

A special feature from the archives of ReclaimingQuarterly.org

a collection from past RQs

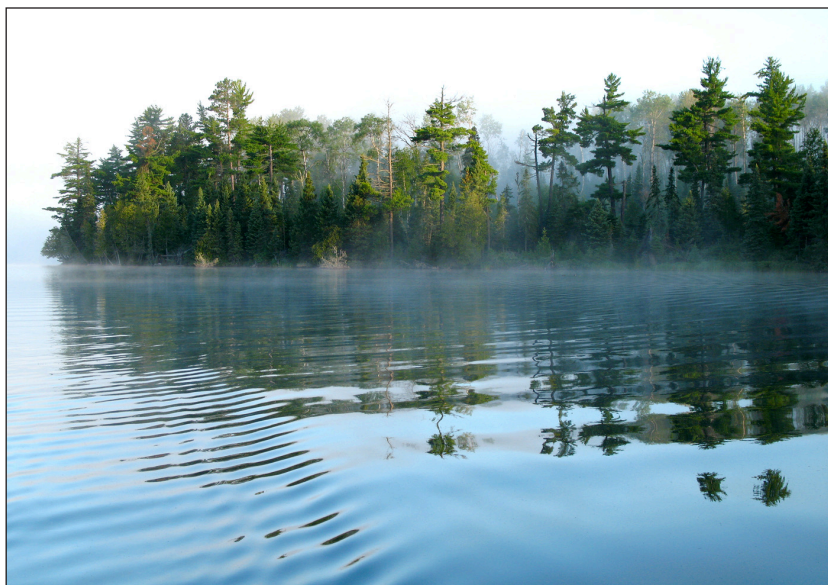
## RQ Tarot Compendium

Reclaiming was founded in 1980 as an organizing and teaching collective. Although there is not an official Tarot class, various teachers have offered workshops and classes over the years, bringing this time-honored practice into the feminist and activist cauldron of Reclaiming.

These articles were compiled from issues 67-90 of RQ, and are offered here as an archival feature. Included are articles from a number of people who helped integrate this material into the dynamic mix of Reclaiming:

- Mab
- Reya
- Alexandra Genetti
- Brook
- Elka Eastly
- Olwen Aurora Borealis
- Amy Moondragon
- James Wells and more

To find out about Reclaiming classes and retreats internationally, visit [www.Reclaiming.org](http://www.Reclaiming.org). You can also join Reclaiming's International Elist (RIDL) or the Bay Area elist (BARD). To join either list, email [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)



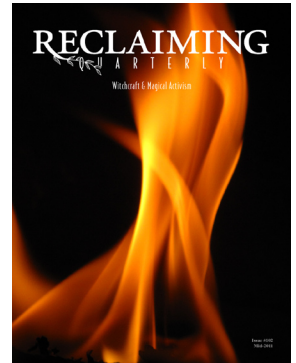
Luz

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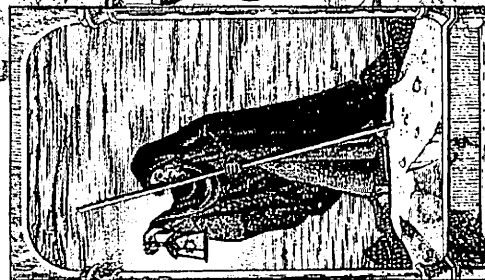
Reclaiming has released four CDs of Earth-based chants and music. All four are available on our website.

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# RECLAIMING

Q U A R T E R L Y



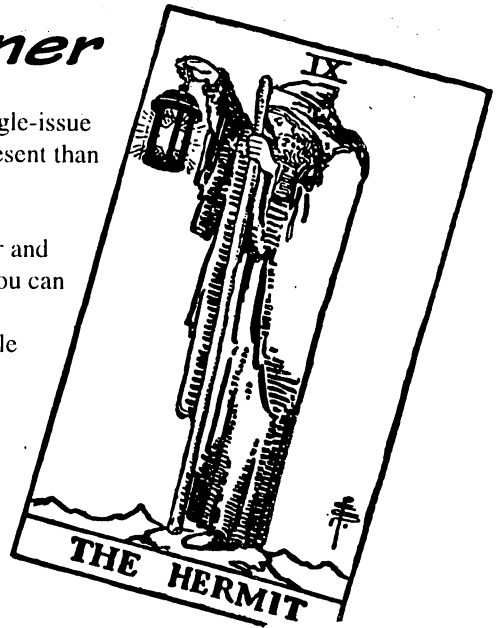
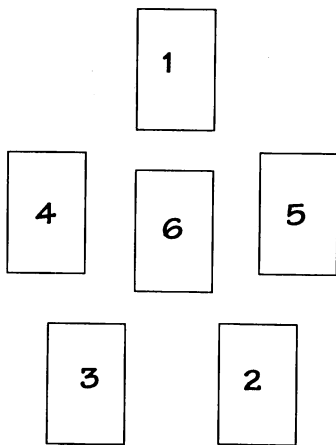
# The Tarot Corner

This is the Star Quickie tarot layout. It is a single-issue tarot spread and may be more useful for the present than finding out about the future.

- First, hold the cards in your hands, center and focus on making your question as specific as you can possibly make it.

- Second, focusing on your question, shuffle the cards at least 5 times.

- Third, lay out the cards as follows:



## To the Hermit

You cannot hide your spark for long,  
Lone wanderer.

Traversing mountains, living  
In dark caves of study;  
Contemplation.

Comes a time when the lamp  
Must beacon others -  
Your cave become a den  
Of learned women.

Traversing mountains, up  
And down. Trailing souls  
Behind you, pick sure footing,  
Trying not to fall into abyss.  
Attempting to follow  
A light

*T. Thorn Coyle, 1996*

1. The querent — you, the person asking the question. There is a lot of information in this card about you in this situation.
2. Obstacle, what is blocking you from resolution of this situation.
3. Helper, what will help you with your question.
4. Past influences that affect the question.
5. What's coming in the future?
6. What's the gift from this situation?

I always look carefully at the cards after I lay them out to see what my gut tells me before I either look at any reference books or try and figure it out. It is important for

me to get any information directly from the Goddess before I filter it through my own or others convenient classifications of specific cards. Good Luck!

— Susan & Margaret

# The Hierophant & the Sense of Belonging

## Bringing Reclaiming's Hierarchy Out of the Closet

by Reya

Look through the major arcana in your tarot deck & imagine showing the cards to some "regular" person on the street. If you asked that person to show you the most disturbing cards, they'd probably choose the Devil, the Tower, or Death, maybe the Moon, don't you think?

But show those same cards to any witch you know, and the reaction is often very different. The Devil makes witches laugh, they shrug their shoulders at Death (another massive transformation — so what?), the Tower is an adrenaline rush. The Moon? We love that madness!

But hold the Hierophant card up to any witch you know, especially a Reclaiming tradition witch, and she's likely to shrink away in terror or revulsion. The Hierophant, who was originally the pope and counterpart of the High Priestess, makes the witches I know cringe. Why?

Angeles Arrien describes the Hierophant in terms of the challenges he offers us, which she sees basically as the challenge to trust in our own faith. He is the supposed arbiter of The Faith, holds the keys to the dogma of his religion, and not only that — he's ultimately responsible for deciding who belongs to his religion and who doesn't. He makes the final decisions about various rules & regulations, and he has the power to excommunicate you or me whenever he feels like it. It's pretty easy to see how that interpretation would give those with anarchist roots the willies. But even if you've never thought of yourself as anarchist, doesn't he represent everything about religion you hate? He's a paragon of spiritual power-over, which to me seems even meaner than the earthy power-over of the Emperor.

### Power & Trust

Mary Greer writes about the Hierophant in terms of the relationship of teacher to student or mentor to protegee, both in the way the student must place her trust in the teacher, and how the teacher must hold & honor that trust. The Hierophant relates specifically to the way power manifests in these relationships. Because up until recently

Reclaiming was in essence a teaching tradition playing with the dynamics of power, this interpretation is especially relevant.

Probably most significant is the fact that the Hierophant holds the power of 5, the power of the pentacle, which is the symbol most central to the Craft and to

our tradition. The pentacle is, after all — air, fire, water, earth & spirit, the cycle of birth, initiation, consummation, repose and death. It is the plate from which we feed, the earth which we hold sacred. We run the energies of the pentacles of iron & pearl through our bodies as invocations of ourselves, bravely facing and working with those qualities which are our birthrights and the sources of our transformations. The pentacle is a picture of our miracle bodies, so how can the Hierophant, representative of the pentacle, be so despised by us?

It's because we forgot, somewhere along the way, that one of the major qualities contained in our sacred number 5 is in direct opposition to one of

Reclaiming's core values — non-hierarchy.

### Shadow Issues

I believe that, among other things, the Hierophant holds the key to understanding some of Reclaiming's deepest shadow issues, in particular the constant & ongoing issue of who belongs and who doesn't and how we've framed the solution to that issue. We're always thinking the problem is that we need to learn how to be inclusive, which always brings up more anxiety & questions than can ever be answered.

For instance, who it is who needs to do the including — Is it the core Reclaiming collective? That question inevitably brings up the question, Who is the collective? Next, we try looking at the function & structure of the Reclaiming collective for answers. We ask, Is it a coven, a working group or what? How are new collective members chosen? What is the quality of power that collective members hold versus members of various working cells or members of the community who



attend rituals & classes?

The questions take us nowhere; any answers we come up with leave us empty and unsatisfied. I think this is because these issues of belonging are not about needing to be more inclusive, but are more about what we've pushed into the shadow in our attempt to evolve beyond what we think of as the old patriarchal power-over dynamics of domination, which we see as contained in any hierarchical structure.

Ironically, one of the great powers of the number 5 is the call to evolve, and so we're working our butts off to evolve past hierarchy. But look at the problems this vision has created. If you take a look at the minor arcana 5's, you can see a beautiful illustration of the issues of belonging or not belonging, as they move through the elements. The 5 of swords describes the hoarding of power and belonging by some, & the despair of those left out; the 5 of wands describes the sometimes open conflict & psychic bloodshed we get into, and the great difficulty we experience trying to work in groups & come to consensus. The 5 of cups shows the self pity and loneliness of the 'rejected' and the 5 of pentacles, oh, the five of pentacle is perfect in illustrating the feeling of being left out — outside in the snowstorm, outside the church.

