

AGAPÉ

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FALL, 2010 EV

FROM THE GRAND MASTER

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Annual Report

United States Grand Lodge's annual report is available here:

oto-usa.org/usgl_annual_report_IVxvii.pdf

United States Grand Lodge Library

The U.S.G.L. Library has moved from the Denver area back to Southern California. It is now being housed at the Star Sapphire Lodge facility in La Crescenta. Brother M.T. Marfield and Soror Sophia (Master of Star Sapphire Lodge) have jointly taken on the duties of U.S.G.L. Librarian. Many thanks to Frater A.G.R.C. for his years of service as librarian! Library lending and visitation policies are being revised, and policies for acceptance of original works by members are being developed—details

forthcoming. As always, donations of books to the library are appreciated.

A reminder: the librarians-oto-usa YahooGroup is open to U.S.G.L. and local library officers. Please use it!

Grand Tribunal and Ombudsman

After over five years of outstanding service, Frater AISH MLChMH (Brother Dathan) has retired from the office of Grand Tribunal Secretary.

Many thanks to Brother Dathan for his patience, diligence, and untiring efforts to keep our processes moving efficiently, as well as to secure and organize our historical documents.

Frater Harmateus has stepped in as Brother Dathan's replacement. Brother Michael Kolson, who has successfully completed his term on the Electoral College, is replacing Frater Harmateus as Ombudsman.

Best wishes to our new officers!

Note Regarding Alcohol Consumption

As most of you know, we have several policies that deal with the consumption of alcohol under specific circumstances. Please note that small quantities of communion wine served and consumed as part of the Gnostic Mass are to be considered as

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reasonable exceptions from such policies.

Upcoming Events

For upcoming events, please see our events calendar at oto-usa.org/events.html NOTOCON VIII is scheduled for the weekend of August 5-7 2011 EV in Detroit, Michigan. The theme is *Manifest Thy Glory*. For more information, please visit www.blueequinox.org/notocon2.html.

General information on our various conferences,

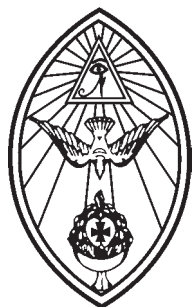
including NOTOCON, Advanced Initiator Training (A.I.T.), Kaaba Colloquium (Thelemic Leadership Seminar), and Pastoral Counseling Workshops can be found at notocon.org.

Love is the law, love under will.



Faternally,
Sabazius

MYSTERIA
MYSTICA
MAXIMA



ECCLESIA
GNOSTICA
CATHOLICA

AGAPÉ

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Executive Editor: Sabazius X°
Editor: Fr. Julianus
Proofreading: Heather Lantz, Joseph Thiebes,
Fr. L.
Production & Distribution: Sr. Marlene
Editorial Address: P.O. Box 1892
Bloomington, IN 47402
agape@oto-usa.org

U.S. GRAND LODGE OFFICERS

U.S. NATIONAL GRAND MASTER GENERAL: SABAZIUS X°
P.O. Box 32, Riverside, CA 92502-0032 • ngmg@oto-usa.org
U.S. DEPUTY NATIONAL GRAND MASTER GENERAL: LON MILO DUQUETTE
P.O. Box 3111, Newport Beach, CA 92659-0705 • dngmg@oto-usa.org
U.S. GRAND SECRETARY GENERAL: FR. HUNAHPU
PO Box 2313, Maple Grove, MN 55311 • gsg@oto-usa.org
U.S. GRAND TREASURER GENERAL: HANK HADEED
4110 SE Hawthorne Blvd. #444, Portland, OR 97214-5246
gtg@oto-usa.org • www.oto-usa.org/treasury
U.S. GRAND TRIBUNAL
FR. HARMATEUS, SECRETARY • grand_tribunal@oto-usa.org
3350 E. 7th St. #207, Long Beach, CA 90804
U.S. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, U.S. SUPREME GRAND COUNCIL,
U.S. CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS
P.O. Box 32, Riverside, CA 92502-0032
U.S. ELECTORAL COLLEGE
DANN BUCHANAN, PRESIDENT • ec_president@oto-usa.org
P.O. Box 12653, Oklahoma City, OK 73157-2653
DEBORAH WOODY, SECRETARY • electoral_college@oto-usa.org
P.O. Box 5741, Glendale, CA 91221-5741
U.S.G.L. INITIATION SECRETARIES: FR. SATVRNVS BAPHOMET AND SR. NA'AMAH
P.O. Box 48569, Minneapolis, MN 55448 • initiation@oto-usa.org
U.S. E.G.C. SECRETARY: SR. HYPATIA
P.O. Box 2578, Columbia, MD 21045 • egc@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. PARLIAMENTARIAN: SR. HELENA
P.O. Box 32, Riverside, CA 92502 • parliamentarian@oto-usa.org

U.S.G.L. OMBUDSMAN: MICHAEL KOLSON
719 Highland Dr., Seattle, WA 98109 • 206-306-6487
ombudsman@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. QUARTERMASTER: SR. ISHARA
quartermaster@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. WEBMASTER: CRAIG BERRY
webmaster@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. LIBRARIAN: MATTHEW T. MARFIELD AND SR. SOPHIA
3212 1/2 Honolulu Ave, La Crescenta, CA 91214
librarian@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. ARCHIVIST: FR. P.
P.O. Box 6635, Jersey City, NJ 07306
U.S.G.L. VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR: FR. DO
volunteers@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. LOCAL BODY PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY: SR. ANANAE AGAPE LUX
PO Box 5, Ashburn, VA 20146 • publications@oto-usa.org
COORDINATOR, O.T.O. PRISON MINISTRY: Father Solomon
PO Box 4215 • Culver City, CA 90231
prison_ministry@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER: FR. LUX AD MUNDI
O.T.O. U.S.A./Thelesis • 1627 N. 2nd Street, Suite 220
Philadelphia, PA 19122 • pio@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION: FR. JULIANUS
PO Box 1892, Bloomington, IN 47402 • agape@oto-usa.org
U.S.G.L. EDUCATION COMMITTEE SECRETARY: KAYLA BLOCK
education@oto-usa.org

WWW.OTO-USA.ORG

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FROM THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

The Electoral College at its **Fall Meeting**, October 16th, 2010 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

Local Body Closures

None.

