

Green Egg

The Legendary Journal of the Awakening Earth



The
Phoenix
Has
Risen
Once
Again

Issue No. 137

Ostara 2007

Acceptance

Jaya Rubysdaughter

*Growing, learning, accepting
Reverance for myself
Emerging from my cocoon
Entering freely into my destiny
Needing little I am complete.*

Emergence

Jaya Rubysdaughter

*Come outside
Come out of hiding
Come out and participate*

*Come out in your finest clothes, come
out and show off!
For the days, they grow long again and
there will be much for us to see*



GREEN EGG is the official Journal of the Church of All Worlds. Its mission is to save the world for those of us who like it here and plan to be back, life after life. **GREEN EGG** is a mirror which shows how wonderful are Gaia's children, each and all, and how we blaze with intelligent passion as we waken and heal ourselves, each other, and our Mother.

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About Our Cover

Our beautiful cover art of the Phoenix Rising was generously contributed to our first issue by artist Ian Daniels and is titled *Firebird*. As this is the third incarnation of **GREEN EGG** the beautiful representation of the Phoenix rising once again was the perfect compliment to the Inaugural Issue of **GREEN EGG EZINE** and our greatest thanks go out to Ian. For more about Ian Daniels and our other talented contributors please visit the [Contributor's Showcase](#) page.



See What People say about Green Egg!

[Quotes on GE, OZ and CAW](#)

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Dark Cup of Light
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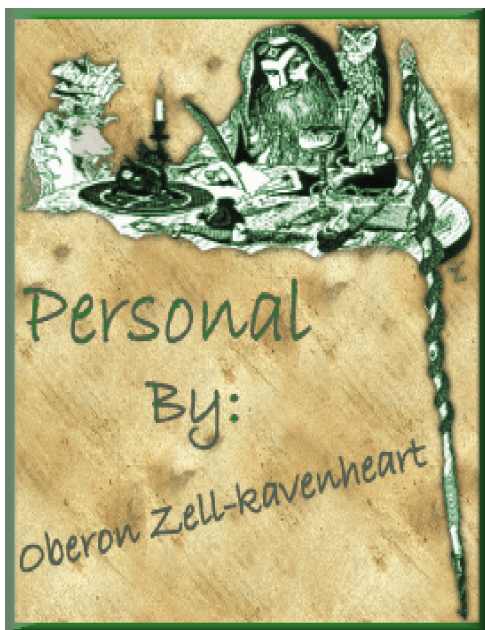
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And the Phoenix Rises--Yet Again!

Welcome, Dear Reader, to the third incarnation of the legendary *Green Egg*! What you see before you is the culmination of decades of history, interwoven with the rise of the Neo-Pagan movement—now ranked as the 19th largest religion in the world, and the fastest-growing religious movement in all English-speaking countries! (See <http://www.Adherents.net>)

For over 30 years, *Green Egg* was my most-beloved magickal child. It began simply enough, at Spring Equinox (Ostara) of 1968, as a single-page dittoed newsletter of ideas and a calendar of coming meetings and events in our local Church of All Worlds Nest, in St. Louis, Missouri. But it expanded rapidly as we started getting letters which we printed and commented upon; and as I started including assorted cool stuff I wanted to turn people onto. Soon we were running announcements and manifestos of other groups we were contacting, who identified themselves as "Pagan." Within a couple of years we were including entire newsletters of various Paths—such as the Gardnerians, Egyptians, Pagan Way etc.



Thus *Green Egg* grew from a little newsletter to a regular printed magazine, reflecting and stimulating the increasing diversity of the growing worldwide Pagan community. I reveled in the rich potpourri of provocative ideas and no-holds-barred discussions as we turned out 77 issues over the next decade.

Margot Adler, in *Drawing Down the Moon* (Beacon Press, 1979), her landmark history of the Pagan movement, said: "It is popular today to talk about 'synergy'—a combination that has a greater effect than the simple addition of its components—and that perhaps best describes the effect of *Green Egg*. It connected all the evolving and emerging Goddess and nature religions into one phenomenon: the Neo-Pagan movement."

Then, in 1976, Morning Glory and I left St. Louis and moved to the West Coast, leaving *Green Egg* behind to continue publication under the direction of other members of the CAW. Two more issues were produced, then the zine folded.

Twelve years later, after many amazing adventures (including eight years of rural homesteading, raising Unicorns, overseas travels, and diving for Mermaids in New Guinea), I decided to resurrect my beloved magazine. With the help of Morning Glory and Diane Darling, *Green Egg* once again arose, like the Phoenix.

Our first new issue, number 80, came out at Beltane of 1988, featuring a spectacular split-fountain color image of a rising Phoenix on the cover. In honor of the new *Star Trek* series that premiered at the same time, we subtitled it: "The Next Generation." Within a few years, GE had again risen to prominence as the foremost "Journal of the New Pagan Renaissance." It won many awards, including three times the Wiccan-Pagan Press Alliance Gold Award for "Readers' Choice." We were very proud of it.

However, success inevitably attracts envy. In September of 1996 I found myself embroiled in a power struggle over who was to be at the helm of the ship. Certain members of the GE staff had just been elected as Officers of the CAW Board of Directors, and they took the earliest opportunity to strip me of all decision-making power in the magazine. The justification given out was that I, as Publisher, chose to print an item by an author/artist whose personal behavior those "certain members of the GE staff" objected to, and therefore they did not want to have anything of his printed in the magazine. I, as Publisher, maintained that was my decision, not theirs; so they took that away from me.

This felt like a total betrayal, shattering decades of deep relationships. Our whole family was devastated and our tribal community was rent asunder. It took me years to deal with the extent of this wounding, and the degree to which my trust in the bonds of water-brotherhood had been demolished by it.

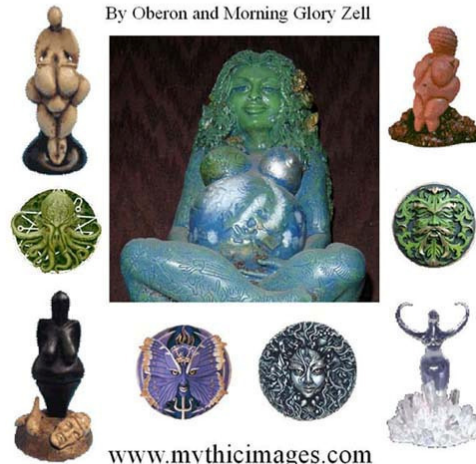
Under new management, but with the amazing and talented Jeanne Koelle graduating from Art Director to eventual Publisher, the magazine continued publication for a few more years. But finally and sadly, at the dawn of the new Millennium, the 136th and final issue came out, terminated by order of the new CAW Board of Directors in Ohio. Within a few more years, the Church of All Worlds

itself was officially dissolved by the same BoD.

Mythic Images

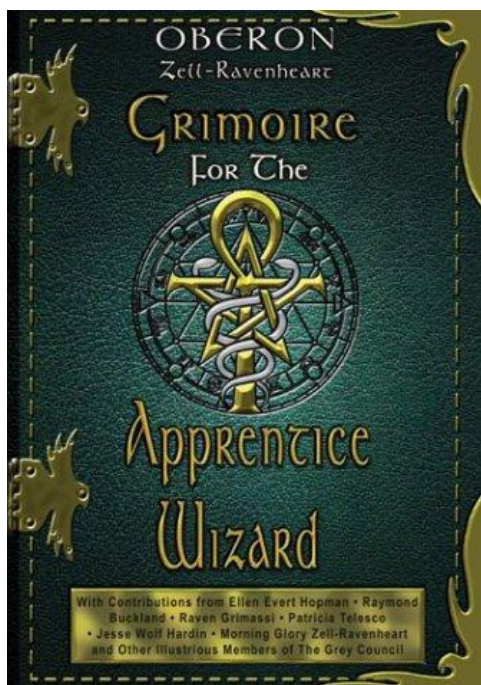
Sacred Statuary & Magickal Jewelry

By Oberon and Morning Glory Zell



Meanwhile, however, I was incredibly busy, and had little time to be involved in these issues. My life was fully-engaged with our Ravenheart family, several moves to new homes, and the expansion of our business, Mythic Images (www.MythicImages.com), involving the creation, production, and marketing of our growing line of sacred statuary. And I was traveling all around the country—and also to Australia (with Morning Glory) and Europe (with Ariel)—attending Pagan festivals, academic conferences, business trade shows, and an eclipse of the sun.

In 2002, 40 years after Lance Christie and I first shared water, beginning the amazing odyssey of the "Galloping Garrulous Grok Flok," I was commissioned by New Page Books to write a foundational book of Wizardry for the "Harry Potter generation." Tapping the great pool of Pagan Elders ("sages and mages") I had come to know over the decades of publishing *Green Egg*, I assembled the "Grey Council" as an advisory council for this project. And we spent the entire year of 2003 writing the *Grimoire for the Apprentice Wizard*.



The *Grimoire* was released in Feb. 2004, and became an “instant classic” as one reviewer wrote. Its success compelled the immediate formation of an online school to continue the studies introduced in the book. Over the coming months I recruited and worked with a talented and dedicated team of web wizards and educators to create the Grey School of Wizardry (www.GreySchool.com), which opened its virtual doors on Aug. 1, (Lughnasadh). The Grey School has taken off phenomenally, and now has over 600 students and 35 teachers, with over 200 classes in 16 departments, at seven levels.

Hardly had the Grey School gotten off the ground, when the entire Church of All Worlds fell back into my hands upon the mass resignation of the entire Ohio BoD, immediately following their dissolution of the Ohio-based corporation. We had never allowed the California corporate charter to lapse, so we just transferred our international headquarters back here, and have been working ever since to rebuild a new and better CAW on our solid foundations. The phenomenal Cat Deville

has been most instrumental in that process, and many other fine folks have been signing on. See www.CAW.org.



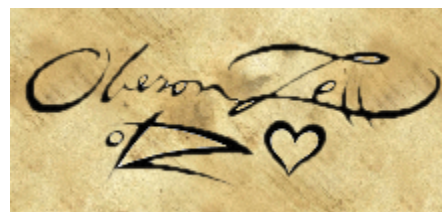
The success of the *Grimoire* and the Grey School has led to an entire succession of books: *Companion for the Apprentice Wizard* (2006), *Creating Circles & Ceremonies* (2006), *Dragonlore* (2006), *Gargoyles* (2007), and the one I am presently working on: *A Wizard's Bestiary* (due out next Dec.).

And now the latest manifestation of these magicks is here before you: the newly-resurrected *Green Egg*—this time as an interactive e-zine for the new Millennium! My very dear friends Ariel and Tom stepped forward to take this on, and others of our previous staff have joined us: Jeanne Koelle, Ian Lurkingbear Anderson, Carolyn Whitehorn... They say third time's the charm—and I know that this third incarnation will continue to “boldly go where no Pagan publication has gone before.”

And as we did in 1988, we have chosen to grace the first issue of this new series with a spectacular painting of a rising Phoenix—this time by the brilliant artist Ian Daniels. I hope you enjoy it!

Drink Deeply,

Oberon Zell-Ravenheart



The Third Time Is the Charm



By Ariel Monserrat

Last January 25, 2007, Tom and I were chatting in our living room. For the one zillionth time, we said what many Pagans have probably been saying for the last 7 years: "I sure wish Green Egg was around, I miss it." Suddenly it occurred to us that We had the time and the resources to revive it ourselves. And so we have.

As our first issue goes to press, I am once again struck by the deep connection that the Pagan community has to Green Egg, Next Ostara, Green Egg will be 40 years old. It seemed fitting to start it up again on this Ostara, the 39th anniversary of the birth of Green Egg. I have been asking myself "What is the special mystique that Green Egg seems to have for all of us?"

It is true that over the long life of Green Egg, we've had contributions from some of the best writers, poets and artists that Pagandom ever produced. But it is so much more than that. Back in 1968, when Oberon Zell first began his little journal of

the awakening earth, Pagans were few and far between. There was no email then, much less computers and there were hardly any Pagan festivals. In the 40 years since that time, Green Egg has grown from a one page mimeographed newsletter to a legendary, award-winning magazine. For most of those 40 years, Green Egg has been a major venue for bringing Pagans together to network. For many of us, it has also been the way that we first came to Paganism. I know that is true for me.

Green Egg also became a venue for beginning writers and artists to test their wings, while at the same time providing Pagans with information and knowledge on magick, mythology, science and a host of other areas. As time passed, more people contributed their creativity to Green Egg and it grew, becoming something more than the work of just one man. I believe, at this point, that Green Egg belongs to all of us. This has been demonstrated by the outpouring of excitement, offers of help, and the many emails we have received congratulating us and telling us they're so glad that the Green Egg is coming back. It is as if it has become a living entity, changing, taking on the characteristics of those associated with it and, amazingly, surviving the test of 40 years worth of history and all the inevitable conflicts that arise with such an endeavor. 40 years of blood, sweat and tears has gone into Green Egg, but also much joy, love and fun. It is a Labor of Love, one that I am proud and honored to be a part of, in service to the Goddess and the Pagan community. This is the third incarnation of Green Egg. It has often been said that the third time is the charm. So mote it be.

Ariel Monserrat



THE REBIRTH OF AN EGYPTIAN

by Nydia Walker

My eyes stung as the light brightened when I awoke to find myself laying beside a pier on the Great River Nile. Confusion, chaos filled my thoughts. I had been walking home from work and someone shouted. I turned around and now I am here. What has happened? Where am I?

Looking around, all I can see is the pier, the water beneath it and sand, miles and miles of sand. Nothing more could be seen. No trees, no birds, not even a wind to move the surface of the water could I detect. This is a desolate place, devoid of landscape, of color, even of life, save my own.

"Where am I?" I shout, afraid that no one would answer and then afraid that someone would. I am not entirely sure I want to know the answer. Not even a whisper returned my cry, but the light seemed to intensify on the river near the Horizon. As I watched a golden boat appeared and sailed towards me. A beautiful boat whose sail brightens the world around it and gives the waters and the nearby land beautiful colors of azure blue, creamy white and iridescent pink. Instantly my mind cleared and I understood completely.

Yes, I had been walking home. Someone shouted out a warning that rocks were falling from the cliffs above me. I turned and looked up to see a large boulder come down on top of me. I am dead. My body has been embalmed and now lays within my tomb. This place must be the Pier between the worlds.

My legs left me again and I sank to the ground as my thoughts became fact when I recognized the Great God Ra steering the Boat of the Sun. He was coming for me, to take me to the Hall of Ma'at, where my heart would be judged against her feather. His face was just as I had imagined.

it, golden and pure. His eyes the deep blue of the finest lapis lazuli, his dark hair bound with a thong from which hung a single hawk feather.

"Come, my child," He called to me. "Let us journey together."

My time on his boat seems short, but in fact it is long as we travel the hours of the Duat. There are monsters to fight and riddles to solve and all of the Great Gods and Goddesses of the Two Lands appear at one time or another to guide us and to guard us. Many of them fight the evil Apophis when he reveals himself and tries to destroy the Boat of Ra. He is defeated and we sail on, into the Hall of Judgment, with the echoes of the battle still lingering behind us.

Inside the Hall, Ra leaves me to face my destiny alone. No more can I take comfort from his presence. I do not want to open the doors to the inner sanctum. My fears are overwhelming me. If I do not pass this judgment, if my heart does not weigh the same as the feather of Ma'at, my heart will be eaten by the Great and Terrible Goddess Ament. I shall cease to exist completely on any plane, never again to walk the paths in the Eternal Field of Reeds, never again to walk on Earth and gaze upon my beloved Egypt. It is a fate that is unthinkable.

I must have strength. I have done this before, many times. I am no stranger to this hall, no, nor is any Egyptian. We all come here after each death and we are judged. It is quite an imposing place, this Hall of Truth. Ra drops me off just at a set of white marble steps that leads up to a colonnaded porch and a set of very tall golden doors.

Inside of those doors lies my fate and I hesitate before opening the heavy doors. This moment is the culmination of everything I have worked so hard for in my lifetime. Everything I did, I did for this moment and I want it to last as long

as possible. I want to savor it, to take it inside me and remember it forever.

The memories of my life, my family, my friends, my work, my service to the Temple, all of it, I am about to be questioned about. I must defend my actions to the Great Gods of my land by answering the 42 Negative Confessions. If I have sinned, I will be punished. If I have not, I will be rewarded.

With a deep breath, I am ready and push open the doors. The Hall is so astoundingly beautiful that at first I can see nothing but the glint of gold on the columns, the ceiling, the chairs, and the railings which ran alongside the center aisle down which I would walk towards the altar, also made of pure gold.

Lavish deep blue and royal purple linens cascaded from the ceiling to sweep down the walls, giving the room the appearance of a wealthy Bedouin's tent, a very large and wealthy Bedouin's tent. Braziers suspended from chains held fires which gave the room a soft glow, belying the seriousness of this event.

The Great Gods and Goddesses were all standing close to the aisle, waiting for me to begin. As I began to walk toward the Altar, the first Deity approached and my Judgment began. With each step another God or Goddess approached, forty two in all, each asked me one of the Negative Confessions. If I was able to honestly answer that I had not done what they had asked, then I was allowed to continue. But, had I not been able to answer that, had I committed that sin, my heart would have been given to the Goddess Amenti and she would have eaten it and destroyed my soul forever.

