OVEN-READY
C H A O S

Phil Hine

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This book is dedicated to:
The Hydra's Teeth; wherever they may fall, whatever may spring up.

With thanks to:
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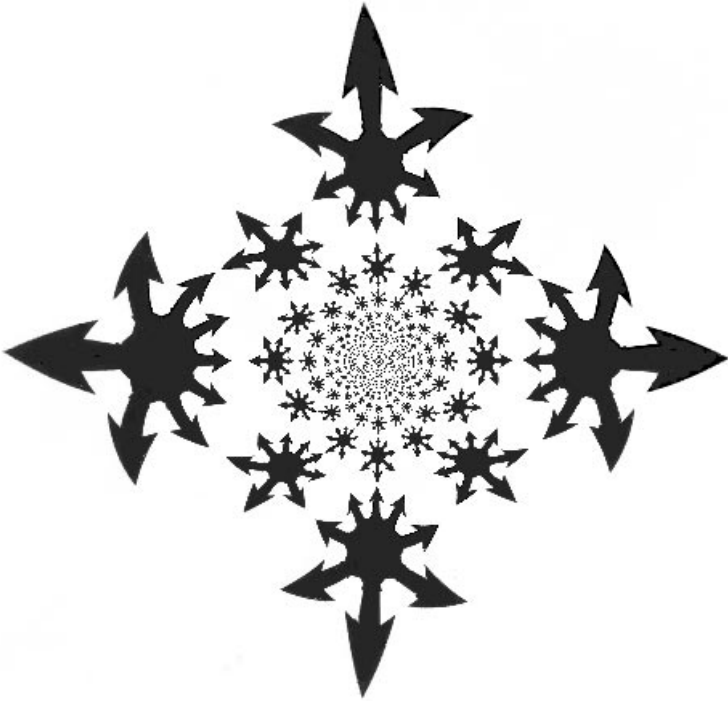
Stunning Artwork & Graphics by Nathaniel Harris

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CHAOS

Nothing is True,
Everything is Permitted.

What is Magick?

What is Magick? Several definitions float into my mind, but none of them do it full justice. The world is magical; we might get a sense of this after climbing a mountain and looking down upon the landscape below, or in the quiet satisfaction at the end of one of 'those days' when everything has gone right for us. Magick is a doorway through which we step into mystery, wildness, and immanence.

We live in a world subject to extensive and seemingly, all-embracing systems of social & personal control that continually feed us the lie that we are each alone, helpless, and powerless to effect change. Magick is about change. Changing your circumstances so that you strive to live according to a developing sense of personal responsibility; that you can effect change around you if you choose; that we are not helpless cogs in some clockwork universe. All acts of personal/collective liberation are magical acts. Magick leads us into exhiliration and ecstacy; into insight and understanding; into changing ourselves and the world in which we participate. Through magick we may come to explore the possibilities of freedom.

Surely this is simple enough? But no, magick has become obsfucated under a weight of words, a welter of technical terms which exclude the uninitiated and serve those who are eager for a 'scientific' jargon with which to legitimise their enterprise

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into something self-important and pompous. Abstract spiritual spaces have been created in the midst of which tower the Babel-like lego constructions of 'inner planes', spiritual hierarchies and 'occult truths' which forget that the world around us is magical. The mysterious has been misplaced. We search through dead languages and tombs for 'secret knowledge', ignoring the mystery of life that is all around us. So for the moment, forget what you've read about spiritual enlightenment, becoming a 99th level Magus and impressing your friends with high-falutin' gobbledygook. Magick is surprisingly simple. What can it offer?

1.A means to disentangle yourself from the attitudes and restrictions you were brought up with and which define the limits of what you may become.
2.Ways to examine your life to look for, understand and modify behaviour, emotional and thought patterns which hinder learning and growth.
3.Increase of confidence and personal charisma.
4.A widening of your perception of just what is possible, once you set heart and mind on it.
5.To develop personal abilities, skills and perceptions - the more we see the world, the more we appreciate that it is alive.
6.To have fun. Magick should be enjoyed.
7.To bring about change - in accordance with will.

Magick can do all this, and more. It is an approach to life which begins at the most basic premises - what do I need to survive? - how do I want to live? - who do I want to be? - and then gives a set of conceptual weapons and techniques for achieving those aims. Chaos Magic is one of the many ways of 'doing magick', and this booklet is a concise introduction to the Chaos approach.

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What is Chaos Magick?

What"is Chaos Magic? Good question. Since it burst upon the magical scene in the late '70's it has generated a great deal of debate about what it is, what it isn't, and who's doing it 'right' - such circular arguments being beloved of occultists, it seems. At this point, it would be tempting to launch into a lengthy discussion of the history of magic leading up to Chaos magic, but instead I'll confine it to a sweeping generalisation and say that before Chaos came kicking and screaming onto the scene, the dominant approach to 'doing magic' (and still is, to a great extent) was the 'Systems' approach.

So what is a magical system? Magical systems combine practical exercises for bringing about change with beliefs, attitudes, a conceptual model of the universe (if not several), a moral ethic, and a few other things besides. Examples of systems are Qabalah, the different Wiccan 'traditions', The Golden Dawn system of magic with all its grades, costumes, mottos etc, and the increasing number of westernised 'shamanic' paths that are proliferating nowadays. As far as most magical systems go, before you can start to wave your wand around or bounce up and down on your head 'til you reach enlightenment, you have to spend a good deal of time reading up on the beliefs associated with the system, learning its "do's and don'ts", committing to memory lists of symbols and correspondences, how to talk to your fellow magi, and in

some extreme cases, how to dress, walk, and chew gum at the same time. How does this come about? Well magic, like some of the great religious messages is essentially simple, but is prey to the process whereby simple ideas become extremely complicated beliefs which can lead you further and further away from doing any magic at all. Weave back through time to 'somewhere in the paleolithic era' to find a tribal shaman sitting on a rock gaping at the visions revealed by a soggy piece of toadstool. Fast-forwards a few millenia and you'll find a 'Magical System' that comprises of several hundred-thousand words, obscure diagrams and appendices which will probably state at some point, that drugs are a no-no.

The birth of Chaos magic came about in the late 70's, at about the time that punk rock was spitting out at the music industry and Chaos Science was beginning to be taken seriously by mathematicians, economists, and physicists. The two 'names' most associated with the birth of Chaos magic are Pete Carroll and Ray Sherwin, though there were others lurking in the background, such as the *Stoke Newington Sorcerors* (SNS) who later became entwined with the first stirrings of the Punk movement.

Some of Pete Carroll's early writings on Chaos was published in The New Equinox, published by Ray Sherwin, in which the first adverts proclaiming the advent of the *Illuminates of Thanateros* (IOT) magical order appeared. Interestingly enough, there is no mention of the term 'chaos' in the earliest versions of IOT material.

Ray Sherwin's Morton Press then issued Pete Carroll's *Liber Null*, and Sherwin's own *The Book of Results*, which expounded the very practical method of 'Sigilisation' as

developed by Austin Osman Spare, which has become one of the core techniques associated with Chaos magic.

The early growth of Chaos magic was characterised by a loose network of informal groups who came together to experiment with the possibilities of the new current. With the demise of The New Equinox, the 'chaos kids' reported their results and heresies in the pages of Chris Bray's new magazine, *The Lamp of Thoth*. The early Chaos books were joined by two tapes '*The Chaos Concept*' which discussed the basics of Chaos magic, and '*The Chaochamber*', a science-fiction pathworking which combined elements of Star Trek, Michael Moorcock, and H.G. Wells. Chris Bray's 'Sorceror's Apprentice' Press then re-released, Liber Null, The Book of Results, as well as two new books, Pete Carroll's *Psychonaut*, and Ray Sherwin's *The Theatre of magic*. These, together with articles from the growing Chaos corpus in the LOT, drew more people into experimenting with the new approach. Thanks to the efforts of Ralph Tegtmeier, the Chaos approach was also receiving attention in continental Europe.

The basic message of Chaos magic is that, what is fundamental to magic is the actual doing of it - that like sex, no amount of theorising and intellectualisation can substitute for the actual experience. Pete Carroll's Liber Null, therefore, presented the bare bones of the magical techniques which can be employed to bring about change in one's circumstances. Liber Null concentrated on techniques, saying that the actual methods of magic are basically shared by the different systems, despite the differing symbols, beliefs and dogmas. What symbol systems you wish to employ is a matter of choice, and that the webs of belief which surround them are means to an end, rather than ends in themselves (more of which later).

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An important influence on the development of Chaos magic was the writing of Robert Anton Wilson & co, particularly the Discordian Society who revered Eris, the Greek goddess of Chaos. The Discordians pointed out that humour, clowning about and general light-heartedness was conspiciously absent from magic, which had a tendency to become very 'serious and self-important'. There was (and to a certain extent remains) a tendency for occultists to think of themselves as an initiated 'elite' as opposed to the rest of humanity.

Unlike the variety of magical systems which are all based in some mythical or historically-derived past (such as Atlantis, Lemuria, Albion, etc), Chaos magic borrowed freely from Science Fiction, Quantum Physics, and anything else its practitioners chose to. Rather than trying to recover and maintain a tradition that links back to the past (and former glories), Chaos magic is an approach that enables the individual to use anything that s/he thinks is suitable as a temporary belief or symbol system. What matters is the results you get, not the 'authenticity' of the system used. So Chaos magic then, is not a system - it utilises systems and encourages adherents to devise their own, giving magic a truly Postmodernist flavour.

Needless to say, Chaos magic began to acquire a 'sinister' reputation. This was due to three factors; firstly that its "pick'n'mix/D.I.Y" approach to magic was frowned upon by the 'traditionalist' schools, secondly that many people associated chaos with 'anarchy' and other negative associations, and thirdly that some Chaos magic publications were hyped as being 'blasphemous, sinister, and dangerous' in a way that they were not, which proved all the same to be an attractive glamour for those who required such a boost to the ego.

