

REAL PAGAN PULSE

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"WELCOME, EVERYONE, TO THE REAL PAGAN PULSE. THE PULSE WILL BE A MONTHLY EZINE PRESENTING A NEGATIVE RELEASE TO OUR REAL PAGAN PAGES-- IT WILL COVER SUBJECTS NOT COVERED IN PAGES, FROM SMALLER INTEREST GROUP ORIENTED DIALOGUE TO NONCONVENTIONAL, PERHAPS EVEN CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS. WITH ITS SISTER PUBLICATION, PAGES, THE PULSE WILL CERTAINLY ADD TO THE GROWING DYNAMIC OF TRUTHFUL DISCOURSE, EDUCATIONAL INTEGRITY AND THE FOUNDATION OF PERPETUAL GROWTH WE HOPE TO PRESENT THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE NETWORK."

- SANGRAAL

Contents

ii - INTRODUCTION FROM SANGRAAL

iii - CONGRATULATIONS

iv - THE AUTISTIC MIND AND SPIRITUALITY

v - HAPPY HINTS, SOVEREIGNTY

vi - ECLECTIC ETHICS: SPIRITUALLY PROGRESSIVE OR TRADITION THIEVING

vii - CRAFTING YOUR OWN RUNES

viii - SPIRIT ANIMALS VS. TOTEM ANIMALS

ix - INITIATION INTO N.O.X.

xi - ON OATHBINDING: AN OPINION

xii - CHRONESTHESIA AND ASTRAL TRAVEL: A THEORY OF SCIENCE AND MAGIC

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All articles will be considered, from all writers. Please maintain a high standard of grammar, spelling and general quality.



Congratulations on the engagement

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**Two of our wonderful Staff Members here
at Real Pagan, who deserve the best, and the
best is each other.**

“Sláinte mhór agus á h-uile béannáhd duibh.”



The Autistic Mind and Spirituality

BY ELIZABETH CORNWELL

From the start let me be sure to point out that I am not a professional anything. I have no credentials, and have completed no formal studies on this topic. I have done much informal research and had multiple conversations with various individuals on the spectrum. I have also spoken with several nurses, nurse practitioners, dieticians and medical students. The conclusions I have reached are mine alone, but I would like to share them with you.

Let's begin with a quick explanation of what makes the autistic mind. A malformation in chromosome 17 has been shown to lead to the neurologic deficiencies for both Autism and Schizophrenia. The absence of the malformation does not prove that the individual will not have problems with either, but the inclusion does invariably lead to some form of mental disorder. There are then environmental factors at work. Dr. Natasha Campbell-McBride, MD wrote a book called 'Gut and Psychology Syndrome'. She specializes in nutritional healing and developed what is called the GAPS diet to combat unhealthy bacteria in the gut. We all have unhealthy bacteria, but it is especially detrimental to the autistic mind. Pin holes in the intestines leak toxins to the brain from undigested food particles. These particles are fermented and have an effect like many mind altering substances that people indulge in for recreational purposes.

Many people who spend their life looking for deeper answers in their spirituality have differing opinions as to the use of mind altering substances for the practitioner. I personally believe it can be helpful... but must be used with great caution, if at all. Matters of spirituality are not child play. I do not recommend it, nor do I condone it's uses. It is not for me to dictate the religious practices of another. People who do choose to weave various states of intoxication into their practices have been long at work in doing so. Native American cultures had their spirit quests. It has long been believed that a thimble of 'spirits' would appease an unhappy brownie or leprechaun in various religions. Modern day has the 'Holy Church of Cannabis' and so on and so forth. With so many using such substances in their spiritual practice, one must surmise that the effect is a worthwhile one.

I can only imagine then, what effect it has for a person, locked in their own minds. I have often times seen Autistic youngsters staring off vacantly much as I do when I am trying to get a feel on a person or situation. They startle quite violently at times when pulled back into the world around them. Crowds overwhelm them, much as I have heard the general population of empathy describe.