### The Call to Evolve

As Patti Martin says, in taking up the call to evolve, and deciding we should simply get rid of hierarchy, we definitely have jumped a few paces further than what we can accommodate right now, right here at the end of the 20th century. Trying to move from systems of strict hierarchy directly into the realm of consensuality has created as many problems as it has solved. Because although our star selves, our deep selves, are quite capable of comprehending the beauty of non-hierarchy, we are, after all, animals, and our animal bodies change very slowly.

For hundreds of thousands of years, our animal selves have lived within natural hierarchies. To think we could suddenly get beyond all that shows me how willing we are to ignore the needs of our bodies in order to facilitate the soaring of our star selves. How's that for a hierarchy?

Watching my dog with other dogs, and reading about dog behavior, and listening to the needs of my own animal self, has made me finally understand why we hear so many people say



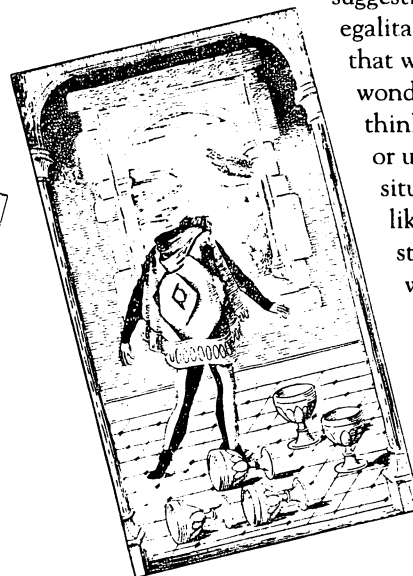
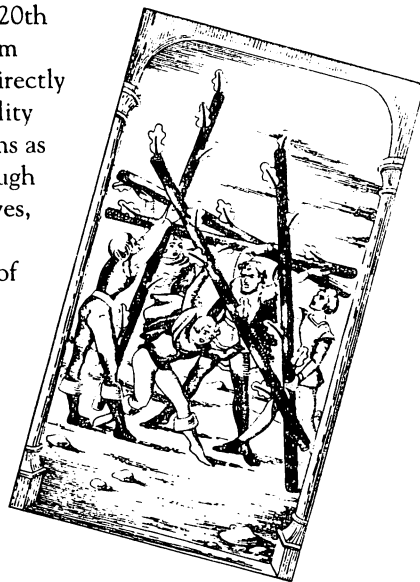
they feel "unsafe" in Reclaiming rituals, classes & at witch camp. Of course they do — their bodies feel unsafe because they don't have any ways of determining where — or if — they belong. To attempt to interact without an overt hierarchy, which is one of our deepest instincts, must be completely disorienting to our blood & bones, our muscles. As Hilary points out, the value of hierarchy in animal communities is that it minimizes actual conflict. In many animal communities little or no actual conflict is needed to establish hierarchy — size of horn or tail or shoulder, height of piss marks, formal dance-like battles, these are all used to avoid actual bloodshed. Why? I suppose because the margin of survival for most in the wild wood is so narrow that one injury means death, and loss of a strong, breedable animal harms the species too.

### Out of the Shadows

How does this apply to us in the Reclaiming/Feri tradition? How much of our energy goes into actual blood-shed (emotional or psychic) when we try to live without hierarchy? Hilary thinks maybe this connects to the old king-for-a-year practices. One day of battle to the death, 364 days of peace.

I think it's time to bring hierarchy out of the shadows and begin to work with it instead of trying to pretend it no longer exists. Now this doesn't mean I'm suggesting we give up our vision of egalitarianism — working towards that way of living has opened us to wonderful possibilities. But thinking that all hierarchy is evil or unnecessary has created situations which look somewhat like the 6 of pentacles — our star selves have been well fed while our animal selves are starving and fearful.

What can we do to help soothe our animal selves while we move through this awkward lurch in our evolution? The first step is to become conscious of the needs of our bodies, and to accept and truly rejoice in our animal natures. We always say we celebrate our beautiful bodies, but in practice I don't see a lot of that in Reclaiming, do you? We've been exemplary models of burnout, running ourselves ragged, working too hard & too intensely, and not providing for our most basic needs. Anyone who has been involved in Reclaiming will groan thinking about the stultifyingly long meetings in which we sit for hours, packed together in small



*continued on page 47*

## Hierophant

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rooms, meeting & talking & meeting until we're starved, exhausted, and nearly out of our minds with stress. The unspoken Reclaiming standard demands that we keep going until we drop — somehow in the past this felt heroic to me, but I'm realizing, finally, that this has got to stop. We need to care for our bodies in very common sense ways — we need to eat well and get enough sleep, not work too hard, and try to reduce stress in our lives. We need exercise, we need to move around. We need to spend more time out of doors. We need to take more time to play and have fun, to let go of our workaholic natures sometimes.

We all need to develop the discipline of daily practice. Routine is a part of our animal natures and helps us feel secure, gives us a sense of belonging in the scheme of things. So it doesn't really matter what your daily practice might be, simply that you have one, and that you do it every day.

We need to admit that a hierarchy does exist within Reclaiming, and begin to explore that hierarchy with compassion and with open minds. We need to figure out how to work with the inherent hierarchy of teacher & student, initiator & initiate, experienced priestess & novice. Those relationships began as very strong hierarchies, which I believe is the only way they can — but we should be able to discover ways in which, for instance, as the student gains in skills & experience, the relationship can begin to evolve and in time become a relationship between peers.

And most of all we all need to practice sitting on the throne of the Hierophant, and to welcome & integrate his powers into ourselves. As long as we look at the Hierophant as loathsome, we'll never fully be able to embody the reality that each of us is in direct connection with the Goddess, that each of us speaks for the Goddess, that each of us holds the keys to our own spiritual destinies. Only then will we know that we truly belong, to ourselves, to each other, to our community, and that we are each definitely a necessary part of the great tapestry we call the Goddess.

Blessed be.

## Labyrinth

continued from page 15

convinced that the labyrinth holds an ancient consciousness, that perhaps it is a manifestation of the living earth, of the Goddess.

We have also painted the triple spiral on a smaller piece of canvas which can be laid in the center of the rosette area of the labyrinth. The first time we placed it I was immediately aware that it vibrates at a higher frequency than the rest of the labyrinth. At first I was distressed; I thought we wouldn't be able to use them together, but I have come to feel that the triple spiral vibrates at a healing frequency, which can work very well in the center. And although many people love the energy of the triple spiral, we don't always use it, because some people find it distracting. The energy of the triple spiral spins in both directions at once; it can be quite dizzying.

Whenever I prepare to walk any labyrinth, I ground myself carefully. I noticed early in my work with the labyrinth that I often lost my balance, and I came to understand that this is due to a lack of grounding. Most people experience losing their balance while walking. And while a grounding meditation as preparation is extremely important, I now don't think it can completely eliminate the sense of imbalance. My sense is that if, in the labyrinth, one steps into another realm or beyond time, it only makes sense that grounding, and therefore balance, would be somewhat tenuous. Ungroundedness becomes very physical, and can make walking difficult.

After grounding, I step up to the entrance of the labyrinth. I often find myself asking permission to walk, and I always have a strong sense of Crossing A Threshold when I first put my foot onto the path. It is a stepping into the mist. The entire path seems to be hovering or floating in some elemental depths. And small wonder! I recently read in Nicholas Mann's book *The Isle of Avalon*, that the winding path on Glastonbury Tor is almost certainly a three-dimensional seven-circuit labyrinth.

The Lancaster Labyrinth is positioned with the entrance at North. One of the first sensations that many people talk about is Feeling the Elements in each direction. The wind blows in the East; in the South it is quite warm; and in the West you can stand in a waterfall. The North is the way in way out; it is the connection with Earth. In this eleven-circuit labyrinth, the labryses at the turns are painted to be large enough to step into. Standing in the labrys is like floating in an element. The paths that lay between the labryses are like bridges across the depths. We enhance this sensation by using only candlelight in the room where the labyrinth lays.

The center of the labyrinth is many things. It is a six-petaled flower, also sacred to Aphrodite, It is Womb, mystery revealed, stillness and spinning. It is where we are going, and from where we must return. It is deep peace and endless love. It is sometimes very hard to leave the center, but it is possible to carry the center inside yourself, to hold onto it, and bring part of it back out into the world.

Walking the labyrinth requires that we surrender to it. We literally cannot see where we are going. Once we are able to surrender, we can begin to see the mysteries.

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# The Minor Arcana & the Number Five

By Alexandra Genetti

[EDITOR'S NOTE — Last month, Reya wrote about the Hierophant card (major arcana number 5) and its relationship to the Reclaiming community and hierarchy in general. This issue's tarot article is a further discussion of "fives," specifically minor arcana fives and our relationship to them as witches.]

I'M SURE YOU ALL HAVE noticed that in all the popular Tarot decks from Waite-Smith to Motherpeace the fives are pretty universally negative. Waite-Smith has the dismal five of cups with the spilled wine (or blood) and the person mourning the loss, the fives in the Thoth deck have words at the bottom: "Worry," "Strife," "Disappointment" and "Defeat." In the Motherpeace book Vicki Noble describes five as "the number of struggle and conflict." And in the Barbara Walker deck, the fives are certainly no exception.

In making my own deck I wanted to understand the reasoning behind this dislike of the number five. As a Pagan it seemed to me wrong that the number of the manifest Goddess, the number of women should be the most universally negative number in the Minor Arcana. I wanted to understand where the negativity had come from and why it was so pervasive.

**Illustrations: top, 5 of Wands from the Color Wheel Tarot; bottom, 5 of Cups from the Wheel of Change Tarot. Both cards copyright 1997 by A. Genetti.**



Numerology is a pretty complex study. But in relation to the Tarot, I believe it is generally related to the Cabalistic notions of the Tetragrammaton or the holy unspeakable name of God: "Yod - He - Vau - He." Each part of the name symbolizes the process of the magical triangle. This is the description of Magick in the world as two opposites combined (numbers 1 and 2) through an action (3) to produce a result (the final 4) which then becomes the new 1 of the next triangle. In this way the numbers 1, 4, 7 and 10 symbolize the individual, the numbers 2, 5 and 8 represent what opposes the individual and the numbers 3, 6 and 9

represent the action taken. For a clearer understanding you can draw the diagram as a series of triangles moving upward (or downward).