Finally, I was through them all, and stood before the altar. My head was high and I felt great happiness and pride within my soul. But I was not yet finished, for there was yet one more test, the most

important one. My heart must now be weighed against the feather of the great Goddess Ma'at.

My heart must weigh the same as her feather. It cannot be heavier, as that would mean that my heart has sinned in some manner that was not discovered by the Negative Confessions. But it also cannot be lighter, for that would mean that I do not know evil and therefore cannot recognize it and would be susceptible to it from others. My heart, like my soul, must be in balance.

In silence, the Great God Anubis takes my heart from my trembling hands and places it in one side of the golden scale and Ma'at places her feather in the other. In just a few seconds the verdict is announced by Anubis.

"It is balanced"

I didn't know I was holding my breath until I released it in a loud whoosh that caused Anubis to turn to me and grin. I have always thought that beneath his somewhat stern expression, he had a lively sense of humor. But I didn't get a chance to think much more on that, as Ma'at was at my side, and took my hand to guide me behind the Altar.

There sat the Great God Osiris, God of Death, Dying, Resurrection and Fertility. The God who created my soul, My Godly Father. He takes me to his breast and holds me tight. I can hear the emotion in his voice as he whispers, "Welcome home, my child."

And that is exactly where I am. I am home. I remember now, all of it.

Behind his throne is a door to another dimension, another world. It is called the Eternal Field of Reeds and it is where I live. It is a beautiful Oasis in a vast desert. All of the Great Gods live there in beautiful Temples, as well as all of the Ascended Ones, those who have

completed all of their life's lessons and have been granted the titles of Gods.

Imhotep was the first of us to be so honored. In my last earthly lifetime, we often would go to his Temple and leave offerings when any of our family was sick. We all knew he had been a mortal who was now a God, and we were taught that we could do the same.

On the Earthly dimension if I live a normal mortal life, learning the lessons that have been set for me, I will live and die and then I will return to my home here to rest before being reincarnated and living another life. On and on until I have learned all the lessons that I need to learn. Then I shall live forever in the

Eternal Field of Reeds with the Great Gods, as one of them.

That is what the Temples taught us and that is what is the Truth, for here I am once again, walking beside my Father Osiris, on our way to the house of my Mother, the Great Goddess Bast. We will be having dinner with her, and then I shall take my leave and go to my own home, one not quite so grand.

My Godly parents do love me, that is true, but I am just one of their thousands of children. I am neither heir apparent here nor anyone important at all, just a simple person really, with a long way to go. I shall rest here only awhile to reflect upon what I have learned.



A Dancer of Ancient Egypt

George Owen Wynne Apperly

1884-1960



Aquatic Eden

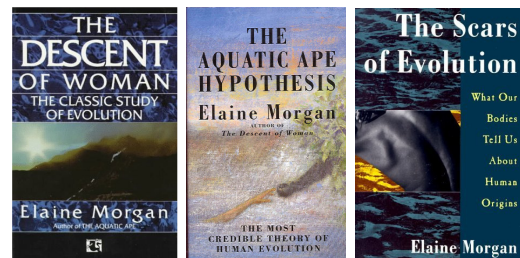
By Tom Donohue

We humans are a most unusual species. While we are clearly primates, and similar to our mammal cousins in many ways, we differ dramatically in a number of others. No other earthly organism exhibits our erect, bipedal posture. Our brains exceed all others in size except for those of the whales and elephants. Our brain size to body weight ratio is matched only by the bottlenosed dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus*. While we are clearly the dominant terrestrial animal of this planet-time, somehow we just don't seem to fit. Most of our activities are accomplished by the use of prosthetic devices. We need beds to sleep comfortably, toilets for defecation and clothing to survive in most environments that we inhabit. These differences have led many people into wild speculation about our origins, from special creation by a craftsman-like god to extraterrestrial invasion. At a recent gathering of scientists and theologians at the University of California at Berkeley, John Polkinghorn, a particle physicist turned Anglican priest, asked, "How is it that humans' cognitive abilities greatly exceed the demands imposed by evolutionary pressures, so that we can perceive the quantum nature of the universe and map its cosmic features?" He went on to suggest that we were the

creation of a craftsman-like god and intended for some lofty purpose.

Evolution is as important to Paganism as it is to Biology. Creationism is rooted in the concept of transcendent divinity; the immanent divinity of Nature operates through biological processes like birth, sex and natural selection. Evolution is Nature's maternity viewed through deep time.

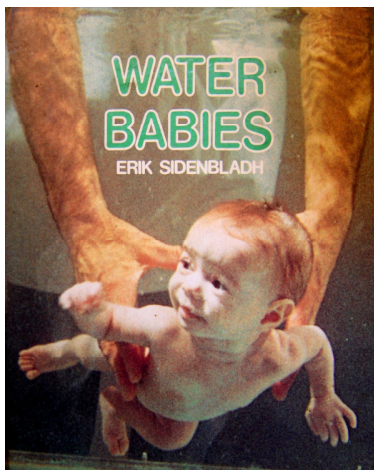
Since the early years of the twentieth century, the most commonly held view of human origins has been the savannah theory, which posits that we diverged from our primate kin when climactic changes forced us to change habitat from lush forest to tropical savannah. (grassland spotted with occasional clumps of trees) This theory was largely based on the observation that most ancient hominid fossils have been discovered in parts of the world that are now savannah. Recent research in paleobotany has discovered that these parts of the world were not savannah at the time that these proto-humans actually lived, but were, in fact, lush forest. "Lucy", the well known *Australopithecus afarensis* fossil, was discovered surrounded by fossilized turtle eggs, crocodile eggs and crab claws. These new discoveries led the great South African paleoanthropologist, Phillip V. Tobias, long a proponent of the savannah theory and the discoverer of several *Australopithecus* fossils, to completely reverse his opinion. He is now giving serious consideration to the forty year old, aquatic ape hypothesis, popularized by Elaine Morgan in *The Descent of Woman*.



It is impossible for me to report all of Ms. Morgan's observations in this article. She has written at least three books on the aquatic ape hypothesis, as well as a few videos and numerous essays and lectures.

The best I can do is to recommend reading *The Descent of Woman*, *The Aquatic Ape* and *The Scars of Evolution*. I prefer, instead, to focus on my own experiences and observations concerning our possible aquatic origin.

In the early 1950's there was a television series named *You Asked for It*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/You_Asked_for_It As the title indicates, the show consisted of several segments based upon viewer requests. One often repeated segment called "Water Babies", showed human infants swimming around in a pool, holding their breath while swimming under water, eyes open, with all the facility of baby seals or sea otters. The researcher, whose name and nationality I never really noted, said that human infants were born with these abilities but seemed to lose them unless they were exposed to the water before four months of age. An instinctive ability to swim so well, immediately suggested an aquatic phase in human history. More recently, the soviet researcher, Igor Tjarkovsky has combined the water birthing techniques pioneered by Frederick LeBoyer, with aquatic training of infants. His work is reported in the book, *Water Babies*, written by Erik Sidenbladh of Sweden and lavishly illustrated with amateur photographs of the babies swimming.



Sidenbladh describes his experience, "... it feels strange to be standing here, chest-

high in lukewarm water in a swimming pool in Moscow. All around me, babies and children are splashing, swimming and diving. The oldest ones amuse themselves by climbing up on to the edge of the pool only to jump, with delighted shrieks, back into the water again. There they dive like small otters, staying underwater for long periods of time." Although this book is out of print, it is well worth seeking out. The photographs are astounding and offer clear proof of the babies' aquatic abilities. Tjarkovsky and the water babies have also been featured in at least two BBC video documentaries.



In a nutshell, the aquatic ape hypothesis suggests that our human lineage passed through an aquatic or semi-aquatic phase during the pliocene, about five million years ago. It was first propounded by Sir Alister Hardy in 1960 to explain the numerous ways in which we humans differ from our primate cousins. Our erect, bipedal posture and large brains have already been mentioned. Other differences include our nearly totally hairless bodies, a layer of fat just beneath and attached to our skin, large breasts, fat babies, verbal communication, sweating and our preference for ventro-ventral (face to face) copulation.

Although most primates mate belly to belly occasionally, it is only the primary position of choice for humans and bonobos. While this array of characteristics makes us unique among primates, most of them can be found among **aquatic** mammals. Whales, manatees and dugongs are hairless; they and the seals and walruses have a layer of subcutaneous fat, commonly known as

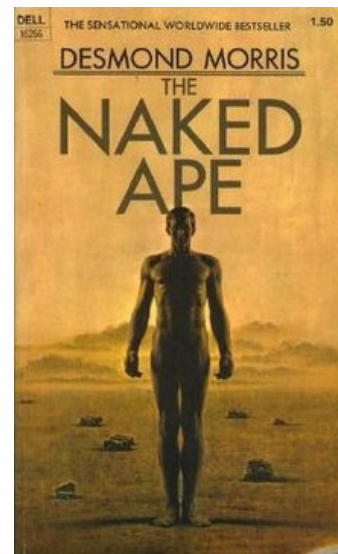
blubber. Enlarged thoracic breasts only occur in humans and sirenians, (Manatees and dugongs) and may well have provided the basis for mermaid myths. All of the aforementioned mammals, plus sea lions and otters, mate ventro-ventrally. All other primate babies are born scrawny to the point of apparent emaciation; aquatic mammals are not. Possibly most important, the gross enlargement of our brains is a characteristic shared by those mammals who returned to the sea, most obviously whales and dolphins. Otters have cranial capacities much larger than their nearest terrestrial relatives, the weasels. Seals and sea lions are bigger brained than their land-bound carnivore kin.

Very few animals play as adults. Dolphins, other whales, seals, sea lions, otters and humans are major exceptions to the rule.

We humans also have several nutritional needs which suggest a close ancestral connection, not just to water, but to sea water. Many years ago, iodine was added to American table salt, at the request of the federal government, so that people in the midwest wouldn't develop goiters. Coastal people fulfilled their iodine requirement with local seafood. In Nature, vitamin E, essential to male human fertility, is only easily available from fish. Fish are also rich in vitamins A and D. These are now available from a number of grain and bean sources but we didn't start farming until the Neolithic. We humans have been described as being, "profligate of water and salt." We excrete salt at such a rapid rate in our sweat that people who perform heavy labor in hot environments, need to take salt pills in addition to drinking plenty of water. Not a very useful adaptation for the arid African savannah. There are also a few fats which are essential for brain development and fetal development, which are only available from seafood. Mammal fats, beef, pork, lamb etc., clog our arteries with a hard plaque; bird fats like chicken, also contribute to this sclerosis. Vegetable oils are much less harmful in this way, but some fish oils actually reduce the level of

sclerosis. Numerous studies have shown that the high density lipoproteins, (HDL's) found in salmon and sardines, significantly reduce the risk of heart attack. While they are not actually nutrients, two of the most widely used flavor enhancers, monosodium glutamate and disodium guanylate, occur naturally in kelp and fish skin. .

Our erect posture sometimes seems more of a liability than an asset. As we age we develop all sorts of back problems from the stress of carrying so much weight on such an unusual skeleton. We seem to require external support devices like bras, jock straps and support hose. Many men develop inguinal hernias when the muscles of our pelvic floor fail to support the weight of our viscera. Large breasts can be especially problematic for the upper back.



In *The Naked Ape*, Desmond Morris writes, "The evolution of protruding breasts of a characteristic shape appears to be yet another example of sexual signalling." He goes on to describe them as frontal self-mimicry, a reiteration of the rounded buttocks which frame the genitalia from the rear. What makes Morris' claim, that breasts evolved for the purpose of sexual decoration, seem so plausible is the intensity of their impact, at least on males. They're certainly our favorite sexual dimorphism, a fact which

has led millions of women, worldwide, to have silicone implants, and millions more to wear falsies and padded bras. They are considered so provocative that most states require that they be covered in public places while men are only required to cover our genitals. Breast size has little impact on milk production; the smallest breasted women are quite capable of producing enough milk for their offspring. So are all the rest of our flat-chested primate kin. But the sexual display and pair bonding explanations of Morris and Lovejoy never quite rang true. I have said before, that Nature is economical. While specialized structures of sexual display do exist, they are seldom so wasteful of living tissue. They usually take the form of lightweight, low-maintenance materials like the plumage of a peacock or bird of paradise, or the facial pigmentation of the mandrill. It seems unlikely that Nature would have provided women with such burdensome appendages for decoration alone.

My personal epiphany of human mammary evolution occurred during those halcyon days of peace, love and *The Whole Earth Catalog*, skinny-dipping in the Perkiomen creek with my friend and lover, Sandra. Sandra had the kind of build often referred to as "softig" (pronounced: Zoff tik) a Jewish term which translates somewhere between plump and voluptuous. Her ample bosom bobbed on the surface of the water like a pair of pontoons.

"That's it! That's it! They float", I exclaimed, with the same sort of excitement Archimedes must have felt as he ran nude through the streets of Athens shouting "Eureka!" after having made his own observations about buoyancy and displacement.

"Uh yeah, tits float," she responded, "What did you expect?"

I explained that my excitement was because I'd always suspected that there had been an aquatic phase in our human ancestry and buoyant breasts would have been quite useful for nursing babies in the water, and in water they provided none of the gravitational burden that they do on

land.

"Oh, you're an Elaine Morgan fan I see," she said.

"Who?"

"Elaine Morgan. Haven't you read *Descent of Woman*? She proposes the same theory as you're talking about."

Needless to say, I bought and read the book as soon thereafter as possible. Our discussion of the aquatic theory continued through the afternoon and well into the evening. Sandra pointed out that the Birkenstock company had designed their basic sandal sole on the supposition that our feet were adapted for walking on sand. My brother David and I presented our ideas about the distribution of human hair and fat. We have a layer of subcutaneous fat, which insulates very effectively in water, but the tops of our heads are covered with hair. When all other genetic factors are the same, men are 1.08 times the height of women; ergo, if a male hominid stands next to his sister in neck deep water that same water would cover her to just under her nose. Is it just coincidence that men have subcutaneous fat up to their chins and hair from there on up while women's subcutaneous fat covers their beard area and the tops of their heads are covered with hair?

For the rest of that idyllic spring day, we discussed human evolution, foraged fresh water mussels and began to fall in love. When we feasted on the mussels, later that evening, we found several pearls, a perfect end for a perfect day, and a perfect beginning for a long and loving relationship. Sandra died three and a half years later, ironically, of breast cancer.

Perhaps the most important contribution of the aquatic theory is the fact that it is the only theory that adequately explains the rapid and dramatic enlargement of our brains. There is a joke that recurs in rural America whenever a dog, male or female, is seen eagerly licking its own genitalia.

"Know why they do that don'tcha?"

Someone always bites and asks, "No, why?"

" 'cause they can!"

The same principle applies to the

enlargement of our brains. We evolved this way because it was possible.

During my tenure as a microbiologist, one of my more unpleasant duties was the dissection of animal brains to determine if they were rabid. Most game wardens and law enforcement officers continued the classic practice of shooting a suspected rabid animal, or any animal that had seriously bitten a human, decapitating it, and sending the head off to the state lab. Proper procedure required that pets be confined and observed by a veterinarian for two weeks; only wild animals were to be killed. Most law enforcement people simply didn't know any better so most of the severed heads I received were dogs and cats. I LOVE DOGS! However emotionally unpleasant the task was, somebody had to do it. Somewhere there was a person, usually a child, facing the possibility of a horrible death, a nightmarish series of mega-injections or both. A negative result would save them from the treatment; a timely positive result could save their life. As time wore on, I got used to it. After the initial horror of the first few dog heads, the process became routine, scientific curiosity took over, and I started paying attention to the similarities and differences among the hundreds of heads I'd dissected and brains I'd excised. All dog brains are about the same size. From Chihuahuas to Saint Bernards, they show very little difference in the size of their brains. The larger breeds of dog do, indeed, have larger heads, but most of the space is taken up by masseters (biting muscles) and bone. I also noticed that small animals had relatively large brains when compared to their body weight. The mouse has the same brain weight / body weight ratio as a human.

For large animals, it is the reverse. There is some increase in actual brain size as animals become larger, but their relative brain size decreases rapidly. The exceptions are, once again, the marine and aquatic mammals. I assumed at that time that it was the result of buoyancy and support. Brains require a lot of protection and bone is heavy. The

mechanical burden of a big head in a terrestrial environment is maladaptive. Immersion in water alleviates that problem and frees the head to enlarge as the rest of an organism enlarges. Michael Crawford, in his monograph, *"Apes, Dolphins and Big Brains"*, ascribes the increase in brain size among mammals that have returned to the sea, to diet. He states, "Laboratory work showed that the brain did not just use any old neural fatty acid but a consistent balance of 1:1 of both the Omega-3 and Omega-6 families." One of these groups of fatty acids is plentiful in seafood, the other from terrestrial sources. Evidence is increasing that we were not quite sea monkeys but rather, beach apes, frequently entering and leaving the water not unlike the present day natives of Polynesia.