A great number of Autistic individuals are completely non-verbal. Some speak only in an imitation (echolalia) of sounds and words they have heard repetitively in the past.

BrightTots.com describes echolalia as follows; echolalia is the immediate or delayed echoing or repetition of whole, unanalysed expressions or reciprocation. It depends on the ability to remember streams of auditory signals and to reproduce them, processes that are related to verbal short-term memory, the purpose of echolalia is unclear, but it has been believed to serve a number of functions, including conversation maintenance, communication, self-soothing and verbal rehearsal.

With these stumbling blocks in the way it's hard to find individuals with Autism to interview, to get a direct idea of how their minds work on such topics. I have a variety of such friends so I have two different vantage points to work with. They are quite opposing viewpoints. The first, (we'll call Fred) has a tendency toward obsessive behaviours. He worships the Emperor as he calls Him and feels that there is no greater crime then to give less than ones very life and soul to the will of the Emperor. Through conversation I have gleaned that Fred is referring to the Christian God, but does not like the blanket term, God. So out of respect Fred has deemed fit to call him the Emperor. We have discussed at great length matters of other spirituality such as tarot readings, ritualistic magics, and worship of other deities. He however has no interest in such and still feels drawn to worship the Emperor.

"I might not be able to describe it in a way that makes sense, but that's spirituality for you. No one ever said faith was logical, just real."

– 'Fred'

Another friend of mine, Isabelle is on the opposite end of the spiritual spectrum. She feels no pull towards any path beyond just walking hers through

life. Her tendencies to dissect and logically examine everything give little room for 'imaginative things like God' When asked what she did believe in, she replied as follows; "I believe the sun rises and the world turns and that as long as it does, it doesn't matter if or what there is out there. I have my own life to worry about without trying to decipher the metaphysical universe."

When we discussed organized religion she was disdainful of that too. Her belief is that organized religion robs the people of individuality.

"It breeds hate, and close mindedness. It does not allow for creative thinking or acceptance of strangers. It's all about being the same."

Though she admits that there could be some kind of metaphysical aspect in the world, she does not believe that there is anything more than the here and now.

Individuals with Autism are just that, individuals. They are all as different as night and day, you and I or any other of the millions of people on the earth. They have as much potential for spirituality, as much religious fervour, as much capacity to believe, or disbelieve, and make their own choices therein. I for one believe that there are as many gifted autistic minds, if not more (because they are stubbornly, if not obsessively persistent in their beliefs) as typical gifted minds. This however, is still just my opinion and observation.



Sovereignty

BY LADY MORGEN

Long after I had taken my 1st degree, my High Priestess posed a question to a group of us one evening: "Whom does the Grail serve?" Memories of the movie "Excalibur" (1981 – John Boorman) flooded our collective heads as we looked at each other oddly. So we sat there, looking quite comically, each of us puzzling it out, not seeing what was right in front of us. The answer in the movie was something like "You, my King", referencing Arthur. But the Secret behind it was that Arthur and the Land were one...aaahhh. This was just the tip of the iceberg for us as we were set to task to understand the Question even further and deeper.

The answer comes in many forms, but it comes. So we were left to ourselves to find the answer to the question that only we could answer. Oh how those 5 words in the form of a question dominated my many weeks to come. Finally, on an overcast, rainy morning, with fog lying heavy on the ground, I woke with My Answer. The answer was to be mine and mine alone. If I were to become Sovereign of my Faith, then I must learn to Give of Myself, Give of the Vessel that I am, for only in doing so, room would be made within me for the Lord and Lady to truly manifest Their will and fill my vessel with it. And so my service to Find the Grail and understand it began.

You see Sovereignty, in this case is not about Power over Others, but True Understanding of Ourselves. It is the kind of Understanding that brings with it confidence in who and what you are. Others may find Sovereignty in their own way, but that way may be very different from yours. Sovereignty is about becoming "One With". Do this in Truth and you will become Sovereign. Do it with impure motive and you may find yourself 'always seeking, never finding'.