Change of Body Status

None.

Change of Body Masters

Mastership of 418 Lodge in the valley of Sacramento, California, has passed from Brother David Shoemaker to Sister Anna Tsu effective October 16th, 2010 EV.

New Local Body Charters

Sword and Serpent Camp was chartered in the valley of Dayton, Ohio. with Frater VITRIOL as Master effective October 16th, 2010 EV.

The College wishes to express its appreciation to the past and present Masters of each of these Bodies. We wish each of them the best in their new offices and endeavors.

Ninth Degree Revolutionary

Members in good standing of the Sovereign Sanctuary of the IX° in the United States (who are not serving as an officer or voting member of any Governing or Administrative Body under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Grand Lodge) wishing to volunteer to stand for election to the office of Revolutionary by the Electoral College are encouraged to write the President of the E.C. See page 2 for contact information.

Sanction for Appeal

Brothers or Sisters of our Order who wish to pursue appeal of a verdict of the Grand Tribunal may write to individual members of the Electoral College to request sanction be given to take their case to the Areopagus of the Eighth Degree (per *Liber CXIV*, section 16) via email links found at:

ec.oto-usa.org/ECelectors.html.

Hosting E.C. Meetings

Local bodies that are interested in hosting meetings of the Electoral College are encouraged to write the President of the E.C. See page 2 for contact information.

Upcoming E.C. Meetings

- Winter 2010 EV Meeting scheduled for January 8th 2011 EV via online electronic medium.
- Spring 2011 EV meeting scheduled for Saturday, April 16th, 2011 EV, hosted by Leaping Laughter Lodge (Minneapolis, Minnesota).
- Summer 2011 EV Meeting scheduled to be held on-site at NOTOCON VIII, August 5th 2011 EV in Detroit, Michigan.
- Fall 2011 EV meeting scheduled for Saturday, October 15th, 2011 EV, hosted by Abrahadabra Oasis (Portland, Maine).

The deadline for submission of items to be considered (for the Winter 2010 EV meeting) is December 15th, 2010 EV. Please mail submissions to the Secretary of the Electoral College. See page 2 for contact information.

Attending E.C. Meetings

Dues current members in good standing of V° and above are welcome to attend and observe the in-person Electoral College Meetings. We request that those planning to attend contact the Master of the hosting body so that adequate arrangements can be made.

Website

The official E.C. website can be found at: ec.oto-usa.org.

Forms

Bodymasters seeking up-to-date forms for the Annual Report, Change of Mastership Application, Application for Oasis Status, Application for Lodge Status, or closure forms, will find them by contacting the document control officer at doc_control@oto-usa.org.

Communication with the E.C.

I would like to invite any initiates with specific concerns or questions regarding the operation of the Electoral College, to write to either the President or Secretary of the E.C. For contact information, please see page 2.

It is my goal as President of the Electoral College to take effective measures bringing about better communication between the E.C. and the membership of all local bodies. Any input provided to this end is warmly welcomed. I believe that communication is of benefit to the entire Order in our mutual goals and aspiration toward enlightenment in all forms. All

Continued on next page ~

postal mail correspondence with the Electoral College Secretary should be sent to the address listed on page 2.

Love is the law, love under will.

In the Bonds of the Order,
Dnn Bvchnn
President, Electoral College
O.T.O. U.S.A.

THELEMA NOW! PODCAST

*Do what thou wilt
shall be the whole of the Law.*

Thelema Now! began production in August 2009 EV and in our first year we have had 49,267 downloads. Whew! As of this writing, July 2010 was our best month ever, with 6,783 downloads.

Among our guests, the two members of the 3,000 Club are our all-time winner Genesis P. Orridge (3,413) and James Wasserman (3,287).

There are two members of the 2,000 Club: Richard Kaczynski (2,888) and J. Daniel Gunther (2,723). Many others are coming *very* close to joining the 2,000 Club though—many need less than fifty downloads to get there.

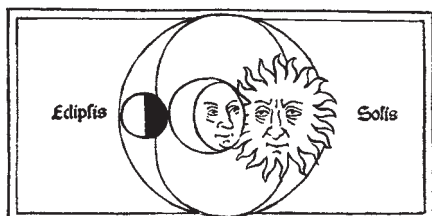
72% of our listeners are in the United States, followed by the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and Germany. But let us toast those lonely people in Qatar, Singapore and Ghana (they each had one download in August 2010) and a round of applause for the eight people in Iran and the 12 people in Trinidad and Tobago! Truly, Thelemites are everywhere.

In the United States, our top markets are New York City, Los Angeles, and Boston. And lastly, 85% of our listeners get the show through iTunes.

Thank you for supporting *Thelema Now!* We look forward to even more success this year.