The mid-Eighties gave rise to a 'second wave' of the Chaos Current. 1985 saw the publication of The Cardinal Rites of Chaos, by the pseudononymous 'Paula Pagani', which outlined a series of seasonal rituals as performed by the Yorkshire-based 'Circle of Chaos'. Alas, by this time, the early co-operation between exponents of Chaos had given rise to legal wrangles, literary sideswipes, and even magical battles. For some at least, Chaos magic = loadsa money while others discovered that they had a 'position' to hold onto as defenders of the title of spokesperson for a movement. True to its nature, Chaos splintered and began to re-evolve in different ways. Three different magazines emerged to continue the Chaos debate - Chaos International, Nox, and Joel Birroco's Chaos.

Chaos International was formed on the basis of networking, specifically the idea that the editorship would change hands with each issue. A good idea in principle, it gave rise to practical problems such as address changes, obtaining back copies, and meant that each issue had to be virtually self-supporting. Chaos International survived five different editorial changes, after which it passed into the hands of Ian Read, who has had the job of producing it ever since. Chaos International has now matured into one of the best all-round magazines of innovative magical ideas.

Nox magazine emerged out of the wilds of South Yorkshire to serve up a mixed brew of Chaos magic, Left-Hand path material and Thelemic experimentation, which matured into one of the best magazines publishing experimental magic from a wide variety of sources. Since its inception, it has grown from being an A5 'fanzine' to paperback book status.

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Joel Birroco's *Chaos* introduced a Situationist perspective into the Chaos debate, predicted the glamour for Chaos-isms as experimentation turned inevitably into fashion accessory, and then proceeded to identify various magical 'leaders' and tear them apart with the eagerness of a whole pack of Greek cynics.

The debate over the progression of the Chaos Current raged throughout these 'zines and the aforementioned Lamp of Thoth. Arguments begun in one 'zine spilled over into another and sides were drawn up as some voices allied with others, though allying with Birroco's iconoclastic stance on Chaos turned out to be a tactical error, as he invariably massaged the egos of his 'allies' only to drag them down at a later date.

In '86 the S.A. Press released Julian Wilde's Grimoire of Chaos magic, the first book on Chaos magic outside the Sherwin/Carroll circles. Despite heavy criticism from other Chaos factions, Mr. Wilde never came forth to explain his ideas, nor has much been heard from him since. Grimoire departed radically from the other approaches to Chaos, particularly with his assertion that Chaos magic was in itself, a 'system'. Grimoire was followed by a tape The Chaosphere, and later, another book The Apogeton, by Alawn Tickhill which was marketed as a 'Chaos Manual' although the book itself made little reference to Chaos magic. None of these releases were received very favourably by the other Chaos factions and this 'third wave' of Chaos development further rang to the sound of voices raised in acrimony, slanging matches in print, and behind-the-scenes bickering.

By late '87 one of the weirder Chaos groups, the Lincoln Order Of Neuromancers (L.O.O.N) had announced the 'death' of Chaos magic, asserting in their freely-circulated 'chainbook'

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Apikorsus, that:

"Chaos magic is already dead, and the only debate is between the vultures over who gets the biggest bones."

This assertion was also made by Stephen Sennitt, the editor of Nox magazine. In retrospect, it seems less that Chaos magic 'died', and more that the furious debate which blew up around it for many years had become boring - it had hit the point where constructive criticism had degenerated into a mere slanging match. Perhaps some Chaos Magicians shook themselves and wondered, after all, what all the fuss had been about. By this time, Pete Carroll had begun to reformat the IOT into 'The Pact', setting up temples in the UK, USA, and Europe. The IOT is seen as the Order for 'serious' Chaos Magicians in the same way that the OTO exists for 'serious' Thelemites. At the time of writing, the IOT Pact has temples active in the UK, Europe and America and, despite the apparent hierarchical structure outlined in Pete Carroll's latest book "Liber Khaos/ The Psychonomnicon", there appears to be much scope for new growths and experimentation within its loose structure.

Having reviewed the development of Chaos magic, we can now turn to looking at its principles in greater depth.

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Principles of Chaos Magick

Whilst magical systems usually base themselves around a model or map of the spiritual/physical universe, such as the Tree of Life (which can sometimes described as a cosmic filofax), Chaos Magick is based on a very few 'Core Principles' which generally underlie its approach to magick (they are not universal axioms however, so feel free to swap 'em around).

1. *The avoidance of Dogmatism*. Chaos Magicians strive to avoid falling into dogmatism (unless expressing dogmatism is part of a temporary belief system they have entered). Discordians use 'Catmas' such as "Us Discordians must stick apart!" Thus Chaos Magicians feel entitled to change their minds, contradict themselves and come up with arguments that are alternatively plausible and implausible. It has been pointed out that we invest a lot of time and energy in being right. What's wrong with being wrong occasionally?

2. *Personal Experience is paramount*. In other words, don't take my word that such-and-such is the case, check it out for yourself. Magick has suffered extensively from 'armchair theorists' who have perpetuated myths and out-of-date information purely due to laziness of one kind or another. Sometimes it's interesting to ask awkward questions just to see what the selfappointed experts come out with. Some will emit a stream of verbal diahorrea rather than admit to not knowing the answer, whereas a true adept will probably say "I

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haven't a f*****g clue." Quite early on, Chaos magicians came to the startling discovery that once you strip away the layers of dogma, personal beliefs, attitudes and anecdotes around any particular technique of practical magick, it can be quite simply described.

3. *Technical Excellence*. One of the early misconceptions about Chaos Magick was that it gave practitioners carte blanche to do whatever they liked, and so become sloppy (or worse, soggy) in their attitudes to self-assessment, analysis, etc. Not so. The Chaos approach has always advocated rigorous self-assessment and analysis, emphasised practice at what techniques you're experimenting with until you get the results that you desire. Learning to 'do' magick requires that you develop a set of skills and abilities and if you're going to get involved in all this weird stuff, why not do it to the best of your ability?

4. *Deconditioning*. The Chaos paradigm proposes that one of the primary tasks of the aspiring magician is to thoroughly decondition hirself from the mesh of beliefs, attitudes and fictions about self, society, and the world. Our ego is a fiction of stable self-hood which maintains itself by perpetuating the distinctions of 'what I am/what I am not, what I like/what I don't like', beliefs about ones politics, religion, gender preference, degree of free will, race, subculture etc all help maintain a stable sense of self, whilst the little ways in which we pull against this very stability allows us to feel as though we are unique individuals. Using deconditioning exercises, we can start to widen the cracks in our consensual reality which hopefully, enables us to become less attached to our beliefs and egofictions, and thus able to discard or modify them when appropriate.

5. *Diverse Approaches*. As mentioned earlier, 'traditional' approaches to magick involve choosing one particular system and sticking to it. The Chaos perspective, if nothing else, encourages an eclectic approach to development, and Chaos Magicians are free to choose from any available magical system, themes from literature, television, religions, cults, parapsychology, etc. This approach means that if you approach two chaos magicians and ask 'em what they're doing at any one moment, you're rarely likely to find much of a consensus of approach. This makes Chaos difficult to pin down as one thing or another, which again tends to worry those who need approaches to magick to be neatly labelled and clear.

6. *Gnosis.* One of the keys to magical ability is the ability to enter Altered States of Consciousness at will. We tend to draw a distinct line between 'ordinary consciousness' and 'altered states', where in fact we move between different states of consciousness - such as daydreams, 'autopilot' (where we carry out actions without cognition) and varying degrees of attention, all the time. However, as far as magick is concerned, the willed entry into intense altered states can be divided into two poles of 'Physiological Gnosis' - Inhibitory states, and Excitatory states. The former includes physically 'passive' techniques such as meditation, yoga, scrying, contemplation and sensory deprivation while the latter includes chanting, drumming, dance, emotional and sexual arousal.

Infinite Diversity, Infinite Combination

As I said earlier, one of the characteristics of the Chaos Magick approach is the diversity of systems of magick that practitioners can choose to hop between, rather than just sticking to one particular one. There are, naturally, many different approaches to using systems within the Chaos corpus, and I'll examine some of them here.

D.I.Y

In other words, create your own system, like Austin Osman Spare did. Creating your own, operationally valid magical systems is good practice, and whether or not you can get someone else to work that system is up to you entirely. On the other hand, new systems of magick are occasionally commercially valid. One book on a system = some good ideas, then of course you write a sequel developing the original stuff, and then you might as well go for the accompanying tarot deck, videos, cassettes, lego expansion kits, etc. Coming up with your own, (mostly) original stuff is better (at least from the Chaos viewpoint) than doing other people's rituals and continually following other people's ideas. Doing something innovative (especially if you don't know anyone else who's tried it) is very good for building your confidence. I remember, years ago, doing a ritual and thinking "Hey, I drew all the pentagrams wrongly for that one, and like, nothing noticed" -

at least nothing nasty appeared out of the woodwork (- yet!).

Metasystems

There is a great tendency nowadays for people to try and create metasystems - that is, systems into which can be slotted anything and everything, and will explain, given time, everything worth explaining. So we see attempts to meld runes with tarot, put virtually anything on to the Tree of Life, and much theorising/woffle (delete as appropriate). There's nothing wrong with this - again, its often a useful exercise. It can also be fun, especially if you come up with a plausible explanation for something which is based on 'made-up' or dodgy 'facts', and loads of people go "Hey wow, that's really amazing" (a few years ago an occult author released a version of Lovecraft's Necronomicon that sounded good, but which in fact was spurious. So he got loads of letters from people who had done the rituals and wanted to chat about their results). This is also important when looking at 'Beief' as a magical tool, and I'll get on to that later.

Personally, I like to use lots of different systems, and use them as seems appropriate. I tend to flip between D.I.Y, Qabalah, Tantra, Cthulhu Mythos, Shamanism, and anything else that I feel to be appropriate at any particular time. It is worth going into a system in some depth, so that you become more or less competant (and confident) with it, but magicians tend to find that once you've become competant in one system, then it's easier to get to grips with another one. If you're fairly expereienced with Enochian for example, then you shouldn't have too much diffiuclty with the Runes.