The Service of Sovereignty has now led me to instill in those that I teach a sense of that Sovereignty. That which can only be achieved through opening themselves up to not only the Gods and Nature, but also to what is going on around them.

"You see Sovereignty, in this case is not about Power over Others, but True Understanding of Ourselves."

Some still run from the Gifts of the Grail – The Mantle of Sovereignty, as I speak of it, is not meant to be political, but spiritual. It is a Mastery of the Mysteries. It drives those that I teach to never stop seeking it. They seek it within themselves, in their Body, Mind, Spirit, Heart and Soul. They seek to refine what they learn until it is no longer separate from them, but All is One. They are taught to be Sovereign with Nature, and to Master the Mysteries of the Moon and the Sun. So that in doing so, they become the conduit between the two and All is One. Only when they are One and are Sovereign can they then ask the question of others. Only then can they teach and guide.

As I said before, Sovereignty is not political, nor was it or is it a way to be perceived as better than. It is Personal Sovereignty. It makes you wholly

responsible for that which you are and do. It makes you manifest. Manifest in this mundane world but it also reveals to you what you must do to achieve that manifestation beyond the veil. It is a Journey. Much like the one we were born into. Only this is Our Journey. One of Our Conscious Choice. It is the Journey to find our True Sovereign Self.



Happy Hints

BY DAMOISELLE

New Year's Resolutions

Don't make them or you'll break them. Simple. Statistics show us that, on average, 30% of all New Year's resolutions are broken within a week of being made, and common sense tells us that the majority of them aren't actually resolutions. If they were you wouldn't have to wait until next year to keep them, would you? No. If you really wanted to lose weight, spend more time with the family and/or quit smoking, and I mean really want to, what's stopping you from doing it now? Why wait?

It's a simple case of why do now what can be put off until tomorrow or, in this case, next year. I'm not saying don't change but, before you start making lists and promises you can't keep, think – is this something you really want to do?

Happy New Year
xoxo



Eclectic Ethics: Spiritually Progressive, or Tradition Thieving?

BY BEORC KANO

In the pagan community, there are many arguments every day about Traditional vs. Eclectic. Some think that the only paths that have any real value are

the initiated, tradition based coven-style structures, such as Traditional Wicca (which are, in this author's opinion, the ones with the right to claim the title of Wicca), the historical reconstructionist religions, such as Greek Hellenism, Egyptian Kemetism, Norse Asatru, and the like, or other traceable, historically represented religions or paths.

“In the pagan community, there are many arguments every day about Traditional vs. Eclectic.”

But what of the eclectics? What of those who, in their studies and search for a path, find truth in several places? They sample from here, draw from there, pulling practices and philosophies from many different sources to build a conglomerate spirituality that is a perfect fit for themselves and their paths.

Let's take me and my path for example, as it's the most readily available one for me to write about. After all, nobody knows my path as well as I do.

I am a Runeworker. The runes I work with are the Norse Elder Futhark. I am decently versed in the other Runic forms, such as the Saxon Futhorc, the Younger Futhark, I am... aware of the Marcomannic runes, and the Ogham runes are not alien to me. However, for my purposes and uses, the Elder Futhark fit the best.

So I took them, I studied them, and I made them my own. I spoke to as many people as I could find that were versed in the runes, and asked them to show me how they worked, what they meant, and I slowly, over the years, built a studious base on how they could be used. I am certain that most Norse Recons would disapprove of the *method* I used with them, as the Runes were discovered, as the legends go, by the god Odin, and so are religiously and culturally tied to the Norse and their deities. I am not much of a theist (my own views on God or the Gods are very much so my own), so in my workings, I don't really dedicate myself to any one deity or pantheon, and it could be said that my workings with the runes don't properly venerate Odin.

Does this make me a bad person? Does this mean that I am stealing and desecrating the runes from their rightful owners, the Norse? Will the Norse gods visit a wrath down upon my silly, wishy-washy eclectic head? Well... ten years and running, and nothing yet. It all depends on *how* one does what they do that define the ethics of one's actions.

