1966, Pearson published a series of monographs, including *Race and Civilization* and *Eugenics and Race*. The first study was based upon Hans Gunther's *Racial Elements of European Civilization*, a key text among Third Reich race theorists, while the second encouraged the "extermination" of "inferior tribes." Both of these treatises are still offered for sale by the American Nazi Party.

For some time, Pearson was active in Washington political circles, working with the Heritage Foundation and editing the American Security Council's *Journal of International Relations*. He also served as president of the World Anti-Communist League in the mid-1970's. During his tenure with WACL, he invited numerous fascist terrorists (some wanted for murder), death squad leaders, Nazis, and former SS officers to join their ranks.

Pearson's *Mankind Quarterly* often reflects its editor's racialist bent, and has included more than one prominent Nazi on its editorial board. One of the more notable advisors to MQ was Otmar von Verschauer, an associate of Josef Mengele's. Despite Pearson's rather blemished history, and the foul associations of *Mankind Quarterly*, he succeeded in attracting Joseph Campbell to serve on its editorial board – a post he held until his death.

While *MQ* often publishes articles on European Paganism, it has also run "studies" on the intellectual inferiority of blacks and Nazi head-measuring techniques. Such leanings should also make one wary of the quality and worth of the *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, also edited by Pearson and published by his Institute for the Study of Man.

Third Positionists, Pagans, and the European Network

Observers of the international ultraright see *Mankind Quarterly, Nouvelle Ecole, the Northlander,* and Germany's *Neue Anthropologie* as part of a network of fascist/racist publications which also includes the UK-based journal, *Scorpion*. *Scorpion* is operated by former members of Britain's racist National Front who have adopted the theoretical trappings of the so-called "Third Position" movement, which sees itself as opposed to both capitalism and communism while claiming to embrace ecology and feminism. In June of 1980, members of the British Third Position sponsored what looked like, for all intents and purposes, a Pagan festival. Called "Camp Hobbit" by its organizers, the gathering attracted some 2,500 right-wingers from several European countries, and featured workshops on subjects ranging from Nordic mythology to the Grail legend.

The encampment convened in Italy's Abruzzi region and, only six weeks later, fascist terrorists bombed the Bologna train station, killing 85 and injuring 200. Authorities believe that Camp Hobbit may have not only emboldened young fascists to take direct action, but may have also provided several leaders the opportunity to meet and strategize. During a major police crackdown on the Italian right-wing, Third Position leader Roberto Fiore fled to London where he was provided safe haven by Michael Walker, editor of *Scorpion*.

Those who subscribe to *Scorpion*'s political tenets regard themselves as anti-totalitarian, elitist and white supremacist. Their stated goal is the creation of a pan-European "Imperium" isolated from the influences of both the United States and Soviet Union, and they often see themselves as actively engaged in re-Paganizing the continent. British, French and Italian Third Positionists or proponents of the "Third Way" (*La Troisieme Voie*) see a number of theorists as mentors and friends, among them Julius Evola (1898-1974) of Italy, Jean-Gilles Malliarkis of France, and Libya's Muammar Al-Qaddafi.

Fascist Watch — More to Look Out For

There are several more publication not included in the piece. Two journals out of Belgium which preach the gospel of racial nationalism are: *Altair*, published by Jean-Paul Hamblenne (BP 1446, 1420 Braine L'Alleud), and *L'Anneau* ("The Ring"), published by Rolf van den Haute (BP 436, Centre Monnaie, 1000 Brussels). Both are fascist and pan-Europeanist. Out of France there's *L'Immonde* ("The Unworldly") (Ce Cedias, Boite Postale 4, rue Las Cases, 75007 Paris), which circulates among members of the World Union of National Socialists, and *Europe jeunesse*, published by Raymond Ferrand (91 bis rue de la Div. Leclerc, Linas, 91310 Montlhery), which is white supremacist and pan-Europeanist. There are several proto-pagan Spanish groups as well, some of which claim to be Falangist (Catholic, pro-clerical fascist) but which are actually rather odd amalgamations of mystical Xtianity and solar religion. The CEDADE (Circulo Espanol de Amigos de Europa) is headquartered in Barcelona, and they publish a magazine called *Cedade*. Local branches have newsletters, such as *Cruz Solar* (Sun Cross) and *Halcon* (Hawk).

Of these, Malliarkis is the most avowedly Pagan, often referring to himself in writings and speeches as an "orthodox" Pagan. In addition to operating La Librairie Française out of a seemingly abandoned storefront in Paris, Malliarkis is the leading philosophe of the French MNR, or National Revolutionary Movement, and maintains close ties to the directorship of *Scorpion*. Members of the MNR roused the ire of the French public by carrying banners and posters emblazoned with the slogan "Free Klaus Barbie" at a public rally held in 1986.

When Martin Lee and Kevin Coogan, two investigative journalists from the United States, visited Malliarkis in his bookstore, they discovered copies of *Mein Kampf* and various titles written by holocaust revisionists (those who deny that the holocaust ever happened) snuggled up against works on "alchemy, magic, Nordic gods, and Viking warriors – all meant to conjure up visions of a Pagan Europe free from Judeo-Christian influence. Exposés of the world 'Jewish, Masonic, high-finance conspiracy' are displayed alongside books on Breton separatism and other regional movements." Malliarkis also assured Lee and Coogan that he supported his "Celtic blood-brothers" in their ongoing war against the British in Northern Ireland.

Links among these various groups and publications are strong and ongoing. Indeed, in March of 1985, several representatives from these various journals and organizations met in Geneva, Switzerland under the auspices of the Cercle Proudhon, a neofascist think tank headed by one Pascal Junoud. In the same month, Malliarkis organized a second such conference in Paris, inviting prominent figures from the European ultra-right to attend.

There are other such periodicals kicking about the European scene, too numerous to list here. But two more such publications worthy of mention are *Totalite* and *Le Devinir europeen* ("Europe's Future"). *Totalite* is edited by Georges Gondinet, an associate of the GRECE circle and an advocate of the writings of Julius Evola. His publishing house, Pardes, prints Evola's writings in French, and distributes numerous other right-wing and anti-semitic publications. Gondinet, deeply interested in the occult and pre-Christian religions, also publishes *Rebis, L'Age d'or,* and *Kalki*. The first deals with sexuality and sexual politics, the second with mysticism and magick, and the third with the history and folklore of Indo-European warrior castes.

Le Devinir europeen is more overtly national socialist in orientation. Its editor, Goulven Pennaod, prefers to refer to the movement and magazine's political orientation as *ethniste-socialiste*, based upon principles of scientific racism. Its religious leanings are Norse Pagan, and each year the group sponsors festivals in observance of the solstices, equinoxes, and major sabbats, most notably Beltane.

U.S. Connections

In the United States, the Odinists have become the leading Pagan proponents of Third Position ideology. Issues #117-120 of *The Odinist,* published out of Crystal River, Florida, have serialized a five-part commentary on Muammar Qaddafi's *Green Book* written by one "P.W.," seemingly affiliated with something calling itself the International Green March and headquartered in Brunswick, Australia. Entitled "Against Capitalism, Against Marxism," the series explicates the fundamental prescripts of Qaddafi's "Third Universal Theory" as these relate to Odinism. While the articles themselves are largely technical in nature, the same P.W. who heaps praise upon Qaddafi later, in issue #121, makes the following statement: "The lackeys of liberalism, those who have performed some service on behalf of International Money Power or its Zionist appendage, are inevitably

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touted as heroes or celebrities in the media..." Sound familiar?

Despite disclaimers by the Odinist Fellowship that they are not racists, members regularly attend activities held at Mountain Church in Cohoctah, Michigan, and openly identify themselves as Odinists. Mountain Church is the brainchild of Rev. Robert Miles of the Aryan Nations, and was organized in 1972 as a meetingplace for members of the Christian Identity movement, the Nazi Party, and Ku Klux Klan. In 1971, Miles was jailed for bombing school buses in protest against desegregation, and in 1989 oversaw a nationwide meeting of nazi skinheads at the Aryan Nations encampment in Hayden Lake, Idaho. Mountain Church is an "ecumenical" gathering-place designed to allow for dialogue among the various neo-nazi and racist organizations currently operating in the U.S.. And, strangely enough, one of Mountain Church's largest annual festivals is held to mark Beltane.

Those who may be researching the roots and origins of Eastern European Paganism would do well to stay away from the writings of Charles L. Thourot Pichel, leader of a renegade sect of the Catholic Knights of Malta called "The Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem," located in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania. The so-called "Shickshinny Knights," as they're disparagingly referred to by other Knights of Malta, were established as the result of a dispute which arose while the Order was in Russia under Czar Paul, prior to their flight to Malta.

The Shickshinny Order has long been a haven for "white" Russians, monarchists, fascists, and anti-semites, among them Boris Brasol. Brasol, who initiated Pichel, ran pogrom operations before World War II and later served as the go-between for Henry Ford, the Nazis, and the White Russians, according to John Roy Carlson's *Under Cover: My Four Years in the Nazi Underworld of America.* Pichel, during the 1930's, unsuccessfully struggled to have himself named head of Nazi Propaganda Services in the United States (see Sandor Diamond's history of the German-American *Bund, The Nazi Movement In America,* published by Cornell University Press).

Pichel's literary claim to fame was a book entitled, *The Lost Land of Samugitia,* which retells – in fantasy form – the racial and ethnic history of "true Russia," which is Pagan Lithuania, according to Pichel. Such ethnic fantasies are a favorite genre among white Russians and Russian fascists, and include the infamous *Book of Vles. The Book of Vles* regularly re-emerges in Soviet society (most recently among the members of Pomyat, or "Memory," a fiercely anti-western, anti-semitic and nationalist Russian movement). The book claims to contain the pre-history of the "true" Russian peoples (called "Russes") prior to their enslavement by Christianity and their loss of freedom to the worldwide Jewish banking and cultural cabal.