Love is the law, love under will

Sister Amy
Producer, *Thelema NOW!*



A FEW WORDS FROM YOUR EDITOR

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Agapé Online

As this issue goes to press, *Agapé* will once again be available for public download from the U.S. Grand Lodge website at:

lib.oto-usa.org/agape/index.html

In a change from previous practice, the online version will lag a quarter behind the printed edition. This means that the Summer issue will go online as this Fall issue hits your mailboxes, and so on. The practical upshot is that members of U.S. Grand Lodge will get their piping-hot *Agapés* three months before the general Internet-viewing public.

Missing an Issue?

If you are a dues-current member and have *not* been getting your copies of *Agapé* in the mail, please make sure your current mailing address is on file with U.S.G.L. Changes of address should be sent to the Grand Treasurer General. See page 2 for contact details.

Publication Announcements

In the interests of facilitating members' gift-giving needs for the Solstice and various other midwinter holidays, this issue's Publication Announcements section is quite large. If you're a member of Ordo Templi Orientis and you have a book (or CD, or even video for that matter) coming out, please consider sending an announcement to *Agapé*. Your work does not necessarily have to be related to Thelema or Magick, but such will obviously get priority when space is limited. Contact your Editor at agape@oto-usa.org for details.

Call for Rituals

For our Winter issue, to be published in January of 2011, *Agapé* is seeking original rituals suitable for celebrating the Three Days of the Writing of the *Book of the Law* and/or the Equinox of the Gods. Thelemites have been marking these Feasts of the Times in various ways for decades, often with rituals composed for the occasion, so *Agapé* would like to publish a selection of these as a celebration of our brethren's creativity. Why the Winter issue? Because the Spring issue won't be out until late April and we thought it would be nicer if readers could actually use these rituals this year.

Rituals can be anything from solo rites for the solitary Magician to full ritual theatre similar to Crowley's *Rites of Eleusis*. Your submission can be something you wrote just for us or that ritual you've been doing for years. Contact us at agape@oto-usa.org for details.

Love is the law, love under will.

Frater Julianus
Agapé Editor

TO GUARD THE CAMP

by Sister Anna Tsu

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law

The first duty of an initiate is to guard the camp. This requirement is not unique to Ordo Templi Orientis. In most ceremonial Magick, the Magician performs general and/or specific banishings before the work in question. A surgeon obtains a clean room, implements, and surface before making an incision. Every small storekeeper locks his/her cash register and doors at night.

Guarding the camp may, however, need some additional elaboration. Not every local body officer has a background in security, or in small business. Many may work for larger companies, in which “security” is a job performed by someone else. But once you are a local body officer (or a senior member of a local body), that “someone else” is you.

Much of our attention is rightly directed toward producing excellent ritual work, providing instruction and opportunities for fellowship, and attracting and welcoming new visitors; the practical requirements of guarding and protecting may be neglected by comparison. In addition, “guarding the camp” may, in many cases, be ignored for a long time without negative effect, due to “luck” or “chance.” Many forgetful souls have left their keys in the front doors of their houses overnight once or twice, and been fortunate enough not to have been rudely awakened during the night. Nevertheless, such behavior is best avoided. Thelemic philosophy, as I understand it, does not recommend trusting in “luck.” Instead, we create our own “luck.”

This article attempts to give a (partial) instruction on the subject of guarding the camp (that is, your local body). What I’m about to relate may be routine to some of you, but there may be others who will benefit. There is surely much more of value that can be added by other initiates.

Visitors and Guests

First, always check references. If an initiate comes to your Valley from another Valley, it should be standard practice to contact the previous local body. Does the person actually hold the degree they claim? Is there anything good or bad that the body officers would like to tell you about this person? Even if the person is not an initiate, but has spent a lot of time in a particular Valley, you could consider asking the local body there if they know the person. Perhaps there is a reason why they are not yet initiated.

Intuition: Respect it! With regards to either visitors or sponsorship, pay attention to your gut. Do you feel uncomfortable with the person? When you observe from across the room, do others seem to be at ease with the person? Does this individual seem to understand and respect unspoken social boundaries? We are all open-minded and even eccentric people, so if someone makes *us* feel ill at ease, that is a clear warning signal and should be respected. I highly recommend

Gavin de Becker’s book, *The Gift of Fear*, which is not about being controlled by fear; it is about learning to honor the messages of your intuition. Yes, “Fear is failure,” but if you read the book I believe you will not find it in conflict with Thelemic ideals.

Sponsorship

You know it’s important. You’ve been informed of the responsibility you take on when you sponsor a candidate (see especially the comments of the Grand Master in *Agapé* Vol. III, No. 1; “On Sponsorship,” available online at the oto-usa.org website, and also *Agapé* Vol. V, No. 2). But perhaps you don’t have a clear idea of what could go wrong after you sponsor someone. Here’s an example: a person you have sponsored could make other members or guests feel uncomfortable or unsafe at an event. One person exhibiting inappropriate behavior could scare away the new visitors that you’ve worked so hard to attract. They could disrupt a Mass or other ritual and “ruin” the experience for others attending. They could put the local body and/or its officers at legal risk. Keep this in mind next time you consider sponsoring someone (reluctantly) because you feel “sorry” for them, or because they seem to want initiation “so much.”