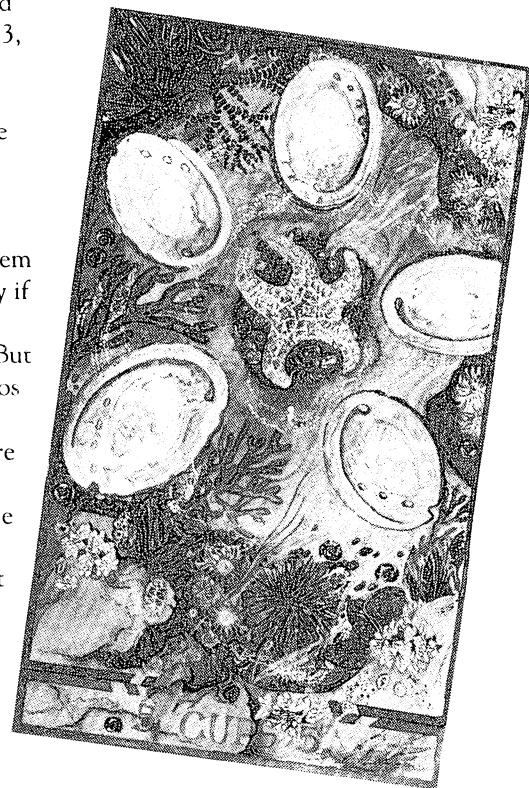
Because the numbers 2, 5 and 8 signify opposition one might expect them to show this nearly universal negativity if indeed it is the quality of opposition which has permeated their meanings. But this is not the case - for indeed, the twos show generally positive meanings. The thumbnail words in the Thoth Deck are "Change," "Dominion," "Love" and "Peace." Waite shows generally positive or neutral scenes such as the 2 of Wands, which shows a man staring out to sea with the world in his hands. The 8s are mixed with some negative and some positive. So clearly it is not just their status as other or opposites that determines the negative meaning of the fives.

In the case of the series 2, 5 and 8 the numeral in the middle is odd; in both the other series the numeral in the middle is even. Somehow, this oddness between evens must set five off as a particularly negative number. In Christianity five is the number of the wounds of Christ on the cross and is symbolic of the brutality of humankind. It has also symbolized the condition of humanity through our five senses and our starlike nature. In Christian thought, then, 5 is a symbol of suffering and travail here on earth, while the coming world of heaven is perfect and without human travail.

This negative assessment of our lives here, and the negative associations of any experience as trouble and complication, is a symptom of our tendency to think that whatever is beyond us is better than what we have here. It seems to arise from the assumption that we are, at the root of our existence, "bad," and that our lives here are made up of extensive suffering.

This leads us to environmental abuse and

*continued on page 44*



## Music review

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Excellent musicianship throughout and Karan Casey's lovely soprano are quite enjoyable. While not explicitly a "Pagan" release, fans of Celtic music should be pleased with this album.

"Sunny Spells & Scattered Showers" is released on the Shanachie label, catalogue #78010.

A couple of final notes. First the contact information for Sharon Knight (reviewed last issue) has changed:

Sharon Knight, P.O. Box 1020, Occidental, CA 95465, (707) 869-1773, email: [nuit@wco.com](mailto:nuit@wco.com)

Also, if anyone has any music that you feel really would be appreciated by this community, or to cast aspersions, brickbats, or the occasional accolade I can be reached online at: [bwinkle@slip.net](mailto:bwinkle@slip.net)

My snail mail address is: Don Barks c/o Harper Hall Productions, 3073 Richmond Blvd., Oakland, CA 94611.

## Housing Takeover

continued from page 5

had no chance of survival.

Since that modest beginning, the numbers arrested, determination of activists, and political support has steadily grown. This year more than 200 people got arrested and many of those formerly pessimistic established groups have announced their support for Wherry. Even the mayor has an affordable housing plan for the site, albeit a weak one. Religious Witness with Homeless People, a group that includes Pagans, Christians, Buddhists, Native American religious figures, and Jews, has also started organizing takeovers at the Presidio. At the most recent Religious Witness takeover in May, a contingent of about twenty white-clad pagans beat out rhythms on drums, chanted, and got arrested.

Victory seems plausible, if only organizers can keep Wherry housing in the public eye long enough to sway the mood. Otherwise we will pay \$16 million to tear down \$80 million worth of good housing.

To get involved, call Homes Not Jails at (415) 282-5525, or Religious Witness for Homeless People (415) 885-6401. For advice on how to occupy vacant buildings or start a Homes Not Jails in your area, call Homes Not Jails San Francisco or visit the Boston Homes Not Jails web site at <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/7996/>.



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## Tarot

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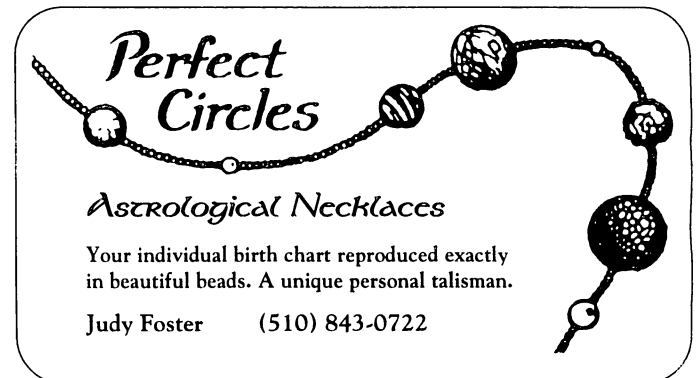
collapse through the prevailing belief that there is another world ruled by an All Powerful God who wouldn't let anything happen to his beautiful and perfect world beyond. Through this underlying belief that we must suffer here we expect no better, looking at this life as only a temporary way station in a progression to better things. We have no special need to improve conditions here or expect joy and positive experience.

Because we are all born into human life and suffering from a woman's body, women are seen as particularly bad, dirty and evil like the temporary earth we inhabit. The number 5, mythologically connected with the feminine through the observation that the lives of women could be conveniently divided into 5 stages. These were Birth, Menarche, Motherhood, Menopause and Death, linked to the evil and suffering that we bring forth in the blood of birth.

Because 5 is the number connected to women and to the cycles of human life I believe that we as Pagans must begin to see it as a positive number that expresses our certain understanding of where we have come from as well as where we journey to. Because it is halfway between one and ten it looks both backwards to our birth in the primeval waters of this planet and forward to our uncertain future. Just like the stardust from which the earth was born, it is the symbol of our eventual return to the mother and our rebirth as part of the cycle of time. It is a symbol of the deep link we have with all that is outside of our temporarily limited vision of the universe.

It is my belief that these unexamined and originally Christian precepts have made their way into the Tarot. Instead of rethinking the raw symbolism of the numbers, Pagans have generally accepted overlying Christian notions of the number symbolism that defines the number 5 as the number of the suffering lot of human life. It is my belief that the number 5 is an especially good and magical number that expresses the first effort that unites us with our opposite on the road to integration that leads us to human joy and love.

Alexandra Genetti is the author and illustrator for "The Wheel of Change Tarot" published by Destiny Books and available very soon. For more information contact her at Color Wheel Creations, Box 293, Cazadero, CA 95421 or check out the website at <http://www.wheelofchange.com>



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# MOVING POWER THROUGH AND PAST HIERARCHY

An Exploration of the Tarot Fives And Hierophant by Brook

[Editor's Note: Brook's piece responds to Reya's article titled "The Hierophant and the Sense of Belonging: Bringing Reclaiming's Hierarchy out of the Closet," which first appeared in Reclaiming Newsletter #67.]

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE Reya's reading of the Tarot Fives and the Hierophant a little further, as we explore the cards' messages for our community. I want to thank Reya for starting a dialogue and bringing hierarchy out of the closet so that we may look more fully at its meaning for our community.

In thinking about the ideas Reya presents, it seems to me that hierarchy is at least a part of the tension many of us feel as we try to figure out who is "in" and who "out" in the Reclaiming community, and how each of us fits into the group or not. But I disagree that these disquieting feelings are caused by a lack of "natural order."

I went to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) to clarify the meaning of the words hierarchy and hierophant. As I thought, hierarchy refers specifically to the ordering of people into grades "as in an Episcopate." That is, the word specifically refers to the ranking of Bishops in the Catholic Church or to any similarly ordered organization of humans.

We're accustomed to hierarchy, maybe as animals, as Reya posits, but also quite likely because that's the only ordering we've ever known with other humans. Our families are often little fiefdoms: one of the parents rules, usually Dad, and everyone else must fall into line. And then there is school and corporate work. No wonder we feel uncomfortable without hierarchy, or, at least, when we experience less of this

very familiar organization. Nevertheless, in the same meetings and rituals that Reya uses as examples of difficult, uncomfortable situations, I experienced my first real taste of power from within, my first empowerment.

When I looked up hierophant in the OED, however, it does not mean a pope, the head of a hierarchy. It refers to the keeper or priest of sacred mysteries, as in "the Hierophant of the Eleusinian mysteries." This really got me thinking about the symbolic meaning of "hierophant" and how it relates to the picture of the Catholic Pope in many Tarot decks.

As Reya wrote, Fives numerically represent change, growth, dynamic power tensions and synergies. This we see in the Pentacle, consisting of a series of crossing lines of interaction. In the Tarot, the Fives embody the difficult situations, those that bring out our most mysterious, gripping, and usually painful feelings. I see arguments won and lost (Swords), contests of wills (Wands), destitution (Pentacles), and depression and hopelessness (Cups).

How does the Hierophant sit as the key to the Fives? Using the Major



Arcana as the master/mistress or keys of the Minor Arcana is a method for understanding the relationship between the Major and Minor Arcana.

One way to avoid arguments, battles of will, unfair distribution of wealth, and depression is with an established order—a hierarchy. The Pope is the very top of the Catholic Church's hierarchy, the Church's supreme ruler. The Pope's position also includes a hierophant function because the Pope is the keeper of the Catholic mysteries. Of course, the historical implementation of the Pope's functions has, in my opinion, left a good deal to be desired.

I think considering one of the principles of the branch of physics called Chaos Theory is useful. There is resonance, which creates a standing wave out of the chaotic motion of many interacting particles. These waves are patterns that can be observed arising out of chaos. For me, this is an apt description of the patterning of life; it is the Goddess' dance of life, Her order—natural order. When the resonance, the wave, is broken, new patterns will arise. My friend, Phebe Fletcher, pointed out that it is the endless cycle of chaos, resonance, wave, and chaos again that is the great pattern in which we live, move and breathe, that the cycle itself represents divine order.

