If "less is more" were true,
the world would not need witchcraft.
—JACK FRITSCHER

CHAPTER 2

The Selling of the Age of Aquarius

The true philosopher's stone is found within yourself.
—SABAEAN PONTIFEX MAXIMUS FREDERIC DE ARECHAGA

SATAN GOES HOLLYWOOD; pop music; wiccabilly rock; Broadway; television; the evil eye; *Camelot*; *The Music Man*; Mick Jagger; Roman Polanski; Kenneth Anger; Jim Morrison; Frank Sinatra; *Haxan: Witchcraft through the Ages*; *The Devil Is a Woman*; *Freaks*; how to look like a witch; the magic capital of the world; nuns from hell; Hispanic botanica; and Satan with a zip code

Mein Camp: FROM UNIVERSITY TO DIVERSITY TO PERVERSITY

Kitsch and *camp* and *pop culture*: synonyms or not? For years *kitsch* was anything sentimental, precious, and dreadful, particularly in the art world and its collectors' environs. *Kitsch* was Betty Boop figurines, Elvis on black velvet, and crystal balls with shakeable swirling snow resting on dragon claws. With Susan Sontag, *camp* emerged in the mid-1960s from the homosexual subculture into the "overculture's" straight word-hoard. What had once meant to act *queer, gay, effeminate* in public came to mean *nostalgic*, or something that was "so bad it was good," such as professional Las Vegas temptress and gay icon Ann-Margret singing "Thirteen Men (and Me the Only Gal in Town)" without any irony.

In the 1950s, popular culture was scorned by most intellectuals as vulgar. At that time, the University of Michigan reportedly turned down an offer from a major Hollywood studio that had offered the university library thousands of scripts of produced movies. In the late 1960s, when cinema courses bloomed in university curricula and film scholarship became serious, the library claimed it had turned down the written scripts because they weren't suitably bound. Always, some sniffy followers of the high culture of, say, academic art and literature, mock anything *popular* as *vulgar*.

Professor Ray B. Browne, literary critic and folklorist at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, founded the *Journal of Popular Culture* in 1967. With the journal's success, Browne, Russell Nye, and Marshall Fishwick, reacting against their connection with the tightly traditional American Studies Association, founded the American Popular Culture Association headquartered at Bowling Green in 1969. Their controversial purpose established the principle that pop culture itself was intellectually defensible, and that it was important to study culture as it was happening and not leave analysis of culture to historians fifty years later.

Their pioneering theory, spinning out of the work of Marshall McLuhan, said that students can be taught the essence of liberal arts and critical thinking through the serious study of film and television, as well as through William Shakespeare and John Milton. When Brown founded the Department for the Study of Popular Culture at Bowling Green, he and the American Popular Culture Association basically opened up the landscape of American "universities" to the "diversities" of what came to be termed "alternative curricula." Historically, in 1969, Browne was the first to include witchcraft and homosexuality in pop culture studies when he, as publisher of the Popular Culture Association, signed the contract for the first edition of the present volume.

Actually, *popular* means "belonging to the people," as in *people's culture*. The very democratic Latin word *vulgaris* means "belonging to common people." Pop culture, in short, is something—usually in mass media—that is known to many people: the Beatles, the Hell's Angels, the television soap opera *Dark Shadows*. Popular culture can also be measured by what people buy in large numbers: best-selling books, records, and toys. Pop culture is also a synonym for folk culture: what people make and do for themselves—for instance, family snapshots and home movies. The word *pop* by itself has also come to mean a style, particularly of art, that depicts everyday life using commercial techniques .

In Western culture, people believe there's a price to pay to gain magical

powers. They think the price is one's soul. Actually, the price of witchcraft is the cost of "entertainment," coven supplies, and dry cleaning.

CUT TO

The Record Industry

Long before the French composer Charles Gounod met Faust, music was essential to witchcraft and Wicca: from druid drums to the mystical chants composed by Hildegaard von Bingen; from Kenyan ritual music to the hillbilly and rockabilly of Wiccabilly; from ancient chants written down as Gregorian plain chant to country songs sung as Christmas carols. Because folklore considers the partridge a randy bird, the gift of "a partridge in a pear tree" promises sex and fertility. Gounod adapted Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust*, the cautionary tale of a man who sells his soul to the Devil, into a five-act opera in 1859. In *Fantasia* (1938), pop-culture king Walt Disney cast his own alter ego, Mickey Mouse, as the "Sorcerer's Apprentice," from the poem by Goethe and the concert piece by Paul Dukas of the same name. Disney conjured magic and demonology, and anticipated the acid culture of LSD, by sampling the work of classical composers who were not unfamiliar with the occult: Modest Mussorgsky's *Night on Bald Mountain*, Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, and Johann Sebastian Bach's *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*, which was part of the "fantastic genre" of organ music from northern Germany.

Mass-media producers of movies and television try to cross-pollinate their screen titles with hit songs. Gounod's "Funeral March of a Marionette" was popularized into the theme for the suspense-driven *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* TV show (1955–62). In 1964, Jack Keller and Howard Greenfield wrote the million-selling "Theme from *Bewitched*," which helped launch the initial success of that TV series starring Elizabeth Montgomery. Robert Cobert hit the Top 10 list with his 1966 "Quentin's Theme," composed for the afternoon gothic-horror soap opera *Dark Shadows*. Wildly popular with every school kid in America, *Dark Shadows* featured the reluctant vampire, Barnabas Collins; the living head of Judah Zachery; and the man-wolf, Chris Jennings. The series was equally successful as a set of paperback Gothic novels.

Popular music frequently references magic. Tin Pan Alley, Motown, and Nashville are in love with witchcraft. Thousands of songs invoke, like Debussy's "Claire de Lune," the powers of the moon: "Shine on Harvest Moon," "By the Light of the Silvery Moon," "Moon Glow," and "Blue

Moon." These songs are more than pop tunes of love with nature rhymes. They are limned out of folk hymns of the lunar cult of the horned god and of the Roman goddess Diana, who rode the crescent moon, as Ben Jonson wrote, like "a silvery chair." The cult of the flying Diana is the archetype of witches flying. From ancient theater to Broadway and to television, the Dianic cult awes audiences every time an actress/singer/chorine sits in a silver-moon crescent and is lowered down over the stage. Since the dawn of humans, the moon in all its phases has been mystical, as when the upturned crescent moon seems to be two horns in the sky. Before there were druids and Celts, the Old Religion existed as a lunar cult. Saint Paul, preaching the solar cult of Christianity, tried to end the moon worship of Diana. "This Paul hath persuaded and turned away many people . . . so that the temple of Diana should be despised, and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worships" (Acts 19: 26–27). Centuries later, another Paul—Anka—tapped alongside this ancient worship with his 1957 hit song, "Diana," sung by a modern young man in love with an explicitly older, perhaps ancient, woman. Whether or not Anka at age fifteen knew what he was writing, worshipers of Diana have adopted his anthem as a hymn.

In fifteenth-century Spain, the religious battle for the moon became political in art and in the Inquisition. The Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella defeated the Moors, whose symbol was the crescent moon, because Islam was infiltrating Spanish culture. Arabized Jews and Christian scholars joined the fight. Even more than before, the moon and Diana were translated into Catholic statues and art portraying the Virgin Mary, the Catholic version of Diana standing like a Ziegfeld Follies star with her feet on a crescent moon. In Christian iconography, historically, this posture signifies that Mary as the Mother of Christ—with her foot on the neck of the Islamic crescent—is stamping out the Moors to help the Christian Crusaders to victory over the infidel. Charles Gounod, having turned Faust into opera, also composed the Marian anthem "Ave Maria." Catholics, whom Protestants accuse of idolatry, explain that they do not worship the Virgin; they venerate her. The cult of the Virgin, whether pagan Goddess or Christian mother, is everywhere.

In the last three months of 1949, the hit song of the "Top 10 in the Nation" was "Our Lady of Fatima." That time around, the Virgin was iconized as an anticommunist symbol popularized by the Catholic Church after she promised world peace when she appeared to three shepherds at Fatima, Portugal, in 1917. In 1949, the Cold War had American culture shivering

with fear at the "Red Menace" drummed up by Senator Joseph McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Pope Pius XII, an ardent anticommunist, declared 1950 to be an official "Marian Year" to coincide with his new infallible dogma, "The Assumption of Mary," which stated that the Virgin Mary upon the moment of her death rose bodily up into heaven. The song "Our Lady of Fatima" implored Mary to "show the bright and shining way"—which, of course, is a yellow brick road similar to the shining path of Wicca. In that "Red Scare" climate, "Our Lady of Fatima," sung by Kitty Kallen and Richard Hayes, was ecumenical enough to receive huge popular radio play, even with its final line, "We pledge our love and offer you a rosary each day."

The movie *The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima* was released in the midst of a political storm in 1952. Producer Jack Warner, a well-known anti-communist, who had been tricked through byzantine communist intrigue to make the pro-Stalinist movie *Mission to Moscow* (1943), was trying to correct his left-appearing image in fear of Senator McCarthy's right-wing HUAC witch hunt , which was attacking Hollywood. What better way than a Jewish-produced Virgin Mary picture? Venerable composer Max Steiner wrote the music for the well-scripted movie , and it was popular enough to be nominated for an Academy Award for best musical score. Screen-writer Crane Wilbur typed his way from *Our Lady of Fatima* in 1952 to scripting the first 3-D horror movie, *The House of Wax* (1953), starring Vincent Price. Ten years earlier the first Virgin Mary cult movie, *The Song of Bernadette* (1943), won Jennifer Jones the Academy Award for best actress for playing the visionary peasant girl who saw the Virgin at the healing waters of Lourdes. The Beatles, known for their pursuit of Eastern mysti-cism, invoked the Virgin as "Mother Mary" in "Let It Be," as well as in "Lady Madonna."