When you sponsor someone, it’s like a marriage. Here’s what I mean: if you’re just dating someone, you can theoretically drop them at any time. Just one quick conversation, and it’s over (unless you’ve been dating a stalker). If you’re married, you can still break up, but you have formal bonds. You have to go through some formal procedures in order to end the relationship. In the same way, a non-initiate at the local body, no matter how many times they attend, is just “dating” the Order. If something goes wrong, the local master can ban them from future events, just like that. If they are an initiate, however, they have formal bonds to the Order, and formal rights as well. You can still exclude them from events, but the local body will have to write up a formal document (notice of pending bad report, and/or related items), explaining the reasons for their exclusion. This document must be sent to the member, and to the Electoral College, and to the member’s most recent sponsors. Although the E.C. members are kind and non-judgmental, *you* will feel very foolish explaining to them why, in essence, you decided to sponsor “the wrong person.”

Given that sponsorship is like a marriage, it follows that it doesn’t need to be a spur-of-the-moment decision. When a person you don’t know well approaches you with application in hand, it’s okay to say, “Let me think about it for awhile,” or “Let’s talk more about this tomorrow.” You could also say, “I need to know someone better before I sponsor them,” or “I’m

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sorry, but I don't feel comfortable doing this." All the lines (and all the intuition) you learned to use while dating. If you really don't feel comfortable with the person, and don't really ever want to sponsor them, don't say, "Well, maybe, if you do such and such," because they'll probably do it and then come back to you again.

Guarding our Rituals

Every event should always have one or more guards appointed who can correct problem behavior the instant it occurs. This both controls problems before they get worse, *and* communicates to newer members or visitors that such behavior is not O.T.O. practice. If new visitors witness odd behavior which is not corrected, they will naturally get the message that it must be okay at an O.T.O. body. Visitors and newer members will generally not feel they have the authority to correct behavior; they are just observing and getting the "lay of the land." A senior member or appointed guard is required to maintain decorum. This does not mean that our meetings must resemble an armed camp. The guard can and should be relaxed and friendly and indistinguishable from the other attendees. The number of guards will vary with the size and layout of your space, the number of attendees, etc. You could also consider promoting the message now common in New York: "If you see something, say something," among junior members and trusted guests. Even if they don't feel authorized to step in themselves, they can be empowered to call in senior members if things just don't seem right.

Another element of protecting our ritual work is the idea of "redundancy." What I mean here is not useless replication, but rather the concept (vitally important in the sort of mountaineering expeditions Crowley engaged in) of having a back-up whenever possible. The unexpected does happen. You do not want to explore the Arctic with only one stove. Likewise, key initiates can become suddenly ill, or injured. Equipment can suddenly give out. Very small O.T.O. bodies may have no option for duplication, but as soon as the body grows large enough, efforts should be made to have more than one person trained and experienced in any one ritual role, so that an alternate is available in case of emergency. Some items of equipment may be too large or expensive to be duplicated ahead of time, but if the local body can afford it, there's no reason not to have extra Mass and initiation supplies on hand (censers, in my experience, are particularly prone to breakdown).

Guarding the Officer Work of the Camp

When first giving new responsibilities to a new officer of the local body, initial instruction is not enough. Bodymasters should be sure to review their officers' work at intervals for the first year at least, to ensure that they have accurately understood how the tasks are to be carried out.

Physical Guarding of the Camp

A few simple physical safeguards: Does your Temple and/or storage facility have good locks? Is there any reason to consider changing the locks or keys? Do you have a peephole in your door so that you can see who is there before opening?

Would it be a good idea to have one? Are there irreplaceable items of historical or sentimental value at your location? Would the items and the local body be safer if such items were stored in another location?

Does your temple have a clearly designated escape route (or routes) in case of fire or other emergency? Do you have first aid equipment and an appropriate number of fire extinguishers? Have the fire extinguishers been recharged as required (once a year)? Do members know where they are?

Do you review the physical safety aspects of an initiation (as covered in Initiator Training and Advanced Initiator Training) while practicing with the team? Are the members current in First Aid and C.P.R.?

In Closing

I hope this is helpful to some. It is not my intention to encourage paranoia. The goal of appropriate precaution is to face danger, and reduce fear, by addressing potential weak points. It is the exact opposite of being controlled by fear, or repressing it so that it works unseen in the subconscious. As the Arab saying goes, "Trust in God, but tie up your camel at night."

Love is the law, love under will.

NOTOCON UPDATE

Carae Sorores et Fratres:

*Do what thou wilt
shall be the whole of the Law.*

In the latest NOTOCON news, hotel reservations may now commence! Please visit www.notocon.org and click on the "Lodging" button. Find the Passkey Link under "Reservations" to go directly to the hotel website. This will automatically lock in the great rate of \$99. This rate is guaranteed until July 12, 2011 EV. Please use our website to place your reservation so that every room gets counted and your reservation is made with certainty and security.

Please contact us at www.notocon.org with any questions or problems. Thank you for your participation!

Love is the law, love under will.

Soror Shivani
Master,
Blue Equinox Oasis
Detroit, Michigan

BABY ON BOARD: INITIATING PREGNANT CANDIDATES

by Soror Ananyelka. and Frater Julianus

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

In the summer of 2008 EV, a tyled elist saw a long and complex debate on the subject of pregnancy and initiation. In *Liber CI: An Open Letter to Those Who May Wish to Join the Order*, Frater Baphomet writes:

All pregnant women are especially sacred to members of the Order, and no effort should be spared to bring them to acceptance of the Law of Freedom, so that the unborn may benefit by that impression. They should be induced to become members of the Order, so that the child may be born under its ægis. (Tenth House, Paragraph 37)

This might be taken to say we have a *duty* to initiate expectant mothers upon request, a question well beyond the bounds of this essay and not taken up in the online debate. There the question was far simpler: can an O.T.O. initiator *require* a woman to delay a scheduled degree if she happens to be pregnant? This article attempts to summarize some of the issues involved and to foster discussion among initiates.