For example, practicing Angel veneration while cursing Jesus in your rituals is probably not a very good idea, and is fairly contradictory. Combining the Futhark with elementalism, metal or gem magic, or bloodworking, however, doesn't strike me as specifically disrespectful to the runes, or the culture that spawned them.

“What of those who, in their studies and search for a path, find truth in several places?”

Other practices must be weighed and measured before their use. I am familiar with the ones listed above, and I know how they integrate and work. It gives my practice a distinct flavor that is a mixture of Norse, Native American, and Celtic, which can integrate with each other very easily. The pieces fit, and they fit soundly.

Now... try to combine a Norse polytheistic practice with monotheistic Judaism, give it a dash of Aztec flair, and use the Australian aboriginal deities. Can it be done? Maybe. I don't know. I don't personally think so, but I've never seen it try. The cultures strike me as so incompatible that the blend would be like mixing oil and vinegar. It's like taking parts from different cars. A Taurus and a Tempo can trade parts back and forth, as can certain models of Dodge trucks, and certain Chevy models, like the Suburban and the S series pickups. But try to take a Mazda water pump and put it into a Dodge Ram 3500. It just doesn't work. The parts aren't compatible. They won't work and sync with each other, and your practice is broken, fragmented.

And therein lies the wrong being done to the practice itself. How effective is a 30/30 if you load it with .22 shells? How would you feel if you created a tool, something so very useful for your job, something you were proud of, and then someone took it for a different task and just abused it, something you has spent days, months, *years* perfecting, and it was just grabbed by someone else and misused? Would you rather it be used by someone with the understanding of how it was designed, and adapted to an applicable use?

“The pieces [must] fit, and... fit soundly.”

If you are an eclectic practitioner, give respect to the Traditionalists. After all, just about every single practice that you use came, at one point, from a tradition, a group of people of like mind and culture that developed, tested, and refined a practice through religious and practical experimentation, until it was to a point where you, the eclectic, could study it and use it for your own spiritual progression. It is their hard work that you are using to fill a place in your life and spirituality that would not be filled were it not for them.

If you are a Traditionalist, look at the practices you have, look at how wonderful and valid they are. These arts are so revered, so effective, that they transcend culture, they transcend *religion!* They are

so effective that people who weren't even brought up around them and raised to know them see immediately that they are *worth* so much! They chose your practice in that regard to fill that hole in their lives. Maybe they weren't drawn in by the culture, but, despite that, they didn't cast you entirely to the wayside.

As in all things that I say or write, these are just the musings and interpretations of one eclectic person. Take from it what you will, do with it what you will. I hope it has given you something you can use.

Be well.



Constructing Your Own Runes – Part I

BY JAIMES YUUGURE

What are the Runes?

The Futhark runes are a sacred relic of Norse mythology, a language of most of the northern lands and a divinatory tool of most of today's pagan world. They are not toys to be played with, you don't play 'rune games', and you don't ask them silly questions like 'what is my future husband's name?'

The runes have power; they are a link to something primal, something deep. People have speculated that the runes answers come from within you, from the Earth Herself, from the Norse landvaettir and even from Odin himself. I say: why not all of them. Well maybe not from Odin, seeing as they already

had power when he is said to have found them. But who knows, Ol' One Eye has a habit of meddling.

Method

I'm not going to go into methods of carving rock, crystal or wood here, those will come later. The methods I'll discuss here are spiritual.

Rune sets should be carved over a period of nine days following the tradition of Grimnir hanging upon the World Ash for nine days, and nine is a sacred number in Norse culture. Meditate on the meanings, significance and energy of each rune as you carefully carve the image onto its face. If you're a heathen, drink to the gods at the end of your work, if not, do whatever is applicable to your faith. This same technique can also be used for making runic items of any kind: carving a wand or a stave, engraving a sword or athame, even just scratching runes into a box.

Materials

The debate about what materials can, can't and shouldn't be used for runes is up there with the debate of Christ's mortality, so I'll stick to the bare facts.