At this point, it is necessary to address the concept of neoteny, the retention of juvenile characteristics. It occurs quite frequently in Nature, for a variety of reasons. Sometimes the reason can be a simple genetic error. It has been pointed out, that the heads of all primate babies are similarly shaped, but those of the non-human varieties change shape as they mature. The best example is the baboon. Baby baboons look much like human babies, but as they mature, baboons grow a long, dog-like muzzle, and some formidable fangs. Adult human skulls retain a child-like shape and child-like size, in proportion to the body. Neoteny is a genetic mechanism, from the internal variation side of the evolution equation. Few theorists of human evolution doubt that neoteny played an important role, at the genetic level. If some mutation induced this cranial neoteny in a savannah dwelling ape, it is doubtful that it could have survived. It would have been like a seed on rocky ground. A large brain would have been a nutritional and mechanical impossibility.

While buoyancy and the availability of certain fats allowed our brains to grow larger as our bodies grew larger, (I.E. to remain in the same proportion to our bodies.) what factors might have encouraged this brain growth? How might

it have provided an immediate adaptive advantage? What use might we have found, for this suddenly burgeoning intelligence? A look at the anatomy of our brain provides some clues.

Let's forego the anatomy lesson. A very large portion of our brain is dedicated to the production, hearing and interpretation of speech. We receive about 90% of our direct sensory information from vision; 90% of our interpersonal communication is via speech. Most primates and, indeed, most animals, communicate primarily through body language and gesture. Vocalizations tend to serve as emotional punctuation. This is why it is possible to teach chimpanzees and gorillas American Sign Language while attempts to teach them to speak have failed. But to an organism up to our chins in water, body language and gestures are quite useless. Sound, however, carries quite well over water. Vocal communication was already part of our primate repertoire. When an organism loses an ability it compensates by refining another to do the same job, much like the blind learn to read with their fingers. Deprived of one means of communication, we refined another.

One of the more fanciful hypotheses suggests that our impressive musical ability is a leftover from the time when we communicated by singing. I find the idea as plausible as it is charming.

Most mammals identify individuals of their own species by scent. Dogs sniff each others anal glands when they meet; cats sniff noses. Many animals are able to recognize their kin by scent alone. In *The Youngest Science*, Lewis Thomas reports that the entire genome is reflected in the scent signature. In contrast, humans identify each other by facial features. We recognize our friends and family immediately, even though there are billions of humans, all with remarkably similar faces. The subtle variations we use to accomplish this, defy description, possibly why police artist sketches tend to be such poor likenesses of the actual suspects. To a wading or swimming ape, our sense of smell would be useless.

Unlike the fish, we can't smell under water. The only part of us that was always visible when swimming or wading, would be our faces.

When my erstwhile wife, Lynn, was pregnant with our daughter, her hair grew luxuriously long and dense. The common explanation is that it is a side effect of the increased hormone levels of pregnancy. The pair bonding theorists consider it a sexual decoration but, once again, the economy of Nature suggests otherwise. Hair is composed almost entirely, of the protein, keratin. Gestation requires a good supply of amino acids to make proteins for the developing fetus and is a very unlikely time for the body to suddenly divert these nutrients for a mere decoration, especially at the time when it would be least necessary to encourage mating. If, as Elaine Morgan suggests, this extra long hair, which reaches its maximum size at the time of birth, is to provide floating babies with a convenient handhold, the whole process begins to make sense. Other primate babies cling to their mothers by clutching their hair, so the behavior is not without precedent.

Opponents of the aquatic ape theory have tended to be arrogant, contemptuous and smug. Possibly, their most specious argument is, that the aquatic hypothesis is "unnecessary" because, "We already have a theory." It is surprising that paleoanthropologists are willing to echo the usual creationist attitude, "Don't confuse the issue with facts; we've already made up our minds." Their second most common argument is, that variations like our near hairlessness and subcutaneous fat are not relevant because they are only "a matter of degree". They appear to have failed to notice that most evolutionary changes are matters of degree. For example, the same eight carpal bones of the terrestrial vertebrate wrist, have elongated, foreshortened and occasionally fused to form hands, paws, flippers, wings and the whole panoply of thousands of different front appendages. If we look at each bone individually, all of these variations are only a matter of degree.

Their attacks are so emotionally charged that one wonders what underlies such fierce attachment to the savannah theory. Does their entire paradigm rest on the belief that, "Mankind has only grown strong through perpetual struggle"? (Pop quiz: Who am I quoting?) Would their view of humankind crumble if they had to recognize that we played and partied and orgied and frolicked and sang our way through the pliocene? Does it disturb them that "man the hunter" was in fact , human the beach forager?



Science is constrained by the requirement of objectivity. This limits useful information to the kind of observable, measurable and verifiable data, that have been thus far discussed. As Pagans, we also have access to subjective channels to our understanding of nature. The greatest deficiency in science education, is that students seldom get an opportunity for the direct apprehension of Natural processes that can be provided by watching the sunrise from a mountaintop as the clouds carry water inland from the sea, spending a lazy afternoon by a

babbling brook or foraging for one's own food. We can find further evidence of our semi-aquatic origin by looking within.

We love being in water. It feels good! We swim in mountain lakes and rivers, sheltered ocean coves and swimming pools. We love to soak in hot tubs and hot springs and spas and bathtubs. We vacation at the beach or the lake or, if we can afford the air fare, tropical island paradises. Much of Northern California has been turned into an artificial savannah, at least during the summer months. It doesn't feel like Eden; Hawaii does. It is in water that we most enjoy being naked. When I imagine myself sky-clad on the savannah, I think of thirst and sunburn and insect bites.

It may be that the greatest testimony to the aquatic ape theory is its popularity. For thousands of people, it has the ring of truth, regardless of the opinions of academicians. As the mass of evidence increases, it seems ever more likely that we were actually beach or island dwellers, dividing our time between land and sea just like we do when we vacation at the beach now. Recent geological discoveries may have pinpointed the location of this Pliocene paradise on Danakil Island (Now the Danakil Alps of Ethiopia), an island that lay in a large shallow bay, with the enchanting name, *The Sea of Afar*. If we need a new Eden for a new paradigm, I nominate Danakil. There is a certain appeal to the vision of hairless, slightly chubby protohumans cavorting in our animal innocence, in warm tropical seas, of fat little babies bobbing at the surface, some nursing at their mothers floating breasts, some clinging to their mothers' luxurious swirls of hair. Did we sing to each other? Did the sound of lullabies float across moonlit waters? What did we sing about, five million years ago, as we were becoming what we are?

Tom Donohue

The Goddess

Andi Fisher

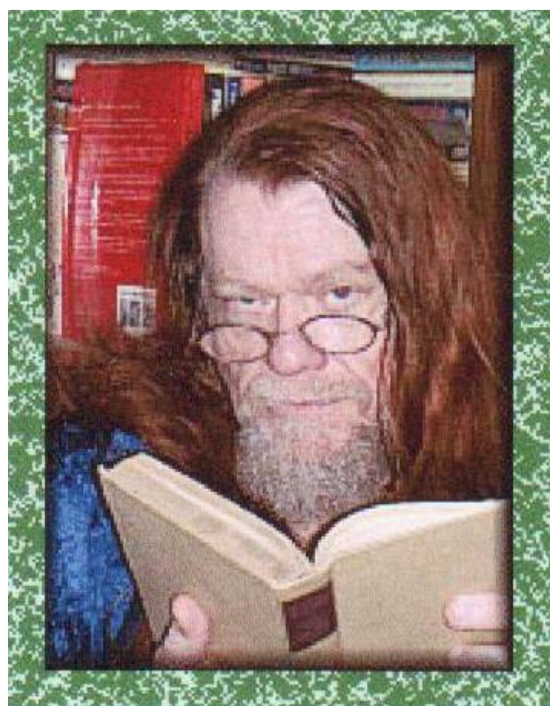
The moon was full and shining bright
In my Circle and in me
My altar glowed by candlelight
As I touched divinity

*"My child you came" -She softly said
In the silence of the call
Her words filled me as I fed
On her love for each and all*

*"I recall" She said "a time before
When you asked me to reveal;
And you knocked upon my sacred door
To receive my Holy seal."*

*"The path you chose brought you
Deep within your soul.
You saw me there, I saw you too-
-Two aspects of the whole...
And finally you began to see
With Spirit eyes and mind,
That I am you and you are me
Together for all time."*

*"The Moon is full and you have come
To honour me - through you.
My child, I thus bless you
As I know you bless me too."*



Our Pagan Elders

Michael R. Gorman

I recently read a post on one of the many Pagan and Druid internet groups to which I belong from the English Druidess who hosts the group. In her post Ellen (Evert Hopman) wrote of her frustration in soliciting help and funds for various Pagan

issues, including the US Veterans Administration's refusal to approve the pentacle on the graves of Pagan fallen soldiers, and a recent fire that had left a Druid in her circle destitute. As so often happens when Pagans are confronted with real needs, folks answered her frustration with criticism, blame, excuses, and lots of great ideas for what she could do to address the needs she brought up. Sadly, I know for a fact that every other Pagan leader in the world will recognize this situation. In response to her apology after the flood of criticism, I wrote my own response to those who did the criticizing, but I think most Pagans, if they are honest, will not be able to lay this situation at the feet of those other Pagans, but will recognize themselves, and uncomfortably so, in these words. Admitting a problem is the first step in solving it. To Ellen and all: Ellen, as a founder and leader of a large Grove here in Sacramento, I definitely sympathize with your frustration. My partner and I have worked an amazing number of hours every week, unfailingly, for 10 years, and the very small and occasional financial remuneration we have received pales in comparison to the thousands of dollars of our own money we have invested in this work. The amount of money and resources we have been able to collect for

various community needs is embarrassing when compared to even very small congregations of Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and many other faiths. If I dare to complain about this situation, Pagans who hear me can't decide whether to encourage me to take even more work upon my own shoulders, or bring back the Burning Times temporarily, just for me. But I got over my martyr complex long ago, so I refuse to climb the pile of wood. We Pagans do not treat our leaders well. Don't even try to deny it, because you know it is true. We don't treat our Elders well. We just don't. I once had a woman leave the Grove even though she felt that it reflected her spirituality better than anything she had ever known. When I asked her why she left us and returned to the Jewish temple, she said, "I'm sorry, Michael, but I can't be a part of a community that treats its leaders and elders so badly." And our Grove is one of the better ones in this regard. We have a small group of dedicated Druids who are taking on more responsibility, and sadly beginning to experience the same overwork and frustration their elders have faced. I have to give it to Pagans, we're consistent. Each of the elder leaders in Sacramento's Pagan Community has been out of commission at one time or another, sometimes multiple times, for health issues, sometimes life threatening, related to overwork and stress, and not one of them has ever received any substantial money, food, tender visits, massages, tea and cookies, shoulders to cry on, flowers, or even physical labor to ease their burden. We just say we will send some energy (always long distance), offer nice words of encouragement on the yahoo group, and wait for them to recover so they can continue to serve us. The same is true of every national and international leader I know. I have time to write this response because last November my doctor gave me two options: slow down and learn to take care of your health, or prepare to die of a heart attack very soon. I opted for learning, at age 51, so be as nurturing of myself as

I have been to others. Even now, I get more calls for help or requests for my labor or advice than I do calls to inquire about my health and welfare. Only two people so far have brought over a meal, and neither of them are Pagans. And I realize now that I am very used to that. When will we Pagans take a sober and honest look at ourselves? Perhaps we are afraid of what we might see. Our magical shops come and go like mushrooms, while we indignantly point to the lower prices at Wal-Mart. We have no newspapers anywhere. We have, what?, three or four magazines in the world, none of which reports news and all of which struggle from year to year. We have no local magazines. We have no lists of services by Pagans or Pagan Yellow Pages. We have no social service organizations. We have no leadership training seminars. We have one large Pagan Convention called Pantheacon once a year. We have no pastoral support organizations. I think we have one seminary for spiritual leadership training, and that just started recently. We have no universities, grade schools, high schools, preschools, or adult education schools. We don't even have Sunday schools. We have no campgrounds we can rent or property for our festivals that is Pagan owned and run. We have no political lobbies. We have no professional services for our poor or the mentally disabled or physically disabled. We have no professional or political caucuses. We have no places of worship that are handicap accessible. We have nowhere to take our totem animals when they are sick that understands their role in our lives. We have no community centers for meetings. We have precious few actual places dedicated to our Gods and Goddesses where we can go to worship, meditate, and share our faith. We have no resources for helping those in need in our own community let alone people outside our community as virtually every single Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Sikh, etc. church or temple in the world does. Half the time we don't even meet each other face to face or share something as simple as a meal. We live most of our

community life on line, which is a bit oxymoronic. I can already hear the thoughts some of you are thinking. Go ahead, desperately search your mind for examples of each of the things I have listed. But once you have your list and your righteous indignation to thrust under my nose, do a little exercise to put this into perspective. Ask yourself this: how many churches and temples and synagogues are within 5 miles of your house that have classrooms, designated worship space for a community of believers, offices, meeting rooms, and social services? Now think; how many such Pagan groups are there within 5 miles of your house? How about within your city? Your county? How many within your state? Your country? I am one of the most connected Pagans I know, and I can name only a handful in the world, and none of them is well funded or loyally supported over years by the same people. We turn our noses up at New Agers, but at least their teachers can make a living at it. We are so quick to claim superior enlightenment, but don't ask us to paint a fence or deliver a meal to an elder who is ill! We all have jobs, after all. We claim to honor the natural world, but that includes an invocation now and then and a few words hastily keyboarded into our latest Pagan Google Group, but certainly not regular tree planting, writing of letters of environmental advocacy or circulation of petitions (except those pointless unverifiable on line things), cleaning up the parks, teaching a class on trees for Pagan children. How many of us even know the names of the endangered species who inhabit our area? How many trees can you point to and say, I planted that? And actually establishing a social service for Pagans or feeding the homeless? That's not even on our radar. Besides, we need all of our own resources for buying bigger and better wands and staves and magical jewelry! Is there a festival? We're there! But not during the planning, of course. We are so devoid of any definitive sense of community that we wouldn't even know where to donate

money and supplies even if we wanted to, and our leaders are too exhausted to take on another project let alone spend their time scratching for funds. If one of our sons or daughters graduates with a professional degree and wants to serve our community, where would we send that young professional? To my backyard? To Ellen's? To a yahoo group? Ask yourself right now. If you needed to mobilize our community because someone was threatened with stoning or burning by the KKK or the Aryan Nation, who would you call? How would you get the word out? What phone number would you give to the police for a resource to understand the situation? WitchVox? One overworked web site for the entire world that half the Pagans in the world don't even know exists? Your yahoo group? How many of you have read pleas for support for the Pentacle issue on your yahoo groups? How many of you did anything except maybe hit the reply button? If we really want to do something to guarantee that the Burning Times will never happen again, it certainly isn't limiting ourselves to groups of 13. While we hide in silence, the Jerry Falwells of the world are more than happy to fill the void by teaching the world who we are! We are willing to whine about our image in the media and elsewhere, but how many of us have ever written a letter or did a guest lecture at a college, or held a seminar on Paganism, or offered our homes and resources so someone else who can do that? The smallest Christian church in Appalachia offers its pastor a salary, a place to work, and a place to live. It offers its children a place to study and learn tradition. It has song books and most often a choir. It has sacred art and music. It has someone to clean the church and often the pastor's house as well. What do we offer our leaders? Squat. Our children? Squat. Our elderly? Squat. We think because money is used so badly in so many religious communities that somehow taking care of our own or using our money for something besides a new ritual robe is tainting our purity. Well,

puffed up pride in our righteous poverty is no better than puffed up pride over a million dollar sanctuary. Money controls us in both situations, and the fruit of our labor is just another brand of religious hypocrisy. We can talk about respect for all people, the need for justice, the sins of fundamentalist Christianity, and the corruption of the current system, but what exactly have we done to counteract these things? Who have we confronted? How many of us are even out of the broom closet enough to speak of our beliefs and defend our beliefs to the world? When we wish to influence politicians or seek grants, we don't even have any addresses or phone numbers to offer except a few brave leader's homes. Doesn't exactly inspire confidence in our cohesiveness and dependability as a community. When the media does want to do a fair and educational article on us, who can they call? Who can they put in their rolodexes who will still be around in a year to address current issues? Who is the contact person or organization? Who is the spokeswoman? No wonder all we ever get is one interview with one dysfunctional witch every Halloween! But, you say, being out of the broom closet and honest is so scary!! Yeah? Talk to our children who get bullied at school about what it is like to be protected by adults who aren't out of the closet. Listen, I'm an overweight, intellectual liberal, out of the closet, activist, cantankerous writer/poet/journalist who is a gay Pagan Druid. I'm a poster boy for who the right wing should hate. In the fundamentalist dictionary under "them" they have my picture. I've had guns in my face. I've lost jobs because of who I am. I've lost family and friends because I refused to deny my identity and my beliefs. I've been threatened and harassed by street punks and police alike. I have been condemned by preachers and investigated by organizations and government agencies. I have an FBI file and a CIA file. I've been spit at and had stones thrown at me. I've been heckled and booed and jeered at, more times than I can remember. And my experiences pale in

comparison to people like Starhawk. And you tell me it's scary to tell your family and a few co-workers that you worship a Goddess as well as a God. Let me get you some cheese to go with that whine. Let's talk about the Goddess's protection and if we really believe in it. Let's talk about our spirit guides and whether or not we actually trust them. Let's talk about the very real needs of our own people weighed against our fear driven secrecy. Our own secrecy hurts us more than any witch hunter ever could because it strikes at the core of our spirits. Our enemies cannot imprison our souls, but we can, and we do. Ask yourself where do we meet as a whole community to offer counseling, intervention, comfort, exchange of information? Nowhere. Where do we go for news of Pagans around the world? Nowhere. Where do we go to rally and support each other when discrimination or persecution arises? Nowhere. We have no such places. Do you know why the Veterans Administration can continue to get away with dishonoring our dead soldiers by denying them the symbols of their faith? Because there is no visible constituency demanding otherwise. I can almost hear the thoughts of the bureaucrats when the few Pagans who even speak up demand equal treatment:

"For who? Who are you people? I've never even met a Pagan, let alone had one vote for me! I wouldn't know where to find one to treat him any kind of way!"