Pop lyrics, more than other media, portray conquering women seduc-tively and positively, because it's a good thing for everyone that "What-ever Lola Wants, Lola Gets" (1955). Popular songs like the Eagles' "Witchy Woman" celebrate the helpless seduction of willing men by attractive witches, vamps, and sirens. Sex appeal is one of the more delicious works of the Devil. While Bing Crosby sang the rather Wiccan "White Christ-mas," Frank Sinatra crooned that he was "wild" because he was "beguiled" in "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered." In her first movie, *Romance on the High Seas* (1948), Doris Day sang the Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne song "It's Magic." In the cross-dressing Western *Calamity Jane* (1953), tomboy Doris Day introduced what was instantly a coded classic of gay desire,

"Secret Love," with its rebellious "outing" refrain of shouting "from the highest hills."

In the six degrees of separation, the house in which the Manson Family's Tate murders occurred was rented by Roman Polanski from its owner, Rudi Altobelli, who had bought the house from Terry Melcher, the son of Doris Day, who herself was born German-Catholic and turned to Christian Science. Melcher was a record producer from whom Charles Manson had sought a recording contract for his songs, "Sick City," "Run for Fun," and "Clang Bang Clang." When Melcher met Manson, Melcher lived at what was to become the scene of the Satanic Manson cult murder at 10050 Cielo Drive.

What did Frank Sinatra know and when did he know it? Curiously, he served his much younger wife, Mia Farrow, divorce papers, between takes, during her last days of filming *Rosemary's Baby* in 1968. Sinatra already had several hits about occult passion: "That Old Black Magic" that had him "in its spell," and "Witchcraft," with lyrics of "crazy witchcraft," meaning "cool witchcraft," sung to a woman than whom there was "no nicer witch." Known as "Old Blue Eyes," the Italian American Sinatra was so powerful that no one—female or male—wanted a disapproving glance from him, because he seemed he could back up any "evil eye" he cast. During his charmed life, American popular culture thrilled to the eroticizing rumor that the romantic Sinatra was connected to the Mafia. When Mario Puzo wrote *The Godfather* and Francis Ford Coppola turned the novel to a film, their audiences figured the subplot about the Mafia creating their own Italian-American crooner reflected this rumor of the Sinatra mystique. Who can say who sells their soul for lifelong talent, fame, and fortune? Only after Sinatra's death did the show-biz bible *Variety* dare to publish a cartoon drawing of the singer crooning in a spotlight that revealed his shadow as Satan.[1] As over the crucified Jesus the sign "INRI" was hung, proclaiming "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," is it a satirical parlor game played on a ouija board to decode the anagram of the "marquee name up in lights" of "SINATRA" into "SATAN, Rex Imperialis," meaning "Satan, King of the World"?

Why has no packager yet put out *Frankly Magic: Sinatra's Greatest Occult Hits*? Time and again he returned to composers who used popular witchcraft to tap into romantic metaphor. Without exaggeration, some of his hits sound like a sorcerer's hymn book: "Witchcraft," "That Old Black Magic," "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered," "Luck Be a Lady Tonight," "Devil May Care," "Come Fly with Me," "Fly Me to the Moon," "Baubles, Bangles,

and Beads," "Three Coins in the Fountain," "Dancing in the Dark," "Old Devil Moon," "I've Got You under My Skin," "I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance with You," "Some Enchanted Evening," "On a Clear Day You Can See Forever," "I Did It My Way," and the "glances" and "chances" of "Strangers in the Night." Add one more track to the list: in 1948, Sinatra, Nat "King" Cole, and Sarah Vaughan each made a recording of one of the most popular songs of the year, the now standard "Nature Boy." Los Angeles mystic-composer Eden Ahbez gave America a song hero who was a "strange, enchanted boy." Arriving on a "magic day," the boy evoked the coming-out archetype of the homosexual outsider with psychic-fairy ability. Ahbez hung out with the Beach Boys, one of whom—Brian Wilson—once allowed Charles Manson to live at his home. Ahbez was a New Age practitioner whose white-magic lyrics promised lovely esoterica.

Eden Ahbez's pagan saying, his *rede*, was: "The greatest thing . . . is . . . to love and be loved in return."[2] Director Baz Luhrmann revived "Nature Boy," sung by David Bowie, as the opening and closing song of his film *Moulin Rouge* (2001) in order to identify his romantic hero.

Other popular songs featured magic in the rock recipe, "Love Potion No. 9" (1959), or the novelty song "Witch Doctor (Ooo Eee Ooo Ah Ah)" (1958). The singer Cher, born Cherilyn Sarkisian, played up her Babylonian-Egyptian looks when she and her Italian-American partner, Sonny Bono, first took to the stage as Caesar and Cleo. Cher sang many hit songs about magical outsiders, such as "Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves" (1971), "Half Breed" (1973), and the fortune lady of New Orleans in "Dark Lady" (1974). In addition, her film roles, in *Mask* (1985), *Moonstruck* (1987), and *The Witches of Eastwick* (1987), elevated her to icon status in the outsider culture of gays.

The postwar influence of Italian sorcery on white Anglo-Saxon Protestant American pop culture brought more than Dean Martin singing the 1953 song "That's *Amore* (When the Moon Hits Your Eye)." In the 1950s, Rome was the romantic destination of choice because of movies shot on location, like *Roman Holiday* (1953). Even while Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck played comic-horror by sticking their hands into the mouth of the great stone face of the Sun God, the Vatican guarded morality and was the center of anticommunism. Within this polarity, auteur Federico Fellini directed his *La Dolce Vita* (1960), filmed just outside the pope's windows on Rome's famous Via Veneto. The Vatican condemned Fellini and his movie, which won an Academy Award for best foreign film. The Legion of Decency warned that any Catholic who viewed *La Dolce Vita* would

commit a mortal sin that would condemn the viewer to hell with the Devil for all eternity. The Inquisition never dies.

Censorship of this *dolce* morality tale was ironic, anti-art, and anti-intellectual. Fellini dramatized the Seven Deadly Sins as happening over seven days and seven nights on the seven hills of Rome. *La Dolce Vita* is rich, with magic from its opening shot of a statue of Christ flying (a true deus-ex-machina) over Rome, to its hysterical "miracle" of the Blessed Virgin, and its last shot of a dying fish (a symbol of Christianity) on the beach where the hero can no longer reach out to touch innocence. *La Dolce Vita* introduced the pop-culture term *paparazzi*, and presented Swedish actress Anita Ekberg as a glamour goddess sprung from Hecate, Artemis, and Diana. For Americans escaping Puritanism, Italy, with its sensual culture, was a destination of sex, magic, ritual, and cuisine. Italian neorealism films played in the new American "art theaters," and Italian themes entered Hollywood romantic comedies with Sophia Loren and Gina Lollobrigida, and dramas with Anna Magnani, who embodied the Italian *strega* (witch) in *The Rose Tattoo* (1955) and *The Fugitive Kind* (1960), the screen version of Tennessee Williams's pagan legend, *Orpheus Descending*.[3]

In 1954, full-page ads in the movie sections of newspapers read, "The story behind the love song that's sweeping the country! *Three Coins in the Fountain*." Rome was so beguiling that this was the first Cinemascope movie shot on location. The hit song promised magic love in return for tossing coins in the Trevi fountain. Throwing coins in a well is an ancient folkway to make a wish as well as appease demons. In *Three Coins*, the proper American women stood on the fountain's edge. In *La Dolce Vita*, Fellini deepened the magic. At midnight, wild woman Ekberg waded into the waters of the Trevi, causing so many tourists to follow suit that fences, laws, and fines had to be created. The soundtrack of *La Dolce Vita* featured international music including the blues standard "Stormy Weather," the Cuban mambo "Patricia," and an occult version of "Jingle Bells" worked into the soundtrack by Nino Rota, who composed music for sixteen Fellini films, including the ghostly *Juliet of the Spirits* (1965), in which the spirit realm is a woman's subconscious.

Nino Rota also wrote the score for *The Ghosts of Rome* (1961) as well as for the star-crossed and potion-based *Romeo and Juliet* (1968) directed by Franco Zeffirelli. Rota won an Academy award for his controversial score for Part Two of Coppola's *The Godfather*, a trilogy about the secret society of the Black Hand—the Mafia—whose oaths and blood rituals fascinate popular culture.[4]

In these ways Italian magic continued to seep into American popular culture of the 1950s and 1960s with the discovery of the cinema of Fellini, the fast-driving Lamborghini Diablo, and the Italian liqueur Strega, which infers a specific kind of Italian female magic.

When in Paris, Gary Cooper, in *Love in the Afternoon* (1957), hired strolling violinists to follow Audrey Hepburn playing F. D. Marchetti's love theme, "Fascination." That tune became a pop-culture standard with magic lyrics of the eye and the moon: "just passing glance" and "seeing you alone in the moonlight." *Fascination* always means *bewitchment* or *enchantment,* and in a context less romantic than director Billy Wilder's Hepburn-Cooper comedy, fascination is caused by the hypnotic "evil eye" no one can resist. In the bible, the Book of Proverbs warns, "Eat not the bread of him who has an evil eye" (Prov. 23:6). In the thirteenth century, Saint Thomas Aquinas acknowledged the existence of the evil eye (*malocchio*) in his official theological texts written for the Catholic Church. A balanced face in all cultures equals approachability and beauty. As grace builds on nature, so do psychic powers. A green-eyed stranger looking around a brown-eyed town is always suspect. When an eye is out of alignment, as in being cockeyed like the actor Marty Feldman (especially notable in Mel Brooks's film *Young Frankenstein*, 1974), the person looks to have the evil eye. Audrey Hepburn, who made dark glasses famous in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), warded off the existential evil eye of the "mean reds" when she sang the white-magic hymn "Moon River," which won the best-song Academy Award for Italian American composer Henry Mancini.