Rock

Rock is a perfectly acceptable medium for runes, and probably the most (professionally) common. I personally suggest you use raw rock that you harvest, polish and carve yourself, as it shows the severe dedication the runes draw from best.

Bone

Bones are considered to be the older form of runes, but tooth, horn and claw are also appropriate. Bone has been said to channel the "Primal" force of nature, the kill-or-be-killed energy that balances our 'magic', and is thus considered to be the best conduit for divination, especially with the raw nature of the heathen way. Bones from an animal you have hunted and killed are, of course, the best to use, even if it's as small as a rabbit.

Wood

Wooden runes are a touchy subject, as wood is perishable and denies the natural permamancy of runes. Petrified wood is a common material, although I'd personally avoid it, as you don't always know what wood it is. Oak, Elm, Ash and Yew are the most appropriate; birch and pine are also acceptable. Avoid mistletoe (for obvious reasons) and blackthorn completely.

Semiprecious Stones

The energy of stones like jasper, malachite and lapis make them perfect for rune sets, although it's thought that these runes can 'taint' a read, and turn the outcome. Use stone sets for casts where you want a specific type of answer: Jasper if you're seeking ways to aid yourself spiritually, for example, or Lapis if you seek knowledge and glory.

Crystal

I don't personally like using crystal runes, as the energies they contain and channel can overpower the messages sent to the runes. Obsidian is probably the best if you really desire a crystal set, but avoid quartz and amethyst, as they can alter the outcome of the cast by their nature.

Amber and Glass

Amber is a good, but short lived, material for runes, and glass makes a perfect channel for the energy of the runes. But unless you use heat hardened, neatly cut pieces, the set won't last very long, and replacing runes can often lead to poor energy in casts.

Plastic

Plastic runes are completely useless. I don't know if it's the amount of treatment plastic goes through, or the level of artificiality that denies the energy of the runes, but I have never seen useful plastic runes. As a teaching aide, they are fine, but nothing more.

Mixed Materials

Apart from mixing the colour of rock or bone that you're using, I would suggest avoiding mixing your sets. Using runes of different material, and the same goes for runes from different sets, can cause the runes to 'not recognise' each other, and you often end up with conflicting readings and even casts where the stones completely contradict each other.

Over the next few months, several other writers and I will cover runic subjects ranging from carving techniques to simple rune magic. If there are any subjects you wish to see covered in this section, please email me.



Spirit Animals vs. Totem Animals

BY MAKOONS MILLER

Spirit Animals and Totem Animals are two separate concepts many constantly confuse. Some even seem to think the two are interchangeable. Some have even tried to use the two to draw comparisons to a Witch's Familiar, but the concepts are all very different.

The word "Totem" actually comes from the Anishinaabe word "Doh-Daym" (spelled Dodem) meaning "Clan". Your Clan animal represents which family is in your lineage and what skills you are expected to master in order to serve the tribe (these days, the community). There is nothing mystical in the way a First Nations person receives their Clan animal. Depending upon whether the tribe is Matrilineal (tracing a member's lineage through their mother's side of the family) or Patrilineal (tracing through the father) a Clan is decided at birth. The animal you are given represents the skills you will learn throughout your life. For instance: I am Bear Clan. The Bear represents a master medicine worker as the Bear knows what herbs and plants to dig up when it is ill. It also represents a tireless warrior and protector. These are the skills I bring to the table for my people. In the case of adoption or a Caucasian parentage, there usually is a Clan that serves as the "adoption Clan" and takes in members. The Anishinaabe are Patrilineal, and since my fiancée's father is Caucasian, he is Eagle Clan or a member of the adoption clan.

There *are* mystical channels a person can go through to find their Clan if their mother or father's lineage is unknown. I had the unfortunate circumstance of being a member of a Patrilineal tribe and having my Anishinaabe heritage passed down through my grandmother's family. I had to go to what is known as a "shaking tent", or a place where a Medium speaks to the spirit world on your behalf. I asked him to find my Clan. Others go to Medicine People, or simply dream their clan.