The Tarot Fives are about tension and challenge, the difficulties that break the standing wave in our lives. When we encounter them, we enter into chaos. Out of the chaos of the Fives, a new resonance is formed, a new standing wave, a new pattern. The Tarot Fours can be thought to represent patterns of stability, the culmination of the Aces, Twos, and Threes, and the Fives break down the stability and move us on. Where do they move us? The Fives move us to the pleasurable experiences of the Sixes. Only when stability is challenged or left behind are we open enough to receive the Sixes. I think this progression is exemplified by the movement from Emperor, through the Hierophant, and on to the Lovers.

When we reach the Fives' point in

things, an established order. Whenever I look at the Four of Pentacles in the Rider-Waite deck, I see stability from having enough earthly goods, the King's feet firmly planted on his pentacles, but I see great boredom, too. This is the nature of the square Fours.

In the pictures on the numbered Wands in the Rider deck, at least one of the wands in the picture is being held or manipulated by a person. This manipulation symbolism is used on every numbered Wand card except for the Four of Wands and the Eight of Wands. The wands on the Eight are in motion. However, on the Four, the wands are free standing. They form a square with the garland of flowers connecting the wands' tops and through the ground upon which they stand. I think this difference in symbolism is used to indicate stability. Our energy is at rest as we celebrate the successful completion of a project.

In the meditation of the Four of Cups and the repose or sanctuary of the Four of Swords, I also see stability and, at least the possibility of, stagnation. The Hierophant can break open the Emperor's stability, just as the Minor Arcana Fives are the experiences that break the stability of the Fours. The Hierophant offers us teachings that move us forward.

But we cannot stay in the Hierophant; we must proceed, for there are dangers on both sides of the Hierophant, student and teacher. That

line is humility—realizing that I will never have control of my shadow side, that I will continue to be fully human with all the beauties and pain that that position entails—saint and despot and everything else rolled into my complete being.

I believe that there is a tension between the name of the card and the picture of attendants and Pope. It is the tension between the Hierophant, who is the keeper of mysteries, and the very human, patriarchal ordering of Bishops in the Catholic church. I think this tension is intentional. It is meant to help us move through the cycle of our growth without getting stuck in either side of the Hierophant. The dangers are clearly pictured on the card. We must not stay in the student or the teacher role. These positions must be relinquished to move on to the Lovers.

The Lovers bears the same key relationship to the Sixes as the Emperor to the Fours and the Hierophant to the Fives. Each of the Sixes involves giving and receiving. There is the token of friendship of the Cups, the journey, relief, and hope of the Swords, the surplus and charity of the Pentacles and the accolades of the Wands. These experiences are rich in themselves, but they also lead me to my deeper desires. In the context of the Sixes, I desire union with another and, ultimately, union with the divine. I seek the sacred in everything, and especially, to express it in myself.

On the Rider Lovers card, we see

## IN THE TAROT, THE FIVES EMBODY THE DIFFICULT SITUATIONS, THOSE THINGS THAT BRING OUT OUR MOST MYSTERIOUS, GRIPPING, AND USUALLY PAINFUL FEELINGS.

our lives, where we've had enough of the daily descent into our own hells, we often turn to find a teacher, someone who appears to hold and speak for the mysteries, a guru, an avatar. The Hierophant offers energy to help us: she or he is a teacher. The Hierophant offers teachings and counsel, but he or she also can become the all-powerful keeper of mystery, the ruler, the penultimate insider.

The Emperor has all the ducks lined up; this is a card of stability and stagnation. He represents, among other

is why it bears the number five. The danger is giving over one's power to a teacher and never forging one's will and empowerment. And on the other side, the danger is losing humility and getting stuck within the teaching role, no longer wielding our own power, but thriving on the ego gratification given to us by our students. We can forget that our students teach us as much as they learn from us. The teaching relationship, the relationship between the holder of the mysteries and the seeker, serves both sides. For me, the bottom

pictured a man, a woman and an angel above them. We can think of the man as Talking self, the woman as Younger self and the angel as Deep self. Talking self, the conscious mind, acknowledges that it must go through Younger self, the subconscious, intuitive, symbolic mind, by looking at her. Younger self can connect to Deep self, our divine spirit self, represented by the angel. The angel looks at both Talking self and Younger self, unites the two selves, and

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## Needle Exchange

*continued from page 7*

action, willing the world we envision into being. Maybe in a perfect world, we wouldn't need needle exchange, but in an imperfect world, it's going forward with what seems right. Taking responsibility for the world is at the heart of Reclaiming. We're responsible for ourselves, but also for those around us. In some of the sorriest sights in the world, there is still the Goddess, the God. But it's not just Reclaiming. I see it in connection with Buddhism, or Jewish or Christian mystical ideas. It's taking care of the world and the people in it.

**Rose:** The Craft is about *real* work. Our magic is strongest not when we are standing in a symbolic circle, but when we are incorporating spirituality into our actions in the world. It's not to say we don't need pure spirituality, apart from the world. But wedding spirituality to action is when it really becomes Witchcraft — when you are holding a tool. I feel like the more Witches are involved in healing work, in political work, the kind of work where you need to bring a spiritual focus through, the better.

**How does your spirituality strengthen your work?**

**Rose:** Mindfulness and intention are important. I need to be aware that I am bringing aspects of my work into my magic, and vice versa. Otherwise, my work can become sloppy, I can be drained. It's about sustaining myself. Without my spiritual focus, I couldn't do it. Practical things like knowing how to cleanse and renew myself are important. And having a relationship with life and death, knowing death's place in the cycle, brings things into perspective.

**Jim:** Some of it is the community aspect. People who come to exchange needles sometimes seem so disconnected from the world, and hurt. Sometimes they can be comforted immensely by people being out there for them. It can be humbling. It's a simple act, but it keeps me coming back.

**Bill, you were part of the legal team that successfully challenged needle exchange arrests in San Mateo, Berkeley and Oakland. What did you learn from this experience?**

**Bill:** The first case was in San Mateo County, in Redwood City, in early 1991. About a year after they started exchanging needles there, a Prevention Point activist was arrested. We brought in "experts" to testify, but we never expected to get them on the witness stand. Well, a Republican Judge allowed the Defense of Necessity! [Note: The Defense of Necessity contends that the illegal act was necessary to

prevent a greater injury or injustice. It is virtually never allowed in civil disobedience trials.] We not only won the acquittal, but the foreman of the jury actually joined the needle exchange.

The four times we have had trials, we have been able to use the Necessity Defense. This is unheard of. I think it's because everyone knows that one dirty needle can mean a person will die. The courts recognize that there is no other effective way to save lives. The politicians are gutless, and the drug war makes other avenues impossible. I think even conservative judges realize, this is a moment I can do something.

**What lessons have you learned?**

**Bill:** I learned that in a situation like this, our usual political adversaries are on our side. They knew this would be effective against AIDS. Needle exchange is not only an empowering tool of direct action, but also deepens our commitment to working with people from all different walks of life. It expands our hearts, our compassion.

**Rose:** When I worked as a Results Counselor, before doing a session, I would say the same thing as before teaching a Reclaiming class: "Goddess, speak with my lips, I lend them to you." That doesn't mean that I am any more capable than others. But working with people who are physically sick and soul-sick, there is room for me to be a vessel, a vehicle for someone to hear what they need to hear.

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## Harm Reduction

*continued from page 7*

started doing street-side problem solving around other services, gradually developing a broader model of Harm Reduction.

"What Harm Reduction comes to is the belief that given the right tools, people can use drugs and not inevitably have to destroy themselves. We look at addiction through a lens that takes into account the health issues. But it is also a social, political, economic, class issue — it is very complex. You try to see that there is a continuum of drug use, from abstinence to out of control use. Here in the U.S., we have a system that says, if you want to talk about drug use, there is only one valid thing you can talk about — abstinence. So whatever resources are committed to drug treatment are funneled into abstinence. When people want to access other services, like health or housing, these services are often dangled out as a carrot — you can have these if you'll agree to abstinence. So we just offer housing to people who say they're going to be clean? What sort of hoops do we want people to jump through?

"If the only tools you offer them are abstinence-based programs, which have very

minimal success rates, you are dooming most people to continued use."

Yet up until now, almost all services have been developed around abstinence. When someone starts talking about managed use, proponents of traditional programs say that it doesn't work. "But 90% of people using alcohol and drugs are doing managed use," Geoff emphasized. "It is not impairing their ability to function on a daily level. The people who say, I tried and it didn't work, well, what assistance have they had? They had to do it on their own."

One goal of Harm Reduction, Geoff said, is to give people a safe place to talk about using, and how they can get a handle or control on it, so they do not wind up homeless, and can hold down a job. "Nobody has been addressing these things. Let's ask, 'what steps do you need to take, what support do you need to do that?' There are tools people can use to feel like they have some control over their lives.

"A Harm Reduction approach asks, Who are you? What do you need? Where do you think you want to be three months from now? What help do you need to get there? As opposed to, 'here's our plan, go do it. If you're successful, we'll take the credit, but if you fail, it's your fault.'

"Eventually we want to see this accepted as a valid approach to dealing with substance use and addiction, no less valid than abstinence. That is the long-range goal."

*interview by George Franklin*

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## Power and Hierarchy

*continued from page 15*

unites with them. The circle is complete. Talking self has integrated divinity by acknowledging and working with Younger self. Deep self has entered into the conscious mind. We see here what Mary K. Greer calls, "involution of spirit into matter," her phrase for the nature of the Sixes.

To experience union, we must be empowered, not led. To unite with another and to express our spirit fully, we must remain open to our own complete self and to the other's complete self. It is humility, my feeling of being fully human, with all the foibles and joys that this implies, that opens me enough to another to experience union, and to bring "spirit into matter." The lesson learned from the Hierophant, the keeper of the mysteries, is the ability to move power through us without causing power to become stuck or blocked. This is our journey through and past hierarchy, and on to consensual, empowered relationships.

# In Search of The Star

Teaching models in the Reclaiming tradition

By Elka Eastly

WHILE I WAS drafting my notes for this piece, its working title was “Co-Teaching vs. Solo Teaching.” This is what I called the concept when I first discussed it with Reclaiming Quarterly. I was facilitating transformational work, at the time, using these two different models, and they lived for me then as contradictory, competing, and open to criticism by peers in circles that seemed to favor one over the other.