One thing everyone involved in the debate, including our Grand Master Sabazius, seemed to agree on is that an unborn child is *not* initiated simply because its mother takes a degree during her pregnancy. A fetus is a passenger at an initiation just as it would be at a baseball game. It hears very little, sees nothing, does not participate in the oaths and is presumably incapable of understanding the ritual's symbology anyway. Furthermore the *intent* of our initiation rituals does not involve any child a woman may be carrying at the time. If this were not the case, then seeing as a woman carries *all* her possible biological children within her as unfertilized ova, *any* child she might bear after her initiation could be regarded as born initiated. The glorious absurdity of such an idea is obvious.

But even without being initiated *in utero*, could the fetus still be affected magically by its mother's initiation? We have to admit the possibility, but is this a bad thing? Many Thelemites believe we choose the circumstances of our incarnations. If this is true, then presumably the incarnating soul approves of and desires participation in whatever Mysteries in which its mother might plan to partake. It is true the child might object to this involvement in later life—but then it might just as easily object to that baseball game. In any case, one might consider that being raised to adulthood by a member of our Most Holy Order is going to have far more effect on a child than just being internally present for the brief duration of its mother's initiation ritual.

Much of the above is a matter of faith and speculation, unresolvable by conventional means. For this reason the online debate concentrated on the possibility of physical harm to the pregnant candidate and/or her unborn child. We begin with

two basic assumptions:

First, we assume that ritual initiation *can* pose a danger to anyone. We're sure the attorneys who wrote the liability waiver worked very hard to cover the contingencies. That document is certainly far more terrifying than any initiation we have yet seen; yet the liabilities and danger do exist and must be taken into appropriate consideration.

Second, we assume that certain specific degrees may pose an especial danger to pregnant women because of the specific physical demands of those rituals. Despite some arguments on the elists and the success of one of our sisters aside, these degrees are not recommended during the later stages of pregnancy.

So the arguments made on the elist are that for at least some reasonably fit and active women the first two initiations theoretically pose no more danger than a walk or a number of other things a normal pregnant woman is entitled to do in her daily life. That is, of course, leaving aside any stress, but then pregnancy is itself stressful. Furthermore, stress of one sort or another is a part of normal, daily life for any person living in America (and probably elsewhere as well.)

Soror Ananyelka, as a former pregnant person, initiate and aspiring initiator, finds these arguments interesting but feels they miss the point. Yes, pregnant women are fragile and deserving of our care as a society. Let's remember, however, that women are capable human beings, were capable before they were pregnant, will be so after, and do not automatically become incapable while pregnant, all those pesky hormones to the contrary.

As capable human beings first, women second and perhaps even mothers third, candidates should be given the opportunity to make decisions for themselves without having to endure scare tactics. It is perfectly possible for anything to happen at any minute, so that a freak accident or other random event could occur during an initiation causing spontaneous miscarriage or other injury to the pregnant woman and/or her fetus. However, it is also perfectly possible for anyone to be in a car accident on the way to or from the initiation, so let us look further at the risk analysis that is being performed.

If you mention a risk of miscarriage, some women immediately freeze up and will do nothing further for the remainder of their pregnancy. This is absolutely the correct decision for that woman and the situation she finds herself in because that's *her* decision. However, if the possibility of risk is presented by a person of trust in an overbearing manner, then it *may* count as using a scare tactic or even amount to hazing.

Other women will require more information, including "how dangerous is this, really?" This is where more care

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should be taken and an assessment of the woman's situation should be made not only by the woman herself, but also the initiator and the father (if he's involved) and possibly their physician. No obstetricians waded into the elist with their opinions, possibly due to malpractice concerns, because there aren't any in the Order, or because the attorneys got there first.

During the online debate, some mention was made of requiring a pregnant candidate to prove she is under a physician's care and is fully apprised of her risks in these matters. This sounds good but is not without unsightly wrinkles: we must remember that a woman has the legal right to *not* involve a physician in her childbearing at all. Who are we to dictate this one way or the other, especially for someone who is presumably competent to make her own decisions in life? (One would hope that any potential sponsors would screen out the incompetent long before an initiator laid eyes on them.) We are all familiar with the interminable debate over whether Ordo Templi Orientis is or is not a magical, religious, fraternal or teaching order, but it would be sad indeed if we wound up as a "nanny order" that didn't trust its members to run their lives without professional help.

However, this type of decision requires some knowledge that may or may not reside in the experience of the initiator. Our Grand Master has stated that an initiator has a broad mandate to remain comfortable with his or her decisions and may choose to not initiate the person due to his or her perceptions of the danger the pregnant candidate will find herself in. This bears repeating: the initiator has certain rights to remain comfortable with initiating a candidate of any gender and under nearly any conditions, *so long as there is no denial of initiation cleverly disguised as a delay*, or not providing the candidate with an alternate initiator possessing the required experience, though possible risk and liability would still exist even then.

Pregnancy is of course a temporary condition, so it is possible to wait until the pregnancy is over, just as you would wait until an injured person's wound was healed and the candidate in good shape for physical activity. This scenario presents the least liability for all concerned, including the fetus. However in some areas there is only one initiator for more than 200 miles and initiations are somewhat hard to come by (as hard as that is to believe in other areas where the *initiators* are on a waiting list...) Soror Ananyelka's own experience as a pregnant initiate was for a more physically demanding degree. Since she was eligible for it in her third trimester it was decided—and yes, in some ways *for* her rather than letting her make the decision herself—that she should delay. She had, and has, no arguments with that having since taken the initiation in question; but it required another year to actually take the degree. A year is not so long perhaps, but the fact remains the delay seems longer than that contemplated by anyone on the elist.