Paganism should not be synonymous with racism.

The treatise, an obvious forgery, claims that Russia's roots are actually Indo-European (Aryan) and traceable through the Ukraine. The "Russes" referred to in the text, transcribed from tablets since lost by the "editor," were descendents of the people of Oriy, later mistakenly called "Aryans" rather than "Oriyens" by scholars. Hence, Slavic culture is actually Indian or, to be more precise, truly Aryan. *The Book of Vles* also claims quite an authorial legacy for itself, suggesting that it is, in reality, the historical chronicle kept by Pagan priests from the ninth century, B.C.. Russian racists have long referred to *The Book of Vles* with reverence, despite the fact that it is little more than a hoax.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Members of ADF and other workers in the Pagan restoration should be wary of research materials which originate with these various groups. Phrases such as "Third Position," "Third Way," "European Imperium," and "Pan-European Identity" should hereafter be considered synonymous with fascism, militant racism and – in some cases – terrorism.

Those scholarly journals which define their missions in terms of a seemingly Manichaen struggle between cultural and religious light and darkness (framed as a battle between Judaeo-Christianity or "Semitism" and the glorious inheritance of Pagan Europe) should be left on the shelves. If a writer or group of writers seem a little too willing to engage in wanton acts of ethnic and religious bashing, denigrating this or that group as "infectious," "debilitating," or "decadent," the reader should be tipped-off. If they sound like nazis, they probably are nazis.

Also, it's always sound policy to review editorial boards and to double-check members' names against guidebooks and databases (see bibliography, below). If, for instance, Roger Pearson serves as an "editorial advisor" to the journal you're currently reading, put it down. Likewise, if you scan through the back pages of a periodical and discover that it accepts advertising from holocaust revisionists (such as *The Journal of Historical Review*), cancel your subscription.

One such magazine regularly read by occultists is *Critique,* which peddles books with titles like *"The Holohoax"* and *"Did Six Million Really Die?"* In a recent issue of *Critique,* publisher Bob Banner promised his readers a future special issue dedicated to the "question" of the holocaust. And lately, even the very respectable quarterly *Gnosis* has taken to publishing articles lionizing Julius Evola, one of the doyens of contemporary European fascism and racialism. In addition to producing several books on esoteric subjects, Evola also penned *Synthesis of the Doctrine of the Race* (1941), an anti-semitic work lauded by Mussolini. Evola served as a mentor to young Italian fascists and terrorists throughout the sixties and seventies, regularly holding court in his Roman apartment until his death in 1974.

In short, Paganism should not be synonymous with racism. If anyone among you has questions about a particular group or publication, or comments about this piece, please address them to me, care of the Archdruid. Finally, I would like to thank the Archdruid for inviting me to contribute this article, and hope that it will be of some use to those of you in ADF.

Bibliography

The best and most thorough overview of the international ultraright is Ciaran O Maolain's *The Radical Right: A World Directory* (United Kingdom: Longman's, 1987). On Third Positionism see Martin Lee and Kevin Coogan, "Killers on the Right: Inside Europe's Fascist Underground," *Mother Jones,* May 1987, 40ff., as well as Mohamed El-Khawas, *Qaddafi: His Ideology in Theory and Practice* (Brattleboro: Amana Books, 1986) (El-Khawas is, perhaps, a bit too sympathetic toward Qaddafi, but it is one of the few studies which takes Qadaffi's work seriously on intellectual and political grounds). On the British far right see Richard Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain: A History, 1918-1985* (London: Blackwell, 1987), as well as back issues of *Searchlight* (from 37B New Cavendish Street, London W1M 8JR). Michael Billig's *Psychology, Racism, and Fascism* (London: 1984) is also good, and available through the people at *Searchlight.* Stuart Christie's *Stefano delle Chiaie: Portrait of a Black Terrorist,* deals with one of the purported masterminds behind the Bologna train-station bombing, and also outlines the nature of present-day Italian fascism. For more information on the U.S. far right, see *Covert Action Information Bulletin,* published quarterly. The World Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League both issue regular reports on the doings of antisemites at home and abroad. For information on the Christian Identity movement, see *Armed and Dangerous: The Rise of the Survivalist Right* by James Coates (New York: Hill and Wang, 1987). The best book on U.S. support for Hitler during WWII is still John Roy Carlson's *Under Cover: My Four Years in the Nazi Underworld of America* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1943). For more on Roger Pearson see Scott Anderson and Jon Lee Anderson, *Inside the League* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1986), as well as Russ Bellant, *Old Nazis, The New Right and the Reagan Administration* (available for $5.00 from Political Research Associates, 678 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 205, Cambridge, MA 02139).

A Note from the Archdruid

ADF has official policies forbidding behavior of the sorts that these right wing fascistic groups routinely engage in or encourage. Specifically, Article 18, Section 4, of the By-Laws states that "Proven communication or behavior of a virulently racist, sexist, homophobic, heterophobic, antisemitic, or otherwise bigoted manner, shall be grounds for expulsion..."

The recent collapse of the Iron Curtain is unleashing a wave of antisemitism and fascistic political movements throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. I'm sure that Mesopagan groups with fascistic agendas will be quick to follow. It will be important that we keep track of these groups, and that we offer Europeans genuinely Neopagan alternatives.

The Druid Church of Gaul, publishers of *Druidisme,* mentioned in *DP#5,* appear to be associated with the French fascists mentioned in the preceeding article. So we will no longer be printing their exchange ad, any more than we print those from the neonazi Odinist groups, since we cannot recommend them to our members. We will continue to send them copies of *DP,* however, in hopes that our Aquarian attitudes may eventually influence them to join the Neopagan community.

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Ogham Use in Divination

by Susan Kirsch

A couple of years ago I was pleasantly surprised to find Colin and Liz Murray's *Celtic Tree Oracle* in the bookstores. At last, I thought, something for the masses that portrays Druids in a positive light (it did) and that drew from real Celtic sources (it did, no matter what Robert Graves said). I had grown dissatisfied with Norse and Anglo-Saxon runes and was even less pleased with Ralph Blum's interpretations.

I liked the Murrays' writing, and their idea – a boxed set of cards, note pad and book – was, well, neat. It fit well on the bookshelf with the larger trade paperbacks. It made a reasonably priced gift. It was a marketing dream, but... a nightmare for a practitioner of an outdoor religion. Images came forth of the fate of these cards once subjected to outdoor rituals in New England: you know, rain, hail, snow and mud – and that's the summer. So my use of these cards was largely restricted to indoor use.

One Imbolg (Brighid – and Thank You, Lady, for your inspiration!) as I sat contemplating the ritual to be held later that day, outdoors, I sat looking at the trees and the sky outside. The branches were bare and they seemed to form patterns against a grey winter sky. So I got out the wooden "Ogham box" as I had come to call it, and my copy of *America B.C.* by Barry Fell, and leafed through them for a few minutes. Then I went out for a walk, my trusty Swiss Army Knife in pocket. I came back with a handful – nine to be exact – of twigs three to four inches long, cut with thanks and prayers from local species like apple, oak, maple, birch, pine, willow, witchhazel, sassafras. These grow nearby and have historical, economic and healing significance. I added a twig of rowan, or European mountain ash, from a tree we planted a few years ago. I trimmed all the twigs to about the same length, leaving their bark and bud scales and other irregularities intact.

Then I wanted a baseline. I had already decided to use a white wool felt for an "Ogham Cloth" because white is easier to see in the dark. (More on the colors later.) I cut this fabric into a square, but there's no reason you couldn't make it a circle. I added a length of red ribbon down the center (or across it, depending on your perspective). In between uses, the twigs are rolled up into the cloth which has been folded in half along the red baseline. A cheat sheet can be rolled up into it too, or Ogham symbols and names can be embroidered along the outside edges for ease with interpretation. When rolled up, the pieces are contained in a cylindrical, lightweight, compact whole. I tied the cylinder around with a length of black velvet ribbon.

So I had my Ogham reading package. Nine seemed like a good round Celtic number and I had black, white and red in honor of the Morrigan, an important Goddess for me.

But it gets even better. All of this took place in 1988 or 1989. In August 1990 I was looking over some notes and couldn't get my mind off the reference to the "Lacnunga." I requested the book through interlibrary loan – and waited. A few weeks and as many tries later, a book arrived: from Boston College no less, off the shelves at their medical library. As I leafed through it I found lots of interesting information and references, especially a few paragraphs on how twigs (twigs = tan, singular, A.S.) were used to cast lots and conduct divination as reported by Tacitus. And they were thrown at random over a white cloth.

The system I developed differs from that reported by Tacitus in that I have not carved any runes on the twigs: the patterns they form over the baseline determine which Ogham they create. I drew from Celtic sources rather than Germanic or Teutonic, but some anthropologists and other scholars link these people with the Celts. I doubt there was a Berlin Wall between Germanic/Teutonic magic and Celtic magic! I'm tempted to think that Druids and other sayers of sooth used something similar.

References: See text, plus Grattan, J.H.G. and Singer, Charles, *Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine,* Oxford University Press, 1952.

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Druids and the Media

by Deborah Lipp

Recently, ADF received two letters, informing us of two different instances where Druids were defamed in the media. The text of these letters, and my response to them, follows.

What should we do in such cases? Certainly, ADF has always been in favor of "out-of-the-closet" Paganism, and Isaac has long championed the cause of Pagans' rights, even before ADF (see *The Aquarian Manifesto,* this issue). We should, and must respond when slandered – if we don't, the ignorance and bigotry can only persist. The question is, how?