Some of the strongest voices in the debate about the Pentacle on the soldier's graves were not even Pagans! Why? We are too busy destroying our own unity by "hiving off," and disguising our real names and huddling in someone's living room based upon a fear of persecution that dates back to the Middle Ages and is today very often just an excuse for people to not commit for the long haul, or a chance for arrogant and untrained individuals to create their own little fiefdoms. Even then, we rarely hived amicably. More often we do so with

insults and threats and magical curses we barely understand. No wonder the powers that be don't listen to us! They can't even find us! And no one has to divide and conquer us to achieve our Marginalization. We do that all by ourselves, so they don't have to lift a finger. What an insult to the industrious and cooperative bees that we even use that word hive. Show me a hive with thirteen bees and I'll show you a dying colony. And what do we do when anyone in our community calls us on our selfishness and inattention to our community's needs? We attack that person or give "helpful suggestions" about what more that person should do to make it better. I swear our favorite act of magic is trying to squeeze blood out of a turnip! Goddess forbid we should ever begin a response to a need within our community with the words "I will!" or "I can!" or "I intend to do this!" In what universe does a handful of individuals have the emotional, physical, and financial resources to carry an entire community of people who feel no obligation to their brothers and sisters? How dare anyone bad mouth Ellen for pointing out the truth and sharing her heartfelt frustration! You should have your mouth washed out with essential oil soap! Try doing half of what she does for a year or two and maybe you will earn the right to respectfully offer a bit of criticism. But be warned, by then, if you survive it, you will be wise enough to honor her instead.

And mark this. There is only so far we can progress as a community by being mutually pissed off at Christianity! There is a reason we are languishing in the backwaters of the land of spiritual communities. We don't care enough about our own people to do otherwise. We do not pass our tradition on to our children with schools, kids rituals, or even permission to participate, and we wonder why every time a Pagan group starts it has to start from scratch! We wonder why teenagers resort to the Goth world. Where the hell else are they going to go? Most of our groups ban underage people. Again the fear. And our groups fade as quickly

as they pop up, usually because yet another leader burns out, or some arrogant wanna-be leader initiates a petty witch war. We don't pass anything on to our children because we have built nothing substantial to pass along. Oh, but you say, we have created our work in the spiritual realm! We don't need to bother ourselves with the mundane world. Really? The unseen realms are filled with our good works? Well I have internal senses that are fairly well developed, so show me. Point them out. Describe them for me. Tell me where they are. Tell me how they affect our lives. Let me see them. Give me a tour. Where are they? Show me. Give me something besides your righteous indignation that I had the audacity to hold up a mirror for us to look into. My mother had an expression for this: "He's so heavenly minded that he's no earthly good." So if we have done these great works, where are they? Show them to me. Show me the ones you have personally done. Better yet, show the Pagan child who can't wear her pentacle at school. Show the Pagan family that has no food on the shelves. Show the single Pagan mother who fears for her life with no one to turn to in her conservative town if the locals should learn about her faith. Show the Pagan who is arrested because of the assumption of guilt on the part of those Satan worshipers. Show the teenager desperately seeking a better spiritual path. Show the dead soldier who has to rest beneath an unadorned headstone.

I dream of the day when a child in our community can say, "My grandparents had their handfasting right here in this stone circle, and I'm going to get married here too." But instead, we fracture, fight, accuse, deny, ignore, and pompously claim some sort of transcendental spiritual superiority. That and a buck fifty will get you a bad coffeet Starbucks.

When My Lady, when?

I am reminded of a scene in the movie Brother Sun, Sister Moon in which Saint

Francis of Assisi is out in the snowy countryside with few clothes and no shoes, lovingly rebuilding a ruined church for the poor, stone by stone. One of his rich buddies from his past rides out from the town of Assisi and sees Francis working. While Francis continues his labor, the friend follows him and philosophizes about his own spiritual emptiness and how much he admires Francis's simplicity and dedication to a dream and a hope. Following Francis back and forth between the rock pile and the stone wall as Francis compassionately includes a young paraplegic in the work by looking to him to nod his head to show where the stone should be placed, the friend finally says passionately, "I want to help you, Francis! Tell me what I can do to help you! Something needs to be done! How can I help?" Francis smiles, amused at his friend's thick-headedness and inability to

see the work going on right below his nose. He replies, "Words, Bernardo! There was a time when I believed in words!" A modern paraphrase of that tender line might be: "You want to help? Then shut up and pick up a stone! Hellooo!" If our leaders have earned nothing else, we at least have earned the right to bitch about our situation. You want to object to that? You feel put upon? Reprimanded unfairly? Fine! Pick up that stone and finish that wall. When you are done, we'll talk.

You want to help? Then shut up and pick up a stone. Put a cornerstone where your mouth is. If you think I'm being too harsh, well deal! I'm a Druid, not a Hallmark card.

Most sincerely, Michael R. Gorman Druid



Santeria 101

Rev. Regina Navickas, aka Zenobia Morgana

On the topic of using Christian holy water or various other Christian objects in a Pagan/Wiccan setting I have to ask, why not? If one believes that all Gods/Goddesses are just rays of one Entity, wouldn't holy water that has been blessed by a Christian priest be just as holy as water that has been blessed by a Buddhist monk or Wiccan high priest/priestess? If you believe that the Norse Gods, the Celtic Gods, the Greco-Roman Gods, and the Hindu Gods are cool, why not the Abrahamic Gods? (Yes, yes, I know they only have "One True God". Then what about the Archangels? They sound to me like demi-gods. And what about the Kabala and the mention of the Shekeena - you know - God's wife? Sounds to me like a Goddess.) Yes, there are Christians that have and still are doing mean rotten nasty things in the name of "their" God. As much as I hate to say it, it looks like they will still do so in the future. Yet, I refuse to throw the baby out with the bath water as how can I pooh-pooh a religion that gave us Mother Teresa? (Not to mention St. Anthony to whom I would never be able to get to work on time as I am always looking for my other shoe in the morning and without whom I would never be able to find it! (Love ya St. Anthony!))

For those Pagans who incorporate Ancestor worship into your lives, if you have an ancestor who was a devout Catholic wouldn't you place upon your Ancestor Altar some item of Catholicism? Say as a way to remember and honor them? Or perhaps to entice them to help you in some way or as a way of saying, "Thanks!?" After all, if late great Uncle Liam liked whiskey and you needed help from him, you would offer up a shot glass of the stuff, right? So if dearly

departed Granny prayed the Rosary every day, wouldn't you place a set of Rosary Beads on your altar? I know I would.

I have a B.A. in religion and in studying for that degree I've found that the BASIC fundamentals of Christianity are very beautiful, just like for the other Abrahamic religions. Unfortunately, it is the things that SOME of its followers have done in its name that has tainted it. You know, the whole "squeaky wheel gets the oil" motif - you hear more about the bad stuff and less about the good.

If you would rather not use Christian holy water, et al, then don't. No harm no foul. It's all good. Once upon a time I too pooh-poohed all things Christian. Found the mere mention of their possible usage in ritual insulting, disgusting even. But then I looked deeper and with an open mind. For after all, wasn't I just as guilty as they were? Looking down upon and judging another's beliefs by what I had heard and not by what the facts were? Isn't that what some of them did and still do to Pagans? So now I have no problem with the Christian Religion. I might have a problem with some of its followers, but not the religion as it is supposed to be and as it should be practiced. Because I took the time to read and learn and question - to come to my own non-biased conclusions - I now have no problem incorporating their elements into my spiritual - magickal practices. If they fit that is. Maybe it's the whole "with age comes wisdom" thing that makes me think like this - I do have a major milestone birthday coming up in the spring so the age thing does apply - who knows?

By the way, my feelings about using Christian items in a Pagan way are not because of my practicing Santeria either, which does use a lot of Catholic bells and whistles. All of which came about from the Yoruba slaves having to mask their Gods, the Orishas, in order to preserve their religion. So when

I light a candle that has St. Barbara on it, I am not doing it to Her, but to Chango who was given Her as a mask to wear so the slaves wouldn't be beaten by their masters for worshiping their gods. By using Catholicism as a cover, they were able to pull one over on their masters. Pretty slick, huh? The Yoruba saw that there was real power in the Saints and Masses and all the other Catholic stuff besides being able to use it to hide their religion so therefore incorporated it into their beliefs. But enough Santeria 101.

I ask you: there is the belief that to kill a werewolf you need a silver bullet that has been blessed by a Catholic priest. Will a silver bullet that has been blessed by my local coven at the last esbat work just as well? Probably. But why take the chance? If you know that something works and works right the first time, why not use it? Why mess with the tried and true? Not to say that sometimes finding an easier or different way isn't fun and exciting and good. But sometimes you're in a pinch, you know? Options, life is just so much easier with options.

Diving Reflex Experiment

By Tom Donohue

While living in the area of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in the mid 1960's I read an article in the local newspaper about a young boy who had fallen through thin ice on the Monongahela River and apparently drowned. Hours later, his apparently lifeless body was recovered. Following the normal protocol, the emergency medical technicians began CPR immediately even though the patient appeared to be quite dead. To everyone's surprise, the child was successfully resuscitated and recovered with no ill effects from the trauma.

The apparent miracle was attributed to the "diving reflex" a characteristic response to immersion in cold water that we share with whales, seals and other marine mammals.

More specifically, when our faces are immersed in cold water, our pulses slow down and the rate at which our cells use oxygen slows to a near standstill. The fact that we share this reflex with various marine mammals has been used in support of the aquatic ape theory.

Some scientists ascribe the boy's survival to simple hypothermia. (All chemical reactions slow down with a reduction in temperature) and deny that we have a diving reflex at all. Fortunately, it is possible to demonstrate the diving reflex to one's self with no specialized scientific equipment. All you need is a friend and a dishpan filled with ice water placed in front of you. Relax for a few minutes, then have your friend take your pulse. (Ideally, one should take the carotid pulse where the neck meets the angle of the jaw. Count the number of heartbeats that occur in fifteen seconds and multiply by four.) Then immerse your face in the water and have your friend take your pulse again. You'll be surprised by the difference.

What people have said about Green Egg CAW and Oberon Zell

The Church of All Worlds understands itself as part of the Neo-Pagan movement. Its members, both intellectually and sensually oriented, take this first of all to mean that man must discover himself as part, not sovereign, of a world biological unity, within which men must find an ecological slot, cooperating rather than competing with his own kind, as do all successful species. In view of current sober predictions of catastrophic disaster for mankind and the earth within a century if exploitation of resources continues at the present rate, and in view of the obvious fact that this juggernaut to apocalyptic doom—a world without fuel, hungry, and yet doubtless warring over what scraps remain—will not be halted without a swift and radical alteration of goals, attitudes, and life style, the importance of these discussions is obvious. The language of ancient Paganism, like that of *Stranger in a Strange Land*, is taken metaphorically, but the issues are real. Recent discussion in the Nests has, partly under the influence of Teilhard de Chardin, moved in the direction of considering the whole biosphere of Earth as a single living organism. As the Mother of all within itself, it may be regarded as feminine—the Goddess—and the evolution of consciousness is reaching a point at which it can become aware of itself as such. Then the true nature of the cancer-like self-destruction of the tissues of the organism by certain malignant “calls” within it can be grasped by its unitary mind. ...whether the world ravages itself to death, or the lovely goddess comes to consciousness on this planet, is up to us. This is the mirror the Church of All Worlds wishes to hold up to the present generation.

— Roger Ellwood , *Religious & Spiritual Groups in Modern America*, Prentiss-Hall, 1974; pp. 202-3

The Church of All Worlds grew out of Atl in 1967. It was conceived, according to Christie, as a “living laboratory” to work out problems in communal living, philosophy, and communication... The Church was “Tim Zell’s baby,” Christie wrote at one point, and much of what came to pass was the evolution of Zell’s own vision, with which not all Atlans sympathized.

—Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, Beacon Press; 1979, p. 274-5

It took a catalyst to create a sense of collectivity around the word *Pagan*, and in the United States the Church of All Worlds and its *Green Egg* filled this role. It was Tim Zell who picked up the term from Young Omar’s article. For this reason alone the Church of All Worlds deserves a large place in this story... CAW helped a large number of distinct groups to realize they shared a common purpose, and this gave the phenomenon new significance. Until then, each group had existed on its own, coming into contact with others only at rare events like the Renaissance fairs in California or science fiction conventions. CAW and Tim Zell, by using terms like *Pagan* and *Neo-Pagan* in referring to the emerging collectivity of new earth religions, linked these groups, and *Green Egg* created a communications network among them.

—Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, Beacon Press; 1979, p. 277

Zell’s articles had a strong influence on the development of the Church of All Worlds...the effect of “Theogenesis; The Gaea Hypothesis” on CAW’s history and on the thoughts and goals of church priests, priestesses, and members has been extraordinary. All the CAW members

I interviewed felt that the goals of Neo-Paganism were enormous, involving a total transformation of Western society. In contrast, only half the other Neo-Pagans I interviewed thought in such sweeping terms.

—Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, Beacon Press; 1979, p. 285-6

By 1978 much had changed in the Church of All Worlds... But CAW's role as catalyst for the Neo-Pagan movement had ended, at least temporarily, with the death of *Green Egg*. How important *Green Egg* was to the Neo-Pagan community is a matter of controversy. There are many who welcomed its death with a sigh of relief. But others, including myself, believed that it was a key to the movement's vitality and that its death in 1976 was a blow from which the movement is only now recovering...It is popular today to talk about 'synergy'— a combination that has a greater effect than the simple addition of its components—and that perhaps best describes the effect of *Green Egg*. It connected all the evolving and emerging Goddess and nature religions into one phenomenon: the Neo-Pagan movement.

—Margot Adler, *Drawing Down the Moon*, Beacon Press, 1979; p. 294-5

In March of 1968, the GREEN EGG appeared...it grew over 80 issues into a 60-page journal, becoming the most significant periodical in the Pagan movement during the 1970s.

—J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, 1979

One of the most important religious organizations of Neo-Paganism in America is the Church of All Worlds. Under the leadership of Tim Zell (who later changed his name to Otter Zell), CAW played a key role in the 1970s in the networking of diverse Pagan and Wiccan groups and

interests, and in the defining of a Pagan as a nature lover.

—Rosemary Guiley, *Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*, Facts on File, 1989; p. 63

The Gaea hypothesis was developed by Otter Zell (formerly Tim Zell), founder and high priest of the Church of All Worlds. Zell describes Gaea as the archetypal image of the Great Mother Goddess, a living, sentient being with a soul-essence that can be perceived by humans... Zell also developed a mandate for the neo-Pagan community to become involved in the ecology movement."

—Rosemary Guiley, *Encyclopedia of Witches and Witchcraft*, Facts on File, 1989; p. 132

Also important to Starhawk's cosmology was a separate, and equally dramatic, development of pantheistic thought made during the same period, and which first surfaced within the American Pagan community itself. It was articulated by the Church of All Worlds, an organization of radical mystics who had originally been inspired by science fiction and utopian writings, and was formed in Missouri in 1967. The moving spirit was Tim (later Otter) Zell, who propagated his ideas through the late 1960s and early 1970s in the Church's newsletter, which grew into the periodical, *Green Egg*. It established the identity of modern Paganism as a response to a planet in crisis, and its spiritual core lay in the concept of the earth as a single, divine, living organism. The mission of Pagans, according to this concept, was to save 'her' by a transformation of the values of Western society. Zell's definition of magic was 'the science you don't understand, the science you take for granted.'

—Ronald Hutton, *Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft*, Oxford University Press, 2000; pp. 351-52

Green Egg gives me a new perspective...
I read the *Green Egg* because it has in it
things I do not find elsewhere.

—Robert A. Heinlein, author of *Stranger in
a Strange Land*

I have always liked *Green Egg*, though it
does make me a bit nervous at times. It is
full of juice. I see in *Green Egg* a very
accepting spirit, which does not like to
exclude fellow Pagans with different
angles. Good luck for the next hundred
issues!

—John Rowan, author of *The Horned God*

It is always with a feeling of excitement
that I await my next issue of the *Green
Egg*. It provides a breath of fresh air in
the too-often sanctimonious and
occasionally stuffy atmosphere of the New
Age. It offers an unusual framework for
the open debate of lofty ideas,
controversial proposals and little-known
facts. It is designed to feed intellectual
curiosity, but it is never pompous, even
when it dares to report on those
issues the official media would like the
public to forget, or to ignore.