Also on location in Paris in 1957, Hepburn filmed—back-to-back with *Love in the Afternoon*—the musical *Funny Face.* Paired with Fred Astaire, who was always in search of the Greek goddess Terpsichore, Hepburn herself plays both sprite and goddess. As a bohemian, she dances solo and does what she likes in this retelling of Cinderella. In thirty seconds of film, Hepburn forever turns from mere mortal into everyone's ideal sorceress when she descends the marble staircase in the Louvre, swathed in a red Givenchy gown with her red scarf flying up around the pagan statue of "Winged Victory," which in film magic, shape-shifts her into the goddess Nike herself. As Hepburn descends into the world of mortals, she says, "Take the picture. Take the picture." True witch she must be, because in many of her movies, Hepburn (born 1929) plies her stock in trade conjuring potency in men old enough to be her father or grandfather: *Funny Face* with Fred Astaire (born 1899), *Sabrina* with Humphrey Bogart (born 1899), *Love in the Afternoon* with Gary Cooper (born 1901), *Charade* with Cary

Grant (born 1904), *My Fair Lady* with Rex Harrison (born 1908), *Roman Holiday* with Gregory Peck (born 1916), and *Paris When It Sizzles* with William Holden (born 1918). By the time she played Maid Marian to the Robin Hood of Sean Connery (born 1930) in *Robin and Marian* (1976), both stars were middle-aged, which lent a certain nostalgic sweetness to the lore that Robin was an imp of Satan and Marian was the altar for Robin's coven of merry men who had needed her powers.

In 1968, Fellini tripled with two French directors, Roger Vadim and Louis Malle, to shoot the occult *Spirits of the Dead: Three Tales of the Macabre,* adapted from three stories by Edgar Allan Poe, featuring Vincent Price. Fellini's third of the movie, from Poe's "Toby Dammit," and titled "Never Bet the Devil Your Head," starred the always supernal Terence Stamp, coming to grief on a film shoot in Rome. Roger Vadim directed his wife and brother-in-law, Jane Fonda and Peter Fonda, as fiery incestuous cousins in "Metzengerstein." Louis Malle, in "William Wilson," cast Brigitte Bardot opposite Alain Delon as the sadomasochistic Austrian officer who kills his doppelganger and comes to a bad end when the Church will not accept his final act of contrition. *Spirits of the Dead* ambitiously introduced to the new popular culture of 1960s art-house cinema the concept of horror among "the beautiful people"—which became globally true at the Polanski house. This genre's quintessence is the Jim Van Bebber film *The Manson Family* (2004).

The *Malleus Maleficarum* warns that looks could kill. Witches can bewitch their judges with a glance. "Don't you look at me cross-eyed" is a Celtic threat. At Salem, Bridget Bishop cast her "evil eye" at the Puritan girls. Historically, the counter-charm to the evil eye has been the phallus symbolized in hand gestures, such as "giving the finger," as well as in art. Ancient Romans wore gold amulets of the flying penis around their necks to ward off the evil eye. They guarded their doors, roads, and property boundaries with phallic images.

The Greek word *phallus* was synonym to the Latin word *fascinum*: "You say *phallus*, and I say *fascinum*." Each word means *penis*, and one is the root of *fascination*. The proper name Fascinus is an alternative name for the god Priapus. Posted like a "No Trespassing" sign from an electronic alarm company, the priapic warning to the evil eye is to look elsewhere, because a fully potent defense protects the perimeter surrounding the vulnerable center of secret knowledge.

The boundaries signified by phallic piles of rock, such as the herms and cairns at crossroads, defined the pale, who was in the pale, and who was

beyond the pale. This defined the outsider. For instance, to live "beyond the pale" in Ireland once meant to live outside the pickets and pales of the fence around the part of Dublin ruled by the English. To "go beyond the pale" evolved to mean "to go too far, too outside the standards of society." That is what the Florida police thought in March 1969 when they arrested doomed rock star Jim Morrison, who was "hand-fasted" (married) to self-proclaimed Celtic witch Patricia Kennealy. In one magical gesture to protect himself, the charismatic Morrison exposed his penis to ward off the thousands of eyes in his audience from whom he felt he was an alienated and magical outsider. Morrison, the LSD shaman, had sung of the isolation of being the outsider in his song, "People Are Strange (When You're a Stranger)." His was the hymn of a witch.

The sacred phallus is full-frontal taboo and full-frontal totem. For both reasons, it is censored and worshiped. The phallus is the physical world's greatest shape-shifter, and as such it is of great significance to the metaphysical world. It is worshiped by those who value its morphing magic, which changes from soft to hard and shoots its seed, blinding the evil eye. Hispanic botanicas sell phallic jewelry cast in gold and carved in crystal. The gay press has a long history of magazines featuring ads selling "fascinus" jewelry mail order. A display ad in the gay porn magazine *In Touch for Men* reads, "Exclusively from Aureus. Good-luck Charm of the ancients! From our Midnight Collection of erotic art. The word *Fascinus* comes from the ancient Romans who gave this name to penis-shaped amulets they wore as good-luck charms. Our *Fascinus* amulets are sculptured in exquisite detail and cast in 14k gold and sterling silver. Erotic quality available in two sizes. Send for free brochure. Aureus, Mission Viejo, California."[5]

Nevertheless, most censorship of art and pop culture, which has accepted the nude female form, has to do with covering the full-frontal male form, because of the mysterious power of the ultimate Devil's tool, taboo, and totem: the penis. Only in the fourth century B.C., with the *Aphrodite* of Praxiteles, did the female form in sculpture began to outnumber the male, thus dating how the *totem* of phallus turned 180 degrees into the *taboo* against male frontal nudity.

In 1970s San Francisco, Fairy Shaman Gwydion and his Wicca Blues Band performed pagan rock in the fairy tradition, singing songs titled "Sun God" and "Harvest Dance." The album *Gwydion Sings Songs for the Old Religion* celebrated pagan days of worship, the seasons, and love songs to the Gods. Gwydion followed the gender-equal "feri" tradition of the blind Victor Anderson (1917–2001), the grand master and founder of the "fairy

tradition," who had a profound affect on the radical faerie movement on the West Coast. Anderson, the author of *Thorns of the Blood Rose* (1970), combined Gardnerian and Alexandrian traditions of the Goddess liturgy with the magic traditions of the American south. The Wicca Blues Band extracted its sound and its themes from Irish music as well as Irish lore of fairies and witches. Gwydion's second album, *The Faery Shaman*, appeared posthumously, after he died—like the magic fairy James Dean—still in his youth in a car crash.

The rock-and-roll canon regularly reflects interest, from exploitative to serious, in the occult. In 1956, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, according to legend, dropped into a trance and began singing "I Put a Spell on You," which has become a blues and rock standard sung by many including Creedence Clearwater Revival. Hawkins—who often performed holding a skull—claimed that his mother was a voodoo priestess from New Orleans. The flip side to "I Put a Spell on You" was "Little Demon." Blues and rock-and-roll were from the first denounced by censors as Satanic.

Some of "Satan's greatest hits," popular because they tap the psyche, can fill a playful play list: Kay Starr's "Wheel of Fortune" (1951); the national anthem of Halloween, sung by Bobby Pickett and the Crypt-Kicker Five, "The Monster Mash"(1962); Pat Boone's song of a jilted boyfriend who goes to a gypsy fortune teller, "I Almost Lost My Mind" (1956); Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels' "Devil with a Blue Dress On" (1966); Jimi Hendryx's "Voodoo Chile" (1968); Procul Harum's perfect "A Whiter Shade of Pale" (1967); Galt MacDermot, Gerome Ragni, and James Rado's score for *Hair*, especially, "Aquarius/ Let the Sun Shine In" (1969); and Carlos Santana's: "Black Magic Woman" and "Evil Ways" (1970). New Orleans' Doctor John the Night Tripper recorded voodoo-music albums like *Gris-Gris* (1969) and, with the help of Mick Jagger and Eric Clapton, *The Sun, Moon, and Herbs* (1971). At his concerts Doctor John, always in full conjure costume, conducted voodoo ceremonies popular with his hippie following.

As the Beatles' *Magical Mystery Tour* (1967) is a British trip into pop culture, drugs, and Eastern mysticism, the Chicago group called Coven are pure Devil rock. The nine songs and complete Black Mass on Coven's first album are a guide to popular sorcery. Sexy and bad, Coven's message is explicit in the songs "Black Sabbath," "Coven in Charing Cross," and "Pact with Lucifer." Forbidden sex is coded in the initials of the song "For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge."

Coven's pop liturgy for a Black Mass has adolescent interest. Anton LaVey's liturgy for his Church of Satan appeals to adults. Unlike the seriously

engaging Anton LaVey album, *The Satanic Mass*, the melodramatic production of Coven stirs listeners to laughter for its ritual pomposity and for the too-familiar voice of former Top 10 Detroit and Chicago disc jockey Joel Sebastian hoking it up as "I, Joel, Prince of Bats and High Priest of the Lord Satan." Truly fearful on this Coven recording is the untrained teenybopper voice of the young female probationer. Her quivering voice identifies her as willing masochist participating in the masturbatory fantasy of this occult rock album. "You look into her eyes. She can see through your disguise. . . . You will burn until you're dead / for unlawful carnal knowledge."