First of all, politely. Always assume ignorance, not bigotry. Compliment the reader (Tezra says she usually enjoys the show). Explain who you are, and be careful to define your terms. For example, Tezra says that the TV show in question "...casts aspersions upon respectable Wiccans" without defining the word "Wiccan." The producers are obviously ignorant about Neopaganism – how could they be familiar with the word?

Keep your tone even – don't be furious, or threaten, or use foul language. No one really listens when spoken to in that tone. You'll end up in the "kook file." You want the person you address to come to realize that Pagans are respectable, sane people who shouldn't be defamed – so write a respectable, sane letter.

Be brief. Make one point and stick to it. This means (1) edit your letter – a first draft probably runs on – down to one page. (2) don't digress. Tezra took time to discuss the inaccuracy of the deity chosen, Steve paused to mention that real Druids use Gaelic names. Do these points help protect us from defamation? No. They lengthen the letter, and confuse the reader.

Imagine you're a TV or movie producer, or a police officer, or a newspaper editor, receiving a letter from a Pagan. You've never heard of Paganism, and are already feeling a bit defensive because you're being told (1) you're ignorant, and (2) you've slandered someone. Will you be responsive to a long letter full of detail you don't understand? I don't think so. Will you be impressed by erudition and lots of fancy titles? Undoubtedly not.

Use examples the reader can understand. "Sir, if you had depicted Jehovah's Witnesses sacrificing babies, it might have made a good horror movie. But surely you see that it would have slandered a religious minority, and you would never make such a movie. Druids, too, are a religious minority."

Your letter doesn't have to be an example of great literature, merely coherent, sensible, brief and to the point. If you don't feel you can write such a letter, it is a good idea to contact those who can:

The Witches Anti-Discrimination Lobby, 153 West 80th Street, New York, NY 10024. Founded by Leo Martello, with local branches around the country. Send SASE for info.

Witches' League for Public Awareness, P.O. Box 8736, Salem, MA 01971-8736. Founded by Laurie Cabot. Send SASE for info.

Witchcraft, Satanism and Ritual Crime: Who's Who and What's What
This is a sane, well-balanced booklet put out by the people at *Green Egg,* specifically for use by law-enforcement people. Mailing a copy to a media person, with a short cover letter, can be a very helpful way of getting your point across. $3 each, or send SASE for bulk ordering info to: *Green Egg,* P.O. Box 1542, Ukiah, CA 95482.

Finally, you can always write to ADF, especially if the matter pertains specifically to Druidism.

Here is what was sent to us by Steve Kristmann:

The Guardian Lies

by Steve Kristmann

As a Witch/Druid I became curious about *The Guardian,* a horror movie which has received mixed reviews. My interest was especially aroused because the movie supposedly concerned Druids. Now that I've seen it, I must report that not only is this movie poorly made, badly directed and sloppily acted (with the exception of Jenny Seagrove as Diana/Camilla the Druidess/nanny) but it is an unmitigated insult to women, the environment, Paganism/Wicca in general and Druids in particular.

The movie's premise is that an L.A. suburban yuppie couple's baby is threatened by sacrifice to an evil sentient tree by the baby's nanny/Druidess.

Is it mere coincidence that this movie is released by Universal Studios at a time when women are fighting to defend their reproductive rights and environmentalists are fighting to save the environment (including trees and wolves)? I feel that the following points raised in the movie give irrefutable proof that this movie is damaging not only to women, and the environment, but to Paganism/Wicca especially.

(1) A patronizing disclaimer is the first scene the audience sees. Paraphrased crudely, the statement is that 'Long ago it was believed that Druids worshipped trees and sacrificed babies to appease them. Some trees were good, some trees were evil.' Not only is this an insult to Druids, it is blatantly false from a historical perspective and worst of all it is outright libel. This also replays the old "baby-killer" agitation propaganda, which has always been used against suspect groups (Jews, etc.).

(2) By having Diana's/Camilla's animal guardians portrayed as wolves (erroneously called coyotes in the movie), the moviemakers are practicing wolf/coyote bashing (all the more unforgivable since several species of wolf are endangered).

(3) The use of the name Diana (that of an ancient Goddess of nature preservation/hunting) to identify the villainess, implies an evil connotation. This certainly falls under the "Witch/Pagan bashing" category.

(4) Diana/Camilla is subtly portrayed with a Samantha Stevens/Witch clone surface (Bewitched TV series). This false impression reinforces the audience's misconception that Witches/Druids are evil.

(5) The audience is given the subliminal message that animals are not to be trusted in a sickeningly cute scene where Diana/Camilla places several life-like toy wild animals (a frog, a rabbit, and a snowy owl) in the baby's crib and coos, "...now Jake they're your friends too." Because she is portrayed as a villainess, any animals, and the environment as a whole, associated with her are also evil.

(6) Diana/Camilla gives Witch-familiar names (like Pyewacket) to the stuffed toys. This is in keeping with the classic horror movie Witch tradition. A real Druidess would employ ancient Gaelic names.

(7) By having Diana/Camilla speak of breastfeeding, the audience will assume that breastfeeding is bad. Diana/Camilla is also shown nude in the bathtub bathing the baby (the child is male, adding prurient interest), and such closeness with an infant is made to appear as wrong.

(8) A pop-up storybook of *Hansel and Gretl* reoccurs as a plot device, by opening the book each time it appears to a particularly menacing cardboard tree. All the anti-woman, anti-nature, anti-Witch messages of the folk tale itself are thereby summoned to the audience's mind.

(9) The male hero has a nightmare of being "hag-ridden" by Diana/Camilla. This blatantly ties into the many spurious accusations of "hag-riding" made by persecutors of witches during the Burning Times.

(10) The movie twists and perverts the myth of Diana's hounds attacking Actaeon when a neighbor of the yuppie couple becomes infatuated with Diana/Camilla and spies on her while she is bathing in the woods, which results in his death at the teeth of her defending wolves.

(11) Diana/Camilla is shown to have an unusual birthmark below her left breast, a witch-mark, which defines her as an evil Witch.

(12) Diana chases the hero by flying after him. Her power of flight further defines her as an evil Witch.

(13) The sentient tree, who is Diana's/Camilla's refuge, friend, and protector, is shown as a creature comparable to the Ents of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings,* or the Treants of Dungeons & Dragons. At one point Diana/Camilla is badly wounded, and goes to the tree to be healed. The way that the healing is handled, most viewers would have the erroneous impression that the tree makes love to Diana/Camilla, especially when she becomes one with the tree in order to be healed.

(14) The hero's choice to attack his perceived enemy, the tree/Diana/Camilla, with a chainsaw endorses the dangerous idea that problems, personal or otherwise, can be solved by cutting down trees.

(15) Mutilation of and/or violence towards women and the environment, enacted by the hero with his chainsaw, is endorsed as a rational, just solution to problems.

(16) The movie's main message is that nature is shadowy, untrustworthy, and therefore evil. Because women who empathize with the natural world are also evil, both nature and women must be destroyed.

(17) The entire movie is a cruel, unnecessary castigation of the mentally ill women who *do* kidnap babies because they've lost a child, or are unable to have a child of their own.

One way I intend to protest this movie is of course to write to Universal Pictures. My more direct Pagan consumer protest will be to boycott the following products because they were given endorsement prominence in *The Guardian:* A&W Root Beer, Breyer's Ice Cream, Evian Water, Mr. Clean, and AMC Jeep. I will write to these companies to explain why I will not buy their products. I urge you to do the same.

In service to the Lady and Her Consort, the Lord of the Hunt.

Steve Kristmann, H.P., Rainbow Spiral Coven.

Deborah's reply to Steve:

Dear Steve:

Thank you for your review of *The Guardian*. It certainly sounds like an awful movie! I agree with most of your points, and I very much support your writing to Universal with your objections, but I do want to raise some points of my own.

First of all, although I haven't seen your letter to Universal, I certainly hope it is much shorter than your review. Seventeen points is far too many! In examining your review, I notice that your objections can be grouped as follows:

(a) This movie, and horror movies in general, play on people's fear of all that is wild, including wild animals and untamed forests.
(b) This movie, and horror movies in general, is inherently sexist. It shows sexuality, nudity, even breastfeeding and bathing, as dangerous and somehow evil. Mutilation of women is okay in response to their inherent sexual evil.
(c) This movie first states that its villainess is a Druid, then implies through a number of devices that she is an evil Witch, thereby leading one to believe that all Druids are evil Witches (and that all Witches are evil as well).
(d) This movie is inaccurate about Pagans, Witches and Druids in a way that is both insulting and libelous.
(e) This movie is inaccurate about Pagans, Witches, Druids, nature, trees and folklore in a way that is stupid, nauseating, and plain old bad moviemaking.
(f) This movie will make crazy criminals (in this case child-nappers) feel bad.
(g) This movie is violent and endorses violent solutions.

As you can see, six points, as listed above, are easier for a busy movie executive to absorb than seventeen, and can be fit on one page. However, I'd like to re-examine some of these points.

Points (a), (b), (f) and (g) are good reasons not to attend horror movies. The entire genre is scary (playing on peoples worst, and often unfounded, fears), sexist, and violent. This garbage is what sells. If you write to a studio with these complaints, you might as well tell them to stop making horror movies entirely, and to stop making easy money off of trash – not likely.

Point (e), which I think is the basis of your points 3, 6, 8, 9 and 10, is unnecessary to your argument. If you present these items to a movie executive, you are giving him or her more information than is needed. You are then less likely to be read, and if read, may be thought of as a kook, or at least a nitpicker. When a movie depicts Druids as murderers, is it really worth losing the impact of your protest by pausing to consider the accurate way a Druid would name a housepet?