—Jacques Vallée, author of *Forbidden
Science*

Green Egg is one of the leading voices of
the Neo-Pagan movement in North
America, a movement that is attracting
increasing numbers of followers who are
alarmed at the wholesale destruction of
our planet and disappointed with the lack
of nature reverence in the mainstream
religions. Pagans and Neo-Pagans
celebrate the Earth and all its mysteries
and beauties. Like Native Americans and
like their own pre-Christian European
ancestors, they honor the spiritual forces
inherent in the natural world and seek to
live in harmony with them. *Green Egg* is a
forum and a support system for all those
trying to develop a life-style that is both
spiritual and natural, reverential and
joyous.

—Ralph Metzner, Ph.D., president of the
Green Earth Foundation

The Church of All Worlds' *Green Egg*
remains the great Pagan publication:
besides unearthing old gods and birthing
new ones (call on Squat the next time you
need a parking place), the *Green Egg*
Reader's Forum is the best print intro to
the fractious, funny, sexy texture of Pagan
community.

—Erik Davis, *Village Voice Literary
Supplement*, November 1993

I've been reading *Green Egg* since 1975.
Like the Pagan community itself, it just
gets bigger, and better, and more
beautiful all the time.

—Cerridwen Fallingstar, author of *The
Heart of the Fire*

Green Egg is a gutsy grab bag of news
and views. Brazen, brash, beautiful and
blessed. And never boring.

—Dr. Leo Louis Martello, author of
Witchcraft, the Old Religion

I must say that I am very impressed with
Green Egg, which gets better and better
every time I get hold of one. Your articles
are original and well thought out.

—Cat Summers, editor of *Pagan Voice*,
Bristol, England

I congratulate you on 100 issues of
controversy, taking chances, being
courageously concerned with presenting
all sides, and for pushing the envelope in
excellence, Pagan-style...You can be very
proud of yourselves.

—Lunaea Weatherstone, Ed. *Sagewoman*,
Santa Cruz CA

Many thanks for the Summer issue of
Green Egg which was at its usual high

standard, full of thought-provoking and interesting material which confirms your status as one—if not *the*—best Pagan magazine in the universe. May GE live long and prosper!”

—Mike Howard, editor of *The Cauldron*, Cardigan, Wales

I am proud of the *Green Egg*; may she lay many more others in the years to come!

—Z Budapest, author of *Grandmother of Time*

The *Green Egg* has become one of the staples of Pagan life in the United States, and rightly so in my opinion. For many years it has been a melting pot for Pagan opinion and experience; a means for elders to share and beginners to learn. Paganism without the *Green Egg* would be unthinkable”

—Ray Buckland, author of *Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft*

Though Lovelock’s pseudo-scientific Gaia hypothesis has gotten most of the attention, the truth is that another controversial figure was developing a similar concept about the same time. Tim Zell, leader of the pagan Church of All Worlds, formulated a theology of “deep ecology” that was called Theagenesis. It had to do with “the interconnection of all living things to each other and to Mother Earth, a sentient being in her own right.” Zell, who now goes by the name Oberon Zell, describes the “Mother Goddess” as “a living, sentient being with a soul-essence that can be perceived by humans.” This idea reportedly came to him when he had

a “profound vision” in which “he saw Earth as a single biological organism that has evolved from a single original cell, making all life forms on the planet a ‘single vast creature.’” He views natural disasters and plagues as the means by which the planet heals itself. It is Zell who is credited by at least one expert as the original developer of the Gaia hypothesis. He first called Gaia by the name Terrebia. “Zell’s Gaea has been largely ignored by the media in favor of Lovelock’s Gaia,” states writer Rosemary Ellen Guiley. Why? One possible explanation is that the Gaia concept could never have been sold to the public if it were known that its originator had obvious non-Christian or anti-Christian roots. Cloaking it in scientific terminology gives the notion a certain amount of credibility and makes it acceptable to some. Interestingly, however, Guiley reports that, after hearing about Lovelock’s hypothesis, Zell “corresponded briefly with the scientist and shared some of his ‘Theagenesis’ material with him. Zell also changed Terrebia to Gaea.” The official “mission” of the Church of All Worlds, the largest of the pagan movements in the U.S., involves mobilizing the force of Gaia or Gaea. The mission is “to evolve a network of information, mythology and experience that provides a context and stimulus for reawakening Gaea, and reuniting her children through tribal community dedicated to responsible stewardship and evolving consciousness.” The church has what are called “nests” or “proto-nests” of members in the U.S. and other countries.

—*Al Gore and the Cult of GAIA*, by Cliff Kincaid, Director, American Sovereignty Action Project
Wisdom And Freedom produced by [WORLD NEWSSTAND](#);
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The Maiden, the Mother, and the Crone

Andi Fisher

Cast me a circle of bright blue light
And my Spirit shall whistle a tune.
Blow a kiss to our Queen of the night
-most perfect and beautiful Moon.

Evoke the Elements one by one
To guard the quarters four,
God, Goddess, Daughter, Son
Bonded forever more

Drum me a beat on the tightened hide
Transporting me into my soul,
The tempo - the sound - the pulse inside,
And heat from the bonfire coal.

Universal Life Force Energy
Expanding within my space,
Raising vibrational frequency,
Developing my own pace.

Oh, cast me a circle of bright blue light,
My Spirit shall feel much at home,
Blow a kiss to our Queen of the night;
The Maiden, the Mother and the Crone...

Moral Biology

Tom Donohue

Parts of this essay appeared in unrevised form in Green Egg in 1999. Since then I've made some alterations in my thinking, primarily in response to a letter from a reader, Mark Davidson. Mark, Thank you!

In August of 1990, I attended the *Symposium on the Societal and Ethical Issues of Recombinant DNA*, at U.C. Santa Cruz. I was excited! I expected discussion groups wherein scientists shared their own moral and ethical values. I hoped for a search for values and meaning in what we, as scientists, knew of nature. I ended up disappointed.

The entire conference focused on ethical considerations about biotechnological processes like cloning, herbicides or genetic manipulation. The only moralists present were Christian theologians, who insisted that we had no choice but to consider these issues in the light of traditional religious morality and community and family values. I approached one of these theologians after her lecture. She had made the statement that all ethical systems required some moral ground and that the only real sources were community tradition and holy writ, even if the holy writ was of a secular sort like the US constitution.

When I told her that I had spent my life looking at Nature, via Biology, to find my own moral ground, she reacted as if I had said something that was at once, vulgar, blasphemous and dangerous. After a moment of near horror, she scurried away as if from an apparition of a Priapic satyr.

Whenever I use the word, "morals" most Pagans and secularists remark, "Don't you mean ethics?"

No I don't! Ethics are principles that we believe, about how we **SHOULD** behave. We **do** often **choose** to adhere to our ethical principles. Sometimes we don't. Morals inspire what we actually **Do!** We espouse our ethics and try to apply them, but morals drive our actions. People will usually do what **feels** right; sometimes they do what they **think** is the right thing. When what we think is right and what feels right are the same course of action, the moral/ethical choice is easy. When the two are incongruent we need to resolve the dilemma.

The very words, "moral" and "morality", cause Pagans to cringe because they have been taken over by the religious right who seem to think that morality is all about sex, and is used by them, to justify everything from abortion clinic bombings to homophobia. To the great majority of non-Pagan Americans, morality **is** about SEX! Pagans are among the most moral people I know; they are also the most sexual.

We humans are, by nature, a moral/ethical organism. Some of the most popular TV series of all time, E.G. *Star Trek* and its spin-offs, were basically morality plays. Ethical dilemmas frequently provide the basic plot line for anything from police dramas to sitcoms. Kindness, compassion and altruism seem to be inborn in humans. We are not the only such species. Richard Dawkins discusses the altruism gene at some length in his book *The Selfish Gene*.

Life is a moral process. We all make moral choices every day, taking care of children instead of relaxing, recycling aluminum cans, donating money, time or effort to our favorite causes. Most people's career choices result largely from moral considerations.

As William Damon wrote, in the August 1999, *Scientific American*, "All children are

born with a running start on the path to moral development. A number of inborn responses predispose them to act in ethical ways. For example, empathy-- the capacity to experience another person's pleasure or pain vicariously -- is part of our native endowment as humans. Newborns cry when they hear others cry and show signs of pleasure at happy sounds such as cooing and laughter."

Other animals exhibit altruism, doing for another even at some expense to one's self. Parental care is the most obvious. Mother birds spend long hours incubating eggs while their mates search for food for both of them. Bird fathers will feign attack against possible predators at the risk of their own life. This is why male birds are so flashy and colorful. Mother crocodiles disgorge food for their hatchlings; so do wolf mothers, fathers, aunts and uncles. Male musk oxen risk their lives defending their herd. Milk production by all mammals is at great biological expense.

The great American novel, *Huckleberry Finn*, was essentially the tale of one boy's struggle between his own innate morality and the values of the society that surrounded him. In the eyes of the law, Huck was stealing Miss Watson's property; in his heart, he was liberating his friend Jim from slavery.

Piaget, Kohlberg and others have noted that human moral development passes through distinct stages as we mature. Supposedly, the most mature of these stages begins in early adulthood, when we begin to base our moral view on abstract principles, most of which arise from cultural norms. These principles are often in complete conflict with our innate senses of compassion and altruism. I am reminded of a movie that I watched while a graduate student at San Francisco State University. The title of the movie was, "The Fifteenth Button". It was a dramatization of a psychological

research project carried out by Dr. Stanley Milgram at Yale University in 1963. In this experiment, student volunteers were told that they were participating in an experiment to determine the effect of painful punishment on a subject's ability to memorize nonsense syllables. The students were paid a small stipend for their services. One student was seated at a work table with an electronic device with a series of fifteen buttons. The first twelve of these buttons bore no markings, the thirteenth was labeled "DANGER", the fourteenth, "EXTREME DANGER" and the fifteenth, "VERY EXTREME DANGER". Another person was seated in a room visible to the first through a one way mirror. The second person was not a student but a professional actor whose hands were rigged with electrodes that allegedly delivered a painful electrical shock. The operator of the buttons was told that this was another student volunteer. The operator's instructions were to push the first button when the other made a mistake in reciting lists of nonsense syllables. As the experiment progressed, each mistake was to be punished by pushing the next button up the scale. The actors reacted as if each sequential push of the button was delivering a more severe electrical shock than the last. As the tenth button was approached, the actors began to scream and cry and plead, **"No! No! Please no more!"** When the students asked the scientist supervising them if they could stop, they were told flatly, "This is what you agreed to do. You have no choice. No permanent tissue damage will occur." Most returned dutifully to their console. After the thirteenth button, the actors feigned a brief period of unconsciousness, after the fourteenth they pretended to remain unconscious. Finally, the students were told to push the fifteenth button, sometimes several times, as a punishment for not even trying to recite nonsense syllables. The majority of students willingly pushed the fifteenth button. Apparently such principles as obedience to authority and the obligation to do

whatever one had agreed to do, was sufficient to override their inborn sense of compassion and fair play even to the extent of apparent murder. All of the test subjects were male. I've often wondered what women or children would have done under the same circumstances. We will probably never know because Yale University forbade Dr. Milgrim, or any other member of their Psychology department, from ever repeating the experiment.

Sometimes community and cultural values can be at odds with our natural morality as well. I am reminded of the events that occurred during a human physiology lab some years ago. My school has three human skeletons for use in this lab, two of them are plastic and the other one natural bone. A former colleague, the late Bill Stevens, was skilled in forensic anthropology. He studied the natural bone skeleton and determined it to be that of an adolescent female. The bones showed no indication of systemic disease or malnutrition. There was no obvious cause of death. The skeleton had been purchased during those years when human skeletons were very available and very cheap. In those days, most of them came from India. Someone at that time, noticed that an inordinate number of the skeletons being sold, were those of young women and adolescent girls. The government of India began an investigation which uncovered one of the more heinous crimes of modern times.

A criminal cartel had established a number of fake abortion clinics throughout India. Potential clients were instructed to keep their plans absolutely secret, to tell no one about the "clinic" or their plans. In a climate of extreme disapproval of extramarital pregnancy, most of the young women complied. On the day of the scheduled abortion, the young women were asked one final time, if they had told anyone at all. If they had confided in anyone, they were aborted and sent on their way. If they had covered their tracks perfectly, they were placed under

anesthesia never to awaken. They were carefully dissected and their parts were sold to medical and Biological supply houses.

Having learned this story, I decided that it would serve as a good introduction to the human skeleton lab. After a few simple jokes involving the plastic skeletons, I moved to the natural bone one and said, "You know, I make a lot of jokes about the replicas, but I would appreciate it if you treated this skeleton with the respect due a person's remains, because this skeleton is that of someone just about your age. It is also quite likely that she was murdered." I looked out at the class before beginning the tale of the abortion clinic murders and noticed that one of the students, a girl, was an immigrant from India. I told the tale much as it is written here, but instead of specifying India, I simply said, "a certain third world country."

"WHAT ____ THIRD ____ WORLD ____ COUNTRY?" the student asked.

Before I could answer, she strode over to the skeleton, cradled its skull in her hands and, looking deeply into the empty eye sockets, said, **"INDIA!"** She then added, "It is from India, isn't it Mr. Donohue? Look at these teeth, exactly like mine. Look at the shape of the maxilla, just like mine. This girl was from India. No doubt about it." She then gave me a long look and asked, "Can you do me a favor Mr. Donohue?"

"Anything," I stammered.

"Can we call her Radhe?"

"Sure. Why?"

"For my cousin Radhe who learned that she was pregnant and thought that she could confide in her parents. Instead of sneaking off to an abortion clinic she told her father and the son of a bitch killed her."

"I'll call her Radhe for the rest of my teaching career, and, if you don't mind, when people ask me why I call her Radhe I'll tell them about what you've told me today."

"It gets worse," she continued. "When my father told me about her I was horrified and asked how her father could do such a thing."

"What else would you expect a father to do?" he yelled, and then I realized that if I got pregnant, that bastard would do the same thing to me!"

So much for cultural norms and parental values.

A study of the history of human moral values reveals an interesting fact. Human morality has been evolving over the past few thousand years according to a specific pattern, one of continued expansion. Among the very earliest humans we can guess that altruistic behavior was primarily extended towards one's family, much as it is among other organisms. The ten commandments basically applied to behavior within the tribe. "Thou shalt not kill." apparently did not apply to Canaanites or Phillistines. "Love thy neighbor," was a tenet of ancient Judaism. Later, Christianity and Islam extended the definition of "thy neighbor" to include all of the faithful. The mahayana movement in Buddhism included a similar expansion. The humanist movement attempted to expand the realm of those towards whom we behave morally to encompass all human kind. We are all one family.

Now that we are aware that we are closely related to all living things, horizontally via the atmosphere, the water and the great lithic cycles, vertically in our mutual descent from the same common ancestor, and that we are aware that we are only a small part of the living planet, it is time to expand our morality again. It is time to extend our altruism

and our benevolence to every other organism on earth and to the biosphere herself. It has been said that self love lies at the root of all good behavior. Evolving morality is the continued increase in what we recognize as being like, or part of, ourselves. Perhaps altruism really is enlightened self-interest.

Unfortunately, compassion and altruism are not our only instincts. Consider the case of Mao's Red Guard, the killing fields of the Khmer Rouge, or the Japanese soldiers responsible for the rape of Nan King. In all of these cases, teenaged boys and very young adults, were given the power of life and death over a large number of people. In none of these cases did these boys show any compassion. They were taken away from their families just as the sudden surges of testosterone entered their systems. With no family structure to inform them otherwise, they acted without restraint.

Male violence and aggression seem to be stimulated by the steroid hormone, testosterone. Testosterone also stimulates the sex drive in both males and females. It occurs in much higher levels in men than in women. Men produce it in our testes and, to a lesser extent, our adrenal glands. Women's adrenals supply most of **their** testosterone. That high levels of testosterone stimulate aggression, is not surprising. Most male terrestrial vertebrates defend their mates and offspring against predators, in fact, they are often equipped by Nature, with special structures for this purpose. I've already mentioned musk oxen where the males have larger horns and male songbirds with their elegant distractive plumage.

Naomi Wolf, in her second book, *Fire with Fire*, notes that, "...studies show that men's testosterone and aggression levels fall with time; they become more nurturing as they age. Women's testosterone levels rise with time and they become more assertive in middle life.

Research also increasingly suggests that care taking responsibilities create caretaking behaviors in men that mirror those traditionally attributed to women."

I suspect that these caretaking behaviors have less to do with testosterone levels than with another hormone, oxytocin. Oxytocin is almost unique among hormones. I say "almost" because there is a similar hormone, vasopressin. These two are the smallest of all proteins being made up of only nine amino acids. (Some antibodies are made of thirty thousand amino acids.) Oxytocin is produced in the brains of both men and women, but women produce much more of it__ and estrogen makes them more sensitive to it, especially during pregnancy. It has been called "the cuddle chemical" because it is released in response to any romantic/erotic activity from flirtation onwards, peaking during orgasm in both men and women. It is best known for it's ability to induce uterine contractions during the last phase of labor. Pitocin, a synthetic form of oxytocin, is often used in hospitals to induce labor. Oxytocin also facilitates the release of milk in response to nursing. It induces bonding behavior between mothers and offspring and very probably between members of a couple. More specifically, oxytocin makes us feel good about the person who causes the oxytocin to be released. Not only does touch stimulate production of oxytocin, but oxytocin promotes a desire to touch and be touched, preferably by the same person and in the same way. Good sex with someone makes us want more sex with the same partner. Nursing induces the desire to nurse. Handling a baby makes us want to handle that baby more. A feedback loop is established wherein oxytocin encourages behavior which causes its secretion. More recently it has been observed to be involved in the formation of trust between people. Perhaps most significant is its ability to induce "maternal behavior" I.E. nurturing, care giving, compassion

and altruism. It makes mice build nests, sheep accept their lambs and prairie voles to pair bond.