Chaos Science

Some Chaos Magicians tend to use a lot of scientific analogies/ metaphors in their work. This is okay - after all science sells washing powders and cars - if something can be shown to have a 'scientific' basis, then a lot more people will go for it, especially computer buffs, physics students, etc. It all helps with creating the 'belief buffer'. It needn't actually be 'hard' science, psuedoscience works just as well, as the number of 'New Age' books asserting that crystals store energy 'just like a computer chip does' shows. I'm not trying to be picky (okay, just a bit), and equally, since its the belief factor which is the important thing, then you could use astrology, alchemy, Theosophy or whatever else strikes your fancy, so long as you (or someone else) find it coherent & useful. Just because you're being 'scientific' doesn't mean that you have to be serious at the same time.

Chaos Silliness

It was the Discordians that pointed out that amidst the long list of dualisms that occultists were fond of using, the opposites of humour/seriousness had been left aside. Humour is important in magick. As Janet Cliff once said, we're too important to take ourselves seriously. Some members of the IOT Pact, for example, use Laughter as a form of banishing, and of course there is nothing like laughter to deflate the pompous, self-important occult windbags that one runs into from time to time. IMPORTANT: rituals can be silly and no less effective than ones when you keep a straight face. Magick is fun - otherwise, why do it?

Magical Models

The way that magick is generally conceptualised changes as general paradigm shifts in thinking occurr. Until fairly recently

(in a broad historical sense), practitioners of magick subscribed to the 'Spirit' Model of Magick, which basically states that the Otherworlds are real, and are inhabited by various pantheons of of discrete entities - elementals, demons, angels, goddesses, gods, etc. The task of the magician or shaman is to develop (or inherit) a route map of the Otherworld - to know the short-cuts, and make a few friends (or contact relatives) over there. Having done this, they have to interact with these spirits in a given way, to get them to execute your will. So clergymen pray, shamans stuff sacred mushrooms into their orifices in order to meet their ancestors, whilst demonologists threaten entities into submission by thundering out bits of the Old Testament.

By the Eighteenth Century, and the rise of Science, the idea of 'Animal Magnetism' arose in the West, being the first manifestation of the 'Energy' Model of magick. This model places emphasis on the presence of 'subtle energies' which can be manipulated via a number of techniques. Along came Bulwer Lytton and his idea of 'Vril' energy, Eliphas Levi and the Astral Light, Mediums & ectoplasm, Westernised 'popular' accounts of Prana, Chakras, and Kundalini, and eventually, Wilhelm Reich's Orgone energy.

The next development came with the popularisation of Psychology, mainly due to the Psychoanalytic fads of Freud, Jung & co. During this phase, the Otherworlds became the Innerworlds, demons were rehoused into the Unconscious Mind, and Hidden Masters revealed as manifestations of the 'Higher Self'. For some later exponents of this model, Tarot cards were switched from being a magical-divinatory system to being 'tools' for personal transformation, just as the gods/goddesses came to be seen as not 'real' entities, but

psychological symbols or archetypes.

The current up-and-coming paradigm is the 'Cybernetic' model, as we swing into being an information-based culture. This model says that the Universe, despite appearances, is stochastic in nature. Magick is a set of techniques for rousing a neurological storm in the brain which brings about microscopic fluctuations in the Universe, which lead eventually to macroscopic changes - in accordance with the magician's intent. See Chaos Science, the Butterfly Effect, and all that. Another manifestation of the Cybernetic Model coming to the fore is the new age assertion that crystals work 'just like' computer chips. There are signs that the Cybernetic Model dovetails back into the spirit model, and in 'Chaos Servitors: A User Guide', you will find a reasonably coherent argument to support the idea that localised informationfields can, over time, become self-organising to the extent that we experience them as autonomous entities - spirits.

Each particular model has its own attractive glamour, with exponents or opponents on either side. Many occult textbooks contain elements of the Spirit, Energy, and Psychological models quite happily. It is also worth noting that should you ever find yourself in the position of having to 'explain' all this weird stuff to an non-afficiando or skeptic, then the Psychological model is probably your best bet. These days, people who ascribe to the Spirit model, if they are not of a Pagan or Occult persuasion themselves, tend to think that they have an exclusive copyright over the use of Spirits! If the person is a computer buff or Fractal phreak, then by all means go for the 'cyberpunk' paradigm. Scientists only tend to accept something if a scientific 'rationale' can be wheeled up to slot it into. A good example is Acupuncture, which up until recently

was explained using the Energy Model, and poo-poohed by the scientific establishment until someone came up with Endorphin stimulation. Now most hospital physiotherapy departments have a set of needles.

Whilst some magicians tend to stick to one favourite model, it is useful to shift between them as the situation befits, as some models have a stronger 'explaining' power for accounting for some aspects of magick than others. The Spirit model, being by far the oldest, can account for just about any aspect of magick. The Psychological model, whilst being useful for looking at magical as a process for personal development, has difficulty with aspects such as tribal shamans cursing Westerners who (a) don't believe in magick (b) didn't see the shaman squinting at them yet (c) still break out in hives or boils anyway. If you narrow yourself down to only using one magical model, then sooner or later the Universe will present you with something that won't fit your parameters. When you are spending more time defending your models, rather than modifying them, then you know it's time for another spot of deconditioning ... report to Room 101.

All Hail Discordia!

The Discordian Society is, in its own words "...a tribe of philosophers, theologians, magicians, scientists, artists, clowns, and similar maniacs who are intrigued with ERIS GODDESS OF CONFUSION and with Her doings." The existence of the Discordian Society was first popularised in Robert Anton Wilson & Robert Shea's blockbusting 'Illuinatus!' trilogy, and also in Malaclypse The Younger's book 'Principia Discordia' which sets out the basic principles of the Discordian Religion - a religion based around the Greek Goddess, Eris.

Traditionally, Eris was a daughter of Nox (night) and the wife of Chronus. She begat a whole bunch of Gods - Sorrow, Forgetfulness, Hunger, Disease, Combat, Murder, Lies - nice kids! The ancient Greeks attributed any kind of upset or discord to her. With the fall of the ancient empires, Eris disappeared, though it is suspected that she had a hand in 'manifesting' the first bureaucracies, triplicate forms, and insurance companies. She didn't put in a personal appeerence again on spaceship Gaia again until the late '50's, when she appeared to two young Californians, who later became known as Omar Ravenhurst and Malaclypse The Younger. Eris appointed them the "Keepers of the Sacred Chao" and gave them the message to: "Tell constricted mankind that there are no rules, unless they choose to invent rules." After which Omar and Mal appointed each other High Priest of his own madness, and declared

themselves each to be a Society of Discordia, whatever that may be.

Greater Poop: Is Eris true?
Malaclypse: Everything is true.
GP: Even false things?
Mal: Even false things are true.
GP: How can that be?
Mal: I don't know man, I didn't do it.

Eris has since climbed her way from historical footnote to mythic mega-star, and the Discordian Movement, if such a thing can be said to exist, is growing on both sides of the Atlantic, helped by the Discordian tactic of declaring that everyone is a genuine Pope. More people are getting into the idea of a religion based on the celebration of confusion and madness.

The central Greek myth that Eris figures prominently in is the ever-continuing soap opera of 'Mount Olympus - Home of the Gods'; the episode which inadvertently brought about the Trojan War. It seems that Zeus was throwing a party and did not want to invite Eris because of her reputation as a trouble-maker. Infuriated by the snub, Eris fashioned a golden apple incribed with the word Kallisti, ("to the prettiest one") and tossed it into the hall where all the guests were. Three of the invited Goddesses, Athena, Hera, and Aphrodite, each claimed the apple for themselves and started fighting and throwing food around. To settle the dispute, Zeus ordered all three to submit to the judgement of a mortal over just who was 'the prettiest one', and said mortal was Paris, son of the King of Troy. Zeus sent all three to Paris, via Hermes, but each Goddess tried to

outwit the others by sneaking out early and offering a bribe to Paris.

Athena offered Paris victory in battle, Hera, great wealth, while Aphrodite 'merely loosened the clasps by which her tunic was fastened and unknotted her girdle', also offering Paris the most beautiful of mortal women. So, Aphrodite got the apple, and Paris got off with Helen, who unfortunately happened to be married to Menelaus, King of Sparta. Thanks to the meddling of Athena and Hera, the Trojan war followed and the rest, as they say, is history.

Nowadays, in our more chaos-positive age, Eris has mellowed somewhat, and modern Discordians associate her with all intrusions of 'weirdness' in their lives, from synchronous to mischevious occurences, creative flashes of inspiration, and wild parties. She does get a little bitchy at times, but who doesn't?

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Discordian Opening Ritual

by *Prince Prance*

1. Clap x5

2. The Erisian Cross:
"Light in my Head
Fire in my genitals
Strength at my Right side
Laughter at my Left side
Love in my Heart."

3. Trace Spiral Pentagrams* at the 4 quarters & zenith.

4. Face East:
"Blessed Apostle Hung Mung[1], great Sage of Cathay, Balance the Hodge and Podge and grant us equilibrium."

5. Face South:
"Blessed Apostle Van Van Mojo[2], Doctor of Hoodoo and Vexes, Give us the Voodoo Power and confuse our enemies."

6. Face West:
"Blessed Apostle Sri Syadasti[3], patron of psychedelia, Teach us the relative truth and blow our minds."

7. Face North:
"Blessed Apostle Zarathud[4], hard-nosed hermit, Grant us the Erisian doubt, and the constancy of Chaos."

8. Look up (or down):
"Blessed Apostle Malaclypse[5], Elder Saint of Discordia, Grant us illumination and protect us from stupidity."

9. Look all over the place:
"Great Goddess Discordia, Holy Mother Eris, Joy of the Universe, Laughter of Space, Grant us Life, Light, Love and Liberty and make the bloody magick work!"

10. *"Hail Eris! All Hail Discordia.!*

Notes:
* For more on the Spiral Pentagrams, see the next section.
1.Hung Mung is the Discordian link to the Chinese Mysteries and it is none other than he who devised the Sacred Chao. He is patron of the Season of Chaos.
2.Dr. Van Van Mojo is a fellow of the Intergalactic Haitian Guerillas for World Peace and is Patron of the Season of Discord.
3.Sri Syadasti is the Apostle of Psychedelia and the Patron of the Season of Confusion.
4.Zarathud, a Hermit of Medieval Europe, has been dubbed "Offender of the Faith." He is Patron of the season of Bureaucracy."
5.Malaclypse the Elder is alleged to have been an ancient wiseman who carried as sign bearing the legend "DUMB" through the alleys of Rome, Baghdad, Mecca, Jerusalem, and some other places. He is Patron of the season of Aftermath.