This leaves you with (c) and (d) – we have been maligned, and it must stop. Again, these points could be made briefly, politely, and in a way likely to have a strong impact on even the most pea-brained moviemaker.

You may well have written such a letter – brief, to the point, and effective. However, I have to say that I strongly object to the second action you took – taking on a boycott of all products that appear in the movie.

It has lately become fashionable to boycott sponsors of objectionable TV shows, for all sorts of reasons. If such boycotts are successful, then the sponsor will withdraw its advertisements from that show, and if a show loses enough sponsors, it can no longer be aired.

Although there is nothing specifically unconstitutional about this practice, it is a grave threat to free speech. The media can do nothing but become increasingly bland, since both sides of any controversy can boycott. A free exchange of ideas will quickly cease to exist if this trend succeeds. For example, the excellent made-for-TV movie, *Roe vs. Wade,* was the subject of such a boycott – albeit an unsuccessful one. The anti-abortionists who pushed the boycott had never seen the movie – which was fair-minded and presented all sides. No, they decided that the very act of making this movie was itself pro-choice, and must be stopped.

Magickal Unicorn Messenger

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45839

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We can protest ideas or positions we find objectionable in the media by writing letters, by staging demonstrations if need be, and by *not watching.* But when we try to prevent others from being able to watch, and forming their own opinions, we threaten the freedom of ideas that allows NeoPaganism to exist as openly as it does.

In addition, your particular boycott is ill-conceived. A boycott is a way of forcing a corporation to cease a particular negative activity. Boycotts like this are usually directed at TV, as I've stated, and end when the sponsor's advertisements are removed from the offending show. Likewise, the boycott of Nestle will be ended when Nestle stops its practice of pushing infant formula in Third World countries where use of such formula threatens lives. The tuna boycott ended when fishing practices that killed dolphins were stopped. But your boycott is open-ended. How can these corporations redeem themselves? They cannot pull their products from the movie, which is already in the theaters. Will you, then, boycott them forever, because of this one transgression? If not, how will you determine when your boycott should end? Again, letter writing, education, and strong protest when needed, are good means of demonstrating your concern, but a boycott such as yours only makes you appear wild-eyed and emotional.

I hope you will take my objections in the spirit in which they are meant — as a respectful way of furthering our cause in the media. You've made an excellent first step, and I hope that you'll see that I'm merely following up on that.

Blessings,
Deborah Lipp

Here, edited for brevity, is

Tezra's letter to Deborah,

as well as her letter of protest to the producers of the show:

May 15, 1990
Dear Deborah,

Enclosed is a copy of a letter written to the producers of "Friday the 13th – The Series". The May 12/13th episode, "The Tree of Life" directly pertains to Druids, and to Pagans in general.

Here is a synopsis of the episode:

Childless couples have been going for years to the Oakwood Fertility Clinic, where Dr. Oakwood has been achieving miracles with everything from herbs to modern medicine. She also has certain fathers say a charm for their wives in labor, and a tree takes them as sacrifices.

The mother always carries twins, but only gets the boy, while Oakwood and her nurses raise the girls to be Druid priestesses. Naturally there is a "cursed object" involved, in this case a statuette of Cernunnos.

One little girl's mother is being prepared for sacrifice for the Winter Solstice. A father was also to be a sacrifice, in a wicker coffin, no less. The tree, when deprived of the statuette of Cernunnos, is struck by lightning, falls apart, and kills the priestess Dr. Oakwood.

There were several parts that I considered highly objectionable and defamatory, not only for Druids, but for Pagans everywhere.

If it be your will, and the will of any of your readers to write a letter of protests about this episode, that would be fantastic. To that end, I include the address for the creators of the series:

Jon Anderson,
Executive Producer
Larry B. Williams &
Frank Mancuso, Jr., Creators
"Friday the 13th – The Series"
c/o Paramount Television
5555 Melrose Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90038

If one of you has an address for "Hometown Films" in Canada, which actually makes the series, please pass it along. At a CoG meeting, I obtained a phrase whch is extremely useful in dealing with media types in this sort of thing: "Not in the public interest."

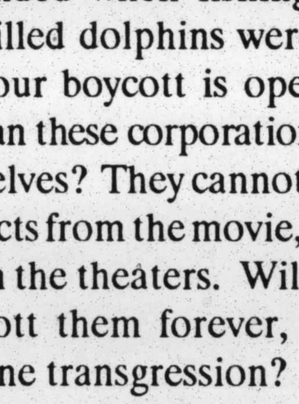
In Her service, I remain,

Teresa (Tezra) Segel Reitan
The Pythoness
c/o AtlanWicca/*The Cat's Meow*
P.O. Box 6775
Meridian Station
1750 Meridian Ave.
San Jose, CA 95150-6775

Tezra's letter to the producers of the series:

Dear Sirs:

While I usually enjoy the episodes of "Friday the 13th – The Series," I



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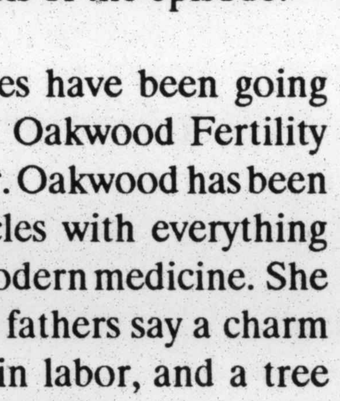

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must take exception to the May 12th episode in which you portray Druids.

For one thing, the ancient Druids were a usually male priesthood, and part of the patriarchal takeover. You portray this group as all women, thus implying they are witches rather than Druids, which is obviously misogynist, casts aspersions upon respectable Wiccans everywhere, and is not at all in the public interest.

We Druids do not practice, nor have we ever practiced human sacrifice. Nor do true witches. That bit with the burning wicker cages was a bit of Roman propaganda designed to destroy the Druids. The "Tree of Life" episode seeks to perpetuate that lie, and thus is not in the public interest.

Nor do we steal babies, nor do we feel any need to do so in order to continue our priesthood and propagate our faith. Quite to the contrary, those who do enter our clergy may only do so in full maturity of age (at least 18 or 21, where that is the age of majority), and may only do so of their own Will. They must *ask* for advancement in our orders, as our degrees are called.

Some other portions of the episode are very nice; the music, the lessons of the children about the living forest creatures, and the moondance are laudable. It is too bad that the many glaring errors so spoiled the mood. One major error was your ignoring of the Lady. Cernunnos, while he might have been a god of a certain type of fertility, would not be the appropriate one for childbirth. Dana was considered to be the Mother of the Irish, but the Goddess that would really have been called upon in time of childbirth would have been Brigid, and the blood shed monthly, and in childbirth by every woman was quite sufficient offering for Her, thank you.

Furthermore, no true Druid would use a cursed object, and allow it to remain cursed. She would either exorcise whatever evil might exist in the object, or destroy it utterly.

My husband suggested that the ritual with the skull was reminiscent of the Templars, which were a Christian order. So far, I've noticed that you haven't slandered the Christian religion, which actually has millions of murders/human sacrifices (during the Burning Times, and even up to the present) on its hands.

I suggest that you have your writers research the subjects and themes of your episodes more carefully. I know several reliable sources of information and true tradition in the Pagan religions, who would be more than happy to serve as consultants and thus avoid inaccuracies which could be legally actionable.

There was one small bit of truth to the episode. The Druids (Reformed, that is), are indeed on the rise, along with other like-minded Pagans, but unlike Christianity, we have never needed force or coercion, or deception to do so, nor will we ever.

Sincerely,
Teresa Segel Reitan, 3rd Order Druid of the RDNA

Deborah's letter to Tezra:

June 29, 1990
Dear Tezra,

Thanks for letting us know about the offensive TV show.

I want to point out, though, that while your letter to the producer of the show was a good idea, there were a few problems with it.

It is absolutely false that ancient Druids were usually male. The Romans make reference to "Druidesses." We have no reason to believe that there was gender discrimination among them. Informing Mr. Anderson that an all-female group must be witches is not only untrue, but probably confused him, which didn't help to make your point.

Druids definitely *did* practice human sacrifice. At some point in their history, so has nearly every religion known to humanity – including Christianity. We don't do so today because we are nice, civilized people who have different values than our ancestors.

There are probably a dozen active Neopagan Druid groups in the U.S. – ADF, RDNA, Keltria, etc. So, it's a little inaccurate to say what "we Druids" do, when what you mean is "we Reformed Druids."

Your other points were good, but you made too many of them. The man you wrote to is no doubt busy, as well as confused about the topic. Driving home the major point – that Druids don't appreciate being slandered – is more important than correcting mythology, discussing the Templars, etc. Most people advise keeping this kind of letter down to a page.

The phrase "not in the public interest" is most effective when used only once per letter, as otherwise it indicates that you'd merely heard this was a good phrase to use. It is also not a good idea to threaten legal action too lightly.

I hope you don't take this criticism personally. I really appreciate your taking the time to write to this guy, and I hope this helps when you write similar letters in the future.

Blessed be,
Deborah Lipp ⛛

Counseling 101 for Non-Counselors

or, Principles of Psychological First Aid

by Domi O'Brien

Counseling isn't advice giving, and it is not problem solving. It isn't analysis, interpretation, judgement, or evaluation. It is trying to get a person with a problem to sort out what's happening, look at their options, and choose a course of action that fits their values, resources, and lifestyle (not yours).

If you're dealing with a person who needs help, think in terms of ABC's.

A= Actively listen and Acquire information. Show your interest by nodding, uh-huhing, keeping your body language accepting and open. Lean forward, don't cross your arms, stay a comfortable distance from the speaker. If they are very agitated, maintain a little more distance and leave yourself an out, but keep your posture relaxed. *Do not talk* or ask questions, except as absolutely needed for clarification.