A number of Pagan writers have extolled as "female" characteristics, protection and nurturing of the young, cooperative labor, egalitarianism and compassion. They have also labeled as "male", the desire for power over, hierarchy, competition, aggression, violence and war. Starhawk sees the difference between "male" and "female" values as:

"... the difference between the dominator and the partnership models of society... war is the organizing principle of [our patriarchal] society; its hierarchical structures determine the management of corporations, schools, prisons, hospitals, universities, churches and, of course, governments....

When birth becomes our underlying metaphor, however, the world shifts. The cosmos becomes a living body in which we all participate, continually merging and emerging in rhythmic cycles."

It might be more valuable to view these behaviors as testosterone induced and oxytocin induced as opposed to male and female. People of both genders secrete both hormones and are capable of both sets of behavior. Our hormones, like our stars, do not compel; they impel. Many social systems based on compassion and gentle justice were advanced by men: Gautama Buddha, Jesus of Nazareth, Martin Luther King Jr., Rabbi Hillel, Mohandas Ghandi, etc. Our challenge is to construct a society that values and encourages compassionate and non-violent behavior, while providing safe outlet for the effects of testosterone.

This same dichotomy of dominator and partnership models can be seen in several situations. One obvious case is the political polarization of America into "liberal" and "conservative."

At first glance, neither side seems to be internally consistent. The right is against abortion because of the "right to life" yet most of them advocate capital punishment. The left supports constitutional rights but votes for gun control. It has been said that the defining difference between the two camps is whether they spank their children or not. Liberals value empathy and compassion, conservatives mandatory obedience to specific rules. The right believes in a prison system based on punishment the left, rehabilitation. Democrats support public education, health care for all, disability insurance and gay marriage. Right wingnuts say they believe in "backbone" and individual responsibility, nose to the grindstone and survival of the fittest.

They view sexual nonconformity as a major violation of their rules. Their view on abortion seems to be based in an attitude of "you got yourself pregnant, now you've got to suffer the consequences." In general, the right abhors sex, the liberals, violence.

The Amazon basin is home to numerous tribal cultures. Some are farmers; some are potters, some are gatherer/hunters. Because there is local trade, most peoples specialize in some product or other and identify themselves by what they create, calling themselves names like the "pottery people," the "invisible people" etc. About half of all tribes are peaceful, productive, kindhearted people with a more or less egalitarian social structure. The other half are all **Yanomamo**, which translates "fierce people" or "mean people." The *Yanomamo* live by attacking and robbing the other tribes. They also are strictly hierarchical. Child and spousal abuse are the norm in their society. Women have very low status. Rules are numerous and strictly enforced. The male dominator model reigns supreme.

Both groups share the same gene pool and the same environment, yet two cultures have evolved that are as different as night and day. What seems obvious to me is that the potential for either lifestyle exists in almost all of us. Inside, we are all both nice people and *Yanomamo*.

At first it seems to be discouraging news. If the *Yanomamo* attitude lives inside every one of us, how can we create a society without cruelty and violence? Where can we find a model for a peaceful, loving culture? Since our instincts are genetic in origin, can we really change our nature as a species? I think we can!

We need to look at one more situation in which the same dichotomy occurs. This time between two different species of the same genus, the chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* and the bonobo *Pan paniscus*. These two primates are our closest relatives. Genetic research has revealed that we share about 98% of our genes with each of these apes. They, in turn, share 98% of their genes with each other. Studies of the so called "junk" DNA suggest that our common ancestor lived about six million years ago during that part of the pliocene frequently called, "the fossil gap". Readers will note that this is the time period when our aquatic ancestor may have evolved. To be more specific, the genera *Pan* and *Homo* diverged about six million years ago, the species *P. troglodytes* and *P. paniscus* about three million.

While the two species resemble each other physically, their social structures differ dramatically. Chimpanzees are well known for male power politics. Generally, males are larger than females, and males dominate females most of the time. Male chimps are territorial and will regularly patrol the boundaries of their territory watching for other bands of chimps. If they encounter a foreign group, violence is the immediate reaction. Many individuals will be brutally beaten,

sometimes to death. This type of violence between different populations can only be regarded as intergroup warfare. Infanticide is also common. A male chimpanzee will kill the offspring of other males in order to mate with the bereaved mother. Chimpanzees have been described as coarse and hot-tempered. Violence of all sorts is common.

In contrast to this, bonobo society is peaceful and egalitarian. One of the bonobo's outstanding traits is their sensitivity to other individuals. Their society has been described as a gentle matriarchy, wherein female rank is based on seniority not physical intimidation. They have been called the "make-love-not-war" primate because they use an amazing variety of erotic interactions to resolve tensions, to cement relationships, to soothe hurt feelings and simply for the sheer pleasure of it. Bonobos substitute sex for aggression. (N.B. Both behaviors are facilitated by testosterone.) Bonobos engage in sex in every possible partner combination, males with other males, males with females, females with females and adults of both sexes with juveniles. In adult/juvenile sex, penetration is never attempted and ejaculation is rare. Sex between bonobos sometimes seems more affectionate than erotic. "French kissing" is frequent, as are fellatio and cunnilingus. Males often rub their rumps and scrota together. Females will often rub their clitorises together; males engage in penis fencing. There is a widespread myth that female orgasm only occurs in humans. It seems to be quite common among bonobos. I have even heard it alleged that only humans enjoy sex. If this is the case, why do adult female and adolescent male bonobos masturbate so frequently? The females undergo uterine contractions at orgasm suggesting that oxytocin plays some role.

"If the sounds and facial expressions of bonobos are any indication, not only masturbation but also sexual intercourse must be quite gratifying. Females

frequently bare their teeth in a pleasure grin during coitus, particularly towards the end when the male slows down for his final, deeper thrusts. Furthermore, females often utter characteristic screams and squeals before or during coitus, as well as when they engage in genital/genital rubbing with other females. Sexual partners often face each other, so they can closely monitor each other's facial expressions and sounds, and the exchange becomes quite intense and intimate."

.....Frans De Waal

Some habits and innovations in groups of primates are passed on genetically, but others are actually taught to younger generations. Primatologists are ever more willing to regard these sets of traditions as culture. The entire social structure of bonobos may be more cultural than instinctive. How did bonobos escape the all too common human traits, xenophobia and murderous violence? One thing is obvious, sex, in fact, loving touch in any form, goes a long way towards reducing the human male tendency towards violence. I am reminded of the "women who slept with men to take the war out of them." Pagan polyamory may turn out to be the key to a kinder gentler society. Make love, not war!

While we as individuals can choose to live differently from the mainstream dominator culture, can we, as a species, possibly change our very nature? Is there any chance that all of human society could switch to the cooperator model?

Recent scientific studies of baboons offer some hope. Robert M. Sapolsky of Stanford University, and his wife, Lisa J. Share conducted a study of a troop of olive baboons (*Papio anubis*) in northern Kenya for over a quarter of a century. When this team first started studying the "forest troop" in 1978 they behaved in much the same manner as most other troops of the same species. As Dr.

Sapolsky noted on a recent *Nature* documentary on PBS, "Usually baboon males spent at least half of their time making each other's lives absolute hell."

Although they occasionally are involved in more hedonic interactions like mutual grooming, it is fairly rare among males.

They don't treat the females very well either. Brutal dominance behavior is the norm. Interactions with females is generally limited to sex and violence.

Another relevant fact about savannah baboon behavior, is that adolescent males leave the troop into which they were born, and join other neighboring troops.

Then something happened in the mid nineteen eighties that led to profound cultural changes in the troop. A nearby hotel established a garbage dump in an area accessible to several troops of baboons including the forest troop. The dominant males of the forest troop vied with big males from neighboring troops, for easy access to the abundant food resources of the dump. So fierce was the competition that females, the young and subordinate males didn't even bother to attempt to compete. Some of the garbage was beef that was contaminated with bovine tuberculosis. This resulted in a die off of about half of the males in the forest troop, the big, fierce dominant males to be more specific. The female to male ratio was instantly doubled,

The culture of the troop made a shift to a more pacifistic model. The remaining males showed much less interest in struggles for dominance over their fellows and females alike. Mutual grooming behavior increased and males actually started associating and forming friendships with females. At first these differences seemed to reflect genetic changes. The bullies were killed off leaving the members of the kinder, gentler end of the gene pool to reproduce.

Another possibility that was considered was the fact that the 2:1 ratio of females to males made the competition for access to females far less acute. It made sense that the remaining males had far less reason to fight.

Adolescent male baboons, however, always migrate to other troops and get replaced by adolescents from neighboring troops. If they were human we would describe them as exogamous. The females remain with their natal group.

One would expect that the influx of outsider males would lead to an immediate reversion to the more usual behavior pattern, especially as the gender ratio became more balanced.

But that isn't what happened!

Instead, the new culture persisted through several generations and several cycles of emigration and immigration. (thus ruling out the genetic explanation.) Somehow the new culture was passed on to the immigrant male baboons as they joined the troop. Several mechanisms have been suggested for this cultural continuity. One possibility is that the new males modeled the behavior of the adult males already in the group. Another is that the females "instructed" the males as to what behaviors they preferred. The females simply solicited more sex from the males who treated them nicely. Only one thing is certain; the new behaviors were transmitted socially. As a fringe benefit, the health of the male baboons improved because of the reduction in stress and its attendant physiological effects. This improved health alone could provide the new culture with an adaptive advantage.

<http://www.plosbiology.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pbio.0020106>

Comparable cultural changes have been reported in other primate species including rhesus monkeys and gelada baboons. Now it's our turn.



Dark Cup of Light

A Healing for Self, Community, Planet, and Gods

Francesca De Grandis

She shattered the cup, boxed the pieces up to send to her spiritual teacher. The cup, the chalice, the mother, the Goddess. She enclosed a verbal attack, denouncing the teacher for charging for lessons.

This happened in the 21st century. In ancient times, a shaman charged. "To cheat him or her of payment was considered stupid."*

She shattered the cup, the chalice, the mother-embrace, the Goddess-link. She is afraid of her mother, and of her Mother, and of herself and all her beauty.

The teacher's friend commented, "I've

never known a shattered cup to mend. Throw it out. Forget it."

In ancient times, the shaman had a reputable profession.

The student's teacher often taught for free, had explained there are lessons that, for one reason or another, cannot be exchanged for money or goods. Other lessons cannot even be *given* for free. But she—the student—broke the cup, the mother-womb of caring, the ancestral link to the Old Ones.

Down, down, down go the misled, the fearful. The teacher can bless them, hope for them, long for them, weep for them. She can protect herself as they reach up from a well of pettiness to drag her in. Pettiness is a sad and awful thing to be snared by, it is an abyss, not a womb or vagina.

The shaman can smile at the fearful and misled, offer her professional services — for free or for fee, as is appropriate. She can hide both her light and darkness from them until they're ready to see these without attacking. She can decide, "I'm not going to let anyone f**k with me."

But she cannot save them. Our caretakers, the earth among them, see us naked—our full magnificence, potential, misery, lies, and failures. If we cannot face one of our powers, fragilities, or shortcomings, we refute those who can: We tell lies about them. Like "She doesn't understand me." Or "She wasn't there for me when I needed her." "She doesn't know the mysteries." "She doesn't have real power."

Or we take a high "moral" ground. "You're bad because you charge for lessons" is a particularly effective way to leave a loving witness behind and hide one's misdeeds. It targets and annihilates a core responsibility that a student has, thereby severing a connection. The teacher cannot save the fearful and misled. Her path is

narrow, more so every moment. There's no time to spare on fretting. Not about anything, not about those who try to extinguish light, who smash a cup. They have denied the Dark Womb who had held them, forsaken the God of Light who flowed from it. So, now they'll wander, perhaps through lifetimes. Until there's the decision and opportunity to fulfill their Karma, to come home, to buy a new chalice, a pretty one, and give it to the teacher.

She has not forsaken them, even though she will not be f**ked with. She is calm and patient or abrupt and stern, both responses acts of love.

If you take but do not give back what's *right*, your chalice breaks. Payment of meaningful words and trinkets

sometimes isn't enough. When the mother, the Mother, the teacher, Gaia gives her life, her breath, her DNA, the marrow from her bones, hard cash may be the payment needed—at least from those who have it to give.

The cup, the chalice, the teacher, the Gods—fill them with grateful payment. You'll be feeding the earth. You'll be feeding yourself.

Sometimes money *is* love.

*Author's Note: My friend Kush said this though the version in this story is a paraphrase.



Romantic Pastoral (PartOne)

Rev. Paul Chase-MoonOak

PaleoPagans

When Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola was led by his young daughter into the caves at Altamira in 1879 and there were the beautiful late-Paleolithic wall paintings dancing in his torchlight, the discovery changed how many people viewed primordial (or "prehistoric") humans. Gone was the club-wielding brute, and in his place, a people with a vibrant and creative culture, the very foundation of our own.

When contemporary Pagans peer into the misty past, to the time when our ancestors were painting animals on cave walls, we see certain distinct truths. The archeological evidence and anthropological explication of this time take vibrant shape in the Pagan imagination. Whether these truths are historical fact is not as important as their theological and mythopoetic interpretation in the present. Altamira and other primal sites where we have glimpsed the lives of our forebears serve as beginnings for the story of the human sojourn on Earth. Part of that story involves what Pagans believe is the innate ability, as developed and manifest in some humans, to delve deeper into reality, to sense and perceive complex levels of consciousness, to commune and communicate with spiritual and mystical realms of the world. In every primal group, clan, or tribe, and in most subsequent settlements and later villages, there was at least one man or woman who possessed these abilities and used them to travel the Netherworlds in service to his or her people. Often thought of as having special gifts of the gods, these few were the first Witches, the first servants called by God.

To tell the story of the *Romantic-Pastoral* branch of NeoPaganism that will lead us to the Church of All Worlds, we must begin at the dawn of humankind, when our

species was one of many children in the primordial garden. Scientific interpretation suggests that humans were originally foragers, gatherers, and scavengers, only later learning to hunt. In this state of complete integration with nature, we may not have yet differentiated ourselves from the Earth, just as an infant may not differentiate from her mother. For most NeoPagans, Witchcraft begins with the proto-shamans of this period, the wise men and women who called the game animals, performed community rituals and rites, and traveled to the land of the spirits to heal the sick and wounded. They were also familiar with herb-lore, medicinal and nutritious plants, and the unique nature of their environment. The rhythms, cycles, and movements of their ecosystem, including migration routes and feeding habits of animals and growing seasons of edible fruits and vegetables, proved a critical gnosis for human survival in the harsh whiteness of the last Ice Age.

Many NeoPagans trace their cultural and religious heritage to these first holy persons and the skills they acquired, which they believe were passed on in a splintered but unbroken inheritance to Pagans today. Again, whether this is historical fact is not the main concern; what matters is the perception that cultural and religious treasures can be re-discovered, revived, reclaimed, and re-manifested in the twenty-first century. Of course, tribal people extant today unequivocally live in an unbroken line of ancestral knowledge, existing in inherited interrelationship with their bioregion. While they should not be romanticized, we can and should acknowledge that they represent a lost state of being, faintly remembered in our oldest literature, wisest stories, most ancient spiritual traditions, and deepest collective unconscious.

The Romantic-Pastoral branch of NeoPaganism begins with the tales, songs, dances, skills, knowledge, and mythic ecospirituality of the "Old Ones." For

those NeoPagans who tend towards Edenic views of the past, humans once possessed great mental and spiritual power emerging from their connection to nature and the old gods and rooted in a sense of interconnectivity and deep communion with other people, non-humans, nature, earth, and deity. Nevertheless, evolutionary processes and cultural development stand between those people and us, especially in the form of modernity, with its drastic changes and comparatively high-speed progress. Humans have grown and matured, learning much in the intervening time, and our species moves through the eons just as infants grow into adults.

We did not stay in caves, of course, but worked substances around us into forms and tools to aid our survival and prosperity—and flourish we did. We taught each other to cultivate certain plants and animals, which provided a steadier food supply than foraging or hunting, and in time, we moved into the Neolithic period. Farming and agriculture opened up an entirely new chapter in history, working on the consciousness in ways that allowed for innovative social organizations based primarily on human-to-human, rather than human-nature, interaction. Cities evolved and grew in size and sophistication, and hierarchies formed—including the religious specialization of authoritative priesthoods. This, according to author Daniel Quinn, describes the historically significant split between tribal culture and civilizational culture. We will follow the spiritual traditions of tribal cultures as they developed, different from, parallel to, and interdependent with, the “march of civilization” that one learns in public school history books.