Noticing incongruities between the naming of and the actuality of facilitation within both models in the Reclaiming tradition, my concept’s test audience enthused that it would be juicy material for the Quarterly’s readership. I thought my exploration of the two teaching dynamics would reveal one to be more effective, revolutionary and liberated than the other. My busy schedule backburned the article for about a year, and my position — about which model I personally preferred and thought to offer greater benefits to the learning environment as a whole — shifted ... not just once, but a few times. Having committed to deliver the article for this issue, and with plenty of time allocated for the process, my writing revealed not a definitive statement, but the same vacillation that stirred the concept’s cauldron for a year.

The Star Tarot archetype showed up while I transcribed my first draft of thinking and said, “You’re talking about



me.” Of course, I slapped my forehead, The Star. Yes, let’s contradict the Reclaiming status quo and extol the virtues of solo teaching. (How anarchist would that be!) But my analysis and experience couldn’t back that up completely. The tone of the presentation was turning derogatory, first of co-teaching, then of solo teaching, as I searched for a singular conclusion.

I struggled in my attempt to be persuasive of something! But I myself wasn’t persuaded. One frustrated evening, ready to bag the article and beg the RQ cell to run some of my poetry instead, I took a walk to my sweetie’s house. Calming my mind under the night sky, I turned my face to the moon. She smiled at me from her mantle of stars, diffused by the San Francisco fog. Ah, stars, I sighed. Beautiful, twinkling, distant suns. I brought my hand to its familiar place of sudden impact. Stars! There are millions of Stars, not just one.

Returning to the text, I decided to shift the magic of its working title. I had set up too much of an opposition between models which each contribute to our collective efforts toward empowerment and the greatest good. Let’s examine them both briefly.

PERHAPS YOU’VE noticed this caveat on Reclaiming Quarterly’s classes page: Reclaiming classes are taught by two or more teachers, one of whom must be a

Reclaiming teacher. Classes taught by only one teacher, even Reclaiming teachers, are not Reclaiming classes per se. The endorsement of the Reclaiming name is conferred only to those teaching environments which model shared power in leadership.

Sharing power is a powerful requirement of Reclaiming’s leadership... our leadership. It’s based in a desire to dismantle our inherited hierarchical thinking and acting. Sharing power is a powerful contradiction to institutional imbalances. It is the foundation of Reclaiming as an organized community... our community.

Our community’s rule — call it policy or requirement, it is still a rule, for it is not merely a suggestion — Our community’s rule offers many benefits within our learning environments. Co-teaching encourages students to be/come their own authorities. With no single authority, students learn to respect the authority of their own experiences. A three-fold

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## In Search of the Star

continued from page 34

teaching team, for instance, might represent three radically different perspectives on, say, the Sex point of the Iron Pentacle. These teachers, in their varied wisdoms, validate students' own personal perspectives. The teachers effectively reinforce the message by demonstrating — which they might also be communicating verbally — that what works for one may be different from what works for another but is just as valid. Part of the magic of co-teaching lies in the revolutionary ideas conveyed through the nuances of presentation and facilitation, not just in class content.

Co-teaching offers more than a model for sharing power. (There are, after all, good reasons for this rule.) Team teaching offers the teachers a built-in leadership support system; it pools greater creativity and thinking for class planning; it allows the teachers to be more fully present to their own processes and magical workings; it helps weave a stronger web for holding, sensing, shaping and raising energy. It can contribute to a deeper class experience for all.

Sounds great! I hear you say. And I say it, too! Sometimes.

Bear with me while I play The Devil's Advocate. And maybe The Hierophant's, as

well. Guidelines are good. They offer consistency and represent sound thinking. But when a recommendation calcifies into a rule, the rule may replace the sound thinking that created it. What starts as an effort to align community education with the ideal of liberation runs the risk of becoming enslavement to the method that once was thought to liberate us. Subordinating one's own authority to the authority of the status quo is The Hierophant's warning.

Don't get me wrong. I love rules — when I've tested my own thinking around them and see their solid foundation. I've thought about this teaching rule, as have many people. I see the value. What does your best thinking tell you?

HAVE YOU EVER participated in a Reclaiming class where it was clear that there was a senior teacher or a dominant personality? Did the class leaders share power?

This is not a criticism of leaders with enough skill, dedication, charisma and energy to facilitate groups on their own when support is not available. Being in your own power and sharing your gifts when the need arises is critical in moments of transition, conflict, strain, desperation or even celebration — any time a group would be well-served by the focusing of energy toward a specific intention. At an action, a single Witch in an affinity group can help the group unify. At a family gathering, she

can shift the group dynamic away from a disempowering pattern.

Consider The Star, pouring forth her energy to ignite the night and inspire the world. She is a bright and powerful guide. Now consider your impressions of someone striving to be a star — the star of the show, of the class, of your family. Do

you envy their ability to stand up in front of a group and shine, wishing it was yourself offering your gifts to an appreciative audience? Are you supportive, aware of the challenges inherent in such a bold act as stripping off the layers of self-deprecation and forced humility to let one's divinity shine? Are you critical, with judgments about attention-hogging drama queens? Are you yourself the star?

What journey has The Fool made to look in the mirror and see The Star? The innocent has claimed his tools of intellect, of will, of love, of groundedness. He has been guided by the heart of his feminine wisdom. He has birthed. He has shaped. He has challenged his assumptions about society and discovered himself to be his own authority. He has integrated the divergent parts of himself. He has moved through his darkest fears toward personal victory. He has found the source of his strength. He has braved solitude to search for his own truth. He has acknowledged that there are forces beyond his control. He has committed himself to what is right. He has released his illusions and attachment to outcomes. He has dissolved limitations within himself to face the deepest of transformations. He has arrived at balance. He has dissolved his belief about the limitations of the world around him. He has been shaken and fully awakened. And now he has discovered within him a desire to communicate without holding back. He has arrived at the part of himself that is The Star.

And as The Star, he has an abundance of energy and inspiration to share. He wants to contribute to the bettering of his world, the benefit of his community. What a wonderful energy to be and be led by.

I have witnessed the powerful transformation that stepping into leadership brings. It is an act of owning The Star-self, of allowing oneself to shine. This is an empowering act for women who have been enculturated to take up little space, for young people who must always seek permission, and for people of color whose voices are frequently unheard. Leading is an effective way to dismantle racism, sexism, and

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\*When the Women Heal ... the Earth Heals\*

ageism. Sharing what ones know in the context of being the visible leader validates the very notion of leadership itself for whatever identity groups leader belongs to. This is even more powerful if a person in a culturally dominant identity group — a middle-aged white man for example — is the visible assistant to the lead teacher. His support comes not by being there to catch the teacher if she stumbles, but simply by beaming love and encouragement and absolute faith in the fact that she's completely capable. This kind of support shifts our collective consciousness by offering an alternative to the attacks and chronic criticisms made on our leaders.

Further, being the sole individual responsible for conceiving a class plan and conducting it demands that one develop one's own thinking and skills. In a co-teaching environment, a newer teacher might hold back or lean on her co-teachers instead of daring to be the bold leader her class — and the world — needs her to be. Yes, needs her to be. When we can all see ourselves as leaders, we all recognize our need to take some responsibility for and lend a hand toward solving our collective conundrums.

Solo-teaching provides a potent cauldron for leadership development. It also allows an accomplished facilitator enough space to guide a group efficiently toward its goal. Strong leaders give strong direction, inspiring others with their visions. The Star effectively encourages us all to be Stars.

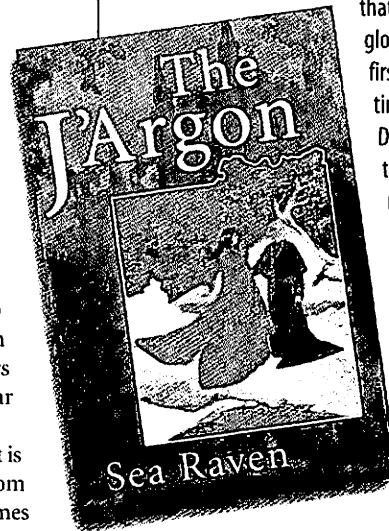
If we turn our eyes heavenward, we see that the glorious night is illuminated by the fire of a million Stars, not just one. There is room enough and need for us all to shine and share our visions. Sometimes we will guide like the bright North Star. Sometimes we will dance in constellations, aware of our unique contributions to those divine roadmaps we both define and refer to as leaders in our stellar community.

*Elka Eastly still teaches in both models. She is learning to value her embodied contradictions.*

# The J'Argon

by Sea Raven

The Year is 2157. The United States has become a repressive theocracy, where a great Evil holds sway. **The J'Argon** is the leader of a spiritual alliance that has voice, but not vote, in 22nd Century global politics. She is the Fourth J'Argon, and the first woman to hold the title. The J'Argon's long-time lover, partner, and soul friend, the Arch Deacon of the National Cathedral, is a leader in the Liberation Underground. The Arch Deacon must open his prophetic Christian mysticism to the J'Argon's ancient earth-based magic and awaken his own Adept Power so that together they can defeat the Dragon.

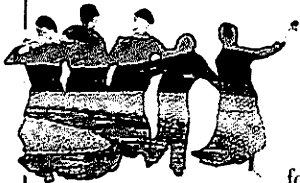


"Not since I read 'Mists of Avalon' have I felt so moved to my spiritual core. 'The J'Argon' is the most powerful narrative of spiritual intrigue, ritual, and power." — *Cristina Gonzales, Ph.D., Academic Dean, University of Creation Spirituality, Oakland, California.*

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# THE WHEEL OF CHANGE TAROT

a review of Alexandra Genetti's new deck

by M. A. Bovis

The first time that I saw the Wheel of Change Tarot was as slides at the Bay Area Tarot Symposium in 1995. A couple of the card images stayed in my mind for a long time — the 3 of disks and the 2 of wands.