B= Boil it down. When you think you have a pretty good idea what the problem is, feed back to them the important facts and/or feelings as summary. Be sure you do not agree or disagree with them. You need to say things like, "So you were pretty angry when you thought Isaac broke your agreement?", rather than, "So Isaac promised you the book and then wouldn't give it to you," which implies that you accept their version of events. Don't take sides or evaluate anybody's actions. Just stick to a recital of the things they've told you, expressed as, "You thought... you felt... you had understood." *Don't* judge *anything* or *anybody.* You may summarize, "So it seems to you that people routinely make agreements with you, but then reneg."

C= Cope. Ask what similar problems they've encountered. Ask what they think could be done to solve the problem now or avoid it in the future. At this point you may offer more information, such as, "Some people find it useful to put these agreements in writing, so that everyone knows what is expected of them." Ask what they feel would be a comfortable resolution, and what they might do next if their first plan doesn't work. *Don't* give them the solution.

Exception: in a true crisis, you may need to get more directive. A true crisis in this sense means a situation where someone's life is threatened – they are holding a gun, or they've taken an overdose of pills. In this case you may need to be very assertive, "I am going to assume that since you called me, you expected me to intervene. Put that knife down, you called me to help so it isn't reasonable of you to threaten me. I'm going to take you to the emergency room." Never get in their face, wrestle them for a weapon, or threaten them. If you feel threatened in a situation, say so. "I'm afraid of heights, and I don't like sitting here on the edge of the roof talking to you. Why don't we go down the fire escape and discuss this over coffee?" Sometimes perfectly rational suggestions are best. Stay in the here and now and rooted in reality, and act calm and as if you have plenty of time. A person in crisis needs to feel their helper is in control of him- or herself.

Most situations, including crisis situations, are time-limited. If you stay calm and give it time, you'll get through it.

Don't assume anyone else knows what you know, or has the resources you have. People chronically in trouble are often people who are in disequilibrium – their resources are inadequate to deal with the things that happen to them, and they don't have the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and relationships that would help them solve their own problems.

On a crisis basis, you apply psychological band-aids – you defuse the situation, let them know that somebody cares, and help them to sort it out, often by making them aware of possibilities they didn't know existed.

On a long-term basis, your goal is to help them be more functional. This will often involve helping with basic and practical things – how to use a library, how to read a bank statement, how to write a resume, how to prepare and dress for an interview. It may mean going shopping with them and helping them choose an outfit that is appropriate and fits, or going out to lunch together so you can firsthand observe and correct some of the behaviors that are making them a social outcast, or giving them a good book on adult children of alcoholics so that they understand their problems are not unique and they can be solved. As a non-professional or para-professional counselor, your role is that of an objective friend – one who isn't directly involved in the situation, but who cares and will be a resource.

Don't:

- give ultimatums
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A Journal of the Heathen Way

Intolerance — Taking a Good, Hard Look...

by Maeve Rhea

"Why are you so intolerant?" spit the obviously upset Paganette. "If you can't say something positive, why say anything at all?"

I confess I was a little surprised. After all, the subject under discussion was the National Socialist Movement of early twentieth-century Germany. We had been considering the religious and philosophical underpinnings of the Nazi ideology as well as the centuries old socio-political causes of the resentment towards and the repression of the Jews. When I expressed my amazement, the young person responded that Witches and Pagans should be tolerant of all other belief systems.

Now that is a belief with which I am extremely uncomfortable.

Am I intolerant of Nazism? Yes, I admit that I am. I am also impatient of the social and cultural mores that led to the Jews setting themselves apart as a "Chosen People" and I am without sympathy towards the Gentiles' hideous persecutions that grew in response.

In a similar vein, I am just as intolerant of clitorectomies and circumcision, sexual mutilations that serve the purposes of oppressive patriarchal belief systems. I am extremely narrow and close-minded when I consider oil spills and I am confirmed in my perception of them as extensions of a belief system that declares that the earth is an object over which man has been set to rule and, further, the despoiling of the earth matters naught because all of God's children are going to be raptured away from the mess.

I guess when I look at it that way, I am a very intolerant person. And I am not ashamed of it. But I want to make a distinction that many people fail to form when accusing someone of or admitting to the character trait of intolerance.

I believe that while it may be ethically necessary to be morally outraged by (intolerant of) a belief system that advocates and indeed mandates the murder of polytheists, it is reprehensible to deny civil liberties and human dignities to the individuals who have been raised in those belief systems. In other words, deal with the person and trash their garbage.

Dealing with the person means that you start with the assumption that they wish to make a contribution to the world. That, however twisted their ways may seem to you, they basically desire to leave the world a better place because of their existence. It means allowing them the room to grow and learn from their life lessons. Acknowledging that, just as they can discover hitherto undiscovered truths and revelations about their ideologies, you can find new and valuable characteristics about the individual.

For the individual is "process", and never a finished "product." The individual can decide that she or he does not wish to be part of an ascetic life-denying religion and therefore starts a life-celebrating religion of his or her own. The individual can reject the pain of love denied and embrace the ecstasy of love affirmed. Those are some of the infinite choices an individual can make if she or he deals in Sarte-ian good faith.

Belief systems, however, are very often finished products. Written and unchangeable. Fiats of dogma that can drive their believer-victims into murderous vendettas against anyone who questions the validity of what has been written. Whenever a belief system states that it is the One True Path and all other paths are false, there will be the potential for murder and persecution. Sadly, in the entire history of human affairs the potential has rarely failed to produce results. And from the ravages of those persecutions the entire world suffers. How many Itzak Perlmanns

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and Albert Einsteins died at Dauchau? How many Guttenbergs and Descartes were slaughtered in the 30 Years' War? How many Omar Khayams perish each year on the Left Bank? How much more butchery will the family of Humanity tolerate for the sake of One True Paths?

And so I am intolerant, of One True Path-ism, as well as Nazism, Chosen People-ness and Divine Edicts of Murder. Yet I try to be tolerant and open-minded towards the individuals who cross my path.

The concept that Witches and Pagans should be tolerant of all belief systems is rubbish. The idea that Witches and Pagans should be tolerant of the human beings who believe and/or worship within the various belief systems is without question.

The Question of Tolerance is a huge subject, fraught with strife and peril. I welcome any well thought-out response and counter response to the above. To establish the context as well as the content of such a dialectic let us consider some ideological parameters.

Concepts of tolerance

Ideas

Full or respectful tolerance: this is what you learned in second grade about never criticizing anyone's religion. It means never to oppose the tolerated ideas actively, i.e. never to call them wrong, but at most to oppose them passively, by promulgating ideas of one's own that might be regarded as inconsistent with the tolerated ideas.

Marketplace tolerance: this means opposing the tolerated ideas in the "marketplace of ideas" as being wrong or harmful. Many people believe this is how Nazism should be treated, but would be reluctant to give this treatment to ideas labeled religious, even if they have Nazi-like overtones.

Repressive intolerance: this can be done only by those who have state power, typically (in modern times) political majorities. It means passing and enforcing laws or decrees against public dissemination of the ideas.

Inquisitional intolerance: laws or decrees against *having* the not-to-be-tolerated ideas; thought control.

Actions:

Full tolerance: the actions are legal and not opposed.

Marketplace tolerance: the actions are legal, but one opposes them as wrong or harmful.

Repressive intolerance, or criminalization: making and enforcing laws or decrees against the actions.

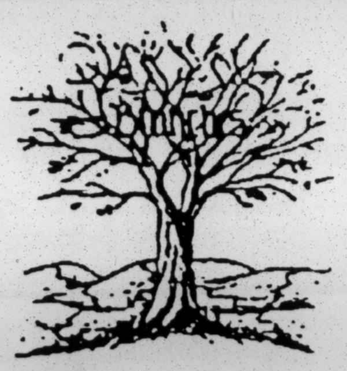
Can one criticize another religion?

In America, most of us learned the principle of religious tolerance early. I actually vaguely remember being told, in about second grade, "You shouldn't criticize other people's religion". Or maybe it was that you shouldn't even *talk* about other people's religion.

The least knowledge of history's centuries of religious wars and persecutions should make us – especially Pagans – grateful for this American tolerance. A little more knowledge of history might make us a little afraid for it, and earnestly protective of it. Consider: Carey McWilliams has argued that religious tolerance wasn't something Americans agreed on, but arose by default because the country grew too fast, and from origins too diverse, for the imposition of religious uniformity to be practical. If he is right, American tolerance is due to unrepeatable historical circumstances, and we must wonder if it would arise again if it were lost.

Against this background, one approaches the idea of criticizing others' religions with fear and trembling. Surely it is better to agree to disagree, than to put at risk the fragile consensus for toleration?

And yet: what do you do when you see a religion being used to legitimize, or even mandate, oppression? Just to take some examples involving Christianity, which I was brought up in and so feel freer to criticize than other equally deserving religions: some churches of the American South used to refuse admittance to blacks and even to justify this practice by arguments from the Bible.



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(In the nineteenth century, they even justified slavery that way.) The Catholic Church officially regards the use of mechanical means of birth control as sinful, as sinful as a wife refusing to do her "duty" and thus justifies husbands forcing their wives to become pregnant.

Religious ideas are not just forms of worship; they imply whole ways of life, frequently oppressive ones. Also, their proponents often feel justified in imposing those ways of life on others, who may not even share the religion.

How, then, do we approach the very thorny problem of standing up for what we believe in, while allowing others to believe what they believe.

On the whole we may agree that it is better to leave the holy books alone; you only think you know what is in them, it's all a question of interpretation.