The rock occult, confirmed by the Krishna chants of Broadway's Aquarian musical *Hair*, could satisfy all those medieval alchemists who wished to turn dross to gold. New York's Fillmore East Concert Hall turned rock to gold on April 19, 1970, in the "First Festival of the Occult Arts." The British invasion of witches featured Sybil Leek and Raymond Buckland as the popular headliners. Printed under the image of an ankh, the Fillmore poster read:

FILLMORE EAST
APRIL 19, 1970
THE FIRST FESTIVAL OF THE OCCULT ARTS
Astrology * Palmistry * Tarot * Telepathy * Prediction * Clairvoyance
Witchcraft * Reincarnation * Mediation * Audience Participation
On Stage:
Psychics Marc Reymont & Chris Phelan
The English Witch Sybil Leek on screen
Holiday Vincent, "psychic" comedienne
Edgar Cayce on film
Joshua Light Show/Cosmic Music by "Light"
Raymond Buckland, High Priest of the New York Coven
In the Lobby:
Mystic Arts Book Society/Astronash
Zotique—Occult supplies and readings
One Night Only
Two Shows: 7:00 and 11:00
All Seats Reserved: $3.50/$4.50/$5.50

The "One Night Only" hook should have been a clue to the quick-buck festival whose caliber, although graced by legitimate professionals Leek,

Cayce, and Buckland , was only slightly above those movie-theater stage shows of the late 1950s that promised "On Stage! The Ectoplasmic Return of James Dean!" The Fillmore light show lacked even the usual psychedelia, settling for slide projections of the speakers' natal signs and characteristic tarot cards.

The Fillmore Zotique came nowhere near the abundance of a botanica. Instead it was a plastic boutique of incense, candles, and charm jewelry. The festival sellers perused such items as:

- The Warner Brothers company's Huebner record *Seduction through Witchcraft* (1969), which is part of the Astro-stereo Zodiac series "Twelve Musical Albums of the Zodiac," featuring Louise Huebner. Each one of the dozen albums is called *The Astromusical House of* (for one) *Gemini* (with Gemini-like songs, "Call Me Irresponsible" and "Cast Your Fate to the Wind"). Each album is accompanied by a "special booklet written for the sign of the Zodiac by the world-renowned astrologer Carroll Righter."
- The RCA Camden recording *Listen to Your Stars: An Astrological Guide to Your Horoscope* (1969).
- The Glass Prism, a rock group reimagining the works of Edgar Allan Poe "to hard-rock guitar and the kind of organ you remember from the cellar of the castle where Prince Prospero stalked at midnight . . . a rather startling way of learning Poe." Such is the advertising copy of their two albums: *Poe through the Glass Prism* (1969) and *On Joy and Sorrow* (1970).

To the Zotique could have been added the album of meditation-and-incense music written, composed, and performed by Laura Huxley, widow of Aldous Huxley, titled *Recipes for Living and Loving* (1969); and Louise Huebner's two albums *Seduction through Witchcraft* and *Orgies—A Tool of Witchcraft* (1969).

The grail of recorded witchcraft, without question, is Anton LaVey's 1968 Murgenstrumm album *The Satanic Mass Ceremony*. The recording was begun on Friday the 13th of September, 1967, where Satan had a zip code—at LaVey's San Francisco Church of Satan, 6114 California Street, San Francisco, 94121. The first cut is the Satanic baptism of his daughter, which segues into the Satanic Mass. Side 1 includes the entire demonic ritual in eight steps, of which three samples are:

Step Two: The Invocation to Satan

The High Priest, encircled by the black robed figures of his assistants, stands holding the Sword of Power in his extended arm and pointing towards the altar and symbol of Satan, recites the invocation to Satan, thereby calling upon the Powers of Darkness to manifest his desires.

Step Three: Drinking from the Chalice and Benediction of the House

This continues the ritual. The High Priest "consecrates and drinks from the Chalice of Ecstasy." Also at that time another priest performs the "Benediction of the House." He shakes the phallus in four directions, "towards the four corners of the earth," as a "holy water sprinkler" of the Catholic Church. As the words point out, "The Satanic Church merely returns it to its original form before Christianity devised this parody."

Step Eight: Invocation Applied Towards the Conjuration of Lust

A female member of the unholy congregation has requested a ritual for the enchantment of the man of her choice, so she may obtain the fulfillment of her voluptuous desires by her chosen lover. The High Priest strengthens this working by acting as her lover, by proxy, in the reading of the first part of the invocation for lust; then the trembling voice of the enchantress for whom the ceremony is being performed is heard, as her ecstatic entreaty comes to its climax. The strains of the syrinx are heard in the background, and the pungent scent of musk mingled with sulfur permeates the dark, highly charged atmosphere.[6]

Included with LaVey's Black Mass on side 1, besides "The First Satanic Baptism,"are "The Benediction" and "The Hymn to Satan." On side 2, LaVey reads from his *Satanic Bible* (1969), which "is divided into four books: the first, *The Book of Satan*, is a Hellish diatribe; the second, *The Book of Lucifer*, is the enlightenment; the third, *The Book of Belial*, is an explanation of the meaning and performance of Satanic magic; and the fourth, *The Book of Leviathan*, contains the actual invocations used in Satanic ceremonies."

The Rolling Stones, notorious for their inversions of establishment values, dragged themselves into women's clothing for an album released a year after the total inversion of *Their Satanic Majesties Request* (1967). On *Beggar's Banquet* (1968), the lyrics for the song "Sympathy for the Devil" rant Genet-like inversions, saying "every cop is a criminal, and all the

sinners saints." Jagger calls himself an unrestrained Lucifer who warns he is out to "lay your soul to waste."

Jim Morrison's exposing himself in concert led to decency rallies in Florida and New York. The Stones' Mick Jagger, in some ways more exhibitionistic than Morrison, wears his zodiac sign embroidered in his clothing. Jagger, noted Everett Henderson in 1969, "is the abstracted essence of demon sensuality; he is the symbol of our most lustful appetites; when he sings he makes you want to do every awful thing you ever felt like doing. Jagger is a consummate actor. He has chosen to play brilliantly the role of Devil's advocate of obsessive and restless sex."[7]

Jagger's diabolical persona matches the witchiness of the temperamental Laura Nyro, favored by female fans. Usually dressed in black and demanding an almost completely dark concert stage, Nyro, one of the hottest composer-poets of the 1960s and 1970s, sang a number of songs with Satanic references. In "Time and Love," she wrote the lyrics "Don't let the Devil fool you." In "Captain Saint Lucifer," she vows that she plans to "live and die and rise with my captain." Her "Gibson Street" smoulders with the experienced Faustian wisdom of a woman who has sold her soul. Nyro (original surname Nigro, meaning "black") was popularly called "the perfect witch with the perfect pitch." She is second only to the Beatles as far as the number of her songs that were reinterpreted and covered by other artists.

CUT TO

Broadway

Magic is everywhere. If the American record industry is into the metaphors of witchcraft and the zodiac, then theater, with its very source in old religious ritual, can be no surprising stranger to the mystical. Broadway legends Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, familiar with magic sources, found great luck with their changeling musical, *My Fair Lady*, which starred Julie Andrews on Broadway (1956), and Audrey Hepburn in the film (1964). Earlier, Lerner and Loewe wrote a musical infused with natural white magic, *Paint Your Wagon* (1951).With the rise of interest in the occult in the 1960s, Paramount Studio filmed *Paint Your Wagon* (1969) starring Clint Eastwood, Lee Marvin, and Jean Seberg, who rose to fame starring in the film version of George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan* (1960), directed by Otto Preminger. *Paint Your Wagon* featured two Wiccan hymns, "I Talk to the Trees" and "They Call the Wind Maria." When Clint Eastwood

intones "I Talk to the Trees," he also talks to "the stars," seeking astrological answers. When Lee Marvin and chorus sing "They Call the Wind Maria," the song is an invocation of what the ancient Greek Heraclites called the four basic elements: earth, air, fire, and water. The lyrics set the place as being so far out in the wild that even God can't find the singer who laments he has no star to guide him, unless it is the goddess of the wind called Maria, pronounced Mar-EYE-ah. The character played by Jean Seberg is a witch natural enough to lure both men, and liberated enough to take the two of them as husbands at the same time.

In the late 1950s, Lerner and Loewe opened wide the world of popular witchcraft. They optioned the last three sword-and-sorcery books of T. H. White's quartet *The Once and Future King*, based on the Arthurian collection of Thomas Malory, *Le Morte D'Arthur* (ca.1470). (Malory's work is required reading for witches.[8]) In 1939, Walt Disney bought White's first book, *The Sword in the Stone* (1938), and turned it into an animated film in 1963. For centuries, the magical story of King Arthur, Queen Guenevere, Lancelot, Mordred, Merlin, and the Knights of the Round Table has been the popular trellis around which twines the whole of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic magic—white and black—mixed with Christian folk magic. Lerner and Loewe musicalized the legend in *Camelot* (1960), which transcended itself when the star-crossed young president John F. Kennedy named it as his favorite musical.

The score opens with the benediction canticle, "Camelot," which heralds how magical is the unspoiled Eden of Arthur's realm where nature rules. Magician Merlin's spirit guide Nimue, the Lady of the Lake, sings the absolutely Wiccan song of seductive white magic, "Follow Me." Lost in the winter woods, Guenevere, who brings irony and lust to Camelot, invokes her Christianized namesake "Saint Genevieve" and in spring celebrates the pagan feast of Beltane in "The Lusty Month of May." Later, she sings the love lament built around the formal magic word *gaze*, "Before I Gaze at You Again." Arthur, an idealist without guile, sings a song that, if sung with sincerity by every man in the Middle Ages, might have averted the holocaust of the Inquisition: "How to Handle a Woman." Merlin's answer is, "Simply love her."