Spiral Pentagrams

This bit 'explains' the Spiral Pentagrams referred to in the Discordian Opening Rite.

The traditional Pentagram is a very solid, geometrical figure - I find its association with banishing to be very appropriate. "So what", I thought one day "would happen if I started using a fivepointed star made up of curves?" You can see the result of a few minutes with a compass (it took ages on the computer!) below. Unlike the traditional pentagram, which has a pentagon shape in its centre, this one repeats the petal formation. So when I draw it (and they're a bugger to draw in the air at first), I visualise the outer petals spinning clockwise, and the inner petals spinning anti-clockwise (no particular reason why), and the whole figure becoming a 3-D tunnel, twisting into infinite space. Pretty, eh?

The first time we tried them out was, appropriately enough, in a ritual invocation of Eris, and they seemed to work very well. They don't keep things out, they tend to draw energies in. You can also use them in astral projection (or in Chaospeak, 'Virtual Magick') to gate through, and I've had them turning up spontaenously in dreams as astral doorways. To seal them, I reverse the spinning of the petals, and have them become 'flat' again, sometimes doing a normal pentagram over them just for good measure. They seem to work well when used in a

free-form style of working, but not when used with 'trad' systems, such as the Lesser Key of Solomon (the entities in there are strictly conservative in how they like being evoked, I find). If you try out the Spiral Pentagrams by the way, I'd love some feedback/correspondence on the subject.

With all magical techniques & rituals, it is important to distinguish between Process and Content. One of the first messages of the Chaos Current is that whilst Content is to some extent arbitary, the underlying processes upon which rituals are based is the important bit. The Discordian Opening Ritual for example, is a variant upon the theme of Centering (or Banishing) Rituals, wherein the aim is to place yourself at the 'center' of your psychocosm, the axis mundi or null-point from which all acts of magic proceed. Centering rituals also act to warm you up for the main event, as it were, the entry into a space where, for the moment, Nothing is True, and Everything is Permitted. Following the main object of a working, performing the Centering Rite again prepares you for moving back to the sphere of common Consensus Reality. Rites such as the standard Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram, or the IOT's Gnostic Banishing combine gesture, speech, breathing and visualisation with different content, but following the same process - identification of the 4 cardinal directions plus the fifth point which represents union with spirit, chaos, or Kia. Such ritual acts produce changes in the 'atmosphere' of the area they are worked in and with practice, these feelings automatically come on-line whenever the rite is used, so that the shift between everyday reality and its concerns (who's doing the washing-up after the ritual etc) and Magical Reality (the purpose of the ritual for example) is clearly perceived.
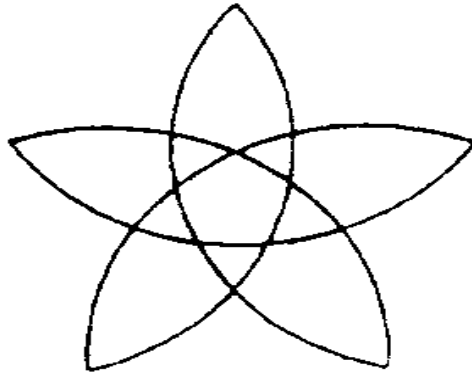
Spiral Pentagram

Sigil Magick

Sigilisation is one of the simplest and most effective forms of results magick used by contemporary magicians. Once you have grasped the basic principles of sigilisation and experimented with some of the most popular methods of casting sigils, you can go on to experimenting with forms of sigil magick which are unique to you.

The core Sigilisation process can be divided into six stages, which I will explain using the acronym S.P.L.I.F.F.
S - Specify Intent
P - Pathways available?
L - Link intent to symbolic carrier
I - Intense Gnosis/Indifferent Vacuity
F - Fire
F - Forget

1.Specify Intent
The first stage of the process is that you should get your magical intent clear - as precise as possible without, at the same time, being too overcomplicated. Vague intentions usually give rise to vague results, and the clearer the initial statement of intent is, the more likely you are to get accordant results. An aquaintance of mine once did a sigil to manifest a lover, and gave very precise details on how this paragon should look, what kind of car he should drive, etc. Needless to say, her

'desire' manifested exactly as she had specified, and she discovered too late that she had forgotten to specify 'intelligence' in her sigil, and was lumbered with a bore!

2.Pathways Available
Generally, sigils are excellent for bringing about precise, short-term results, which makes them excellent for works of Results Magick - healing, habit manipulation, inspiration, dreamcontrol, and the like. It is generally considered useful if you 'open' a path for the intent to manifest along. There is a standard magical example about working for 'money' that goes along the lines of: Frater Bater does a spell for money and waits for the multiverse to provide him with the readies. In the following months he gains financially after the sudden deaths of relatives, receiving industrial compensation after falling into a combine harvester, and so on. Had he made sure that there was a possible pathway or route for the result to come in on, like writing a book (ha ha), writing off for a new job, or entering a lottery, he might have had a better time of it. This is the way magick often works, and shows that the multiverse, if nothing else, has a slappy sense of humour.

3.Link Intent
Once you have decided upon your intent, it can then be turned into a symbolic analogue or code - a signal on which you can focus varying degrees of attention on, without recalling your initial desire. The most common approaches to this are:
(a) Monogram - write out your intent, knock out all repeating letters, and from the rest, design a glyph.
(b) Mantra - write out intent, scramble into meaningless phrase or word, which can then be chanted.
In addition to the above, you can also use other media such as smell, taste, colours, body language, and hand gestures.

4.Intense Gnosis/Indifferent Vacuity

Sigils can be projected into the mutliverse via an act of Gnosis - usually, but not necessarily, within some kind of ritual/magical context. Popular routes to Gnosis include: spinning, chanting, dancing, visualisation, sensory overload or sensory deprivation, and sexual arousal. The other 'altered state' is that of Indifferent Vacuity - a sort of 'not-particularlybothered' state. An example of sigilisation by this route is to doodle sigils whilst listening to a talk which is boring, but you have to take notes on.

5.Fire

This is simply the projection of the sigil into the void or multiverse at the 'peak' of Gnosis/Vacuity. Examples of this include orgasm, reaching the point of blackout from hyperventilation or being asked a question about the boring talk that you were supposed to have been listening to.

6.Forget

Once your sigil has been fired, you're supposed to forget the original intent and let the Butterfly Effect or whatever take its course. Forgetting what you just did can often be the hardest part of the process. It's not so bad if the intent is something you don't really care about (hence beginning with sigils for things you aren't really too fussed about is a good way to begin experiments), but is more difficult if it's something you really want to happen. As long as you don't dwell on the thoughts when they pop up, it shouldn't matter too much. Time for another analogy.

The ever-changing tangle of desires, wishes, fears, fantasies etc jostling around in our minds can be likened to a garden, albeit a somewhat unruly and overgrown one; flowers, weeds,

creepers, and the occassional buried gardening rake. Going through the sigilisation process can be likened to becoming suddenly enthusiastic about tidying the garden up. You isolate one plant (i.e. your intent), seperate it from the others, feed it, water it and prune it 'til it stands out from the rest and is clearly visible on the landscape, and then suddenly get bored with the whole job and go indoors to watch television. The trick is, next time you look at the 'garden', not to notice the plant you so recently lavished attention on.

If the intent gets tangled up with all the other stuff in your head, you tend to start projecting various fantasy outcomes - what you'll do with the money when it comes, how will it be with the boy/girl/anteater of your dreams, etc and the desire will get run into all the others, thus decreasing the probability of it manifesting in the way you want it to.

A useful attitude to have when casting sigils is that once you've posted one off to the multiverse (which, like Santa, always gets the message), then you're sure that it's going to work, so that you don't need to expend any more effort on that particular one. Such confidence tends to arise out of having had some success with sigils previously. The result often comes about when the intent has become latent - that is to say, you've completeley forgotten about it and given up on it coming about. The experience is similar to trying to hitch a lift on deserted road in the dead of night. You've been there for hours, it's pouring down with rain and you 'know' with an air of dread certainty that no one's going to stop for you now, but you stick your thumb out anyway. What the hell, eh? Five minutes later, you get a lift from the boy/girl/anteater of two sigils back, driving a porsche and asking you how far you want to go. Maddening isn't it? But sigilisation often seems to work like that.

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Belief - A Key to Magick

One aspect of Chaos Magick that seems to upset some people is the Chaos Magician's (or Chaoist, if you like) occasional fondness for working with images culled from non-historical sources, such as invoking H.P Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos beings, mapping the Rocky Horror Show onto the Tree of Life, slamming through the astral void in an X-Wing fighter, and 'channeling' communications from gods that didn't exist five minutes ago.

So you might see why using this sort of thing as a basis for serious magical work raises one or two eyebrows in some quarters. Isn't after all, the Lovecraft stuff fiction? What about linking in with 'inner planes contacts', 'traditions', etc - surely you can't do magick with something that doesn't bear any relation to history or mythology?

In the past, such criticisms have been raised over the subject of magicians working with 'fictional' entities. In this section, I hope to argue the case against these objections.

The first point to make is that magick requires a belief system within which to work. The belief system is the symbolic & linguistic construct through which the magician learns to interpret her experiences and can range from anything between good old traditional Qabalah to all this New Age "I-heard-it-

off-a-RedIndian-Shaman-honest" stuff that seems so popular nowadays. It doesn't matter which belief system you use, so long as it turns you on. Read that again, it's important. Eventually most magicians seem to develop their own magical systems which work fine for them but are a bit mind boggling for others to use, with Austin Osman Spare's Alphabet of Desire being a good example.

