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diligence, and untiring efforts to keep our processes moving efficiently, as well as to secure and organize our historical documents.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.

Fraternally,

Sabazius
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 CXCIV, 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 its 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](http://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’mContinued on next page
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 backup 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 everyroom 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 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 aspirering 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

Continued on next page
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 mat-
ters. 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 initia-
tor. Our Grand Master has stated that an initiator has a broad
mandate to remain comfortable with his or her decisions and
may choose not to initiate the person due to his or her percep-
tions 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 can-
didate in good shape for physical activity. This scenario pres-
ents 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 de-
gree. 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 initia-
tion 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 other-
wise, 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 origi-
nal 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 LXV* IV: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.


**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 EV. 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 experience and training, she makes this first guidepost available to those who would walk the Path of Love.

**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 worshiping the Goddess of Love and Beauty.

**Perdurabo: The Life of Aleister Crowley**  
by Richard Kaczynski

Revised and Expanded Second Edition  
Published by North Atlantic Books, 2010  
“The definitive biography of the founder of modern Magick.”

- Includes 150 pages of new material!
- Includes 95 photos and illustrations — many never before published!

**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 Xº, Richard Kaczynski, Lon Milo DuQuette, James and Nancy Wasserman, Dionysius Rogers, Frater Hrumachis, and many Others of equal Merit, if less Fame.

**Agapé**  
Volume XI, Number 4 Submission deadline:  
Θ in VS • ḫ in ḫḫ • Dies ḫ • Anno IV:vxiii  
(Friday, January 7th, 2011 ev)

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