In a duet specifically about magic, Guenevere, curious about "tribal sorcery," asks Arthur, "What Do the Simple Folk Do?" Arthur teaches her a list of "ancient native customs" practiced by the simple folk to "chase the goblins" and make "their spirits rise," such as invoking the sun god Apollo and the moon goddess Venus, whistling to cast "a spell," and dancing "a

fiery dance" till they "whirl" uncontrolled into a "violent trance" that makes life happy and "gay." Lancelot becomes heroic by working his white magic to bring a knight back to life. In "If Ever I Would Leave You," he invokes the powers of spring, summer, winter, and fall as he contemplates the impossibility of separating from Guenevere, who has "bewitched" him so. In the duet "I Loved You Once in Silence," Guenevere and Lancelot voice all the anxieties and dangers of every subculture's secret love when forbidden by the authority of the state. When the nights of the Round Table split, the evil knights, who are into dark sorcery, call upon Beelzebub and sing the Satanic hymn "The Seven Deadly Virtues," with its chorus "Fie on goodness." When Guenevere, like Joan of Arc and all witches, is sentenced to be burned at the stake, it is the state—that is, Arthur the King rather than Arthur the husband—executing her for political reasons, because sexual betrayal is political. Arthur's final reprise of "Camelot" is a lament for a world of white magic destroyed by the collision of black magic with sex magic.

Some people see witchcraft where it is not, and miss it where it is. That shape-shifting quality is witchcraft's big joke, because witchcraft is like the two-ton elephant in the room where people rarely mention the elephant. Meredith Willson turned the fairy tale of the Pied Piper of Hamlin into the Broadway extravaganza *The Music Man* (1956). So instantly did the surface of *The Music Man* jump into red, white, and blue Americana that no critic or director has yet scraped off its nostalgic veneer to reveal the darker characterization of a woman who out tricks a trickster and helps him trick her own town. Willson himself seduces the audience with music and words streaming so fast that the subtext of magic and sorcery bubbles just below the surface—a subtext that, of course, directors, critics, and audiences can choose to acknowledge or not. *The Music Man* is a duplicitous musical. The lyrics spin on double entendre in the same way that the slow, sentimental love song, "Goodnight, My Someone" is the same melody as the faster march, "Seventy-Six Trombones." In many ways, "Goodnight, My Someone" is a conjure song sung in order to read the future. *The Music Man* may as well have been titled *The Magic Man.*

When the traveling salesman—often the disguise of the Devil—takes the fake name of Professor Harold Hill, he rides into River City on huge clouds of steam from the coal-fired railroad car. He has sinister plans to use the town's children to swindle the know-it-all townspeople who are so "Iowa stubborn" that they are righteously fundamental about everything; they are even famous for tarring and feathering anyone who isn't

like them. The other salesmen in the opening song "Rock Island" explicitly sing that Hill is so slick that when he "dances, the piper"—that is, the Devil—"pays him." Willson's archetype is the serpent entering Eden, but this time the Eve he meets is more Lilith, who is his match.

The seemingly innocent Maid Marian became the librarian when an elderly local tycoon died and left her all his books because she had, as the townswomen sing in "Pick a Little, Talk a Little," made "brazen overtures" to him who had no friends before Marian came to town. The orchestration under "Marian, the Librarian" is a threatening moan and vamp that cues the darkness underlying the outsider Marian, who is so cold she would let a lover's dead body turn to "carrion." In the library, no one dares break Marian's strict rituals of behavior. The ladies gossip that Marian is not like the rest of the women, and even the men of the volunteer fire brigade are afraid of Marian for what she would do if her books were burned. In turn, Marian expresses a low opinion of the townspeople. She controls the secret knowledge hidden in books, particularly *Balzac*, which sounds pornographic to the women who sing "she advocates dirty books" like "Chaucer, Rabelais," and "Balzac." Marian sings "My White Knight" as a prayer to the explicitly named goddess Venus, and is adamant that her knight is quite the opposite of Lancelot or an angel.

When the devilish Professor Hill enters River City, this witchy Maid Marian recognizes him faster than he recognizes her. They are the perfect left-handed cult couple, and the plot revolves around their realizing their match. Hill directly cites Satan to threaten the fundamentalist River City with the "trouble" caused by the game of pool, which he announces is, like all pleasures, "the Devil's tool." He also triggers their fears by reminding them "the idle brain is the Devil's playground." He plays upon Puritan heritage to hoodwink the River City Protestants by reminding them of "Plymouth Rock and the Golden Rule" which is, of course, the rede of Christianity.

Willson specifically calls Marian "Irish," thus identifying her as Catholic, and mentions that she is twenty-six. Marian lives at home with her six-year-old brother and their widowed mother, who prays to Saint Patrick and Saint Bridget. This might add up to zero if Willson did not have Harold Hill reference Hester Prynne, living with her six-year-old daughter, Pearl, in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. In the song, "The Sadder But Wiser Girl for Me," Hill sings the punch line, that he hopes and prays "for Hester to win just one more 'A.'" Willson thus gives away the "unspeakable truth" that Marian is an unwed mother whose own mother claims the child is Marian's sibling. Such a cover story was once a staple white lie told when

a family's unmarried daughter became pregnant. Marian is so troubled by her "brother's" speech impediment that when Hill teaches the boy how to speak clearly—in fact, more like Hill himself, the silver-tongued Devil—Marian falls for him.

Hill is into things more mysterious than mythology when he sings, "for no Diana do I play faun." In fact, he knows that the only way to seduce Marian is with the power of "moonlight," which he invokes in "Marian, the Librarian." With Marian's secret sexual past of books and baby, Willson codes internal evidence that reveals her true character to Hill, who pursues her because she is in fact, he figures out, "sadder but wiser." Once this Maid Marian finds out that Hill is a trickster she connives to save her Robin Hood, even to the point of offering sexual favors to another salesman who threatens to reveal Hill's plan to fleece the coldhearted town that deserves to be swindled, the way that Robin Hood only steals from the rich to give to the poor. By the finale, Professor Harold Hill and Marian are a triumphant couple; they succeed in fleecing the entire town, which is too stubborn to notice it's been beguiled. Like Mr. and Mrs. Pied Piper of Hamlin, Hill and Marian march arm in arm down the Main Street of River City, leading away all the children whom they have taught the transforming charms of music—that is, magic. In short, the interlopers from the outside world have come into the domestic small town and done the very thing witches always do: teach the children alternative values.

Because straightlaced Wall Street, always casting runes of one kind or another, is reading David Williams's *Astro-Economics: A Study of Astrology and the Stockmarket* (1959), it follows that when investors merge with artists, paranatural confrontations may not be at all unusual. Before he brought his antiwar hippie musical *Hair* to Broadway in 1968, producer Michael J. Butler found everything he touched was star-crossed. But Joseph Papp's Off-Broadway *Hair*, at the Shakespeare Public Theater (1967), taught that "when the moon is in the seventh house," astrology can "steer the stars." In one of its signature songs, *Hair* announced "the dawning of the Age of Aquarius."

The uncrossed "stars" of Butler's original *Hair* have been young actors well-steered indeed. Shelley Plimpton and Ronnie Dyson moved on to films like Robert Downey's *Putney Swope* (1969); Hiram Kellar to *Fellini Satyricon* (1970); Lynn Kellogg to the Las Vegas and TV circuit; Melba Moore to Broadway stardom and a Tony Award for the musical *Purlie* (1969); and Diane Keaton to Hollywood stardom beginning with *The Godfather* (1972). Butler, for all practical purposes, avoided the "Caesar Syndrome"; he was

very aware of the Ides of March. He put his soothsayer on the pay roll. In fact, no production of *Hair*, even though *Hair* was the first certified global village hit, opened anywhere any day without the approval of Maria Crummere, *Hair*'s official astrologer.

If American witchery has a popular stage classic comparable to the screen's *Rosemary's Baby*, it is Howard Richardson's drama *Dark of the Moon*. No political allegory like Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953), *Moon's* forlorn folktale of Barbry Allen (Capulet) and Witch-boy John (Montague) brings together two strains of American popular culture. Originally, in 1945, *Dark of the Moon* established in drama the Barbry Allen of oral folk tradition. In revival in 1970, at the Mercer-Shaw Arena Theater, producer William Berney crossed *Moon* with the almost obligatory nudity that *Hair* generated on the American stage in the late 1960s. Although some of the *Moon* flesh belonged to strawberry-blonde actress Claudia Jennings (*Playboy*'s Miss November 1969 and Playmate of the Year 1970), when *Dark of the Moon* stripped down, the flesh padded more than the box-office receipts. It polarized the estranged worlds of Christianity and sorcery.

If ever witches were libidinous, the nude athletics of the 1970s *Dark of the Moon* verified what audiences always suspected about "sabbaths." There on stage at the opening of the second act, director Kent Broadhurst's two witchboys gambol naked with three female witches. They celebrate their primeval sabbath in Hawthornian woods. Lightning mixes with thunder. Dead leaves hang in their hair. They quaff great quantities of blood from human skulls.

They pass Barbry's stolen shift in ritual circle. The Dark Witch dons the gingham dress and the coven works its curse. The coals of the witch fire intensify to angry red. The Fair Witchboy mounts the Dark Witch while the others chant the rhythms of the naked coital choreography. They couple in the flames with an inverted cross resting on the Fair Witchboy's bare buttocks. According to set, prescribed ritual, the witches work their curse on Barbry Allen.

Like Rosemary, Barbry gives birth to a Satanic incarnation. But Barbry's baby, with no coven to protect him, is burned newborn by the righteous Christian community. Barbry herself is then raped, compliments of the Baptist congregation. The Christians' unset, unprescribed, ad-lib ritual of exorcism is, by comparison, a more orgiastic and dangerous rite than any coven's. While randy Marvin Hudgins strips naked to penetrate and thus exorcise Barbry on the sanctuary floor, the congregation dances in a circle chanting hysterically the refrain "Blood of the Lamb."

Dark of the Moon is good coven theater. Anti-Christian, it peels back the obscenities masked under malpracticed Christian righteousness. It is the Christians who are superstitious, and the witches who are theologically knowledgeable. It is the Christians who adhere to the letter of the law; it is the witches who catch the free spirit of it. "Bein' human," the witches say, "is to be never gettin' what you want." That's the curse of having a human soul. It's what Jagger sang: ". . . can't get no satisfaction." "A witch," Witchboy John tells Barbry, "ain't got no soul. He lasts three hundred years and then he just be fog, nights, on the mountain."