NO ONE WHO IS NON-NATIVE CAN HAVE A CLAN OR TOTEM ANIMAL.

This is *specific* to those who are First Nations by blood. Since your Clan animal was also used as a way to avoid incest (as ANYONE of the same Clan could not marry) a non-tribal person has no need for a Clan animal. It is also used as something that is specific to your *service* in regards to your people...if you aren't a member of the tribe why would you have any obligations to them? There *do* exist special cases in which a Non-Native person is adopted into a tribe's adoption clan whether it be through marriage or

some extreme act of service they've done on a tribe's behalf.

Spirit animals are an entirely different concept that can be applied with or without First Nations lineage. A Spirit animal is a personal guide which can take many forms and have many purposes. For Instance, one of my friends (who is Scandinavian in lineage) has a wolf as her spirit animal. She has always had a fascination with them since childhood and has had many run-ins and dreams in which they have visited her. Other people have Spirit Animals that arrive in times of need or reflection.

How can you tell if you have a spirit animal or who they are? The way it has always been explained to me is that the animal in question has to be behaving out of the ordinary in order for it to be considered legit. If you like moose a lot and just find them interesting that doesn't count. But if a moose came and stood outside your front door and snorted at you...that would be a pretty huge clue. It has to be something outside of their nature, some way in which they reach out specifically to you. While I'm not sure if I have a spirit animal I have wondered if mine might be the Deer. I've had many strange run-ins with them such as them walking right up to me out of the woods, surrounding my dorm building and so on.

Spirit Animals should be thought of more as patron animals. They support you and guide you when the going gets rough or when you're just not SEEING something right in front of your face.

So I hope this has helped everyone understand these concepts a little better. They are individual and important to my people and very important not to accidentally mix up!

Miigwech bizindawiiyeg.
(Thank you for listening).



Initiation into N.O.X.

BY FRATER EGO MOS TENE0

History can effectively be seen as a series of Aeons, each with its own dominant idea of divinity and its own formula of both redemption and illumination. Over the last 2,000 years, man as a majority, has been instructed to do as they are told, to worship as they are commanded, to seek the light and refrain

from the indulgence of sin. This is the Aeon of the Father, but humanity as a majority is no doubt changing. We are at the cusp of a new Aeon. We see the sense of sin dissolving and the growth of irresponsibility. We witness sexual tendency to become liberated and freely expressed, we indulge in meaningless pleasure, from television to sports, and when we should be shaken by war and our own fatality, we could not care less. We have entered an Aeon of a child, and the potential in our growth could not be greater!

Man now commonly asks why, what for and how come? Man seeks liberty, lust, pleasure and enlightenment within them. We have broken out of the chains put on us by the father and now are responsible for our own direction, and like a child we walk down a lit hallway, completely secure, yet we cannot ignore our curiosity of what lies in the darkened room ahead. Despite how unprepared we may be, its exploration is inevitable.

Initiation: *The act of starting something for the first time; introducing something new.*

- Princeton Dictionary

L.V.X. ~ THE FIRST INITIATION:

For the last 2,000 years mans desire to obtain enlightenment is nothing new. The level of obtainment suitable for the majority was simply following the sun; that is (1) the rise or birth of the sun, (2) the power of the sun, (3) the fulfilment of the sun and (4) the death of the sun. This is the formula of LVX, which is Latin for Light. This is the formula of Life, Death and Rebirth.

In recorded history we see this formulas prevalence everywhere. We see it in Christianity as they observe the life, death and rebirth of Jesus, and the Buddhist who conquers suffering daily. We see it in a vast amount of paganism and all of the dyeing God systems emulate it. The application of Life/Death/Rebirth is adopted in faith and religion all over the globe in order to raise man above the misery of a life of suffering.

A practical application of LVX is its transformation of suffering. Instead of wallowing in the agony of lust for a temporary state, we realize that suffering is full of experience and therefore knowledge. We are able to endure this because we understand that there is no other way to self-illumination than to

endure and conquer. This is suffering to gain knowledge and wisdom. Under the system of LVX the enlightened man is burdened, but he is not restrained by such a burden, as he understands the necessity of it.