However, we must consider whether or not it is permissable to do any or all of the following:

- Criticize actions – e.g. writing or stating "it's wrong to kill someone for writing a book, no matter what religious insults are in the book."
- Passively resist any imposition of repugnant religious beliefs – e.g. some Christian sects believe that if you refuse to listen to their proselytizing or reject their mailings you are denying them their civil liberties of free speech and not according them religious toleration.
- Actively work toward social change that would oppose or limit the cultural expression of the religious beliefs – mandating certain curriculums in schools, insisting that girls be taught the same basic skills as boys and that educational and social opportunities be made available to them.
- Forcibly denying people the right to practice or perform certain acts mandated by their religion – e.g. The British prosecuted anyone mutilating the sexual organs of their female children. Or legally insisting on certain social standards of behavior in our own society, such as removing children from homes where they are "starving for Jesus" or by court-ordering lifesaving blood transfusions to children even when such a practice is in conflict with the parents' religious belief system.

Let us carefully consider where our own tolerance stops and where our own expressions of intolerance should begin. I open this question up to the minds, pens and word processors of the Pagan Community. Please, let me hear from you.

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Thorns and the Briar Rose

by Rosenthorn

Greetings.

This is my first "zine" to ADF. So here's a brief introduction to my mundane reality. I reside in the guise of a mild-mannered science librarian. (However, the more I see what recombinant DNA research's doing to animals, and the way science is going, I don't know how long I can stay serving the scientific community, much as I love science.) I received a B.A. in Biology (strong minor in psychology); training as an Analytical Lab Technician, then I got a M.A. in Library and Information Science. I'm a White-Anglo-Scottish-Pagan who's seen almost 33 turns of the seasons. Until recently I've been a solitary. I've studied Neopaganism, Magic, and Dance for about 6 years. This last year has seen the addition of Herbal Medicine and Tae Kwon Do (sort of a Korean blend of Karate and Kung Fu).

Due to a car accident in 1980, I and my fundamentalist Christianity seriously began a parting of ways, even though it was all I had (except for trees, the stars and Orion). The final break came after failing to find a job, which led to a physical and nervous breakdown in 1984. Afterwards, I started looking into Wicca as I had been impressed by several SCA folk I'd met earlier in the eighties.

Adjusting to a big East Coast city has made life very chaotic – yet much richer. All my life I had been at least 30 pounds (as a kid) overweight. Jan. 1989 I was 100 pounds overweight and very ungrounded. Mid-1989, through the gifts of Angus Og, Bride and later my Tae Kwon Do master, inspiration to lose the weight cracked through my defenses and cravings. At present I've lost all but 13 pounds of my excess weight, safely. My goal is 160 pounds by October plus permanent mental, emotional and physical changes so the weight stays off. I eventually want at least a black belt in Tae Kwon Do. This has been an odd time of transition – plus being an example of the saying that I've adapted through personal experience: "Be careful what you ask for, for you may get it – and when we give it to you ... you sure better cope as best as you can!"

This brings me to the 2 topics I want to express my opinions on:

- The weight controversy
- Isaac's article *Warriors, Soldiers and Cops .. Oh My.*

I. To be or not to be ... weight is the question.

I'm in an unusual situation due to my having recently experienced both sides of this issue. I have had to admit I am a foodaholic and am continually facing the fact many of my "needs" are self-destructive. Most of my life I was a tall, imposing looking, 100 pound heavyweight loner who managed to avoid some of the nastiness that others received. I got involved first in the Society for Creative Anachronism then Neopaganism. Most people of both groups just accepted me for what I was, not my excessive poundage. Could part of the problem be when people are looking for a romantic relationship or that "special friend"? We've all been bombarded with certain ideas of beauty that may have subtly influenced us. I know back then I never felt attractive nor really believed anyone else who thought I was.

This last year has been a heavy level transition stage, and I am glad that the Pagan community here has taken it all in stride, while not putting excess pressures on me.

I do want to say for the record, that if any heavy woman decides to lose weight and get grounded in her body – lose it using a Martial Art! You will have to deal with annoyances and consequences mostly from the outside world and a martial art teaches self-defense, self-confidence and self-knowledge. Obviously, I'm biased in favor of Tae Kwon Do. But also, Isaac, at his Earth Week speech here in Baltimore has also recommended more Pagans take up a form of self-defense as the times ahead for Pagans look to be a bit rough.

II. Warriors, ... or But Ma, I want to be a Hero, not a Saint!

I consciously acknowledged my warrior side this last year. In order to gain competence and make my commitment to serving the Gods and Goddesses real, I had to take up a martial art. Now I'm hooked. I'd grown up in a household that handled firearms and loved the TV show *The Rifleman*. However, I was a female and women warriors were verboten. Isaac's definitions and continuums helped me put things into perspective. The ideas of process being as important as outcome, personal responsibility, and developing one's individuality fit right along with what I'm learning in Tae Kwon Do. Grandmaster Lee, having spent time in the Korean Army, has shown me a different viewpoint about our "territorial grabs" though. Is it possible that Pagans in the Military can be seen like viruses (or termites) that can cause change from within until the system is completely different? I see myself as a virus in academia, exerting subtle influences here and there, helping change here and there.

A friend who's a solitary and I are

wondering if there is a Pagan Militia forming – to guard events, rituals, etc. Could someone with information please write to me about the structure, training, etc?

I Have a Little List...

For those of you who are doing Ecomagic, here are some names to give to the Gods for the Exxon Spill. You can find the names in any *Standard and Poor's Corporate Registry* at your local library. Sorry there are no real addresses. Apparently there is the original Exxon and then two mutant corporations. The *New Scientist* (10 March 1990) had a notice that Exxon plans to fight the 5 criminal indictments in court. The Government expects a difficult court battle.

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Well, I guess I have strewn out enough roses and thorns for one day.

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Consecration Of A New Grove

by Seastrider

This article is an outgrowth of what I've seen in the Grove I've been working with. The major ritual writers in the Grove insist on using Guardians of the Quarters and casting a circle. From conversations with Himself, this is not unusual. It is hard to break people of old habits.

One of the major differences between Wicca and ADF is the use of circles. Wicca uses a closed circle with Guardians to both keep energy in and nasty things out. ADF is open, both psychically and physically. This is possible because demons or other nasties wouldn't interfere with a sacred space.

Wicca uses the circle casting and invocations of the Quarters to establish sacred space and to orient the participants to the four directions. This creates a sort of containment vessel, like for a nuclear reactor. You can build up lots of power before triggering it. Also, if you screw up, the damage is limited to the circle. The casting of a circle is apparently an outgrowth of the Goetic (Medieval Christianity) magical system. In Goetic practice, the circle is a fortress. From within the fortress, you would summon a creature to appear in another warded area near you. The concept of the four elements plus spirit were created by Greek philosophers. This school of thinking is called Milesian. They taught that all substance is make up of one of the four elements. Various teachers thought different elements were the true one. The origin of the Wiccan elements is therefore originally alchemical. By mixing the four elements, you could create any substance, including the "philosophers' stone." The four Quarters are mapped to the elements (earth - north, fire - south, water - west, and air - east; often with a fifth added, spirit at the center). In a Wiccan circle the energy flow is circular. Except for specific occasions, you don't go widdershins.

ADF uses a 3+1+1 system. It consists of the Three Worlds (Land, Sea and Sky), Fire and an Underworld. This is based upon the patterns that are found in Indo-European social and mythological systems. This pattern is: farmers and other producers (Land), clergy (Sky), warriors (Sea), a ruler (Fire) (The symbolism of Leader = Fire might come from the same idea or description as the Gods being "bright") and the outcasts (Underworld). The Three Worlds are organic, in that real living creatures can be found there. The mapping of the elements to the directions is a major difference from ADF. "In Druidism, the World of the Waters is not in the west, it is everywhere." Deborah Lipp. Instead of being "between the worlds," an ADF Grove is at the center of all the worlds.

The ancients did pay attention to the four directions when laying out their sacred sites and temples. They oriented them along the cardinal points. This occurs in many traditions. As an example, Freemasonry uses the four directions in laying out the Lodges. The four directions are mentioned when opening the Lodge, but only in reference to where people sit. There is no evidence either way that the ancient Druids used Guardians of the Wiccan variety.

ADF ceremonies are open to any people who won't disrupt the ritual. Sacred space is open for entry and egress at all times. We are an inclusive, not an exclusive organization. Part of ADF's using open rituals is based upon having sacred space. That is what this ritual is meant to create. To use physical world security analogies, a circle is a fence. A Wiccan circle is the equivalent of an eight foot barbed wire fence with four security guards. At each ritual meeting, the fence is erected, guards posted and the ritual done. At the end, the whole thing is torn down and put away. An ADF ritual doesn't want such an exclusionary barrier. An ADF Grove would instead have the equivalent of a permanent two foot picket fence around it. You can't enter the area without noticing it, but it doesn't keep you out by itself. Any nasty thing would know not to trespass. This ritual is designed to create such a permanent fence, without draining the person(s) doing the casting.

Site location: There are two factors in choosing a site for a Grove. The first is psychic. The second is physical. The area chosen needs to have the right vibes. It must be friendly and receptive to becoming a permanent Grove. (See Larry Cornet's article in *DP #2)*

The physical layout: My personal preference is to work in a circular shape for Pagan rituals. It is preferable to choose a site on property you own, so that you can change it as you want it. Try to make sure it will remain dry all year long, and if you want privacy, that you'll have it, especially during the winter. Next, mark the perimeter with some sort of permanent, visible sign. A good example would be fieldstones, bricks or cinderblocks. You'll probably want a firepit of some sort. It would probably be a good idea to check with the local fire department about the town ordinances affecting such things. Lay down some sort of base in the circle that will be usable year round. These preparations should be done before

the ceremony. Some, like laying in a gravel drainage system, will take money (a dirty word) and hard labor. You might also want to build some sort of seating, be it only planks atop cinderblocks. There should also be some sort of safe path laid out to the Grove that is free of roots and potholes. Provide some means of light for after dark workings. Also plan for some sort of handicap access.