A key to magical success is veracity of belief. If you want to try something out, and can come up with a plausible explanation as to how/why it should work, then it most likely will. Pseudoscience or Qabbalistic gibber (or both) - it matters not so long as the rationale you devise buffers the strength of your belief in the idea working. I find that this happens a lot when I try and push the limits of how I try to do some magical action that I haven't tried before. Once I come up with a plausible explanation of how it could work in theory, then of course, I am much more confident about doing, and can often transmit this confidence to others. If I'm 110% certain that this rituals going to 'bloody well work' then its all the more likely that it will.

You can experiment with this using the technique of belief-shifting (Robert Anton Wilson calls it Metaprogramming), a good example being the chakras. The popular view of chakras is that we have seven. Okay, so meditate on your chakras, hammer the symbolism into your head and hey presto! you'll start having 7Chakra experiences. Now switch to using the 5 Sephiroth of the Middle Pillar (Qabalah) as the psychic centres in your body, and sure enough, you'll get accordant results. Get the idea?

Any belief system can be used as a basis for magick, so long as you can invest belief into it. Looking back at my earlier

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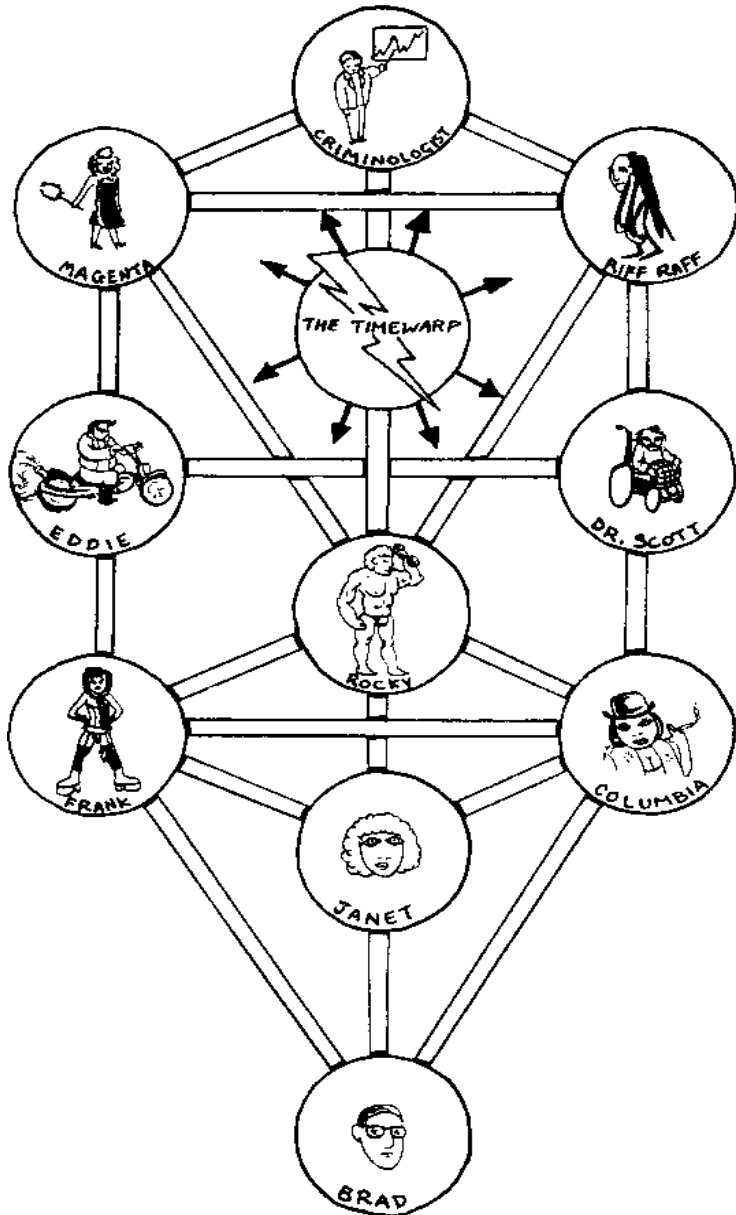
magical experiements, I guess that what used to be important for me was the strong belief that the system I was using was ancient, based on traditional formulae, etc. A belief system can be seen as a matrix of information into which we can pour emotional energy - we do as much, when we become so engrossed in watching a play, film, or TV programme that for a moment, it becomes real for us, and invokes appropriate emotions. Much of what we see served up on the silver screen is powerful mythic images & situations, repackaged for modern tastes, which is a cue to start going on about 'Star Trek'.

More people are familiar with the universe of Star Trek than any of the mystery religions. It's a fairly safe bet that more people are going to know who Mr. Spock is, than who know who Lugh is. The Star Trek universe has a high fantasy content, and seemingly few points of contact with our 'everyday' worlds of experience. Yet Star Trek is a modern, mythic reflection of our psychology. The characters embody specific qualities - Spock is logical, Sulu is a often portrayed as a martial figure, Scotty is a 'master builder', and Kirk is an arbitrator, forever seeking resolution of conflict through peaceful means. As we "get into" the Star Trek universe, we find greater depth and subtlety. We find that the universe has its own rules which the characters are subject to, and is internally consistent. Each episode, we may find that we are being given insights into the Personal world of a key character. Like our everyday worlds, the universe of Star Trek has a boundary beyond which is the unknown - the future, unexplored space, the consequences of our actions - whatever wild cards that we may be dealt. So we watch TV, and enter, as an observer, the unfolding of a Mythic event. We can increase this sense of participation through a role-playing game, where group belief allows us to generate, for a few hours at least, the semblance of the Star Trek universe,

in the comfort of your sitting room. It's relatively easy to generate the Star Trek world, due to the plethora of books, comics, videos and roleplaying supplements which are available to support that universe.

The final proof of all that being that one of my colleagues had to sit a computer exam, and was wracking his brains trying to think of an appropriate god-form to invoke upon himself to concentrate his mind on programming. Mercury? Hermes? And then he hit on it - the most powerful mythic figure that he knew could deal with computers was Mr. Spock! So he proceeded to invoke Mr. Spock, by learning all he could about Spock and going round saying "I never will understand humans" until he was thoroughly Spock-ified. And he got an 'A', so there!

And so, back to the Cthulhu Mythos. Lovecraft himself was of the opinion that fear, particularly fear of the unknown, was the strongest emotion attached to the Great Old Ones. The reason why I like to work with that Mythos occasionally is that the Great Old Ones are 'outside' most human mythologies, reflecting the shadows of the Giants in Norse Myths, the pre-Olympian Titans in Greek Myths, and other groups of universe-builders who are thought to be too chaotic for the polite company of the gods of the ordered universe. For me too, the nature of the Great Old Ones as shadowy beings who can only be partially glimpsed is attractive - they can't be assimilated and bound into any orthodox systems of magick and I get much fun from working out suitable approaches for working with them. The Great Old Ones have a very 'primal' nature, which for me provides the emotional buffer for magical exploration. Having said all that, and no doubt left you thinking "uurgh, weird person, he likes messing round with tentacled slimies",

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I might also mention that I've had some interesting results from working with a Mythic system based on (blush) C.S. Lewis's 'Narnia' books.

The interesting thing about metaprogramming is that you can adopt a belief for a relatively short time, and then drop it again. When practising ritual magick its generally a good idea to, whatever you think about gods being archetypes or reflections of bits of yourself or whatever, behave as if they were real. So in a Cthulhu Mythos ritual, nothing will help build the neccesary tension than the adopted belief that if you get it wrong Cthulhu will slime you! Of course, outside the ritual you don't have to believe in Cthulhu and that even now a slimy paw appears at my window...no! No! ...ahem, sorry about that. Related to this approach is the idea that 'Suspension of Disbelief' can also be useful. To do this, take a book which expounds an idea that you find totally crap (every magician has their favourite 'crap' author) and try to see the writers message without your inner voice hurling abuse at the page. One of the most difficult 'suspensions' for fledgling magicians is overcoming the nagging doubt that "all this stuff doesn't work". Despite hours of talk and reading vast tomes by Crowley and his cohorts, that nagging disbelief can still be heard, and can only be really dispelled by experience - one act that shows you that MAGICK WORKS is worth a thousand arguments.

So my conclusion is that intensity of belief is the key which allows magical systems to work, whether they be related to historical traditions (which are, let's face it, very often rewritten anyway), esoteric traditions (which have evolved down the centuries as well) or based on fiction or TV. It's your ability to be emotively moved or use them as vehicles for the expression of your will that counts. If it works for you - do it.

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Basic Exercises

These exercises have been compiled from a variety of sources, and possibly have little inherent value of themselves, though they could be fun to try and may have far-reaching consequences. One acquaintance of mine began his foray into Chaos Magick by taking on the belief-system of being a Born-Again Christian. He's still a Born-Again Christian, but seems to be happier.

1. When obtaining any magical result (including 'failure') always think of several explanations for it. These explanations should contain at least one each of the following types:
i. An explanation based on the parameters of the magical system that you have been employing.
ii.Strict materialism
iii. Something exceptionally silly.

2. When you have been experimenting with belief-shifting for a while, try contemplating two which appear to be mutually exclusive such as Christianity and Tantra, Islam and Radical Feminism, New Age Celtic Revivals and Marxism.

3. Meditations in Menzies. Read specialist magazines that you have no interest in, especially those written by enthusiastic amateurs. Also read publications with oppposing views in quick succession, such as Playboy and Spare Rib, or Andrea

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Dworkin and the Marquis de Sade.

4. Do not put live toads in your mouth.

5.Everyone else in the world is a buddha except you! And they are all waiting for you to get your act together, so get out of bed and get going! (Buddhahood is especially manifest in all the people you carefully avoid on the street).

6.Try being consistently wrong - make wild statements and then, when someone pokes a hole in your argument, admit your mistake, profusely, if necessary. You can be wrong about the time, the day of the week, any expressed political statement, etc.