During the Neolithic period, deities of grain and season joined older spirits of earth, sky, river, ocean, forest, and mountain. These were immanent forces embodied in the fertile land, cyclical rhythms, and mysterious mists of Old Europe, where dwells the genetic

memories of most NeoPagans. From the start of farming to the widespread use of copper, early village cultures developed, and with them a settled, grounded life of seasonal celebrations, fertility rituals, rites of passage, and other community activities directed at the survival, unity, and prosperity of the whole. Village life took on a steady pace, barring natural disaster, external disruption, or internal disorder, reflected in archeological sites such as Skara Brae in Scotland. With settled life, attention was increasingly given to marking Earth’s seasonal journey in projects like Stonehenge. There is also evidence for a lack of valuated social hierarchies, which developed later as the division between “pagan” and “civilizational” cultures increased, and a sense of egalitarianism may have prevailed where everyone contributed to the community and derived benefits from it in relatively equal measure. When Romantic-Pastoral Pagans tend towards collective interdependence, they recapitulate this Neolithic memory.

The myth of the balanced Neolithic village-community and its conscious attentiveness to cycles forms the basis for contemporary Paganism’s seasonal *Sabbat* celebrations, emphasis on life-long rites of passage, love of circular worship spaces aligned with the cardinal directions, and deeply-held, though admittedly modernity-inspired, sense of equality.

Faeries and Folk Spirituality

As the Celts began to spread across Europe in the late Bronze Age, the indigenous inhabitants, who were probably infantile in their interconnection with nature, came to be viewed by contemporary Pagans as possible candidates for the “little people.” Pre-Celtic natives may well have been small in stature and dark in coloring, leading to tales and myths about “hill-dwellers” and “forest folk.” Indeed, these small, dark-featured inhabitants, who almost certainly were pushed to the fringes of Europe—

eventually Wales, Ireland, and northern Scotland— may have contributed to the extended mythological cycle of the *wee ones* or *fey*. Even now, Brits who are small and dark-haired are considered to have faerie blood. On the other hand, another explanation, particularly concerning the *fey*—faeries, sprites, leprechauns, pixies, and so on—is that at one time people, being more interconnected with nature, were able to see the rich complexity of life on all its many, otherwise invisible, levels of reality. That is, there exists now, as in the past, different perceptual strata in the world, inhabited by ethereal beings not necessarily distinguished by modern humans. If we have drifted away from deep gnosis of Earth, perhaps we have lost certain abilities of perception we once possessed. While highly speculative, these ideas drive a certain need in Pagans to re-inhabit the planet holistically and reclaim lost faculties.

The *fey* are not the grand pantheons of classical antiquity but the pastoral beings of hill and dale and immanent deities like Herne the Hunter and Green Man. Rather than divine aristocracy dwelling in cloud-shrouded Olympus (or even further away in Heaven), the spiritual family of the country folk lived right next door, in deep woods, under grass-soft hills, and beneath crystalline springs. They could take the form of animals, act mischievously, help or hinder crops, and were, in every way, creatures of the elements. In NeoPaganism, they are represented and honored as elementals or devas, the spirits of growing and living things. Whether there currently exist any of the many possible species of semi-corporeal beings that gave rise to fairy tales, I do not know. It is possible they are extinct or greatly reduced in numbers by the dominance of humankind, or, perhaps, they are merely waiting in the shadows and morning mists until we are ready to know them again.

In my own life, I cannot claim to have visually seen these realms of reality, but I

feel them, sense their presence, and have experienced their efficacy. At Findhorn in Scotland, the plant devas helped grow monstrous vegetables in beach sand, and at more than one Circle in which I have participated, others have seen visions or glimpsed the *otherworld* in ways I find compelling. Even one of my sons used to stare up at the corner of the ceiling when he was a toddler, laughing and interacting with unseen companions, and to this day he sees auras. I decline to accept that such events are self-generated phantoms of an isolated psyche. Rather, I choose to believe in a complex world full of intelligent life, visible and invisible, with which we share the Earth. To think otherwise is to reduce consciousness and the planetary milieu to the horizontal plane of physical-sensory perception, with humankind conveniently at the top, a doctrine shared by very few Pagans. The search for holistic consciousness often includes the restoration of mystically esoteric qualities of the mind and spirit.

Folk Religion

In time, the nebulous traditions of relatively isolated groups coalesced into more formalized, and even loosely organized, religious systems. Although there was a great deal of diversity, the early outlines of European folk religions began to unfold. The common people—farmers, village-dwellers, shepherds, and the occasional wise woman or “cunning man”—were already weaving the tapestries of what would (re)emerge as the Old Religion. Cyclical agricultural celebrations seemed to have formed the framework for what became the annual, seasonal Sabbats, punctuated by rituals on the full and new moons. These celebrations offered regional inhabitants the chance to gather, swap stories, find mates, and generally enjoy themselves. Very old traditions of blessing the crops through prayers to the Lord of the Harvest and erotic rendezvous in the fields between amorous couples are still a part of NeoPagan fertility festivals. Images of John Barleycorn, Robin Goodfellow, Puck,

Herne, Sheela Na Gig, and the Lady of the Wood resonate with richness and meaning, creating a mystical mindset and encouraging what is often called "twilight consciousness." In this state, magic can be perceived and worked, reconciling the modern dualities of mind/body, intellect/intuition, human/nature, and earth/spirit, spun into synthetic, energetic, and interdependent polarities and applied to the holistic spiritual life.

Several important elements in folk religions stem from the practice of *animism* and *pantheism*. Animism, in this instance, concerns the belief, and perhaps reality, that supposedly "inanimate" objects like rocks and rivers are actually alive and might even be living beings with their own, albeit radically different, consciousness. The way certain First Nations refer to the "stone people" or "river people" just as they do "buffalo people" or "bird people," as if each were a separate tribe, is an example. Pantheism, of course, is the notion that deity is immanent in the physical world, expressed through sacred nature. These two elements together allow for a relationship with deity or spirits *through* nature, one of the basic tenets of pagan folk religion. When men and women danced across the fields, they were calling on the forces of nature, often embodied as spirit, sprite, or regional deity, to bless them with fertility and a good harvest. They sang songs, performed rituals, and celebrated together in order to draw forth the abundant earth through their clearly interconnected relationship with it. This, in turn, developed into more complex systems of deities who cared for human needs and to whom appeals could be made, either in a parental mode of obedience or partnership mode of cooperation. From these early acts of drawing greater powers into the project of human survival and continued prosperity

developed later Pagan perspectives and praxis. Along with the outlines of folk religions that coalesced as Paganism, there was also distinct folk wisdom that presently informs Neopagan traditions. Story telling (including tales and myths), herbal medicine, midwifery, organic nutrition, Gaean interrelationships, divination, and ecospirituality are all products from the late Neolithic period. Through the centuries, rural people amassed a compendium of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom that is, just as technological innovation and the scientific canon, the heritage of humankind. Many of these skills are greatly admired and cultivated by Neopagans today, and at most contemporary Pagan gatherings, you will find herbs and herbalists, healers, bards, and tarot readers in abundance. Adding religion to the mix, two types of spirituality emerge: the *urban-civilizational* type and the *rural-tribal* type, a difference which is at the conceptual heart of the two branches of Neopaganism. These two ways of expressing spirituality can be discussed with different terminologies, but their meaning is similar.

With the development of civilization, the two spiritual traditions appear to have divided, a separation that progressive Neopaganism seeks to reconcile. Civilization, marked by hierarchical social and religious structures, refinement of the power-over or dominance model, urban landscape and city-centered worldview, individualism, private property and ownership, and, unfortunately, almost constant warfare, gradually overwhelmed rural tribes, clans, and villages in many places. The Romans burned the Druids' sacred groves, city-states conquered the countryside, Christianity displaced, and often demonized, pagan traditions, and European folk religions were driven underground.

Spring Vows

By Laura A. Wildman-Hanlon

This is a true story of spring and love.

We stood in an open field in the heart of New England on a day soon after the winter's thaw. The snows had retreated and spring was making her appearance throughout the countryside. The breeze, while still crisp, brought with it the promise of warmth. The wild grasses around us, once flattened from carrying the weight of winter, were now reaching upwards towards the sky. The first flowers of the season dotted the ground among new green shoots. Fresh leaves recently pushed out from bare branches of the surrounding trees, embraced the field in a decorative web of light green finery.

The young bride stood to my left looking radiant in a white lace mini-dress. Her black hair, piled on her head in meticulously crafted tresses, was held high by an elegant clip. The spring breeze played with the edge of the gauzy material of her veil, lifting it gently to float behind her.

Clutching a small bouquet in her hands, her attention was completely focused on the man to my right, oblivious to the mud oozing around her delicate white shoes.

The groom shifted nervously in his place. Each move of his feet emitted a slight gurgling noise from the earth below. While he looked dashing in his white suit, he appeared uncomfortable in the formal attire. He absentmindedly fiddled with the lower seam of his jacket.

They wore white for purity, white for new beginnings, white to represent the opening of their spirits, their hearts, to each other. His eyes focused intently on his bride, a shy smile on his lips. She blushed under his gaze, but returned his

loving look. They reminded me of young children caught in an innocent but perhaps questionable act; unsure of what was to happen to them but not sorry for whatever they had done. They stood firm on the ground of potential, surrounded by the new growth of spring and ready for adventure.

Thirty friends and family members, loved ones who had gathered to watch this couple exchange marriage vows, sat nearby in rows of white plastic chairs rented from a local store. Each looked uncomfortable as they attempted to balance on seats which were slowly sinking from their weight into the moist earth. You could see annoyance on the faces of the older women who had worn attire more suitable to an indoor ceremony. They eyed the black soil with disgust, lifting one foot then another in a feeble attempt at saving their shoes. It was a lost cause as they were already soiled from the walk into the field to the ritual site. Children, constrained by tradition, struggled with their instincts to run wild and dance in the glorious mud. Not resigned to boredom, they reached down to the ground to grab and pull at the green shoots surrounding their chairs, rolling the leaves into balls which they hurled at each other with glee.

With all the participants in place, I cleared my voice and began the ritual. First was the invocation acknowledging the circle of life, then a call to the Elements of Air, Fire, Water and Earth. Lastly I sang to the God and the Goddess of Love and Creation who were embodied in the couple before me. The spring sun warmed the air and quiet embraced us. We waited. A bird overhead called out. Its mate responded with soft chirps. The scents of spring, sweet grass and damp potential permeated the air around us. The earth hummed with life. All called were present and the circle was complete.

The energy of spring is of possibilities, promises and potentials. Like the fresh

breeze, it is also wild, free, and unpredictable. Once the winter recedes, the ground swells to release the mysteries she held safe within her throughout the cold season. Life is rebirthed in a gush of water and earth. For those who live half the year with the dark of winter, it is an act that is always beautiful and amazing.

We plant seeds and watch with wonder and hope the future will bring growth and harvest.

This couple stood before me and their guests, ready to plant their own seeds, ones made of words. Unlike many who take traditional lines from wedding or prayer books, they had chosen to use the free flow energy of Spring and uniquely craft their own vows. The words they would speak to each other would be a surprise, creative, unhampered by organized form. Their promises were ones secretly fashioned within their individual hearts and would only be revealed, spoken aloud, at this magical time, with moment and emotions selecting the words. I turned to the groom, smiled sweetly and said, "I invite you now to share your vows with the bride."

The man suddenly turned as pale as his suit. His eyes grew wide, his hands trembled, and his body wavered as if drunk. Fearful that he would pour to the ground, I reach a hand toward him, ready to make a catch. The groom took in a few deep gasps of air as if it would help push out the words stuck in his throat. Slowly, he steadied himself and looked into the eyes of his bride.

"I don't remember what I was going to say," he said in a shaking voice. "But," he added as tears filled his eyes, "I promise I will love you forever."

I breathed a sigh of relief and regained my composure. It might not have been the most poetic of vows but they would

do. I turned now to the bride. She looked as terrified as he. Her eyes filled with tears which rolled uncontrollably down her cheeks. She was visibly shaking, the wildflowers in her hands quivering. She looked to her groom for support and found it in his love. Taking a breath, she began.

"I don't remember what I was going to say either," she whispered, "but, I promise I'll love you forever and that I will give you at least two weeks notice if I ever decide to leave."

There was stunned silence. The couple looked at each other with shocked expressions, and then large smiles broke across their faces. They began to laugh with deep, ecstatic delight. The crowd joined in filling the air with loud joyful sounds.

The couple grasped hands and together they leaped over the wedding broom into their new life. As their feet hit the earth, a spray of wet erupted from below splashing their white clothes with dark rich life. The new husband reached down to the ground. Covering the tip of his finger with mud, he dotted some of the earth on the end of his wife's nose. Getting her hands muddy in the process, she followed his example covering his nose with wetness. Then, standing in a mud puddle, radiating waves of love, they sealed their vows with a deep, passionate kiss.

With the pronouncement of marriage complete, hand in hand the couple ran off laughing through the meadow. The children, who could no longer be restrained, sprang from their seats to follow in chase. Their youthful sounds echoed throughout the field as they danced and played in the mud of spring's promise.

Green Egg Forum

THE LEGEND LIVES ON

Well, it's been quite a hiatus here at the Green Egg Forum, about seven years. In those seven years the Legendary Green Egg Forum has been journeying in the other worlds and undergoing intense transformative shamanic experiences. Now its coracle has again beached on earthly shores, and it looks around in wonder, otherworldly music still playing its head. Wow, has it really been seven years? It seems like only yesterday, it seems like much more than seven years.

Yes, the Legendary Green Egg Forum is back, and so am I, Ian Lurking Bear, your Forum editor. I'll try to keep the Forum showing up a little more often than every seven years. Lives have changed, the world has changed, much water over the bridge, and nothing has quite filled the gap left behind by the Green Egg. It's good to be back. Live long and prosper.

Please send Forum letters to lgeforum@greeneggzine.com. Please include any contact info you wish to share with your signature.

The Green Egg legacy

I began reading Green Egg magazine in 1994 when I discovered a Wiccan coven in Nashville, Tennessee. The columns, articles and even the advertisements were inspiring to a newbie Pagan. Over the next few years I married the coven's Chantress, moved to Huntsville, AL, for 3 years - finally ending up in Albuquerque, NM, for 3 years. New Mexico was where the marriage

ended but it was also the location of the most vibrant Pagan community I experienced. I was always excited to find that the local book stores carried Green Egg. Aside from the awesome teachers I had, the two greatest influences on my spiritual development were Green Egg and The Witch's Voice (on the internet). Many of your articles and columns are still part of my daily life. I appreciated your writing style which included lots of humor, intelligence and sexual freedom. There was no other magazine like it. I hope that there will be a successor some day.

Thank you for making me think, laugh and say (out loud), "Ah-ha!" I wish you the best in this life. I consider you part of my personal inner circle and will always feel that way.

Larry Reid AKA Silverdrake

NashVegas, TN

From

CAW-Phoenix

Why would a pagan or wiccan (making an assumption here) use Christian 'holy water' or 'holy objects' to dispel anything? Talk about mixed metaphors! If next you suggest I wear a crucifix around my neck, which do I put on first: the crucifix or the pentagram? Kau

Dear Kau,

First, good question. Second, I was raised Catholic, yet I've always been a pagan, once upon a time called myself a witch for a few decades, but now have found my Soul's calling and practice Santeria but have no problem flexing my witchy muscles from time to time. As far as using Christian holy water or various other Christian holy objects, why not? If one believes that all Gods/Goddesses are just rays of one Entity, wouldn't holy water that

has been blessed by a Christian be just as holy as water that has been blessed by a Buddhist monk or Wiccan high priest/priestess? Or if you believe that the Norse Gods are cool, and the Celtic Gods are cool, and the Greco-Roman Gods are cool, why not the Abrahamic Gods? (Yes, yes, I know they only have "One True God". Then what about the Archangels? They sound to me like demi-gods. And what about the kabala and the mention of God's wife? Sounds to me like a Goddess.) Yes, the Christians have and still are doing mean rotten nasty things in the name of "their" god. And I hate to say it, looks like they will still do so in the future. Yet, I refuse to throw the baby out with the bath water as how can I poo-poo a religion that gave us Mother Teresa? (And St. Anthony to whom I would never be able to get to work on time as I am always looking for my other shoe in the morning and without whom I would never find it! Love ya St. Anthony!)

I have a B.A. in religion and in studying for that degree I've found that the BASIC fundamentals of Christianity are very beautiful, just like for the other Abrahamic religions. Unfortunately, it is the things that SOME of its followers have done in its name that have tainted it. You know, the whole "squeaky wheel gets the oil" motif - you hear more about the bad stuff and less about the good.

If you would rather not use Christian holy water, et al, then don't. No harm no foul. It's all good. Once upon a time I too poo-pooed all things Christian. Found the mere mention of their usage in ritual insulting. Disgusting even. But then I looked deeper and with an open mind. Now I have no problem. Maybe its the whole "with age comes wisdom" thing, (I have a major milestone birthday coming up in the Spring so the age thing applies), - who knows. And it's

not because of me practicing Santeria either, which does use a lot of Catholic bells and whistles. All of which came about from the Yoruba slaves having to mask their Gods, the Orishas, in order to preserve their religion. So when I light a candle that has St. Barbara on it, I am not doing it to Her, but to Chango who was given Her as a mask to wear so the slaves wouldn't be beaten by their masters for worshiping their gods. By using Catholicism as a cover, they were able to pull one over on their masters. The Yoruba saw that there was power in the saints and masses and all the other christian stuff and combined it into their beliefs. But enough Santeria 101.