With the 1970s demand for occult theater, it seemed only a matter of time before someone like producer Hilliard Elkins (*Oh, Calcutta!* 1970) brought a nude musical version of *Dark of the Moon* to the Broadway stage. Elkins also produced the Gore Vidal play *An Evening with Richard Nixon* (1972), featuring Susan Sarandon, who later starred in *The Witches of Eastwick* and was famously photographed by Robert Mapplethorpe with her toddler daughter, Eva Amurri. John Bishop, Mel Marvin, and Bob Satuloff, the Broadway musical adapters of Sinclair Lewis's novel *Elmer Gantry*, which denounces fake Bible-thumping preachers, announced shortly after their singing-dancing *Gantry* failed in the 1970 season that they were turning from religious themes to a new show on witchcraft. Broadway has beckoned musically as well to eminent British astrologer Maurice Woodruff, who was actor Peter Sellers's personal astrologer, brilliantly acted by Stephen Fry in the film *The Life and Death of Peter Sellers* (2004). Woodruff's biography of his mother, titled *Woody* (1967), details the flamboyant life of Vera Woodruff, the lionized clairvoyant of the 1920s and 1930s. From the classic occult of Shakespearean revivals through the dramatized horror of Henry James and Arthur Miller to a variety of Broadway hits, the credentials of Occult Broadway are historical enough for a Ken Burns television documentary.

A few lighter occult titles include *Blithe Spirit* (1941), a comedy by Noël Coward in which a medium contacts the dead; *One Touch of Venus* (1943), in which the goddess of love falls in love with a human, to music by Kurt Weill, lyrics by Ogden Nash, and book by S. J. Perelman; *The Lady's Not for Burning* (1948), a tale of women and witchcraft by the modern Arthurian playwright Christopher Fry; John Van Druten's *Bell, Book and Candle* (1950), in which a man falls under the spell of a witch whose cat has the traditional name of a familiar, Pyewacket; *Damn Yankees* (1955), the musical comedy by George Abbott with music and lyrics by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross, in which Faust meets baseball when a fan sells his soul to Satan

to become the world's greatest player, tempted by the beautiful witch Lola (who gets what Lola wants); *Li'l Abner* (1956), in which Mammy Yokum has conjure visions while Evil Eye Fleegle casts his spell on the town of Dogpatch, where the vamp named Stupefyin' Jones stops men dead in their tracks and a mysterious potion shape-shifts scrawny hillbilly husbands into bodybuilders uninterested in sex with their wives (based on the enormously popular *Li'l Abner* comic strip, and written by Al Capp, with music by Gene de Paul and lyrics by Johnny Mercer); Alan Jay Lerner and Barton Lane's *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever* (1965), in which reincarnation is inspired by the 1950s popularity of hypnotically regressed Bridey Murphy; Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods* (1987), which acknowledges the magic, myth, and mystery of the heath, the weir, and the forest, replete with witches and a real curse; and Stephen Schwartz's *Wicked* (2004), a musical spinning out the back story of *The Wizard of Oz* from the novel by Gregory Maguire, *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West* (1996). Sondheim also wrote *Assassins* (1991 and 2004) featuring as characters two women of the Charles Manson family, Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme and Sara Jane Moore, both of whom attempted at different times in 1975 to assassinate President Gerald Ford. Henry James provides a through-line of America's constant occult obsession. His 1897 ghost-story novel *The Turn of the Screw* was a Broadway hit in 1950 as *The Innocents*, as adapted by William Archibald; it subsequently became a 1954 opera by Benjamin Britten, and a 1961 movie starring Deborah Kerr.[9]

Farther Off-Broadway, *National Close-Up Magazine*, April 27, 1970, reported on the California "Orgasmic Theater of the Supernatural." Using popular folk gossip wishfully disguised as an eyewitness report, drama critic John Nevin assured his *Close-Up* readers of a theater of extreme assault and cruelty. According to the testimony of one "Esther Miles," "A bright light glared on the erection of a hooded male on stage. . . . He stroked himself right out there in public and put fluid in a vial. He raised it to the ceiling and muttered a prayer with a lot of Satans in it. . . . Then these two young girls with things hanging between their legs came running out and put their arms around him (her husband, Mort Miles). They pulled open his drawers and stroked him and led him on stage. They did the same with two other men and called to the god, Astaroth, to bless their doings. Lured on stage, the three gents sat in a triangle and let the duo bi-sex them. As the gents started to quiver, a gowned Satan stormed on stage and pranced up to the writhing bodies. With a sword, he lifted the orgasming men's heads and slit their jugulars just as they jolted their last."[10]

Supposedly fleeing to the hills where Charles Manson and his cult camped, the actors disappeared, according to policeman "Carl Wright," who told *National Close-Up*, "They left a sacrificed dog lying in the dressing rooms and a black cross on the wall. We have nothing to go on except for three slain bodies. They're occult, alright! There's a lot of it going around!"

Whether or not the "Orgasmic Theater of the Supernatural" ever made it on stage, it made it on the printed page and as such is part of the popular occult. As Judy Garland once sang from lyrics written for the MGM musical *Bandwagon* (1953), by Howard Dietz, "When a ghost and a prince meet / and everyone ends in mincemeat / That's entertainment!"

CUT TO

The Movies

Always as much De Sade as DeMille, the movies mated early with the showy horrors of the supernatural. An illusory art, film's special effects easily provide the seeing that is believing. The camera is a magic instrument that penetrates reality to reveal secrets. It is every bit as much a stealer, or a presenter, of soul and spirit, as Native Americans early on believed.

Greta Garbo, in the final scene of *Queen Christina* (1933) was directed by Rouben Mamoulian to stare into space and think of nothing. Yet the magical camera peels her mask and reveals more female and human secrets than entertainment probably should. What audiences see is sometimes more in their own heads than it is on the screen. When movies were introduced, the projector was called "a magic lantern." The best filmmakers know that the motion-picture camera creates the popular art closest to psychology. The movie audience watching one hour of film actually watches twenty-seven minutes of total darkness which, at sixteen still frames per second, is the total of the darkness between flickering frames. The ratio of image to darkness suggests the proportion of the conscious to the unconscious. Anything could be in that dark the way that gray fear lies in the blur of frames. Occult material is a perfect match to the environment of cinema that flickers in a large dark hall filled with strangers sitting alone together in a maze of chairs where anything can happen. Tales of vampires, witches, and ghosts have been big box office since Dr. Caligari opened his cabinet and put the howl and bellow in Bell and Howell.

If the occult film canon is vast, its source is surprisingly uncomplex. Northern European *technology* facilitated the supernatural film, and Northern European *sensibility*—German, Scandinavian, Anglo-American—

complemented the form with suitable matter. Director Robert Wiene's *Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919), a five-reel silent film, set the visual horror style of German expressionism, featuring distorted perspective and deep shadows signifying imminent danger, forbidden desire, and the approach to a kill.

In 1922, director F. W. Murnau created his vampire classic *Nosferatu* by rethinking the Irish horror novel *Dracula*, written by Dublin author Bram Stoker, whose widow successfully sued Murnau for plagiarism. Murnau's first addition to Stoker's vampire legend was his subtle injection of witchcraft's secret ingredient, homosexuality. (By magic's own secret code, the archetypal demon lover always goes beyond heterosexual acts.) His second was equation of the vampire with Adolf Hitler, who with his "black toothbrush moustache" loomed like a fundamentalist Puritan who would ban everything. In 1966, Sigfried Kracauer wrote *From Caligari to Hitler* to analyze how in the 1920s early German directors—many of them Jewish—coded their silent films of horror and the occult with warnings to moviegoers about the rise of Nazism.

In the 1920s and 1930s, director Carl Dreyer's *Leaves from Satan's Book* (1921) and *Vampyr* (1931) established the "less is more" horror principle. Dreyer intuited that horror must rely on the offscreen imagination of the viewer: tapping the ratio of conscious to unconscious. In this way, letting the sun actually shine into his lens to create a visual aura, he directly involved the gray subconscious of his viewer's innermost fears. Cinematographer Rudolph Mate shot most of the *Vampyr* exteriors through black gauze to create an eerie mist even in sunlight.

In the 1960s and 1970s, American International Pictures, famous for the extraordinary pop pulse of *Easy Rider* (1969), approximated Mate's gauze shots at the climax of its H. P. Lovecraft film *The Dunwich Horror* (1970). Sight, hearing, and sometimes kinesthesia are the prime sensual conductors for film reality. Roger George's special effects for *Dunwich*, however, purposely "designed in" the sense of touch. For the Black Mass sequence in which Dean Stockwell rubs his hands down Sandra Dee's naked thighs, the footage was shot through a textured screen—like a kind of cinema Braille—to visually excite the viewers' sense of touch as much as sight and hearing.

Mate's black-and-white *Vampyr* cinematography, even if it hadn't been necessity in those pre-Technicolor days, suited the psychological placement of Dreyer's script. Since the late 1960s, films once traditionally shot in black and white have been, like *Rosemary's Baby*, filmed on color stock. The

economics of TV sale to mass-market network sponsors demanding prime-time color has virtually spelled the end of black-and-white cinematography in the American film industry. In November 1963, president John F. Kennedy was assassinated in black and white; color TV arrived a year later.

The actors famous for their horror roles have exploited names as Transylvanian as their accents. Lon Chaney Sr., in Rupert Julian's *Phantom of the Opera* (1925), Bela Lugosi in Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931), Boris Karloff in James Whale's *Frankenstein* (1931), and Maria Ouspenskaya in George Waggner's *The Wolf Man* (1941) were the first generation. Vincent Price singlehandedly continued the cottage (and castle) industry of horror primarily peddled by American International Pictures. AIP led the way to the huge popularity of the horror genre which aims blockbuster American Gothic films at the teenage demographic.