Perhaps we're finding ourselves on a slippery slope here, leaving aside all numinous elements of initiation, which may or may not have anything to do with a child's choice to incar-

nate or other what-if scenarios. One commentator suggested that, should these initiations be too dangerous to perform on a subset of pregnant women who are healthy and quite desirous of taking these initiations, they are probably too dangerous to perform on most people regardless of gender. Are we then to begin denying initiation to people with more permanent and serious conditions? Or alternately read them through the degree instead? In the same vein, are we then also to begin reading the initiations for *every* person, able-bodied or otherwise, in order to prevent accidents because that's the ultimate safety?

In the original debate we noticed no discussion of the situation for men. Stress is known to interfere with the production of quality sperm. Some activities found in certain degrees might also interfere with the quality of sperm, thus interfering with the man's will to conceive, not to mention a child's will to be conceived. However, men are not required to declare their state of fertility or desire for fatherhood before taking their initiations. The implication is that men have no such frailties in need of protection (or perhaps that their fertility is beneath consideration?) though obviously they aren't putting an actual fetus at risk.

Might we also remind the gentle reader that for the first 4 to 6 weeks, only the ovum knows it has been pierced and has begun the journey toward personhood? We have had sisters who haven't been aware of their pregnancy, for various reasons, well into their second trimester. We've all heard news reports of women who never realize they are pregnant at all until the levee breaks. Frater Julianus has a cousin who went into hospital with what she thought was appendicitis and came out with a baby, much to her surprise and consternation, and she was neither (you know you're thinking it) mentally deficient nor irresponsible.

In the second trimester things grow more obvious but, depending on the woman and fetus in question, a pregnancy could still be concealed should the woman desire the initiation and not be honest because she has been presented with no real choice in the matter. We would hate for our Mysteries to come to this pass: that any candidates would hide their physical conditions for fear that their initiations would be delayed or ultimately denied no matter that two worthy persons are willing to stand up for and with them.

We would also dislike presenting our Mysteries as so dangerous that they are forbidden to a pregnant woman, only to have her discover she would have been easily able to perform the obligations of at least some degrees. This sets up a situation wherein she cannot believe what she's been told. Isn't another component of the initiatory process the trust in the people who hold the secrets you aspire to?

Ultimately, as every case is unique so must initiators and bodymasters re-evaluate any potential liabilities for each candidate, male or female, pregnant or not, who desires to partake of our Mysteries.

[The authors wish to thank all those who took part in the original online debate which inspired this article.]

BOOK REVIEW

Lucid Dreaming

by Stephen LaBerge

Sounds True, Inc. 2009. (96 pages plus 1 CD)

In the garden of immortal kisses, O thou brilliant
One, shine forth! Make Thy mouth an opium-poppy,
so that one kiss is the key to the infinite sleep and
lucid, the sleep of Shi-loh-am.

—*Liber LXIV:9*

LaBerge's highly readable treatment of this interesting topic rightly gives it much greater significance than it is generally accorded. The back cover of my 1986 EV mass paperback copy promises a "systematic, step-by-step program" to cultivate lucid dreaming, but that's not a fair characterization of the contents. While LaBerge does insist that lucid dreaming is trainable, and he details a couple of the most useful procedures for that purpose, the book's scope is really much broader. The author provides a full summary of the state of research on the topic up to and including his own. At least one full chapter of the book is devoted to explanations of the function and meaning of ordinary dreams, and his conclusions on these lines are both flexible and well-reasoned. The information offered is founded on sleep lab research of the late 20th century but the presentation draws on and discusses traditional lore such as Tibetan dream yoga and Sufi teaching stories.

I did find it surprising that a researcher addressing non-ordinary states of consciousness would take the sort of pre-Ericksonian view of "hypnotizability" that LaBerge does, when insisting that hypnosis will facilitate lucidity training for only a small minority of subjects. But this quibble pales beside the quantity of good sense and healthy encouragement to be found in the volume. Another surprise was the final pages' appeal for funding and participants in LaBerge's "Lucidity Project," that gave the book a faint aftertaste of old-fashioned occultist organizing and self-promotion.

An initiated sister once remarked to me that there was no difference between lucid dreaming and the occultist practice of exploration on the astral plane. At the time, I responded with blank disagreement, it seeming obvious to me that one should not *a priori* subsume one phenomenon in the other without having reasonably robust experience of both. In *Lucid Dreaming*, LaBerge makes a more extensive and philosophical argument for including "astral projection" as a subset of dream phenomena, but he understands the original scope of the term somewhat differently than I do. Although he is clearly acquainted with the history of occultist usage, at one point summarizing the perspective of Blavatskian Theosophy, his notion is evidently informed by the parapsychological school, with an emphasis on the O.B.E. (Out of Body Experience) as the defining feature of the category. As a lab-trained skeptic, LaBerge rightly takes a dim view of the naive O.B.E. theory, and consequently is able to present astral projection as a "misinterpreted lucid dream." In deflation of the O.B.E., he aptly points out, "it would seem reasonable to suppose that we

never 'leave our bodies' because we are never in them."