Within the initiation of LVX we are comforted by knowledge and the liberty it brings.

N.O.X. ~ THE SECOND INITIATION:

As the child that is humanity grows, we become more knowledgeable. Our craving for why and how becomes fundamental in our progress. Through our first initiation we become a system of free thinking, accountable beings. However, it is inevitable that the knowledge that liberated us will restrain us. In the Aeon of this Child there is a choice that must be made due to our insatiable thirst for knowledge. In one direction we wallow in knowledge and in the other direction we transcend it. Let us first look at the more well travelled path, that of embracing knowledge.

Man finds comfort in what he knows as it is filled with answers and justifications. However within these answers and justification lies the risk of becoming stagnant. We've all witnessed debates of spectacular content and direction. These debates fall into the abyss of knowledge as they become based on the individual's experience. The issue of knowledge is that it behaves like an illusion. (1) Any term must be defined by two other terms, which the same thing must also be done. (2) One man's knowledge being based on his experience will never tally with another completely. In this sense no man will understand exactly what another means in any statement. (3) Analysis of knowledge leads to analysis of its components in which the same thing must be done. (4) Knowledge can only be explained by knowledge and expounded upon by knowledge, but never fully understood by anyone. There is no objectivity separate from measurement and consciousness.

This circular abyss cannot serve any spiritual purpose. One must measure his own spiritual enlightenment on success, not the "because" of knowledge. This brings us to the purpose of the second initiation of NOX, which is Latin for night. This is the initiation that will transcend the abyss of knowledge and baptize us into union.

Within the night all things are hidden, the formula of LVX and the knowledge of it will take you no further. As knowledge seeks to divide, so it seeks to separate. NOX is beyond knowledge; in essence is the unity of the divided.

Union is the dissolution of separateness into one total. If union is established, there is nothing present to distinguish any one thing from any other. The union of "what is" and "what is not" equates to an indefinable totality of nothingness which all things are a part of.

Within the initiation of NOX man must seek to destroy, as only through the dissolution of all things can one unite. One must destroy the illusion of knowledge, one must destroy the illusion of separateness, one must essentially destroy his ego, and not an ounce may remain. Only when this has been accomplished may he experience the reward of the annihilation of himself and therefore absorption into totality.

In summary, LVX gives purpose to the individual, stirring in him the desire to make sense of suffering. It introduces knowledge and the liberty that comes from it. The liberty leads to the exploration and experience of the unknown, to the night, to NOX, where all things are hidden. NOX leads to the joy of dissolution of all things where one may stand in awe of the universe and its galactic glory and bask in the unfathomable pleasure that is the playground of man.

0 = (-A) + (+A)



On Oathbinding: An Opinion

BY ERUANDIL MA'ATEO
MACDOUGALL

This article begins with a disclaimer. This is a somewhat controversial subject, with many heated and fervent opinions on both sides. To deny this is to deny not only human nature, but the subject matter in which this article deals. Before continuing, please understand that it is not the goal of this article to offend you nor to step on your toes, push your buttons, or get your goat. We have better goats here anyway. That being said, please

understand that this is a statement of opinion, and will be phrased as such. It is not a question of opinion, a poll of opinion, or a demurral of opinion. It is a statement. If any of these things bother the reader, it is suggested that they find something else to read.

This article deals with the practice of oathbinding and the problems inherent in such a practice. There are, to be certain, benefits in such a practice, but the flaws in the system far outweigh its benefit.

Before continuing on, let us examine the definition of this practice. Obviously, to become oathbound is to be bound by an oath, ideally freely given. More specifically in magical or religious circles, [oathbinding](#) is defined as the practice of limiting information to only those who have sworn an oath of similar nature and are deemed fit to share such information by the order or society in which they have been initiated.