Through an almost Faustian pact with AIP, Vincent Price salvaged his career at a time when Hollywood stars of a certain age were well past their zenith in the new youth culture of the 1960s. He ranged from the comedy *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* (1948) to the first 3-D horror movie, *House of Wax* (1953), to the art-house *Spirits of the Dead* (1969). He hit a Hollywood milestone in 1970 with the release of *Cry of the Banshees*, his hundredth film. Price's popular endurance as a mandarin of the occult was not only his copyrighted appearance, but his taste for what sells. Sears and Roebuck's campy mail-order "Buy-A-Painting" isn't called "The Vincent Price Gallery" for nothing.

When Price wasn't tapping medical fears like "transplanting too much too soon" as in *Scream and Scream Again* (1970), he jumped into the public-domain classics of Edgar Allen Poe. *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1961), *The Raven* (1963), *The Masque of the Red Death* (1964), and *The Tomb of Ligeia* (1965) qualify him as king of the "Poe fright trash." Faithful to his peers—Jane Asher (one-time paramour of Paul McCartney), Joe E. Brown, Lon Chaney, Boris Karloff, John Kerr, Peter Lorre, Debra Paget, and Basil Rathbone—Price milked "has-been" and "whatever-happened-to" reputations for leftover camp appeal. Produced and directed by Roger Corman's pop genius, no Price picture ever lost money at the box office.

By his hundredth film, Mercury Records had contracted the droll Price to record a horror album on how to cast spells and curses. "I can't imagine," he said, "why they asked me." On that album, *Witchcraft and Magic* (1969), Price read five cuts : "Secrets of Magic"; "Magic Revealed"; "How to Make Love Potions, Charms, and Spells"; "Raising the Devil"; and "Witches Sabbath." His readings encouraged Anton LaVey to release his

own recordings *The Satanic Mass* (1968), *Strange Music* (1994), and *Satan Takes a Holiday* (1995).

As corporate accountants have made "box office gross" the fiscal definition of popular culture, then Price, who was also the longtime host of *Mystery* on PBS, was a cash-and-scary phenomenon. "I do fairytales," he once said. "My pictures are good clean, wholesome fun. I burn two or three people; maybe hang a girl up by her thumbs. But I've made my pictures into popular staples like only the western used to be. Audiences go to be relieved of tension, screaming and clutching each other; then at least they don't go home and beat the kids."

The straight Price so plied his stock-in-trade camp that he was unafraid to play Butch, the gay hairdresser, in *Theater of Blood* (1973), which also starred his wife, Coral Browne. Asked if he believed in witchcraft himself, Price pointed to the 1970s witchcraft revival and said, not too enigmatically about witchcraft's victories, particularly against attempts to invade England by King Philip II of Spain in 1588 and by Adolf Hitler in 1940, "In the time of the *Armada* the British witches got together and cooked up a storm. They did it again when Hitler was on the way. Enough said?"

As with film director Roman Polanski, most fright films from the serious to the superficial grow from one man's obsession. The widower Polanski believes that good can never beat evil. His filmography includes *Dance of the Vampire*s, also known as the camp *The Fearless Vampire Killers, or: But Your Teeth Are in My Neck* (1967); *Rosemary's Baby* (1968); and the terribly autobiographical *Macbeth* (1971), based on the bloody and Satanic Charles Manson murders at the Polanski home. Kenneth Anger, the obsessed whipping-boy genius of American underground cinema, has long outraged audiences with his guru-like homosexuality and his sadomasochistic fetishism. However, behind Anger's surface shock lies his constant spiritism. His "Magic Lantern Cycle" gains theme, symbol, and ritual structure from the magisterial occult of Aleister Crowley. Anger, who changed his name from "Anglemyer," chronicles his challenging and demonic homosensuality in features such as *Fireworks* (a fifteen-minute film shot in 1947 when he was seventeen); *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* (1954); and the leather-biker-meets-Jesus scenario of *Scorpio Rising* (1964), which revealed the secret lifestyle of outlaw gay men that Hollywood had cleaned up for Marlon Brando in *The Wild One* (1954).

Kenneth Anger flows in the bloodstream of British and American—and specifically Hollywood—pop culture. He authored the notorious book *Hollywood Babylon* (1958). His art is a pedigree that proves homosexuality is

a link to almost everything. Anaïs Nin played Astarte in *Pleasure Dome*. *Scorpio Rising* is dedicated to its own influences: the alienated gay actor, James Dean; the masochistic gay visionary, T. E. Lawrence of Arabia, who died on a motorcycle; the Hell's Angels; and the gay poet Hart Crane, who disappeared (did he jump, or was he pushed by sailors?) from a ship in the Gulf of Mexico. Hart Crane greatly influenced Tennessee Williams, whose play *Suddenly Last Summer* (staged in 1958) was written under the influence of the mid-1950s release of *Pleasure Dome*. The similarity? The parallel? In both Williams and Anger, Bacchus is killed by the Bacchantes, who in modern sexual equality can be wild (gay) men as much as they were classically wild women.

Finally, regarding *Invocation of My Demon Brother* (1969), the sound was composed by Mick Jagger, and the role of Satan was played by Anton LaVey, with Manson Family member Bobby Beausoleil as Lucifer. (It should be noted that Anton LaVey had nothing to do with the Manson Family.) In 1967, Beausoleil, a musician scoring *My Demon Brother*, reportedly stole the negatives and prints from Anger. For a time that material—once recovered by Anger—was hidden in the Berkeley, California, home of legendary gay author Sam Steward who in the 1930s had been an intimate of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas. Steward in the 1950s and 1960s, working as the tattoo artist Phil Sparrow, tattooed many of the Hells Angels, including founder Sonny Barger. For his part, Bobby Beausoleil has always denied stealing *My Demon Brother*.[11]

Yet beyond such personal vision and sexual obsession, nothing so possesses an artist as his culture. The archetypal films of Carl Dreyer (the witchcraft trials of *Day of Wrath*, 1943) and Tod Browning (*Freaks*, 1932) dramatize how the popular Christian culture of Northern Europe was in conflict with sorcery, witchcraft, and physical deformity. Carl Dreyer's masterpiece *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928) dramatized the last day of the "people's saint" Joan, using actual transcripts from her trial, as well as intensifying extreme close-ups, to tell a serious tale of one transgressive woman's murder for her visions. Films of occult horror had an honorable tradition long before Hollywood movies sank to the Satanic drug-ritual B movies spawned by the Manson Family's Tate murders: *Ritual of Evil* (1969); the drug-infested *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* (1970), written by movie critic Roger Ebert; and *Mephisto Waltz* (1971).

The popular Swedish director Ingmar Bergman built his career pitting good against evil. His classic *Seventh Seal* (1956) questioned the values of a malpracticed Christianity. Bergman's protagonist, the knight Antonius

Block (Max von Sydow), sees religion and society collapsing. A witch (Maude Hansson), a woman outside the pale of church and state, is burned out of Christian righteousness, but not before Block interrogates her. Questioned, she does what witchcraft has always done by adhering to its "anti" values in the face of persecutions by Christians who prove that Nero may have been right about them after all.

As a witch, Maude Hansson mounts the basic attack of witchery: she deflates both Christian dogmatics and Western rationalism, calling them both relative, not absolute answers to human experience. In *The Magician* (1958) Bergman continued the struggle between Christian rules and occult freedom. His 1959 *The Virgin Spring*, which won the 1960 Academy Award for best foreign film, used high-contrast black-and-white film to suggest in the medieval world the polarity that continues into the modern: the battle between Christianity and paganism. Witchery is Bergman's constant metaphor for freedom "puncturing" punishing institutionalized dogma.

Certainly the earliest filmic study of witchcraft is Benjamin Christensen's *Haxan: Witchcraft through the Ages* (1922). This Swedish semidocumentary is full of informational data for students of film.[12] *Haxan* was revived in the 1970s at Greenwich Village's famous Waverly Theater, where between features the Muzak trilled "The Theme from *Rosemary's Baby.*" *Haxan* reconfirmed the perfect match made in hell between film and the occult. Janus Films scored the new edition of the silent *Haxan* with a jazz soundtrack mixed with the voice-over of William S. Burroughs reading Christensen's original silent titles.

Except for one Lon Chaney film, director Christensen slipped below the Hollywood radar after this erotic documentary of demonic witchcraft. Because his footage was shot before the invention of safety film in 1930, most of his nitrate prints crumbled to dust. When Janus Films restored this basic cult film, Christensen achieved a permanent place in the expanding universe of occult filmography. Christensen, who played his own Devil in *Haxan,* led a secret Hollywood life nearly as interesting as Christopher Bram revealed James Whale's to be in *Father of Frankenstein.* Bram's gay-themed book became director Bill Condon's *Gods and Monsters* (1998), which won an Academy Award for best screenplay.

Haxan opens with Burroughs intoning an exorcism. (Burroughs often stated that "magic is a gateway to art"; he also revealed that homosexual acts could be performed for magical purposes.) Burroughs reads, "Lock them out and bar the door. Lock them out forever more. Curse go back. Curse go back. Bent with double pain and lack. Silver arrow seek and find."

The ancient witchery of Persian and Egyptian art provides images for *Haxan*'s prologue. German woodcuts and engravings from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance show the growth of the occult in the popular mind. In his first episode, Christensen dramatizes age-old popular stereotypes: crones drop decaying corpse fingers, hopping toads, and snakes into a cauldron. Typically anticlerical and with a studied vengeance, *Haxan* suggests a recipe of "pigeon heart and cat shit" to seduce a corpulent monk. The witches peddling the potions are portrayed as shrewd business people selling the real thing and always getting top dollar.