But LaBerge offers another characteristic within his (very wide!) category of lucid dreaming, that I would use to distinguish it from the astral voyage. When discussing means of achieving the paradoxical state of lucid dreaming, he identifies two essential methods: *waking while dreaming* and *dreaming while waking*. The former method, evidently preferred by him and assumed as the standard in much of the other literature on lucid dreams, is to my mind fully deserving of the "lucid dream" label. The latter method, on the other hand, despite the similarity of its results, should be distinguished *as a method*, and can be conveniently tagged with such traditional language as "scrying in the spirit-vision," "astral journeying," or "clairvoyant travel." Occultists too have their own term for the lucid dream proper: the variously-spelled Sleep of Siloam, referenced by Randolph, Blavatsky, Crowley, and others. In fact, Crowley called that state *somnus lucidus*, and it would be interesting to know whether there was any influence common to or crossing between him and his contemporary Frederik van Eeden, who introduced the term "lucid dream" to psychological discourse.

In fact, the method of astral projection, or in LaBerge's parlance *dreaming while waking*, is of peculiar value to occultists, because it

- a) facilitates programming of the visionary episode through ceremonial measures, and
- b) may allow for visionary phenomena ("auras" etc.) to be superimposed on more objective perceptions.

Since having studied more widely (with LaBerge's book as a positive contribution), and having gained more of my own experience, I would now agree that while there is value in distinguishing the *methods* of astral travel and lucid dream, their highest *results* are likely to overlap to the point of indistinction. It is not on no account that the greatest occultist of the age, in his most recondite book of esoteric theory and technique, placed his discussion of "Astral Journeys and Visions so-called" sandwiched between multiple passages on dreams. And his verdict on them could apply equally to the lucid dream:

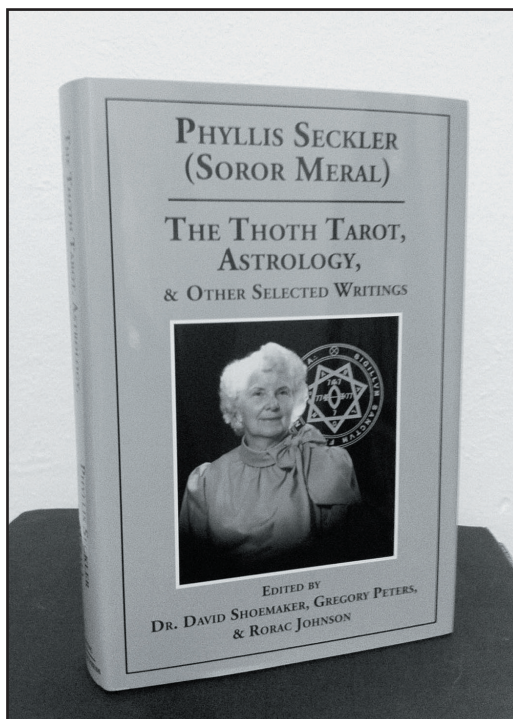
Whereas the Direction of such Journeys is consciously willed, and determined by Reason, and also unconsciously willed, by the True Self, since without It no Invocation were possible, we have here a Cooperation or Alliance between the Inner and the Outer Self, and thus an Accomplishment, at least partial, of the Great Work.

—*Liber Aleph 15, De Via per Empyraeum*

LaBerge observes that one of the greatest possibilities to arise through lucid dreaming is "surrendering control from you *think* you are to who you truly are." —*And lo! thou art passed though the Abyss.*

—T Polyphilus

PUBLICATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

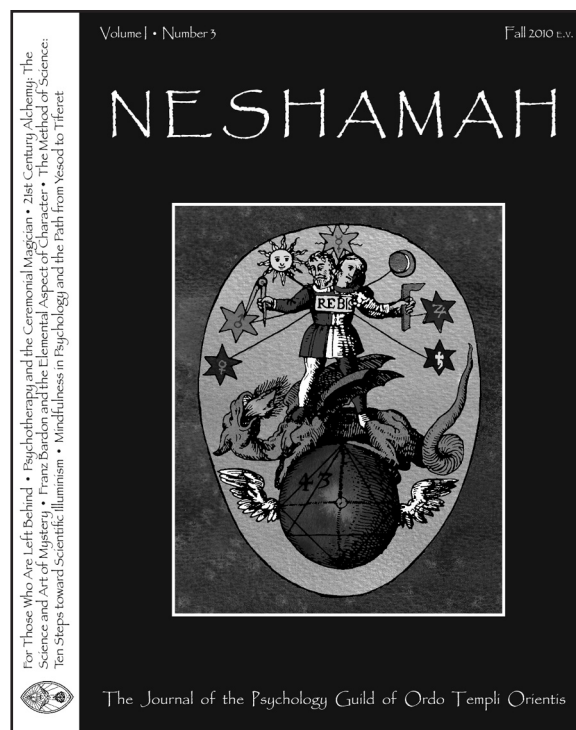


PHYLLIS SECKLER (SOROR MERAL):
*The Thoth Tarot, Astrology,
 & Other Selected Writings*

Edited and introduced by Dr. David Shoemaker,
 Gregory Peters, & Rorac Johnson

Phyllis Seckler (1917-2004) was one of the most important and influential Thelemites of the post-Crowley era. An initiate of Ordo Templi Orientis since 1939, and an A.∴A.∴ student of Jane Wolfe, Seckler was an indispensable factor in the resurgence of the O.T.O. and the shaping of modern Thelema as we know it. She devoted the final decades of her life to her personal students, and in the process, she trained an entire generation to carry the torch forward. This landmark publication collects two of her most important essays on the Thoth Tarot, depth psychology, and astrology (originally serialized in her journal *In the Continuum*) with redrawn and corrected diagrams. In addition, a Selected Letters section presents important and previously unpublished correspondence between Seckler, Aleister Crowley, Karl Germer, and Jane Wolfe. The final section of the book presents the last major interview conducted with Seckler, where she discusses her early years at the old Agape Lodge in Los Angeles, her views on the current state of Thelema, and much more.