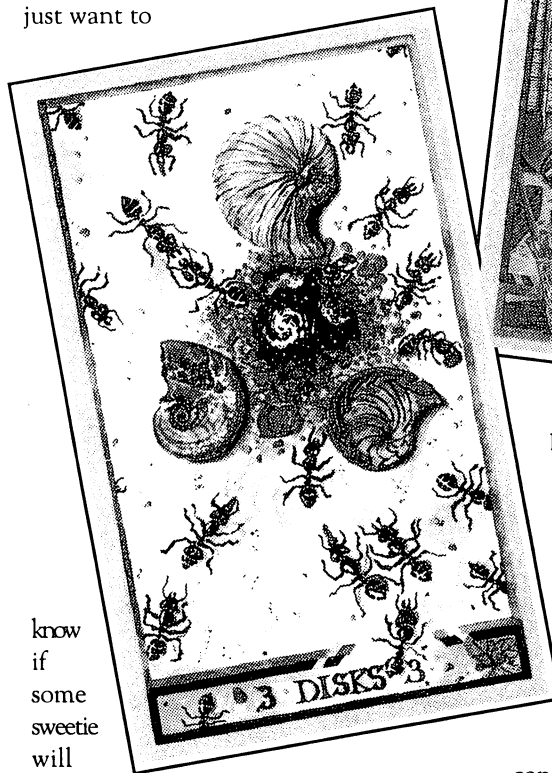
I waited for 2 or 3 years for this deck to come out, and had the privilege of being able to correspond with the creator (Alexandra Genetti is very open, as are most tarotists) while it was being worked on. While I was waiting for her to find a publisher, I ordered several of the cards which were available as color copies on greeting cards.

It is a great pleasure to finally have this deck. It is not an inexpensive set, as it costs almost \$40. But compared to other sets at the same price, it is a good value.

I have a large tarot collection (60-70 decks) and I admit that several of them are collectors' items only and not for practical use. The majority I've tried to use, though, and to understand their "message." Tarot decks often have a message: either of the esoteric school

that the deck creators came from (Rider-Waite/Smith, Crowley, Golden Dawn, Servants of Light, BOTA) or social/political (Motherpeace, Daughters of the Moon, Inner Child). There are some decks that don't have a message at all, but they are unusual.

The message can affect my use of the deck. It can be quite tedious to be belabored by a message when I just want to

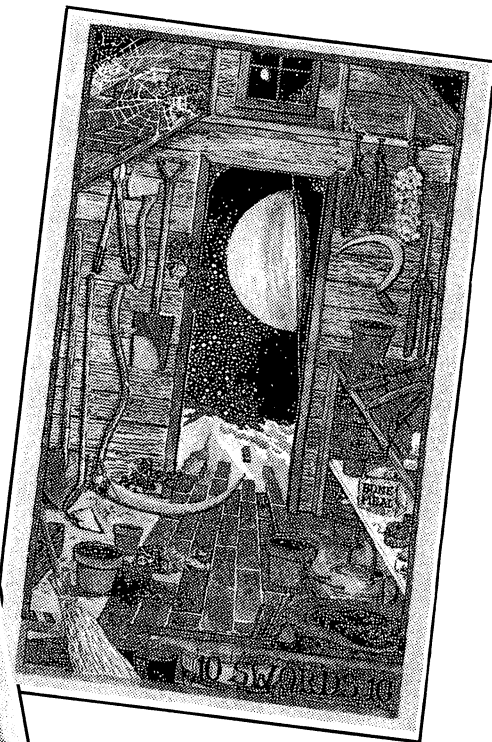


know if some sweetie will call

me again. Other times the message is supportive of me no matter what I'm using the cards for: meditation or divination.

My experience with the Wheel of Change deck is still limited at this point, so I can honestly only review the practical aspects of it: some of the things that make or break a deck for me in daily use. These practical aspects include:

1. How the deck is to hold and physically use — size, back design, paper quality, etc.
2. How much do the card pictures speak to me? Do the minor arcana have



pictures or only symbols? How elaborate are they? I am not an artist or art critic, but some of the most beautiful, critically-acclaimed designs don't take me anywhere, and are done after I see them once.

3. How well does the book go with the deck: do I have to use it to interpret the deck, or can I go right into using the cards? Does the message support me? Or does it try to change me, convince or belabor me? Is this deck only going to work for readings within the framework of the message?

## THE DECK

The cards themselves are approximately 5" by 3" and the back is dark blue with a whirling galaxy on it. I really like the back because it doesn't show whether a card is reversed or not when I first lay them out. The cards are a decent thickness, so they won't tear when shuffled. There are 78 tarot cards and a 79th card that has the Color Wheel on it (this deck was originally

*continued on page 49*



## Wheel of Change Tarot

continued from page 43

named the Color Wheel Tarot). There are different colored borders for each suit: Trumps are lavender, Wands are yellow, Cups are rose, Swords are blue and Disks are green.

The Wheel of Change tarot deck and book set comes in a cardboard holder that is effectively useless after you open it, as the cards will slide around. So I keep the cards in an old evening purse.

### PICTURES & SYMBOLS

The artwork on this deck really appeals to me on an intuitive level. This is the first tarot deck that I ever put on my altar: the four Aces, the Magician, and a few others.

The two cards that first captured me were the 3 of Disks, which is three spiral anthills and ants, and the 2 of Wands, shown as two salamanders on a background of fall leaves. The 9 of Swords depicts windmills used for power generation, and the 2 of cups shows a pair of crystal champagne flutes at a wedding.

I am just getting acquainted with a lot of the cards, but I am enamoured of the minor arcana cards, which are pictures rather than symbols. The Court cards are ordered by Prince, Princess, Knight and Queen, and are multicultural. The Knight of Cups is a saxophone player for the Salvation Army on a snowy corner, the Prince of Wands a Native American man on a vision quest, and the Queen of Swords is a Japanese Shinto worshipper.

### INTERPRETING THE DECK

Weighing in at a hefty 383 pages, the book includes explanations and interpretations for all the cards, general information on reading the cards, suggested layouts, a symbolism guide, a bibliography and an index.

This book is not urgent and necessary for me, because the cards speak to me so clearly. But it took about 7-8 years working with tarot before I felt empowered enough to use *any* deck without some other authority in text, either a book or pamphlet. The literature that comes with a deck is where the explanation of the message is most often found. The Wheel of Change deck is no exception.

In the introduction Alexandra explains: "I wanted to create a new Tarot that was intellectually rigorous, yet consistent and straightforward. I wanted this new tarot to express elements of the modern world of science and of our contemporary life, but also to relate to our history and evolution. I also knew that it should be traditional; it should keep to the ancient form as much as possible without renaming cards or suits and also without the overuse of the human figure, so prevalent in

today's decks. I wanted the Major Arcana to be immediately distinguishable... so I knew that there would be no human figures in the numbered cards. Overall, however, the most important thing I wanted to express in these cards was a deep reverence for nature and, in addition, the condition of humanity embedded within it."

Comparing my interpretations with this book, I find the description of the cards to be useful as well as the interpretation. Some things make me nervous: some of the quotes come from folks that I don't feel should be quoted. But I enjoy Alexandra's wisdom and experience that she shares in both her descriptions and interpretations. Her message reflects my world in my use of the deck. I am finding it well worth the wait.

*The Wheel of Change Tarot deck is available from Destiny Books, One Park Street, Rochester, Vermont 05767, [www.gotoit.com](http://www.gotoit.com)*

## Celtic History

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back into the womb of Mother Earth for regeneration and eventual rebirth.

### THE CELTIC CALENDAR

The oldest known Celtic calendar dates from the first century B.C.E., and is based on the lunar cycle. The Celtic festival-cycle that has come down to us, however, is based on the solar year, focusing on the "four points of the sun," the equinoxes and solstices.

The present eight-fold cycle of holidays (as celebrated by many groups, including Reclaiming) is a twentieth-century reconstruction, based on Welsh, Irish and Scottish festivals. Samhain, for instance, is adapted from the Irish celebration of the feast of Oíche Shamna and Lá Shamna, marking the beginning of the new year. Brigid/Imbolc is adapted from a Welsh holiday marking the end of winter, also celebrated as the feast day of the Christian Saint Brigid, herself a permutation of an older Goddess. Beltane was celebrated as the first day of summer in some parts of Celtic Britain, while Lammass was the time of first offerings of the new harvest.

### THE LIVING CELTIC HERITAGE

Celtic traditions survive to the present day in art, culture and spirituality. Sacred places, covertly maintained for centuries, have been re-discovered by increasing numbers of people throughout the past century. The intricate patterns of Celtic art, epitomized by the famous Book of Kells, enjoy the respect and interest not only of scholars but of the wider art-appreciating public.

Celtic spirituality, suppressed for centuries by Christian authorities but never extinguished,

is experiencing a revival in Europe, North America and Australia. In Nigel Pennick's concluding words, "Celtic spirituality is timeless and not just the legacy of a bygone age. It has never died out because the essence of Celtic wisdom is rooted in the deepest eternal secrets of existence."

*"The Sacred World of the Celts: An Illustrated Guide to Celtic Spirituality and Mythology," is published by Inner Traditions International, One Park Street, Rochester, VT 05767, [www.gotoit.com](http://www.gotoit.com)*

## Scents

continued from page 42

to his eyes as he remembers how funny it was to watch her wake herself from the sound of one. It is spring, and the earth is fragrant and beautiful. Amidst the beauty, amidst the jasmine, the jonquil, the honeysuckle, and the narcissus, honor the stench of your lover's farts, your child's sweaty head or smelly diaper, and your stinky animal. We humans can distinguish among 10,000 different odors. All are sacred, all hold power, and together they create the intoxicating blend that is the perfume of the Goddess. Hail and Farewell, dear One Who the Ocean Obeys! This column is dedicated to you. Blessed Be.

## May Day

continued from page 21

- Participatory Theatre—Saturday, April 11th, 2-5 p.m.
- Singing for the Streets—Thursday, April 16th, 7-9 p.m.
- Mass Motions for Mass Movements: Radical Theater for the Street—Saturday, April 18th, 2-5 p.m.
- Vibrant Street Drumming and Found Object Music Making—Thursday, April 23rd, 7-9 p.m.

Cell Space will also host two weekends of "Work Days" to build our images on April 18-19 and April 25-26. On April 26 we will have a "Meeting of the Masses" to pull together all the pieces for the event.

Please note: because the costs involved in these workshops will involve materials, space rentals and other expenses, we are asking participants for a contribution of \$5-\$30 per workshop. No person will be refused participation for lack of funds.

*For more information about any of these workshops, please call (415) 339-7801.*

*For more information on Reclaim May Day, contact Art and Revolution Convergence, (415) 487-5163 or (415) 285-9734, email: [five@igc.org](mailto:five@igc.org)*



# The New York Tarot

reviewed by Olwen Aurora Borealis

USING BLACK AND white photography, the New York Tarot deck features mid-1980s New York City as a backdrop for the major and minor arcana. Published in 1987, the deck is the creation of Giani Siri.