To understand this practice in more depth and detail, we interviewed a member of an oathbound society and asked him to explain what he could about the process of oathbinding. He said that oathbinding is an "oath to not reveal what we are taught within the confines of the Circle, unless it be in a Circle to a proper person, properly prepared, that has likewise taken those oaths." He also mentioned that it was also an oath not to reveal personal knowledge or information, magical or otherwise, such as the identities of fellow practitioners or the contents of one's Book of Shadows.

To be certain, these items have admirable goals. In what our interviewee shared, such an oath is beneficial in that it helps limit the sharing of knowledge to people who cannot handle the knowledge they might otherwise receive, it helps with the proper application of such knowledge under a mentorship, it helps with keeping expectations and prejudgments from clouding experiential understanding, and it helps keep the energies of a group not only confined and concentrated but also refined and uncorrupted.

The detrimental qualities and risks, however, far outweigh the stated benefits of such a system. To understand this, we will take a look at some of the more major risks and possible detriments. The first of these is also the source of the rest, and that is that the restrictive flow of information is, in itself, detrimental. The restriction of the flow of information automatically unbalances any interaction between people and their environment,

including other people. To knowingly and purposefully unbalance anything in the universe is a dangerous path to choose.

Directly stemming from this problem is the fact that because of the nature of any information restriction and, more particularly, oathbinding, it becomes difficult to derive the factuality, legitimacy, and morality of information transferred and practices taught.

Along with this comes the double-sided coin of accountability. In some ways, it is obvious that people who have sworn oaths of this nature are held accountable because of those oaths, to the oaths, and to others who have taken them. However, it is always easier to become corrupt and spread the corruption when the group to whom one is accountable is highly narrow.

Hand in hand with the idea of accountability comes the problem of general corruption. It is easy to point to examples where people have played on the ability to restrict information across multiple religions and throughout much of history in order to manipulate the people below them into following ideas and concepts that are actually foreign to the things they claim to teach. Again, this becomes more possible with a narrower base of accountability.

Lastly, it comes obviously that restricting the flow of information between orders, and between groups within orders, makes it exponentially harder to verify information between members of orders and other practitioners of different ways. This gives rise not only to the possibility of corrupted information like in a game of Telephone, but to the thankfully few but still far-too-common "pocket cult" masquerading under a facade of an order and hiding behind the "oathbound" shield.

Thus we can see that it is necessary (and all those who are proponents of the practice would surely agree) to choose carefully before swearing such an oath, or choosing to support an order or system that would ask such an oath of its followers. Such a practice is neither to be chosen lightly nor to be treated as unimportant. In some ways, it can be highly dangerous to those who are unsuspecting, and, depending on one's point of view, is much less than beneficial when the sum potential of its effects is viewed.



Chronesthesia and Astral Travel: A theory of science and magic

BY: RAVEN DIETRICH

Introduction:

Many scientists would be insulted by the suggestion that magic is a form of science. Likewise, many practitioners of magic would balk at the idea that magic has its base in the physical world. Nevertheless this article presents the theory that there is a correlation between a recent neurological discovery and a common magical practice; that of chronesthesia and the art of astral travel.

What is Chronesthesia?

Chronesthesia is the brain's ability to think about the past, present, and future, and to mentally travel in subjective time. Humans are one of very few creatures capable of envisioning their future based on their actions, imagining the past, and considering present events in places other than their immediate location. In a recent study, researchers have used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to observe the neural correlates of chronesthesia. These studies are providing neurologists with a better picture of the mental time in which this "travel" can take place. The fMRIs have shown that certain regions in the left lateral parietal cortex, left frontal cortex, and cerebellum, as well as the thalamus, were activated differently when subjects thought about the past and future compared with the present.

“Chronesthesia is the brain’s ability to think about the past, present, and future, and to mentally travel in subjective time.”

What is Astral Travel?

Astral Travel is a term used to describe any form of out-of-body experience that involves an "astral body" that is separate from the physical body and travels independently of the physical body. This form of meditative travel is acknowledged by many cultures including the ancient Egyptians, Hindus in