Then too, there is the belief that to kill a werewolf you need a silver bullet that has been blessed by a Christian priest. Will a silver bullet that has been blessed by my local coven at the last esbat work just as well? Probably. But why take the chance? If you know that something works and works fast and does the job, why not? Why mess with the tried and true if it works? Not to say that sometimes finding an easier or different way isn't fun and exciting and good. But sometimes you're in a pinch, ya know? Options, life is just so much easier with options. I hope this has answered your question.

In peace and respect and may you neverthirst,

Regina

Is there such a thing as unholy water? Can water be converted to Christianity? Pass the cup and never thirst. -- ILB

The letters below are from the Green Egg Forum that would have been if the plug had not been pulled, so these letters are from some years ago. Contact information may be out of

date, though I've verified all links. Sorry about the delay. Funny things happened on the way to the Forum. --ILB

Gender alternatives.

Hello dear friends at Green Egg...

Shekhinah Mountainwater here... just having entered cyberspace and delighted to find all of you. I've been feeling lonely and left out for a long time, and it's so wonderful to be discovering the internet. Was just reading your comments on men and gender at your website, and thought you might be interested in my own findings on this vast topic... can't go into it too much now, but one thing that has worked for me is to start thinking about us in terms of the five elements instead of the old masculine/feminine lists of qualities.

We can understand ourselves as fiery, airy, watery, earthy, and psychic in varying degrees...each in unique combinations. Then it doesn't matter whether you're in a male or female body... men can be watery (soft, receptive) women can be fiery (strong, courageous) and so on.... all combinations can co-exist in peaceful mutuality. Astrology has been pursuing this line of thinking for a long time, but without the fifth element. With the fifth we have the shape of human form- the five pointed star.

Magnetic attractions arise according to which elements you have less of in your own nature. If you are predominantly airy and earthy, you're likely to be drawn to someone with a lot of spirit, fire, and water... just one example. The numbers of elements involved can vary too...

Are these things hard-wired? I do think they are, to some extent. But

there are many factors to consider in the brew, including conditioning, socialization, and preference...

I've found this way of looking at things wonderfully liberating. I wish we could just dump the old gender split- the roles and assumptions and dualities that enforce our divisions and oppositions. We all come from Goddess...S/he--- if there are any genders, that's the only one. We're all one, but with all kinds of variations and unique expressions. So that's my little contribution to the brew... hope you enjoy.....

Love and blessings,
Shekhinah

PS You can see my website, if you like, at:
<http://www.shekhinah.net/>

Thank you, Shekhinah, for your thoughtful letter. I've always thought the patriarchal gender system does a lot more harm than good in our society and in the world, and welcome questioning its assumptions. In seven years your website URL has changed, but Google found you and the link is changed. --ILB

Y'all,

Enjoyed what there was of the "Honoring Men" issue. It seemed to me the issue was a bit thinner than GE usually is, which could have had something to do with your recent financial woes, or could have had something to do with a lack of submissions. And then I remember that "The Green Man" magazine didn't last all that long, either. It occurs to me that my son is going to be a man someday and will probably be exposed to Paganism at some point and I'd like to be able to tell him there's something for his gender...

None of that has anything to do with GE personally, of course. It's more like a general commentary on the Neopagan movement. And it's not like I've personally been proactive in saying, "What about the men?" Number one, I'm only an egg, yet. Number two, as a woman who grew up mostly going to Baptist churches, I'm keenly interested in what Neopaganism has to offer women. Just my personal bias, no malignant intent whatsoever.

Sometimes it takes immersing oneself in that gosh-darned "radical feminist" literature to truly understand how male-biased the dominant culture is, and some of us even come back to Pagan literature and see the same patterns. In GE #135, for example, we see somebody discussing men's and women's abilities in terms of men's standards being "normal" and women's "falling short." Odd. I realize men are usually more physically capable than women, at least in terms of strength, but that doesn't necessarily mean their abilities are the default value for the entire species. We don't grow up expecting most human beings to be able to run a mile in four minutes just because one or two people have done it. I prefer to think in terms of women's abilities as being "normal" and men's as being "normal-to-enhanced." I don't **need** to be able to lift a boulder above my head to defend my child. A big stick will do just as nicely.

Another discussion that interested me was presented in the Forum. Apparently someone thinks the Khmer Rouge and the Red Army behaved in an uncivilized manner because the soldiers were inducted as boys and were not raised by women. This assumes that women will always be a civilizing force, which they most emphatically are not, and that these boys did not already come from

extremely patriarchal and woman-disrespecting cultures, which they most emphatically did. Another thread in this discussion was that women seem to be hard-wired to conform rather than to excel. Again, some interesting assumptions are inferred here. The first is that one cannot excel if one is conforming; in other words, the group-mind must always be intellectually or otherwise inferior. Considering that *Homo sapiens* is a social species, this is an interesting argument to say the least. The second assumption is that because the majority of either gender displays a specific behavior, it must be inborn instead of socialized. I would like to point out here that Mark Davidson cited a group of adolescent American girls as his basis for assuming that it is in the feminine nature to want to conform. While he may yet be correct about the nature of most human females, he needs to do better than this to prove his case. We already know that American girls are socialized to take a back seat to their male peers, even if they have something valuable to offer society. Even gifted girls are not invulnerable to acculturation. We all want to belong and to be accepted. As for those of us who insist on being "nonconformists"... well, you've seen the bumper sticker. (You haven't? Okay... "You nonconformists are all alike.") I'm all for honoring the inherent value of both women and men, and I'm all for acknowledging differences. But let's be honest about what those differences are and where they come from. And let's not delude ourselves that those differences make either gender superior or inferior. To the extent that any of our differences are biologically-based -- and some are -- they obviously serve a purpose in furthering our survival as a species. But really, as I think was mentioned at least once in that issue of GE, there are greater differences between two members of the same

gender than there are between a member of one and a member of the other. I have a friend in England, for instance, who insists that "Girls are more forward here!" and who informed me that both his wives proposed to HIM, not the other way around. (One of them locked him in the bathroom and wouldn't let him out 'til he said yes!) Contrast that with the social environment here -- it's changing, but slowly -- that insists "nice girls" wait for the guy to make the first move. So are men really always the sexual and relationship aggressors, or is society truly an Invisible Dictator, as radical

feminists have insisted all along?

I love men. And part of loving men is letting them be themselves. And in my opinion, a "real man" is a sexually mature human being with testicles. Everything else about him is open to social and cultural interpretation and improvisation. Just my opinion, your mileage may vary...

DrinkDeep,

Dana
kajunhippie@hotmail.com [kajunhippie
@hotmail.com](mailto:kajunhippie@hotmail.com)



Ian Daniels
Firebird (Cover Art)

Ian Daniels was born in Kent, England in 1968 and has always had a passion for painting and studied at the Kent Institute of Art and Design in Rochester, England between 1990-1993. Working professionally as a painter and illustrator since 1985 he has produced work, including gallery exhibitions, book jackets, fully illustrated books, art cards and prints, as well as personal projects, landscape, megaliths and folktales, themes exploring earth and spirit, biology, dreaming, memory, ghosts and stories. His illustration projects range from children's fairytales to fantasy fiction and gothic romance including book covers for E.A. Poe, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Orson Scott Card and Poul Anderson. Two collections of fairytales, *Classic Celtic Fairytales* and *Tales of the Celtic Otherworld* feature many of his paintings. To see more of the art of Ian Daniels please visit his website <http://hometown.aol.co.uk/iandanielsart/home.html>.

Paul Chase-MoonOak
Romantic Pastoral

Paul Chase MoonOak was born March 18 in Miami, Florida amongst the coconut palms and the glittering Atlantic. After graduating high school Paul attended Miami-Dade college where he met his wife, Dulce Corrales whom he married in 1980. They have two sons Arian and Tammen. In 1990 he recieved his BA in Religion from the University of Florida, the same year he discovered NeoPaganism. In 1991 his family along with another Pagan couple moved to a multi-acre homestead. It was this same year that he attended his first Pagan Gathering in Georgia as well as received his first copy of the GREEN EGG and found his spiritual home within the CAW. In 1992 he helped establish the Alachua (county) Pagan Alliance, an open forum group meeting monthly and later the Holy Oak Nest which flourished during the decade. In 1997 he became an ordained minister at Dragon Hills, GA by Oberon and Morning Glory Zell-Ravenheart. In 2003 he received his MA from the University of Florida in religion and between 2005 and 2007 worked on his doctoral degree at CIIS in San Francisco. He is currently working on his dissertation in his hometown of Gainesville, Florida where he lives with his partner Elisabet, 3 cats, 2 scooters and a pickup to be converted to electric ASAP. The current CAW "Nest" is the Radiant Light Church of All Worlds, an interfaith group working in the community to spread the good news of spiritual diversity and goodwill.

Francesca De Grandis
Dark Cup of Light

Author of *"Goddess Initiation"* (HarperSanFrancisco) and *"Be a Teen Goddess!"* (Citadel Press) lives midst the trees and Faeries of Pennsylvania. She provides professional spiritual counseling--renegade style--by phone for people all over the world, people of any spiritual tradition or happy lack thereof. She is also the founder of Faery Nation (<http://www.outlawbunny.com/faerienation.html>). You can also reach her at outlawbunny@outlawbunny.com or (814)-337-2490.

Rev. Regina Navickas (aka Zenobia Morgana)
Santeria 101

Regina has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion and in May will be receiving her degree in Anthropology from Rutgers University. Regina also has an Associate Degree in Psychology. Regina was born and

raised on a farm in New Jersey where she has the blessing of still living. She has been a student of the "New Age Movement" -- aka "So *that's* what I am - I'm Pagan! Who knew? And look! There are" lots of people just like me!!!" since the late 70's - early 80's. For most of the past X-number of years Regina has spent life as a Wiccan. She has been both a solitary and a member of a coven, starting her own coven in the mid-90's. Since 1999, Regina has been an ordained minister of the Universal Life Church. Regina enthusiastically placed both feet on the Path of the Orishas back in 2004 when Juan Carlos Peres Leon Baba Illoibe Melli Babalao Cubano, became her Padrino and teacher. She has never looked back. She is currently in the process of writing a book, part theoretical and part ethnographical. At least as of right now it will be, only the Orishas truly know for that will take an ethnographical look at Santeria in America. It will be part historic sure how it will turn out. Besides being a Reiki practitioner and neoshaman, when time allows, she is researching the healing practices of indigenous peoples of Mongolia as well as North and South America to enhance her own spiritual and healing practices.

Laura Wildman-Hanlon

Spring Vows

Laura Wildman-Hanlon is the author of *What's Your Wicca I.Q.?* (Citadel Press 2002), *Wiccan Meditations* (Citadel Press 2005), and *Celebrating the Pagan Soul* (Citadel Press 2005). She is the Academic Dean of Cherry Hill Seminary, a virtual Pagan seminary offering Professional Pagan Ministry and Leadership Education (<http://cherryhillseminary.org>) where she also teaches the course on Wedding Officiation.

Tom Donohue

Aquatic Apes, Moral Biology

Tom Donohue is a recently retired teacher from Lowell High School in San Francisco, where for twenty years he was best known as "Mister Donohue". In the years prior to that, he was a Public Health Microbiologist, first in Bacteriology then in Virology. He has also been a researcher on telomerase at the Blackburn Lab, UCSF. He has been a member of CAW for over twenty years but considers himself Pagan since the age of seven. He also has an identical twin brother who is also Pagan.

Micheal R. Gorman

Our Pagan Elders

Michael is the Chief Druid Emeritus and Founder of the Sacramento Grove of the Oak, Inc., an eclectic Pagan community that gathers regularly in Midtown Sacramento, California. He is the national Lambda Literary Award winning author of the innovative biography of Jose Sarria called *The Empress Is A Man*. His writing covers a range of genres; journalism, poetry, lyrics, playwriting, short stories, and non-fiction scholarship. He holds a bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degrees from California State University, Sacramento, and has since his formal studie become a student of Celtic Druids out of Lewes, England, a teacher, and an ordained minister. He currently is working on a biography of Irish poet and Druid, Ella Young, and a book of Celtic philosophy. He lives in Midtown with his partner of 10 years, "Dr. Dean" and their black cat Sabbath, whom Michael cals his "reluctant familiar." You can contact Michael at PoetGorman@aol.com or visit his website www.groveoftheoak.org.

Ariel Monserrat

Third Time is the Charm

Ariel was born and raised in the Hollywood Hills in Los Angeles, California. She has a Master's in Counseling Psychology. Her past careers have included six years spent as a flight attendant and 15 years as a psychotherapist. She has been a Pagan, a Witch and a member of the Church of All Worlds for over 10 years. She and her mate of 4 years, Tom Donohue moved to the mountains of Northeast Tennessee almost two years ago, where they live on 11 acres of woodlands with their 2 horses and 2 cats.

Nydia Walker

The Rebirth of An Egyptian

Nydia's interest in Ancient Egypt began as a small child and is evident today in her work as a freelance writer and as High Priestess of Temple Ankh. When not working, she relaxes with her family on their Kentucky farm and chats with Temple members on the Yahoo groups message board. She can also be found at Pegasus Production Psychic Fairs working as a Psychic and Lecturer at their fairs in Evansville, IN and Owensboro, KY.

Jaya Rubysdaughter

Acceptance, Emergence

Jaya Rubysdaughter is a solitary/hedge witch. in the real world she is a nurse who has a strong interest in healing/energy working and divination. She currently lives in her hometown, a small rural farming community in the Midwest. You may contact her at shecat334ab@yahoo.com.

Andi Fisher

The Goddess, The Maiden, the Mother and the Crone

Rt. Rev. Andi Fisher: As a young child she was surprised to find that not everyone shared her gift of clairvoyance. Her father, a dedicated and gifted Christian, encouraged her to seek divinity in all ways that rang true to her, never imposing his own views on her. In April 2001 she followed through with a vision that had deeply motivated her to reach even higher. Andi believed that it was possible to gather representation from the Four root Tribes of Man(kind) to stand firmly and peacefully in their individual faiths, together within one space and time. Proudly dignified in their beliefs without the need to defend or protect these beliefs, therefore secure to respect and acknowledge the same of other - perhaps conflicting - beliefs in people who shared the circle with them. The goal was to discover whether indeed it was possible to create religious and racial tolerance and acceptance amongst mankind - even if only for a brief moment in time. The Four Tribes of Man(kind) was an extraordinary success, attracting visitors and guest speakers from many corners of the globe to share in global spiritual unity. This was the first step in what has become Andi's mission on earth. Finding and focusing on the commonalities, the golden threads of truths that are woven throughout all religions and spiritual paths, instead of focusing on the differences that exist amongst colour and creed. To this purpose the Universal Spirit Sanctuary was recently birthed, a global vehicle with which to teach, learn and commune with mankind these common threads of truths that prevail. Members are from all paths, and are encouraged to learn of one another's spiritual paths in order to cultivate tolerance and understanding. Ordained in the CNCI, Andi is 3rd degree Archpriestess and Elder. She recently accepted an appointment to represent the CNCI as Chief Director and Chief Priestess CNCI South Africa. She is looking towards obtaining her Doctorate in Divinity next. She considers herself a Universal Maverick, rather than

representing one faith, and does not enjoy labels as these imply limitations. It is Andi's goal to co-write books and produce multi-media educational tools in order to widely spread the message of global spiritual unity. Born and raised in South Africa, Andi will always flow to the pulse of Africa in her veins. However, she is planning on immigrating within the next few years to either the USA or the UK where she will be further empowered to continue her greater spiritual work and to take it to the next level. Visit Andi's Universal Spirit Sanctuary web site at: www.uss.za.org.

Sabrina The Inkwitch *Sunning, Triple Goddess*

Sabrina has been an artist since her early childhood. She attended college under full art scholarship Her artworks have been purchased since the 70's. Her career as a Pagan artist came after a long search for the truer spirit of her nature and the delivery of purpose to her artwork began to follow her passion and beliefs. The simplest of conversations with a friend set into motion the plans of producing what the public might seek or need in the way of Pagan styled and themed artwork. Generating artwork rendered to capture the needs, mood and history of our times is no easy task, but Sabrina is tenacious in listening to her public, and committed to meeting thier needs. The freedom of expression of religion or purpose has a serious reality but may only be revealed through time if captured in artwork or fine writings. Sabrina sees her ability to deliver the ideas of history and present times blended together through artwork as a blessing. Sabrina clings to the "Old Style" of dipping her nubbed pen into an Ink Well as her ancestors did so long ago. The art community considers her a "Purist" and upholding this tradition just mirrors her beliefs and love of the craft. She also paints, gardens, is a voracious reader and teaches the Craft of the Wise in her area. She travels to meet the public whenever possible and takes appointments through stores whenever she can to meet the very public she strives to serve. She has no staff, does all her own mail and ships her own private orders. She paints and inks well into the wee hours of the night and loves every moment of capturing the adventure she calls "my path". Don't be surprised if you order a print from her to find a scribbled, handwritten note from her personally, tucked inside. For her, it's all part of connecting with the person who found beauty in a piece of art she put line after line and hour after hour into creating. For more of Sabrina's wonderful art please visit her site <http://www.theinkwitch.com>.