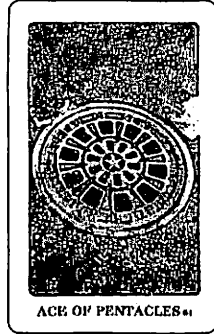
The down-to-earth New York Tarot came about in response to that time



when Wiccans studied serious Ceremonial Magick more than magical activism. Instead of wizards and spirits, its photos boast a pizza-carrying Queen of Pentacles and a Knight of Swords

standing proudly in front of Saint Marks Books.

Imagine a Coney Island Wheel of Fortune or manhole-cover Ace of



with a syringe and Transport (The Chariot) as a subway car protected by a Guardian Angel.

This deck has more cards than the average Tarot. In addition to the regular court cards there are Children. These represent the potential of the suit. The deck also comes with twelve cards for the astrological signs.

I've used this deck for twelve years. It's proven to

Pentacles. Here Quentin Crisp embodies Strength, and Margot Adler is the High Priestess, with *Drawing Down the Moon* by her side. See Death

give clear, mumbo-jumbo-free information. Predictions tend to come true very quickly, even on the same day as the reading. It's not hard to get a feel for these cards, as the symbolism is very modern. It's great for pagans who love



the crazy, eclectic beauty of cities and desire real-life images to work with.

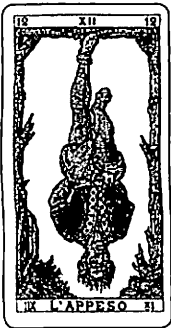
Several of the cards may be viewed at the Tarot Passages website, [www.artoftarot.com/newyork.htm](http://www.artoftarot.com/newyork.htm)

Contact Sirius Endeavors, 5482 Hay Point Landing, Smyrna, DE 19977, (302) 653-5437, [siriuse57@hotmail.com](mailto:siriuse57@hotmail.com)



# Tarot Passages

[www.artoftarot.com](http://www.artoftarot.com)



TAROT PASSAGES is an outstanding online resource featuring hundreds of reviews of tarot decks and books.

We discovered this site while searching for images of the above-reviewed New York

Tarot. The New York deck stumped San Francisco magic stores — not an easy task. We put out a cry for help over the Reclaiming email listserves (visit [www.reclaiming.org](http://www.reclaiming.org) for more info), and

Michele Jackson, who has reviewed many decks for Tarot Passages, directed us to the site.

Luckily we were on a mission to view the New York Tarot images, or we would have gotten lost in the site's 440 reviews of decks, with several cards from each deck pictured (shown here: The "Antichi Tarocchi Italiani" deck).

Visit Tarot Passages at [www.artoftarot.com](http://www.artoftarot.com)



## RQ welcomes magical articles and reviews

Reclaiming Quarterly welcomes articles, artwork, and reviews on magical tools and oracles. We have carried pieces on tarot, the Kaballah, and astrology, and are open to other topics.

We especially like getting short reviews of 200-400 words.

RQ also carries articles on spellwork, such as last issue's Solstice spell for the renewal of the Earth and Indigenous Peoples.

Send writings, or contact us with an idea, at [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org)

Not online? Call RQ at (415) 255-7623, and mail articles to PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

# The Osho Zen Deck

reviewed by Amy MoonDragon

THE OSHO ZEN deck was recommended to me by a friend and a professional reader. My friend also happened to study with Osho so I knew the deck worked well with her core beliefs. Would it conflict with my own? I was intrigued by how well I might be able to wrap my mind around Zen philosophy while working with the Tarot.

I immediately liked the artwork which blends modern and timeless imagery using bright colors framed by a black border. The deck follows the traditional Tarot structure with a major arcana and four suits

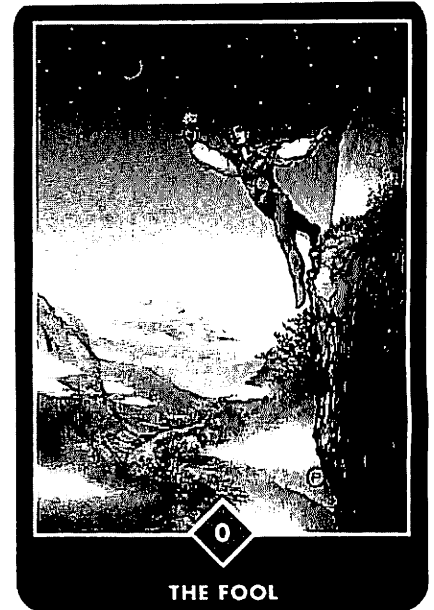
aligned with the elements – clouds, fire, water and rainbows. And this is where the leaps of faith began. Rainbows represent the physical here, yet seem so, well, intangible.

Breathing into the Zen of it all, I made the leap and continued.

I found many similarities to the traditional meanings in the cards and many interesting surprises. “Success”

was the six of fire as expected but the six of clouds revealed the unexpected title of “the burden.” In the major arcana, VII is Awareness, with a message of witnessing and detachment instead of the Chariot’s call to action. Not surprisingly, there were many cards with the message to surrender or flow and few cards about taking charge or making change.

To me, the deck is a mixed bag filled with some helpful, easy-to-integrate information and also some ideas that seem like total reversals of the traditional meanings. I found myself torn between opening to the Zen energy and learning from it, to being frustrated, finding the information too obscure or irrelevant to my situation. I concluded that the deck is most useful to me when I’m in need of a radical shift in perspective, when what I already



know isn’t working.

Working with this deck was a great exercise in stretching my beliefs about the world. I found it challenging, educational and always interesting. I can’t say that I always made the leap but I had fun trying.

Check out the Osho Zen deck at [www.osho.org/Magazine/Tarot/OshoZenTarot.cfm](http://www.osho.org/Magazine/Tarot/OshoZenTarot.cfm)

Amy MoonDragon is a Reclaiming Teacher and professional Tarot reader in Seattle. See Seattle class listings on page 44, or contact [moonami@aol.com](mailto:moonami@aol.com)

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Reclaiming Quarterly welcomes articles and reviews on magical tools and oracles. We have carried pieces on tarot, spellwork, the Kaballah, and astrology, and are open to other topics.

We especially like getting short reviews of 200-400 words.

Send writings, or contact us with an idea: [quarterly@reclaiming.org](mailto:quarterly@reclaiming.org), (415) 255-7623, PO Box 14404, San Francisco, CA 94114.

# The Healing Tarot

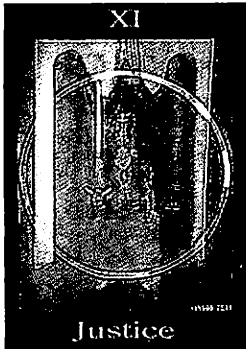
Designed by Jennifer Elizabeth Moore

Reviewed by James Wells

*The Healing Tarot*, a laser-print color photographic tarot deck, is a work of great care and love. Jennifer Moore believes that each card represents or embodies a “Great One,” a spiritual entity. She created masks, costumes, body art, and sets for all 78 cards.

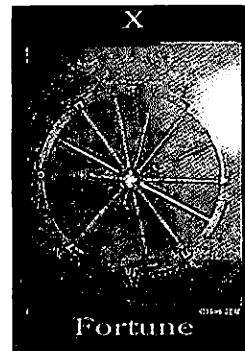
She worked out which day would be most auspicious astrologically for each. Magickally-trained people were invited to pose. Every photo shoot took place in a ritual context in which the Great Ones of the Tarot entered the models. This is why *The Healing Tarot* was eight years in the making!

The card stock is heavy, making for a slightly thick deck, but it’s sturdy. Images are protected with a gloss coating. The scenes are Waite/Smith-based — it’s fun to see them “come alive.” Moore captures the full range of human experience and emotion through a fine balance of



humor (e.g. a couple immersed in trash in Devil) and depth (e.g. a hauntingly beautiful Death). Superb for readings, meditation, or ritual, the pictures inspire an outpouring of creativity and intuition.

Minor Arcana cards bear a subtitle (e.g. Nine of Wands — Courage). Trump names are traditional, with XII as the gender-neutral “Hanged One.” The top and bottom borders seem a bit



wide to me, but that’s probably my own thing about borders. No “little white book” comes with the deck.

A nice touch is the blessing that Jennifer inscribed on the bottom of the box.

I give *The Healing Tarot* a 9 1/2 out of 10. It’s worth the price, and is a handsome addition to one’s Tarot collection.



The 78-card deck is \$90 US from [www.bluewitch.com](http://www.bluewitch.com), where you can also view color reproductions of the cards.

*James Wells is a Toronto-based Tarot consultant, ritual weaver, Reiki master, musician, and workshop facilitator. Contact [workeroforacles@yahoo.ca](mailto:workeroforacles@yahoo.ca), (416) 966-2685.*

# The Hudes Tarot

deck and book set  
designed by Susan Hudes

SUSAN HUDES renders these cards in luminous watercolors accented with marbled paper, antique maps and constellation charts. Although the images felt a bit chilly at first—the colors run to the cool end of the spectrum, and the faces of the figures tend to be passive, with downcast eyes—I began to appreciate their virtues after working with them for a while. They manage to be lovely but not cloying or saccharine. Hudes follows the pictorial conventions of the Rider-Waite® deck, but strips away some of the symbols while enlarging on one or two aspects of the original imagery.

A.L. (Leah) Samul, longtime Feri Witch and member of Covenant of the Goddess (CoG), has written a new companion book for the deck, *Wisdom in the Cards*, that opens up and explains the stripped-down imagery. In her preface she tells the interesting story of how she was compelled to work with this deck, and her insights feel inspired at times.

For novices, Samul briefly outlines the basic concepts of Tarot and several techniques for working with the cards. The

rest of the book describes each card in detail. Samul gives an occasional nod to related metaphysical systems—numerology, astrology—but doesn't belabor them; you don't need to be an advanced occultist to use her book. Her planetary attributions for the major arcana are different from those given by Crowley (widely regarded as the standard), and she doesn't assign astrological correspondences to the minor arcana.

Samul also includes an affirmation and a prayer for each card. These are great for readers who draw a daily card, but are useful even if you don't work with affirmations. Readings that are clear about current and future events don't always suggest a course of action, and Samul's affirmations offer good advice. In a reading for a friend regarding a formidable life change, the Devil card came up.

Samul's interpretation is straightforward: fear and lack of hope, which accurately described my friend's sense of her own situation. However, the affirmation, "I will keep my heart's eyes open for ways in which to free myself," encouraged her to take a specific and more helpful approach.