There are some special considerations for this ritual. First, you'll need three good-sized containers, one each for water, earth/clay/or similar, and an incense burner or smudge. The earth or similar should be in a slurry, that is liquid enough to spread, sort of like pancake batter. Second, some sort of permanent marker for each of the four directions. This could be a stone marker, wood carving or similar. This will stay outside for a long time, hopefully decades at least. Preferably it should be visible so people can orient themselves; but if you live in an area with inconsiderate Fundies, it may have to be buried. For this ritual, use more whiskey or hard alcohol for the final consecration than usual.

Shadowpath Grove came up with the idea of having three Gates along the path to the Grove, one for each of the Worlds plus a firekeeper. As you pass thru each of the Gates, you ask the keeper for something or answer a question. You are then marked by the Gatekeeper with smoke (Sky), water (Sea), or mud (Land). If ADF decides to map each World to an I-E social caste, it might be nice to have the question or request match the Gate that way. That is instead of asking the Gate of Sky for something cerebral (Wiccan air = thought), ask something relating to the clergy sphere of influence or something doing with, say, air travel.

THE RITUAL

People pass through gates to the Grove. Once in the Grove, they could start a chant or stand quietly. I recommend that when people pass into the Grove, that they alternate going left and right around the circle from the entrance. Once all are there, do a settling song.

Tree Meditation.

Specification of ritual:

> D1 or D2: Today we are here to establish an ADF Grove. May it grow, and in growing provide a center for us to work within. May we nurture it, as it will nurture us and our descendents. We ask Manannon, the Keeper of the Keys, Bridget, the Matron of Bards, the spirits of the old times and of this place, people of the old times, and the Gods of the old times, to hallow this Grove. May they watch over it, and keep it from harm. May they keep it sacred.

Invocation of Manannon the Gate Keeper in English (D2) and Irish (D1), and chant. Invoke Matron of Bards (Bridget). Triad invocations and consecrating of the waters. Nature, Ancestors and the Gods as a whole, being the order.

Praise Offerings:

> Starting with D2, offerings are made to the Gods of the occasion. This is the primary energy building. For this occasion, I've chosen Manannon as he is the Keeper of the Keys, and Bridget who is the Matron of Bards and the Hearth Goddess.

The Sacrifice:

> D2: Our praise goes up with thee on the wings of eagles; our voices are carried up to thee on the shoulders of the winds. Hear now, O Manannon, O Bridget, we pray thee, as we offer up this sacrifice. Accept it we pray thee, and cleanse our hearts, giving to us of your peace and life. (D1 repeats in Irish.)

The Omen:

Possible repetition of Praise offerings and Omen seeking, if needed.

> D1: Rejoice! Manannon and Bridget have accepted our sacrifices!

Meditation on personal needs.

Repetition of group needs:

> D1 or D2: Today we are here to establish an ADF Grove. May it grow, and in growing provide a center for us to work within. May we nurture it, as it will nurture us and our descendents. We ask Manannon, the Keeper of the Keys, Bridget, the Matron of Bards, the spirits of the old times and of this place, people of the old times, and the Gods of the old times, to hallow this Grove. May they watch over it, and keep it from harm. May they keep it sacred.

Induction of Receptivity (The Catechism of the Waters).

Final consecration and sharing with passing song/chant.

Meditation on reception of blessings and reinforcement of group bonds.

Consecration of boundary:

> D1: Today we mark the planting of a new Grove. Groves are at the Center of all the Worlds, and have as their edges, the Three Worlds. We mix the Waters of Life with the World of the Land! (Pour some of the waters into the bucket of dirt or clay slurry and mix.)

D2: Today we mark the planting of a new Grove. Groves are at the Center of all the Worlds, and have as their edges, the Three Worlds. We mix the Waters of Life with the World of the Sky! (Pour some of the waters onto the censor of incense; this is when the Waters of Life must be whiskey or similar hard liquor so it will burn.)

D1: Today we mark the planting of a new Grove. Groves are at the Center of all the Worlds, and have as their edges, the Three Worlds. We mix the Waters of Life with the World of the Sea! (Pour some of the waters into the cauldron of water and mix.)

With the mixing of the Waters with the materials of the Three Worlds, D1 and D2 motion three people forward. The three Gate Keepers would be good ones for this. These three people each take one container and walk around the perimeter painting the edges as marked earlier by construction. Hopefully everyone will now see a faint circle of energy around the Grove. If the path to the Grove is easily defined, you might want to paint it also. While the boundary is being defined do a chant, such as the ADF version of the classic, "We All Come From the Goddess":

We all come from the Goddess
And to Her we have returned;
As our Ancestors
Worshipped Her air, land, and sea.

D2: As groves are at the Center of all the Worlds, so are they also on the Earth. Being on the Earth, they have orientation. Thus we mark the directions. North! South! East! and West! (After saying each direction, pour some of the Waters of Life upon the markers.)

D1: By marking the directions we know where our Center is in this World. This Grove becomes a crossroads. From such a crossroads, we can go anywhere, By knowing the directions may we also safely return to this place.

D2 motions forward four people to move the directional markers from the center to their permanent locations. Try and avoid having the three Gate Keepers and the Fire Warden doing this. Another possibility is to have all of the members of the Grove lend a hand moving and setting up the markers. This is especially good if the markers are larger and/or heavy. If setting the markers will take more than a minute or so, do a chant to keep people focussed.

After the markers are set:

D1: To the creatures of the Three Worlds, Land, Sea and Sky; and to the four directions, North, South, East and West; I do declare this space to be sacred! Let none trespass upon it with evil intent. May it grow, and in growing provide a center for us to work within. May we nurture it, as it will nurture us and our descendents. We ask Manannon, the Keeper of the Keys, Bridget, the Matron of Bards, the spirits of the old times and of this place, people of the old times, and the Gods of the old times, to hallow this Grove. May they watch over it, and keep it from harm. May they keep it sacred. So be it!

All: So be it!

Affirmation of Success.

The usual winding down process happens: Thanking of the Entities involved, Closing of the Gates, Reversing the Tree Meditation, Libation to the Earth, and the Final Benediction.

Recessional song/chant: "Walk with Wisdom," by Sable:

Walk with wisdom
from this hallowed place.
Walk not in sorrow,
our roots shall ere embrace.
May Strength be your brother,
and Honor be your friend.
and Luck be your lover
until we meet again.

End notes: Some of you might want to add a few lines about consecrating the hearth or firepit. Obviously, the chants I've selected are suggestions, as are the actual words. It is the intent of the words that is important. You also might want to declare the name of the Grove at some point.

References:
Druids Progress #2 & 4
"World Civilizations", Burns & Ralph, 5th edition, Vol. 1, pages 193+

A Note from the Archdruid

This ritual is an excellent idea and I hope that every grove will eventually do something similar. I highly recommend that the firepit be consecrated, with much ceremony, perhaps at the point in the (new) standard liturgical design where the Sacred Fire is invoked (after the Gate Keeper, before the Matron/Patron of Bards). Remember that any Indo-European liturgical language can be used, not just Irish.

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Conflict and the Stages of Group Life

by Pat Tuley

Any group or organization that seeks to attract new members faces the continuing problem of assimilating these newcomers, of integrating them into the life of the group. This process generally follows a clearly defined pattern. The cycle consists of four stages.

The first stage is that of *dependence.* This is the "tell us what to do" phase. A person just joining a group or organization usually starts here. It is a necessary stage, the one in which new members learn of the structure and the common goals and purposes of the group. In a healthy organization, this stage should not last long for any one individual. Any group that tries to keep its members in the dependent stage, will soon find itself faced with a tremendous amount of conflict.

The second stage, therefore, is *conflict*, and in spite of the above statement, it is inevitable in any healthy organization. The only questions are how soon will it occur, and how will the group respond. Very few people want to be dependent all the time. Many want to be leaders; most want their ideas to be heard.

The primary obstacles most groups have to deal with are here, in the conflict stage. The difficulty usually lies in how this conflict, and conflict in general, is perceived.

If conflict is viewed as a threat, either by the leaders or the general membership, the group is likely to try either to suppress or ignore its presence. In this case, most of the energy generated by the group is expended in the denial that there is a conflict.

What happens in this case? Communication lines between individuals, and between members and leader, shut down. The emotional distance between people may increase; distrust and suspicion may develop. Those who try to bring the conflict to light are frequently rejected, put down, or ignored. And some good, creative people leave as they find other groups and other organizations to fulfill their needs.

If, however, conflict is seen as a growth opportunity, the process of managing conflict can produce some astonishing, positive results. Better ideas and solutions are developed as people are forced to search for new approaches to old situations. Long-standing problems can be dealt with. The tension of the conflict stimulates new interest in the group's goals and ideals as those involved work to clarify their individual points of view.

From the pain of Stage 2 conflict is born the third stage, *cohesion*. This is the calm after the storm, the stage of those who have fought through the conflict; they've held on and won. They belong.

And the fourth stage is *interdependence*. At this stage, each individual is valued for their uniqueness, not their conformity. Everyone's ideas are valued. A great deal of energy is generated in this stage and, since it is not dissipated in internal conflict, it can be focused on outside projects.

The complication to all this, of course, is that there are always (hopefully) new people entering the cycle. Any given group, if it is large enough, can be in all of these stages at once, with different members.

It is important to be aware, though, that some groups never get beyond Stages One and Two; they spend their entire corporate existence circling between these two stages. An understanding of the process and the techniques for handling each stage will not only help to ensure the survival and continued growth of the group, but also the growth and development of the talents and skills of each individual within it.