7.Gods & Gurus
Possession by an entity (God, spirit, drug etc) allows you to do things that you would not ordinarily feel able to. So, to some extent, does the confidence of having a Guru. Such figures provide the confidence that you can walk a tightrope without falling off, play in the deep end of the swimming baths without drowning or run around wearing orange robes and banging a tambourine in a busy shopping centre. Sanity is 'out there' rather than in your head. Most people tend to say that they are mad 'compared to the rest of them' (likewise, most people will affirm that they are stupid. Few will admit to being crap at sex though - why?). Chaos Magick allows you to send your mad thoughts out for a night out occasionally. Contrary to what comes over in books, magick is a street-level activity (gutter-level, even). Look at the zig-zag path of the trickster as expressed by Crowley, Cagliostro, Simon Magus, and the rest. Learn to juggle, mime, pull rabbits out of hats. Pass the top hat and get a laugh or two. In space, no one can

hear you giggle, but chaos is nothing less than Laughing Matter. If you want to see true magick in action, watch a Marx Brothers movie. Harpo could blow up a glove and milk it. How the hell could he do that?

8. Chaotic Attractors Occasionally you will be sure to run into someone who seems to attract chaos wherever they go. Obviously they have some strange and mighty power, but are often unaware, or merely embarrased by the frequency of weirdness that always abounds in their vicinity. Study them carefully (if from a safe distance), and you might learn a thing or two.

9. Deconditioning As I pointed out earlier, it is relatively easy to shift between magical beliefs and produce concordant results. This is not to say, however, that all belief-shifting is so simple. Some levels of our attitude/belief structure are remarkably resiliant to conscious change. Indeed, some structures are able to 'resist' change by remaining elusive and 'invisible' to conscious awareness, and must be dragged, kicking, into the painful light of self-revelation.

If I may use the analogy of beliefs as buildings (the city of Selfs) , around the walls of which howls the wind of Kia, then the continual process of Deconditioning may be likened to chipping away at the towers, with the occasional 'nuke' provided by recourse to a powerful form of gnosis such as sexual ecstasy, pain overload, or Albert Hoffman's elixir. Deconditioning is a continual process - even as you discard one set of limitations (in Tantra, this is known as Klesha-smashing), you may find that you acquire new ones, usually unconsciously. Often, belief-structures are 'nested' within each other, and may have their roots in a powerful formative experience. Timothy Leary calls this process 'Imprint Susceptibility', where

the imprint forms a baseline response to experience, and establishes the parameters within which any subequent learning takes place. Leary's 8-Circuit model of Metaprogramming can be employed as an aid to deconditioning.

Be mindful that the Deconditioning Process is not merely an intellectual experience. It is relatively easy to 'intellectually accept' some experience or belief which you have previously rejected or dismissed. It takes more resilience to take action from your new position, and risk the emotional upheaval that may result afterwards. For example, a young male magician of my acquaintance examined his own beliefs about his sexuality, and decided that he would focus upon his own distate/ fear of homoeroticism. He found that he could accept 'intellectually' his repressed attractions to other males, and thus thought himself liberated. He then went on to have several homosexual encounters which he said, did not give him any physical pleasure, but merely fed his 'belief' that he had sexually liberated himself. Deconditioning is rarely simple. Often people who have had an experience of 'Illumination' report that all their old repressive structures have dropped away. Tear down a building in the city of identities and it grows back, sometimes with a different shape. One of the effects of intense Gnosis is the shattering of layers of belief structure, but it is generally found that unless followup work is done, the sense of shattered belief-structures is transitory.

You should also consider the effects this process is likely to have on others - see Luke Rhinehart's "The Dice Man" for an amusing and instructive tale of one man's approach to deconditioning. The Ego, a self-regulatory structure which maintains the fiction of being a unique self, doesn't like the process of becoming more adaptive to experience. One of the

more subtle 'defences' that it throws up is the sneaking suspicion (which can quickly become an obsession) is that you are 'better' than everyone else. In some circles, this is known as 'Magusitis', and it is not unknown for those afflicted to declare themselves to be Maguses, Witch Queens, avatars of Goddesses, or Spiritual Masters. If you catch yourself reffering to everyone else as 'the herd', or 'human cattle', etc, then its time to take another look at where you're going. Myself, I prefer the benefits of empathy and the ability to get on with other people than the limitations of being a reclusive would-be Raskalnikov dreaming of the serving slaves. While we might echo the words of Hassan I Sabbah that "Nothing is True, Everything is Permitted", acting totally from this premise is likely to bring you into conflict with those individuals and authorities who have pretty fixed views on what isn't permitted. Thus, despite the glamour, Chaos Magicians are rarely completely amoral. One of the basic axioms of magical philosophy is that morality grows from within, once you have begun to know the difference between what you have learned to believe, and what you will to believe.

Some excellent pointers towards the process of Deconditioning can be found in: Liber Null by Pete Carroll, Magick by Aleister Crowley, and Tantra Magick, the collected grade papers of the east-west Tantrik order, AMOOKOS.

10. Keeping A Diary Despite the glamour of Chaos Magic as being spontaenous, do-what-you-like, smash-the-sephiroth and loose your demons "git 'ard" magic, it's generally considered that keeping a diary of experiences & magical experiments is essential. A magical record charters your progress, failures, experiments and insights. If after a brain-crunching ritual, you have a flash of illumination, and don't write it down, chances

are you'll forget it, and that particular pearl of wisdom will be lost forever. Morever, it's a good discipline to get into, and I often find that, when writing up a summary of a working, I often recall things that haven't previously occurred to me. It's also one of the few times when you don't have to censor your thoughts, though names may have to be changed to protect the privacy of other participants.

Conclusions

This booklet has been an attempt to put over some of the basic ideas behind Chaos Magick. What you should bear in mind when reading it is that you're getting my ideas on the subject - strained through my experiences and the zig-zag trail I've blazed through the weird world of magick. There are no 'definitive' books on the Chaos approach. No time-laden glamour of 'tradition' into which the fledgling magician may step with safety, and absolve himself of responsibility for being creative and innovative. The demand of Chaos Magick is that you weave your own path of development, rather than following someone else's - and how you weave that path is largely left up to you.

Where is Chaos Magick going? There is no discernable, distinct path that is going 'somewhere' - no golden bliss of illumination or stated goal tied into the approach. The end-point, if indeed there is such, is for you to decide and discover. Critics of the Chaos approach (both outside and within the corpus) have highlighted a tendency towards 'playing with magick' - trying out different magical systems with the same blitheness that we might try different flavours of ice cream. Some practitioners try out different rituals and techniques without any deeper understanding of how these experiences fit together. Because there is no laiddown 'path', one might then think that there is no path, but again, this is for each of us to

decide. Chaos Magick reflects much of modern western culture, with its emphasis on a multiplicity of ever-changing styles, of diffuse fragments blending in with each other, without a discernable 'thread' to bind them together.

But it is down to each of us to find our individual sense of connectiveness. To throw up a semblance of order from what Austin Osman Spare called, 'the chaos of the normal'. The term 'Gnosis' also means, 'knowledge of the heart' - that which can only come from personal insight and experience, and very often, is difficult to communicate to another, other than in an oblique form. Chaos Magic is merely an all-embracing approach to Gnosis, which encourages each individual to become responsible for their own development - what you do, and how you interpret it in the light of your own experience.
I'm occassionally asked by people 'what do you have to do' to become a Chaos Magician. There really isn't an answer to this. You could, for example, practice Qabalah (and exclusively Qabalah) for ten years, and thus consider yourself a Chaos Magician - if you wanted to. Above all, don't confuse opinion with dogma, or glamour for commitment - but that's only my opinion anyway!
Hail Eris!
Phil Hine, March 1992.

Appendices

The following essays are appended as sources of interest & inspiration for readers who are interested in reading more about someone else's approach to Chaos Magick, and most definitely not to pad out an otherwise slim volume. Most have appeared in Nox magazine or somewhere else, so if you've seen 'em before, go and watch a video or something.

Phil Hine

FRACTURE LINES

"If Will stops and cries Why, invoking Because, then Will stops & does nought."

Liber AL,II,30.

I lay possessed by a demon. Obsession. Twisted by talons; self-love & hatred knotting my guts. Howling frustration into the night, the broken dream heaped around my bed.
Later.
A shaft of light burns through the brooding darkness; my cloak of night, my self-sewn shroud. Knowledge. Insight. Wild laughter. A strange way into gnosis. A self-wounding, stretching back into my personal time. I crawl into my centre, my circle, and with my pen etch a triangle. And force the monster into it, and unloosen the skeins of form; moments of weakness, wanting and waiting, desire ignited by imagination. Manufacturing my own junk, my own addiction.

If this is wading through "qlipothic muck" then so be it. But out of this muck I wove a conversation, a story with no chance of a happy ending. A story which clouded my will, which blurred my eye. I made this monster; a golem born of my own longings & shortcomings, and now I will take it apart, piece by piece, draining the pus from knotted passions. We are but knots in a cord. Untie them and we slip easily across the aeons into nebulous dreams.

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Emotional Engineering

We are bound by our own past, bound to repeat patterns; programs written long ago. Flowcharted in an infant's crabbed hand; meshed like kitten-pulled wool; a language of critical moments in our personal histories. Years later, a gap opens in the world, and creatures of free will and freedom that we think we are, our sudden vunerability surprises us. Caught off guard we pause, and in that silence, ancient-innocent fingers deep within us pluck at strings, so that we jerk awkwardly in the grip of self-spawned monsters of th mind - obsessions.

Defence Mechanisms

The more value that we place on upholding a particular emotional pattern, the more likely it is that all ambiguous signals will be perceived as supporting it. Evidence which counters it will most likely be overlooked or rationalised into a more malleable form. Conflict arises when dissonance occurrs between desires and existing mental constructs (have you ever feared the strength of your own desires?). To cope with such conflicts, a variety of Defence Mechanism can be adopted:

Aggression

A typical response to frustrated desire and loss of control; loss of devouring dreams. We can direct it at the source of our frustration, or direct it onto others.

Apathy

Loss of control - loss of face and self-worth. The machine stops.

Regression

Adult, who me? A return to a child-like mien. Cry hard enough

and someone will come and comfort us. Perhaps we have learnt that through tears, we can control others.

Sublimation

In other words, putting a brave face on it. Re-directing the energy into a more acceptable form. But demons are cunning. Kick them down the front stairs and they will come sneaking round the back, waiting with spider calm until you leave the door of your mind ajar.