Most refreshingly, Samul has a gift for relating the cards to real life. Her

*continued on page 55*



## The Complete Book of Tarot Reversals

by Mary K. Greer

ATTENTION ALL Tarot people! No more panic about reversed cards! Mary K. Greer comes to our rescue in her latest work, *The Complete Book of Tarot Reversals*, the first in a new Special Topics in Tarot series from Llewellyn.

Tired of negative and simplistic ways of reading reversed cards, Greer demonstrates that reversals can fling wide the gates to a card's full spectrum of possibility, provide more specificity, and call our attention to more complex points of view. Without eschewing tradition completely, the author helps us to approach this topic as modern

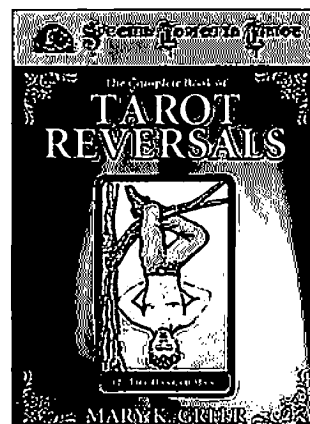
people who can think and explore for ourselves.

Tarot Reversals offers 12 principle

ways in which a reversal can modify a Tarot card. Particularly fine are: rectification; disease into remedy; shamanic and magical perspectives; and moon phases for round decks. Then, card by card (about two pages each), Greer offers both upright and reversed possibilities of meaning for the entire deck. She stresses that they are intended as

springboards only, that the reader is

*continued on page 63*



December 6-20, 2002, at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS), in Petaluma, CA. Contact Capra J'neva, (415) 663-9583, or visit [www.permacultureinstitute.com/eat/](http://www.permacultureinstitute.com/eat/)

#### SELECTED WEB RESOURCES

- EAT Audio Page (*audio documentary and clips from EAT 2002*) — [frsc.bleet.org/eat](http://frsc.bleet.org/eat)
- Penny Livingston-Stark — [www.permacultureinstitute.com](http://www.permacultureinstitute.com)
- Starhawk — [www.starhawk.org](http://www.starhawk.org)
- Wilderness Awareness School — [www.wildernessawareness.org](http://www.wildernessawareness.org)
- Tom Brown's Tracker School — [www.trackerschool.com](http://www.trackerschool.com)
- Occidental Arts and Ecology Center — [www.oaec.org](http://www.oaec.org)
- Builders Without Borders — [www.builderswithoutborders.org](http://www.builderswithoutborders.org)
- Sustainable Sonoma (MASH) — [www.sustainablesonoma.org/projects/mash.html](http://www.sustainablesonoma.org/projects/mash.html)
- Mycoremediation — [www.bfi.org/Trimitab/winter01/mycoremediation.htm](http://www.bfi.org/Trimitab/winter01/mycoremediation.htm)
- Living Machines — [www.oceanarks.org](http://www.oceanarks.org)
- Permaculture Activist Network — [www.permacultureactivist.net](http://www.permacultureactivist.net)
- Permaculture Credit Union (!) — [www.pcuonline.org](http://www.pcuonline.org)

*Jonathan Furst identifies as a polysexual Pagan Jewish artist, writer, and explorer. He is currently living the nuevo low-tech lifestyle among the redwoods of Mendocino, California. He does, however, occasionally check his email: [jfurst@pobox.com](mailto:jfurst@pobox.com)*

## Dancing at the Bomb Plant

*continued from page 9*

convince the bomb people to stop. Death swooped in and overtook everyone, even the bomb makers. A grieving Goddess puppet then resurrected everyone and all the nature puppets (Bill was in charge of moving one of the Goddess' hands). The watching crowd erupted into a spontaneous dance that evolved into a spiral dance. It was tremendous!

The last event of the demonstration was the direct action. This year, because of 9-11, the bomb plant officials are enforcing a federal law against trespassing on the property. Previously they had only arrested folks under city statutes. Four people crossed the line and were arrested. One of those was Tim Mellen, an employee of OREPA. Tim explained to me that they were glad that the federal law would now be upheld, because they wanted to get into a federal court in order to have a jury trial and be heard. Up until now, their city charges just get thrown out by the judge.

After the arrest of the four people willing to face federal charges, two large affinity groups sat down and blocked the road, intending to be arrested on city charges. The police declined to arrest them or the giant puppets who were also

taking part in the blockade. The groups sat there for three hours in total peace. During that time, Gaia Reclaiming led a spiral dance in the street singing Beverly Frederick's song, "We Are Your People." We followed that with several Dances of Universal Peace. Police on Y-12 property looked on with binoculars. It became obvious to us that the police were not going to arrest the blockaders, so we left. We found out later that the affinity groups had marched down to a busier intersection, where they finally succeeded in being arrested. It's rather amusing that they had to work so hard to get arrested.

I personally wonder what other measures can be taken to get the word out about what is going on at the Y-12 bomb plant. My brother and his fiancée live a short drive away, in Knoxville. Neither of them was aware that bombs were present there at all, let alone being built. They said that according to what they have seen in the local media, the only thing going on in Oak Ridge is research and some demonstrators getting arrested. I shared facts with them about what is going on there, but they didn't seem very interested. It is very difficult to know how to engage the greater populace when close family members don't want to hear what's going on.

Won't you join us in Oak Ridge? The next demonstration is in August (which our usual group won't be attending since it coincides with Spiral Heart's camp), but we will be attending the April 2003 demonstration. You can get more information at [www.stopthebombs.org](http://www.stopthebombs.org) and see complete pictures of this year's rally at

[www.peregrineretreats.homestead.com/news.html](http://www.peregrineretreats.homestead.com/news.html).

*Irish Flambeau is a Peace Witch and leads Sacred Circle Dances at every opportunity.*

## Hudes Tarot

*continued from page 35*

descriptions are concrete and useful, taking into account contemporary concerns such as substance abuse and diversity. The Empress, for example, "...deplores any kind of intolerance based on physical appearance, including insensitivity to individuals with physical disabilities."

Some of Samul's interpretations are non-traditional but sensitive. The Five of Cups, for example — often interpreted as a somewhat scolding reminder to stop focusing on spilt milk and count those blessings which remain — is held by Samul to illustrate healthy grief, the ability to face sorrow courageously without rushing the healing process.

U.S. Games is re-issuing the deck as a boxed set with *Wisdom in the Cards*.

*Published by U.S. Games. Reviewed by Rose M. Smith.*

*The Sacred Grove*



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[http://home.attbi.com/~sea.turningtide/Cascadia\\_Village\\_Camp.htm](http://home.attbi.com/~sea.turningtide/Cascadia_Village_Camp.htm)

tion that I must be true to the spirits who guide me. As difficult as these questions are, grappling with them is a small sacrifice for me to make when I think of all that the spirits have given to me and to the worlds. In ritual and in life, I promise them that I will do my best to honor them.

*Judy Andreas lives in the shadow of the Chevron refinery in Richmond, CA, and loves, loves, loves her girlfriend of 26 years.*

## Greer: Reversed Cards

*continued from page 35*

invited to enrich her/his Tarot vocabulary through studying different decks and incorporating personal associations and intuitions. Meanings are keyed primarily to Rider-Waite-Smith images, with occasional reference to other decks.

The spreads — three-card, yes/no, life inventory, problem-solving, hanged man, and hidden influences — designed or chosen for this book are outstanding. There is also a chapter devoted to a Celtic Cross reading with an actual client which demonstrates the fluid and empowering “midwife of the soul” style of reading for which Greer is famous.

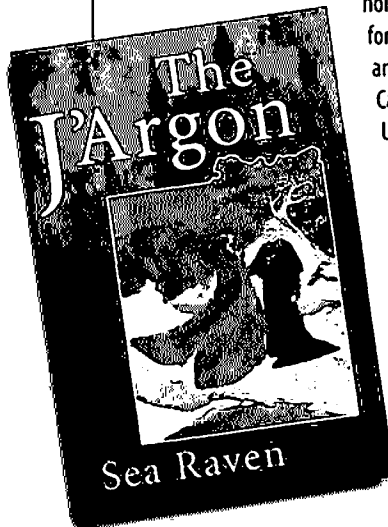
Another important feature of *Tarot Reversals* is the Heroine’s Journey, a retelling of the Hero’s Journey from a feminine perspective, based on the reversed Major Arcana.

Mary K. Greer’s *The Complete Book of Tarot Reversals* is an important work on a highly-charged topic in the Tarot community. Get it, use it, and turn your world upside-down.

*Published by Llewellyn. Reviewed by James Wells, www.workeroforacles.com*

# The J’Argon

The J’Argon is the leader of a spiritual alliance that has voice, but not vote, in 22nd Century global politics. She is the Fourth J’Argon, and the first woman to hold the title since the Covenant of the Word was formed in 2047. Her long-time lover, partner, and soul friend, the Arch Deacon of the National Cathedral, is a leader in the Liberation Underground ...



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— Jim Negrette, *Reclaiming Quarterly*

“The J’Argon is the most powerful narrative of spiritual intrigue, ritual, and power... Not since I read Marion Zimmer Bradley’s *Mists of Avalon* have I felt so moved to my spiritual core.”

— Maria Cristina González, former Dean, University of Creation Spirituality, California

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announcing **Margo Adair’s** new book:

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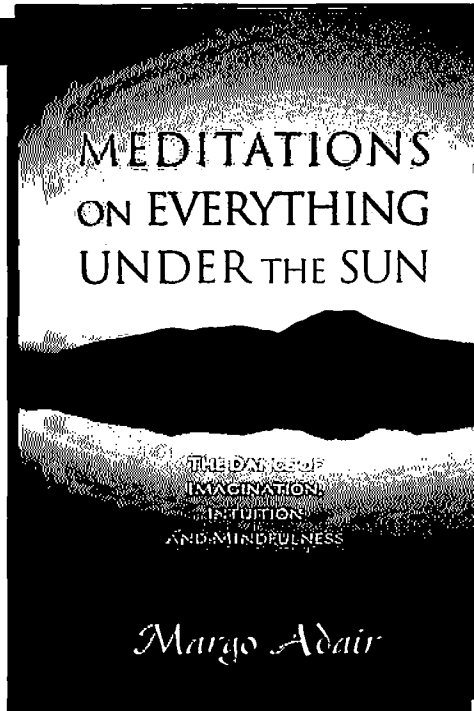
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