References:

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Peace In Our Time

by Ziller non Barba

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We step through the door to the new year and stand on the threshold of a new decade, century, and millennium. Here in the home stretch, the duty falls upon us to coax, drag, even beat the mule of humanity down the road of human progress.

Well established in the big history books are accounts of public anxiety which increases at the turn of the calendar in direct proportion to the number of zeros in the date. We approach a self-imposed check-point of a year with two zeros and, for the first time in a very long time, we peer through the fog to catch a glimpse of a year with three of them. We as a people, nation, and world community prepare to pass beneath the viewing stand where the child-king of the 21st century sits on his throne. It is ours to decide the theme and motif of the float we will enter in that big parade.

Will we carry war, famine, oppression, and intolerance with us into the new millennium? How unbelievably tragic will it be to hear on the Nightly News, only days into new year number 2000, of a shooting, an invasion or a violation of human dignity. It is time to score big in the last innings. This is our two minute warning.

For hundreds of hundreds of years our ancestors have dealt with war, invasion, pestilence, disease, and oppression. But still, every year during this Yuletide they would light huge bonfires to guide the new-born Sun onward to yet another tour through the heavens. To them time was an ever-turning wheel, not some definable road. Perhaps their viewpoint has merit because, in the course of human history, from Alexander the Great's conquest of his neighbors, to George Bush's invasion of Panama, from the plagues of Black Death to the AIDS epidemic, these things seem to stay with us. The prophets, seers and sages, try as they have over the millennia, have yet to convince us not to covet our neighbor's wife.

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It is ominously certain that we will drag our ancient moldy baggage containing our peculiar heritage into the future. Hopefully, carefully wrapped deep inside, is the heritage of our ability to address beauty wherever we find Her. The specter of human nature's dark side continues to trudge mindlessly along the muddy road into time everlasting. Dancing lightly on bare feet through the green grass along the roadside is our sweet Goddess, our goodness.

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Pan-American Indian Association News. Serving tribal peoples throughout the world. 5x/year/$5. P.O.Box 244, Nocatee, FL 33864-0244.

Pipe Dreams. The Oracle of Shadowlight, Make Checks & M.O.'s payable to: Shadowlight Products, Inc. 1965 Prince Albert Drive, Riverside, CA 92507.

Reclaiming Newsletter. Journal of the Reclaiming Collective. 4x/year/$6-$25 sliding scale. Box 14404, SF, 94114.

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The Riverpath. Philadelphia area Pagan Networking. 6x/year/$6. Box 544, Horsham, PA 19044-0544.

Rose & Quill. Journal of Wicca. 6x/year/$13/$17 1st Class, Canada and Mexico/ $25 overseas. Checks payable to: Mystic Moon, 8818 Troy St. Dept. X, Spring Valley, CA 92077.

Rosegate Journal. 8x/year/$10 US/ $17 elsewhere. Our Lady of the Roses, Box 5967, Providence, RI, 02903.

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Société. Journal of Neo-African Religions. $10/$12/$14 for 2 issues in USA/Canada/Overseas. Technicians of the Sacred, Suite #310, 1317 N. San Fernando Blvd., Burbank, CA, 91504.

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The Summoner. Promoting better understanding among the different Pagan traditions. 8x/year/$13. Marian Leaford & Jack Klein, Box #20077, 860 Upper James St., Hamilton, Ont. L9C 7M5

Tara. Newsletter of the TaraVajran trad. 5x/year. $8/$11 US/Foreign. 427-3 Amherst St., Suite #234, Nashua, NH, 03061.

T.G.G. International journal of Wicca, Shamanism & Crystal Enlightenment. Year/$5. Box 219, Galveston, IN, 46932.

Unicorn/Littlest Unicorn/RT News. Sample pack $5, includes description of study program in Lothlorien trad. Rowen Tree Church, Box 8814, Minneapolis, MN, 55408.

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Woman Of Power. A magazine of feminism, spirituality, and politics. 4x/year/$22 US/ $28 Elsewhere. Box 827, Cambridge, MA 02238-9990.

Wood & Water. English Pagan newsletter with emphasis on ecology and feminism. 4x/year/£5 surface, £8 air/sample £1. (Cheques or money orders in Sterling only.) Free to prisoners. 77 Parliament Hill, London, NW3 2 TH.

Yggdrasil. Norse/Heathen journal. 4x/$6/$8 US & Can./Other. Sample $2. Chex & m.o.'s to "Freya's Folk", 537 Jones St. #165, San Francisco, CA, 94102.

"Rosemary's Prayer"

I put my hand in yours
and together we can do
what we could never do alone.
No longer is there a sense
of hopelessness.
No longer must we depend upon
our own unsteady willpower.
We are all together now,
reaching out for power and strength
greater than our own.
And as we join together,
we find love and understanding
beyond our wildest dreams.

— Anonymous

This nonsectarian prayer is used for closing Twelve Step meetings in many parts of the U.S. Although it is <u>not</u> officially approved by A.A. or Al-Anon, it has become a favorite among the many Twelve Steppers who find themselves feeling uncomfortable with or excluded by the Christian prayers usually used to end meetings. To the best of our knowledge, this material is in the public domain, so feel free to photocopy and distribute.

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Pagans In Recovery. For Pagan 12 Steppers. 4x/year/$8.50; sample $2.50. $ to: "Church of Earth Healing," 22 Palmer St., Athens, OH 45701.

Pallas Society News. Pagan newsletter. 4x/year/$8.50. Box 18211, Encino, CA 91316

Pan-American Indian Association News. Serving tribal peoples throughout the world. 5x/year/$5. P.O.Box 244, Nocatee, FL 33864-0244.

Pipe Dreams. The Oracle of Shadowlight, Make Checks & M.O.'s payable to: Shadowlight Products, Inc. 1965 Prince Albert Drive, Riverside, CA 92507.

Reclaiming Newsletter. Journal of the Reclaiming Collective. 4x/year/$6-$25 sliding scale. Box 14404, SF, 94114.

Red Garters Intl. British traditional Wiccan newsletter. 8x/year/$10 USA & Canada/ Foreign: $12 surface/ $20 Airmail. Sample $1. Check or M.O. payable to: N.W.C., POB 162046-DP, Sacramento, CA 95816

The Riverpath. Philadelphia area Pagan Networking. 6x/year/$6. Box 544, Horsham, PA 19044-0544.

Rose & Quill. Journal of Wicca. 6x/year/$13/$17 1st Class, Canada and Mexico/ $25 overseas. Checks payable to: Mystic Moon, 8818 Troy St. Dept. X, Spring Valley, CA 92077.

Rosegate Journal. 8x/year/$10 US/ $17 elsewhere. Our Lady of the Roses, Box 5967, Providence, RI, 02903.

The Rowan Exchange. Pagan letter-forwarding service for confidential contacts. 75-word listing $3/1x, $10/4x. Magazine 4x/year/$9. One free listing with membership. Box 63, Mt. Horeb, WI, 53572.

Sacred Hart. Pagan journal of practical information. 8x/year/$10. Sample $1.50. (Makes checks payable to: B. McMindes.) P.O. Box 72, Kenmore, NY 14217.

Société. Journal of Neo-African Religions. $10/$12/$14 for 2 issues in USA/Canada/Overseas. Technicians of the Sacred, Suite #310, 1317 N. San Fernando Blvd., Burbank, CA, 91504.

Starlight. The Finnish-Egyptian tradation and forest ways. 4x/$8 airmail. c/o Sirius, POB 452, 00101, Helsinki, Finland.

The Summoner. Promoting better understanding among the different Pagan traditions. 8x/year/$13. Marian Leaford & Jack Klein, Box #20077, 860 Upper James St., Hamilton, Ont. L9C 7M5

Tara. Newsletter of the TaraVajran trad. 5x/year. $8/$11 US/Foreign. 427-3 Amherst St., Suite #234, Nashua, NH, 03061.

T.G.G. International journal of Wicca, Shamanism & Crystal Enlightenment. Year/$5. Box 219, Galveston, IN, 46932.

Unicorn/Littlest Unicorn/RT News. Sample pack $5, includes description of study program in Lothlorien trad. Rowen Tree Church, Box 8814, Minneapolis, MN, 55408.

Wiccan Rede. Dutch/English Occult/Craft pub. 4x/year/$12 US (airmail). Silver Circle, PO Box 473, NL-3700, Al Zeist, Netherlands.

Woman Of Power. A magazine of feminism, spirituality, and politics. 4x/year/$22 US/ $28 Elsewhere. Box 827, Cambridge, MA 02238-9990.

Wood & Water. English Pagan newsletter with emphasis on ecology and feminism. 4x/year/£5 surface, £8 air/sample £1. (Cheques or money orders in Sterling only.) Free to prisoners. 77 Parliament Hill, London, NW3 2 TH.

Yggdrasil. Norse/Heathen journal. 4x/$6/$8 US & Can./Other. Sample $2. Chex & m.o.'s to "Freya's Folk", 537 Jones St. #165, San Francisco, CA, 94102.

"Rosemary's Prayer"

I put my hand in yours
and together we can do
what we could never do alone.
No longer is there a sense
of hopelessness.
No longer must we depend upon
our own unsteady willpower.
We are all together now,
reaching out for power and strength
greater than our own.
And as we join together,
we find love and understanding
beyond our wildest dreams.

— Anonymous

This nonsectarian prayer is used for closing Twelve Step meetings in many parts of the U.S. Although it is <u>not</u> officially approved by A.A. or Al-Anon, it has become a favorite among the many Twelve Steppers who find themselves feeling uncomfortable with or excluded by the Christian prayers usually used to end meetings. To the best of our knowledge, this material is in the public domain, so feel free to photocopy and distribute.

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