Intellectualisation

Displacing feelings with words. A quick lie for the aesthetic becomes a fast buck for the lay analyst. Such strategies are normal; that is until they become obsessive: a locked-up loop automatic as breathing. Out of control.

Fantasy

Fantasy is the cornerstone of obsession, where imagination is trussed up like a battery-farmed chicken; catharsis eventually becomes catastrophic. Walter Mitty lives in all of us, in varyingly-sized corners. We use "starter" fantasies to weave meaning into a new situation, "maintainer" fantasies to prop up a boring task, and "stopper" fantasies to persuade ourselves that it's better not to ...

A fantasy has tremendous power, and in a period of high anxiety we can imagine a thousand outcomes, good and bad (but mostly good) of what the dreaded/hoped for moment will bring us. The fantasy exists in a continual tension between the desire to fulfill it, and the desire to maintain it - to keep from losing it. Of course, any move to real-ise it threatens its existence. A closed loop is is the result, shored up by our favourite defence mechanisms, whipped on by fear of failure and lust of result.

The obsession clouds all reason, impairs the ability to act, makes anything secondary to it seem unimportant. It's a double-bind tug o'war. The desire to maintain the fantasy may be stronger than the desire to make it real.

In classical occult terms I am describing a thought-form, a monster bred from the darker reccesses of mind, fed by psychic energy, clothed in imagination and nurtured by umbilical cords which twist through years of growth. we all have our personal Tunnels of Set; set in our ways through habit and patterns piling on top of each other. The thought-form rides us like a monkey; it's tail wrapped firmly about the spine of a self lost to us years ago; an earlier version threshing blindly in a moment of fear, pain, or desire.

Thus we are formed; and in a moment of loss we feel the monster's hot breath against our backs, it's claws digging into muscle and flesh. we dance to the pull of strings that were woven years ago, and in a lightning flash of insight, or better yet, the gentle admonitions of a friend, we may see the lie; the program. it is first necessary to see that there is a program. To say perhaps, this creature is mine, but not wholly me. What follows then is that the prey becomes the hunter, pulling apart the obsession, naming its parts, searching for fragments of understanding in its entrails. Shrinking it, devouring it, peeling the layers of onion-skin.

This is in itself a magick as powerful as any sorcery. Unbinding the knots that we have tied and tangled; sorting out the threads of experience and colour-coding the chains of chance. It may leave us freer, more able to act effectively and less likely to repeat old mistakes. The thing has a chinese puzzle-like nature. We can perceive only the present, and it requires intense sifting through memory to see the scaffolding beneath.

Phil Hine
The grip of obsession upon us has three components:

Cognitive - our thoughts & feelings in relation to the situation. These must be ruthlessly analysed and cut down by vipasana, banishing, or some similar strategy.

Physiological - anxiety responses of heart rate, muscle tone and blood pressure. The body must be stilled by relaxation and pranayama.

Behavioural - what we must do (or more often, don't do). often, our obsessive behaviour is entirely inappropriate and potentially damaging to others. Usually it does take other people to point this out. Analytic techniques such as I Ching or Tarot may prove useful here.

The wrath of the monster left me gasping and breathless, feeling trapped. All paths littered with broken glass. Desperation drove me to a friend. There is magick enough in reaching out to ask another for help. An I Ching reading suggested action and nonaction, negating the momentary trap of self-doubt. Pranayama banished the physical tension (well, most of it). The monster shrank and skittered on spindly legs through years of frozen memories, dissolving finally into a heap of mirrored shards.

Clues; I'm still fitting them together, but the pictures they hint at aren't frightening any more.

Howling

The Babblogue: A deliberate derangement of the senses - orchestrating a personal cacaphony; a descent into the depths of the subconscious, to confront and bind the "lurkers" within.

This essay is a short account of a personal exploration of the "demons" of my own psyche. rather than relying on existing approaches, for the reasons given below, I preferred to develop a purely personal approach. I give this account not to foist this particular approach onto others, but in the hope that it will assist those who also experimenting with different techniques. Nor do I wish to criticise or invalidate the traditional systems of goetic magic, merely to say that they are not for me.

This work began fairly innocuously, with the compilation of a "black book" - a dissection of self - in terms of habits, shortcomings, faults, hopes, ideals, all that I was, that I wished to be, or rejected. Likes, dislikes, attractions and revulsions. Then on to self-portraits - written in the third person - positive, neutral, negative portrayals. A CV; an obituary. To this was added a "Book of blunders" - every mistake or embarrasing memory that could be dredged up, cuttings from school reports, photographs and letters that brought back painful memories.

Choice extracts from this catalogue were read onto tapes, then the tapes scrambled together to form cut-up sequences. A

deliberate attempt at psychic surgery this, smashing the vessel to remould it.

Then to the mundane arrangements. Seclusion from others, as of old a necessity, that one's demons do not derange the unwary, and more practically, that one is not chanced upon, mistaken for a psychotic and incarcerated in some asylum.

As for food, I decided to rely on simple, nutritious fare, sustaining and easy to prepare, with a stack of pot noodles as chemical aids. Drugs? Who needs them? Still, a selection of natural substances can aid things along.

The temple: black, windowless, unadorned but not uncluttered! Around its confines I heaped all kinds of junk. Sheets of hardboard, a bucket of clay, bottles, broken radio sets, rubbish from a building skip, paints, tools, a spray-gun, everything I could possibly need, plus a few more things besides.

Bringing forth the Dweller Within: Legion is it's name.

I was preparing for a descent into the labyrinth, to make known the "Forgotten Ones", with only the thinnest of cords with which to map the maze. Why risk insanity in such a way? This is the inner journey, the whale's belly, the feast of the ravening ones. Why go alone, without the security of tried and tested rituals and banishings? Well I don't trust those old books, those mad monks with their Necronomicons and blasphemous sigils. What price this forbidden knowledge? About £4.50 in paperback actually. Ridiculous! So I set forth to compile a living grimoire. A product of the technocratic aeon, I use its debris to mould my dreams. "The Howling" - the hiss, roar, and static screams of radios tuned to dead channels.

To the work then; some loose structure being required (or so I thought), I devised a hierarchy based on the work of psychologist Abraham Maslow, that ranged from "survival" demons - hunger, thirst etc, "Ego" demons - self-esteem, self-image etc, and more abstract conceptions such as the hunger for knowledge or wisdom. The deeper the level of hierarchy, the more primal the desires.

The techniques: flooding and vomiting (eating and excreting) - to flood awareness with specific images, to bring forth (evoke) the demon, giving it form, "flesh", and eventually a name or a sigil. The scrambled personality tapes were to act as auditory sigils - storms of emotions whipped up by intensive remembering (replaying) sets of memories. Letting the hyenas of cynicism loose on a cherished idela or goal.

The means of Gnosis: sensory overload, hyperventilation, old favourites such as hunger, thirst, exhaustion. 120 hours without sleep produces a fine paranoic "edge" to consciousness.

Cohering the images: using fingerpainting, moulding clay mixed with body fluids and excreta, sculpture using broken glass; and the more usual methods - sigils, auto-writing, taking a line for a walk.

These are the means by which the Forgotten Ones take shape. These "psychographs" accumulate in corners of the temple, giving it the clutter of an Austin Spare print.
Alas, these psychographs fall far short of the images and visions that flicker around me. "Another pile of shit for the ledger?" I scream, and take a hammer to them, only o collapse exhausted and retching on the temple floor. The red lines of the yantra-circuit on the floor seem at that moment to be particularly

mocking and indifferent to my efforts. There is a kind of "wrenching" feeling in my head, the snap of vertebrae being twisted, a helpless animal having its neck wrung, and I begin to howl the names which erupt from my throat:

ZZZNNNAAAAAAA SHKAAA GNAAAAA IIAAAA

And the jackals rush in to feed, and I laughed when I saw them 'cos they all wore my face.

I came back from that moment with a kind of calm detachment, "emptied" momentarily of any further feeling. I walked around the temple, as if seeing the debris for the first time. Sifting carefully through the mess, examining each half-finished piece of work, as though it wasn't anything to do with me. Some pieces i was able to give names to: "You are Uul - the fear of failure, you are Hamal - guilt not yet erased". These names, and their sigils formed the basis for an alphabet of binding.

The second half of this operation consisted of experimentation with the resulting alphabet - binding the demons into magical weapons for later use. When the initial phase was over, I slept for about eighteen hours, and awoke clear of the frenetic delirium which had been built up. Over the next six months or so, I experienced periodic bouts of depression, paranoia or self-loathing. When such feelings did occurr, use of the apropriate sigils and names banished these demons back to their bottles.

Technical Ecstacy

Most forms of magical exercise to produce an Altered State of Consciousness (ASC) can be categorised into one of two forms of physiological Gnosis; Inhibitory or Excitatory. Over the past two decades, many of these techniques have been studied in laboratory conditions, and two important factors has been isolated, known, respectively, as the Habituation, and the Dishabituation Responses.

The Habituation response explains the neurological processes which occurr when an individual focuses upon a single input, to the exclusion of as many others as possible. Thus any technique which focuses awareness towards one-pointedness, such as mantrayoga, breath control, chanting, spinning or dancing, serves to direct awareness towards a chosen focal point. This has a particular effect on a region of the Brain Stem known as the Reticular Formation. The Reticular Formation is a kind of censorship system - "deciding" which sensory input will be passed on to the higher centres. For example, it is the action of the Reticular Formation that allows a sleeping person to not be awakened by familiar noises, but will allow a "new" noise to wake them up.

As it is the Reticular Formation which modulates the perceptual experience of the cerebral cortex, then a single, unchanging input serves to "dampen" the activity of the Reticular

Formation. This, in turn, inhibits the activity of the cerebral cortex, thus focusing consciousness towards the subject of concentration. As a consequence of this cortical dampening, a "high degree of neural coherence" as postulated by Karl Pribram does seem to occurr. One hypothesis is that the quiescence produced in the brain by the habituation response reduces the amount of brain "noise", that is, incoherent neural signals. Patterns which are ordinarily, indistinct from each other, become clear in consciousness, so that we are more aware of the world around us, and can percieve subtler aspects of experience. Thus, the more ordered and cohesive neurological activity across the cortex becomes, the more we are aware of a wider totality of experience.