[A co-publication of the College of Thelema of Northern California and The Teitan Press. First Edition Hardcover. Blue cloth with silver titles on spine. 390 pages. Edition limited to 777 numbered copies. Available from Weiser Antiquarian.]



NESHAMAH
*The Journal of the Psychology Guild of
 Ordo Templi Orientis*

Volume I, Number 3

The third issue of *Neshamah*, journal of the O.T.O. Psychology Guild, has been released for Fall, 2010 E.V. Contents of this issue include:

For Those Who Are Left Behind
 by Frater Harmateus

Psychotherapy and the Ceremonial Magician
 by David R. Hill

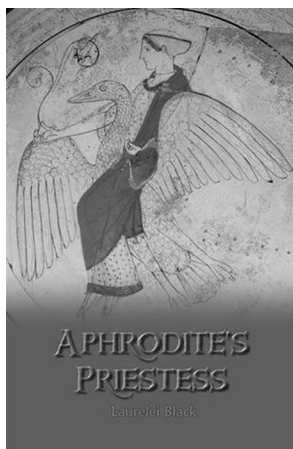
21st Century Alchemy: The Science and Art of Mystery
 by David G. Shoemaker

Franz Bardon and the Elemental Aspect of Character
 by Lita-Luise Chappell

*The Method of Science: Ten Steps toward
 Scientific Illuminism*
 by Richard Kaczynski

*Mindfulness in Psychology and the Path from
 Yesod to Tiferet*
 by Soror Rosasophia

[Format: 8½ x 11 inches, perfect bound, 32 pages. For further information about ordering this or back issues, see www.animasolis.com/guild/Neshamah.html.]



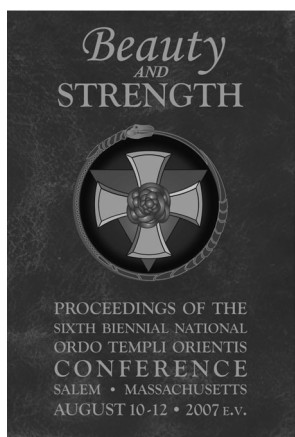
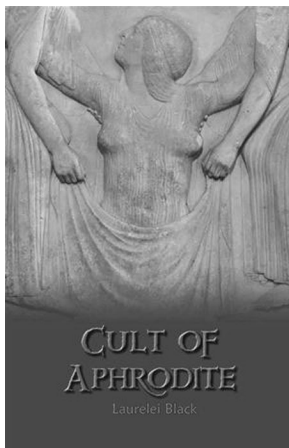
APHRODITE'S PRIESTESS
by Laurelei Black
CreateSpace, 2009
(196 pages, softcover)

Laurelei Black, a contemporary priestess of Aphrodite, found a desperate lack of resources available to the women and men who are called to work with any of the Goddesses of Love from the Mediterranean or Middle Eastern precincts. Writing from her own experi-

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**CULT OF APHRODITE:
RITES AND FESTIVALS OF
THE GOLDEN ONE**
by Laurelei Black
CreateSpace, 2010
(138 pages, softcover)

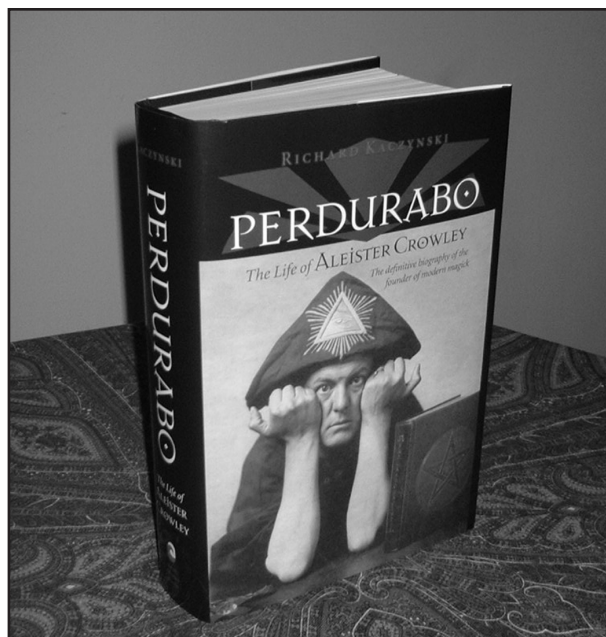
This liturgical compilation is the first of its kind—offering a wealth of well-researched rituals and religious festivals in honor of a single Hellenic deity. Drawing on resources that span the ancient world, Laurelei Black and the Cult of Aphrodite Asteria present immediately usable tools for worshipping the Goddess of Love and Beauty.



**BEAUTY AND STRENGTH:
PROCEEDINGS OF THE
SIXTH BIENNIAL NATIONAL
ORDO TEMPLI ORIENTIS
CONFERENCE: SALEM,
MASSACHUSETTS, AUGUST
10-12, 2007 EV**
U.S.G.L., O.T.O., 2009
(191 pages, softcover)

Includes addresses and articles by Sabazius X°, Richard Kaczynski, Lon Milo DuQuette,

James and Nancy Wasserman, Dionysius Rogers, Frater Hrumachis, and many Others of equal Merit, if less Fame.



**PERDURABO:
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by Richard Kaczynski

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AGAPÉ

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