Conversely, the more the cerebral cortex is over-stimulated, the more noise is generated in the neural patterns, so our awareness of our environment is reduced.

However, some magical exercises do not seek to focus awareness towards a single point, but to enhance awareness until the individual is constantly aware of the total field of experience - both inner and outer. Examples of this are Vipasana in Tantrika, Attention in Zen, or Gurdjieff's technique of Self-Remembering. Research into these exercises indicate that advanced practitioners do not become habituated to background noises, and that they retain full awareness of automatic actions. Such techniques are generally known as Metanoia - learning to look at the world in different ways. It seems that the changes in neural patterning produced by these processes serve to "dishabituate" the Reticular Formation's reaction to stimuli. Thus, after a session of meditation, the world appears to be brighter or newer, because the rate of neural pulses which is the basis of conscious experience has been

first dampened, then re-stimulated, so that they are "firing" at a faster rate than normal.

Physicist David Bohm believes that if we can at least begin to concieve of a Holistic, rather than fragmented universe, then our minds would begin to move in a similar way, and from this would flow "an ordered action" towards the whole. This is certainly the case, in my experience, of learning by experience that we live in a MAGICAL universe.

Of Madness and Mystic Journeys

The work of anti-psychiatrists such as David Cooper and R.D. Laing has popularised the view that the complex syndrome known as schizophrenia is similar, in many ways to a mystic journey, with close links to the inner journeys undertaken by shamans and heroes in cultural myths worldwide. However, one point is very clear, that while the shaman or initiate is the active agent - the fearless one - this is rarely true of the individual in the throes of schizophrenia.

Like the descending 'initiate', schizophrenics often report feelings of a loss of agency over their environment, loss of ego boundary, and a sense of somehow being "different" or set apart in some way. Many cannot, it seems, sort out what is meaningful stimuli in their environment, and report feelings of being overwhelmed by what is happening around them. There is a wide range of speculative theories regarding the 'causes' of schizophrenia, ranging from a purely genetic to a purely environmentalist perspective.

From the neurological perspective, a form of therapy known as Sensory Integration has led to some interesting speculation about the nature of trancedental experience. research in the last decade has indicated that some of the problems that

schizophrenics experience, relate to the process of information selection: sorting out which input is important. This is due to the abnormal functioning of a region of the brain stem known as the Vestibular Nuclei, which is again, related to the Reticular Formation. The Vestibular Nuclei integrates information from the different senses, and so if there is a problem at this level of sub-cortical processing, it will manifest as "confusion" of one sort or another at the conscious level of awareness. The neurological defecit could be due to genetic anomalies, leading to atypical brain development, or due to stress reactions.

Activity at the subcortical level, that guides the information that becomes the content of conscious experience, is thought by some neuroscientists to be the key to ASCs. Some have postulated that such experiences may be programmed at the genetic level, but that individual experiences determine whether or not the program manifests as an evolutionary experience (leading to enhanced survival capacity) or a "systems crash".

Illumination
"Illumination ... the inspiration, enlightenment and liberation resulting from success with these [Gnosis] methods."

Pete Carroll, Liber Null

Illumination is the much-desired goal for which many thousands of people worldwide, have employed different pyschotechnologies, and developed their own psychocosms. Illumination has also been linked with the use of LSD & similar drugs, and perhaps most mysteriously of all, it can occurr seemingly spontaenously, to people who have no knowledge or expectation of it.

What characterises an experience of illumination? Nona Coxhead, a researcher into "Bliss states" lists some of the prevalent factors as:

1. unity - a fading of the self-other divide
2. transcendence of space & time as barriers to experience
3. positive sensations
4. a sense of the numinous
5. a sense of certitude - the "realness" of the experience
6. paradoxical insights
7. transcience - the experience does not last
8. resultant change in attitude and behaviour.

In neurological terms, such experiences represent a reorganising of activity in the brain as a whole system. The loss of ego boundary and involvement of all senses suggests that the Reticular Formation is being influenced so that the brain processes which normally convey a sense of being rooted in spacetime are momentarily inhibited. The "floating" sensation often associated with astral projection and other such phenomena suggests that the Limbic system of the brain stem (which processes proprioceptive information about the body's location in space) is also acting in an unusual mode.

What are the fruits of this experience - the insights, perceptions and messages brought back down to earth by the illuminate? Evolution of consciousness, by such means, could well be an important survival program - a way of going beyond the information given - a way of learning how to modify the human biosystem via the environment. Ilya Prigognine's theory of "dissipative structures" shows how the very instability of open systems allows them to be self-transforming. The basis of this idea is that the movement of energy through a system causes

fluctuations within it. These fluctuations, if they reach a critical level (i.e. a catastrophe cusp point) develop novel interactions, until a new whole is produced. The system then reorganises itself into a new "higher order" which is more integrated than the previous system, and requires a greater amount of energy to maintain itself, and is further disposed to future transformation. This can equally apply to neurological evolution, using a psychtechnology (ancient or modern) as the tool for change. The core stages of the process appear to be:

1. Change
2. Crisis
3. Transcendence
4. Transformation
5. predisposition to further change.

The Conditioned Reflex

As the research of the new Chaos Sciences begins to eat away at the solid foundations of post-Newtonian reality, so all disciplines based on that world-view must eventually be reconsidered. Revolutions in the sciences are beginning to occurr, as the shift in emphasis from a reductionist to an integrationist perpective gathers momentum. There is also a growing awareness of a revolution in consciousness occurring.

The fragmentation of western culture shows how clearly "divide and rule" operates in all aspects of our experience. Our culture is profoundly egocentric - the terrestrial behaviour of tool-wielding apes. The "we superior-you inferior" behaviour loop has dominated our cultural relations with both ourselves and other planetary species, and is also at the root of notions such as free will or spirituality.

At the turn of the century, the shift from religion to science as the dominant ethos for defining reality exposed the fact that us apes required an ontonological dimension of action, to remain secure in a world increasingly percieved as hostile. The space left by the declining power of religion was quickly filled the the cults of the psyche - psychoanalysis, and various mystical/magical cults. These provided a comfortable rationale for the evolving Middle Classes. Enlightenment was captured into being another source of demonstrating status over one's neighbours. This attitude has become increasingly prevalent over recent decades. A magick which is acceptable to mass culture loses its transformative power, becoming a support to the status quo. By all means explore your "inner worlds", but don't rock the boat. Evolution is sacrificed to security. In a world of caterpillers, the butterfly is a dangerous enemy of the way things are.

Ego
The concept of the Ego, having arisen from the psychoanalytic cults, and firmly embedded into the total field of experience, serves to maintain the mind-body seperation which is so fixed in our experience. Much of New Age so-called thinking appears to be concerned with removing or transcending the ego - behind which, it is implied, is a Higher Self. The fiction of Higher-Lower Self maintains the divide between 'spirituality' and everyday experience. Personally, I prefer the idea that we are each a multiplicity of selves, or, as Tantra has it, a squirming ball of Shaktis (desire-comlexes) interacting (but not all at once) with Shiva (or Kia), the divine spark of consciousness. Another useful concept is that of, rather than 'overcoming' the Ego, shifting from a condition of Ego-centredness, to that of Exo-centredness. In the former, the self is maintained by rejecting all that it is not, of being seperate to others. For the

latter, the self is constantly renewed (and modified) through a process of engagement with others.

As shown above, the varied practices of a psychotechnology such as magic produce various changes to the nervous system - the basis of ASCs and accelerated learning. One of the most ancient (and contraversial) means of inducing these states is via the use of drugs. The use, by "primitive" cultures, of agents such as Mescaline or Peyote has long been a matter of interest for cultural sciences, yet the rise of drug culture in the west met the repression and criminalisation. Drugs which historically, have been controlled by Societies' power holders are sanctioned tobacco, alchohol, barbituates;the consumer-acceptable choices.

It would be naive to understate the influence of drugs in Western magick, yet there is much moralising done on the subject, and an insistence that ASCs gained via drugs are not as valid as other routes. Research into the use (and abuse) of psychotropic agents indicates that users experience the same effects as Illumination brought on by other techniques. However, an American researcher, W.N. Pankhe notes that the hardest work may come after the experience, in the effort to integrate it with everyday life. Witness, for example, the number of Acid casualties who end up as Born-Again Christians. LSD was, after all, investigated by the CIA in the '50s as a possible 'brainwashing' agent. If you want to look at some of the modern research into Illumination with Psychotropics, check out the work of Stanislav Grof.

Further Reading

Thundersqueak - Angerford & Lea
Magick,
The Book of Lies - Aleister Crowley
Liber Null & Psychonaut,
Liber Kaos - Pete Carroll
The Book of Results - Ray Sherwin
Cosmic Trigger - Robert Anton Wilson
Illuminatus! - Robert Anton Wilson & Robert Shea
Principia Discordia - Malaclypse the Younger
The Hunting of the Snark - Lewis Carroll
The Book of Pleasure - Austin Osman Spare
Liber Cyber - Charlie Brewster
Metamagical Themas - D. R. Hofstadter
Tantra Magick - Mandrake of Oxford
IMPRO - Keith Johnstone
Practical Sigil Magick
Secrets of the German Sex-Magicians - Fra. U.D.
Chaos Servitors: A User Guide - Phil Hine
The Spirit of Shamanism - Roger Walsh
Escape Attempts - Stan Cohen & Laurie Taylor
Chaos - James Gleick
SSOTBME - Ramsay Dukes
Azoetia - Andrew D. Chumbley
Stealing the Fire from Heaven - Stephen Mace

By the same author:

PRIME CHAOS
Available from Chaos International Publications
BM Sorcery, London WC1N 3XX, UK. Price $20 including
postage (send cash, I.M.O. or cheque drawn on UK bank
only).

CONDENSED CHAOS
Available from New Falcon Publications, 1739 East Broadway
Rd, Suite 1-277, Tempe, AZ 85282, USA.

THE PSEUDONOMICON (2nd, revised edn)
e-mail me (below) for details of availability

A selection of essays by Phil Hine (and others) can be found at:
Chaos Matrix - http://www.sonic.net/~fenwick/

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