In the film's most chilling episode, "The Annihilation by Inquisition of the Entire Family of Jasper Le Riem," Christensen sensationalizes the sex and sadism of a repressive Christianity on its circumstantially trapped victims. Long passages dwell on the salacious torture of helpless women. Christensen illustrates their confessions of Satanic commerce with enough eroticism, nudity, and horror to explain the early twentieth-century censorship of the film: naked women are smeared with oil to fly to sabbaths; crosses are trampled by cackling housewives who eat toads and unbaptized babies; women kneel to kiss Satan's hairy buttocks, then run to a neighbor's doorstep to squat and make water for a curse; finally, a kind of pre-Rosemary gives explicit dramatic birth to a Satanic baby. A young friar, sympathetic to a beautiful witch, is scourged by his superior. When the prior ceases whipping the naked young man, the young friar cries in masochistic ecstasy, "Oh brother, why have you stopped?"

The narration in *Haxan* sometimes rises to the screech of Maria Monk, who in 1836 wrote the best-selling and bogus confessional book *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk, as Exhibited in a Narrative of Her Sufferings during a Residence of Five Years as a Novice and Two Years as a Black Nun, in the Hotel Dieu Nunnery in Montreal.* Monk, escaping the convent to save her baby, told a tale of convents rife with witchcraft rituals, tunnels, and mass graves for babies born of nuns' liaisons with priests. Christensen, for all his over-the-top tabloidism, knows how to make an appealing pop-culture film. Yet in his artfulness, he seems not too far from Spanish filmmaker Luis Buñuel; or from British director Ken Russell's study of convent and cloister, *The Devil*s (1971), based on Aldous Huxley's *The Devils of Loudun;* or from Alejandro Jodorowski, who in his 1971 film *El Topo* raised the whipping of one monk to four naked young monks, as he enlarged the theme of magic.

Haxan says, "Convents in the Middle Ages were hotbeds of flagellation and mortification. Raving mystical lunacy led to sacrilege and erotic

behavior." What the superb Stanley Donen film *Bedazzled* (1967) does to the Devil and convents through comedy, *Haxan* does through vivid melodrama: a nun stabs a consecrated host and sticks out her tongue (the wagging sign of Satan, and the trademark symbol of the Rolling Stones) at her Superior; she steals a statue of the infant Jesus and carries it to the inquisitors of the previous episode. "Take me," she screams orgasmically. "Burn me!"

In Russell's *The Devils*, Vanessa Redgrave updated this Satanic *Haxan* nun in her bravura and archetypal performance as the hunch-backed freak Soir Jeanne, a Mother Superior possessed by black magic, and adept in desecrating religious iconography by masturbating with a crucifix. Opposite this Soir Jeanne, Redgrave also starred as the trance-breaking Guenevere in the musical film *Camelot* (1967), based on the white magic of Merlin versus the black magic of Morgan La Faye in the legendary *Le Morte D'Arthur*. A performer who makes outsider choices in art and politics, Redgrave has twice channeled mystic San Francisco dancer Isadora Duncan, in the film *Loves of Isadora* (1968) and on stage in *When She Danced* (1991). She played the matriarch of the empathic family of seers in the film version of the Isabel Allende novel *House of the Spirits* (1993), and has also narrated Peter Maxwell Davies' *Parody Mass*, *Missa Super L'Homme Arme*, for the art-music group, the Fires of London (1971). Peter Maxwell Davies also wrote incidental music for the film score of *The Devils*. Covering the Salem witch trials, she starred in the film *Three Sovereigns for Sarah* (1985), based on actual transcripts of the trials, and her son-in-law Liam Neeson headlined on Broadway in a 2002 revival of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. She continued her esthetic connection to the occult in *The Riding of the Laddie* (2003), the sequel to the horror classic *The Wicker Man* (1974),[13] which was the first appearance on screen of the image of the Burning Man.

At the end of *Haxan*, in a final coda of "redeeming social significance," Christensen waxes moral after all his sensational reportage. His documentary finale explains that women no longer fly to sabbaths on brooms; now they use airplanes. He says, "In 1920 we don't burn old, poor, and hysterical women; we put them in institutions; and if they're rich enough, in clinics where the therapeutic shower has replaced the torture chamber." Christensen's point in naming witch hunting itself as a modern pathology is a significant statement that helps right the long historical oppression of women.

Thirty years after Christensen's definitive work, Director Erik Blomberg's *White Reindeer* (1956) won the Cannes Festival Award for best film based on a mystical legend. Blomberg, like Bergman in *The Virgin Spring*, dipped

into medieval folklore to re-create a world of mysticism and witchcraft. Through ancient Finnish folk tales Blomberg noticed a recurring white reindeer. The bewitched animal was a transformed woman who appeared during certain phases of the moon to kill.

In the northernmost reaches of Lap Land,
Where the snow and sky seem one . . .
There's a mythical world of white shadows
Called the Land of the Midnight Sun.

It is whispered by natives who dwell there,
Over campfires in voices low,
That a long time ago to their valley
Came a stranger who braved the snow.

'Twas a woman whose pains were of labor,
And the needs of the birth were filled.
For at midnight a girl-babe was wailing,
And the breath of her mother stilled.

But the spell that was cast on that midnight
Was to live after, one by one . . .
And each child of that child was afflicted
With the Curse of the Midnight Sun.

In popular pagan as well as in Judeo-Christian folktales, woman is the constant evil. Neither tradition has forgiven Eden's Eve, who ate humankind out of house and home, nor forgotten that birth itself seems to males a rudimentary rejection by the mother.

Within months of founding his Church of Satan in 1966, Anton LaVey, according to popular legend, cursed the late film star Jayne Mansfield for consorting with companions whom LaVey judged not a worthy match to her role as "female altar" for his Church of Satan. In fact, LaVey explained that he simply warned Mansfield that her lover, lawyer Sam Brody, would come to a bad end, and if she wanted to avoid his fate, she should stay away from him. "It was a very magnificent curse," LaVey said. Not long after, on June 29, 1967, at 2:15 a. m. on a slick curve of U.S. 90, gliding along a foggy swamp twenty-three miles outside New Orleans, Jayne Mansfield's Buick Electra smashed into the rear of a slow-moving tractor-trailer truck, and plowed on in under the big rig.

"The impact," United Press International reported on June 30, 1967, "sheared off the top of the luxury car and shoved it back so that it appeared to be a convertible." Both the chauffeur and Sam Brody were killed. "Miss Mansfield," UPI said, "was decaptitated."

The *femme* was very *fatale*. In the back seat, her three children, fathered by her second husband, Mr. America bodybuilder Mickey Hargitay (from whom she was divorced), survived with minor injuries. In his book *Hollywood Babylon*, Kenneth Anger printed a controversial photograph of Jayne Mansfield's dead dog lying outside the crushed Buick, next to what looks like a blond wig (or a scalp) on the ground. Mansfield's daughter, Mariska Hargitay, age three the night she was in the accident, grew up to be the dark-haired star of the television series *Law and Order*.

Whatever their relationship, the LaVey-Mansfield connection recalls popular notions in films that reduce complicated female psychology to Satanism. Joseph von Sternberg directed Marlene Dietrich in the film *The Devil Is a Woman* (1935), which was scripted—and titled—by esteemed American novelist John Dos Passos. (Dos Passos, in his *USA Trilogy*, was the first novelist to construct fiction that used the movielike material of popular culture—a montage of newspaper headlines, radio broadcasts, and reading cards from silent news reels winding through his narrative—to tell his story.) Von Sternberg's film inspired Luis Buñuel's surreal *That Obscure Object of Desire* (1977), in which two actresses play the same part. Dietrich's conniving gold digger, whose charms destroy men, was a model for Catherine Deneuve, who played a killer of men in Roman Polanski's *Repulsion* (1965).

From Lilith to Eve to Delilah to Lulu to Lola, storytellers from the Bible to the movies cast women as seductive destroyers of men and marriage. For shock value, Mel Gibson cast a woman to portray Satan cuddling a forty-year-old baby during the flogging scene in *The Passion of the Christ*. Women as earth mothers and healing witches come from nature itself. Women as evil witches, vamps, and vampires come, Edward Lucie-Smith assesses in *Eroticism in Western Art*, from "the basic male fear . . . of castration, specifically by the castrating female. . . . The male fear of female aggression is matched, even overmatched . . . by sadistic impulses toward women."[14] In the battle of the sexes, the Inquisition was a skirmish in the age-old gender war in which each side thinks the other the enemy. The archetypal struggle is penis versus vagina and vice versa.

Pop culture's update of the Inquisition is that modern women have taken the *vagina dentata* (the vagina with teeth) and spun the femme fatale from

liability to asset. Women were once burned at the stake for being vamps, vampires, and witches. In modern media, vamps star in movies. Vampires have their own television series. Vaginas sing in movies like *Chatterbox*, and star in theatrical productions like *The Vagina Monologues*. Ball-busters get elected to public office. If the Devil is not a woman, the thoroughly modern Ms. Faust seems to know how to make an empowering pact with the Devil. What is true is that the disquieting image of woman as toothsome destroyer demands a demystification if only to put to rest the bewitched, bothered, and bewildered anxieties about women that the hurtful mystique has caused in religion, art, politics, and culture.

The images to deconstruct are endless. In movies and on stage, when the male magician closes a woman into a wooden box and saws her in half, they are ritualizing one of the principle tortures of the Inquisition. The saw, as much as the axe, was used to kill pregnant women and homosexuals who—unlike the smiling woman in the magic show—did not rise up unharmed to thrilled applause. Kim Stanley, in *Seance on a Wet Afternoon* (1964), starred as a dead child's mother, who, posing as a medium, decreed the death of a young girl to give her dead son a playmate in the afterlife. *The Witch* (1955) from Finland, and *The Sorceress* (1956) from France reinforce the 1960s summary movie title *Deadlier than the Male*. In *The Witch* (1954), from Mika Waltari's stage play, the plot is B-movie classic: over the protests of villagers, an archeologist removes a stake from the heart of a three-hundred-year-old corpse; in hours, the corpse rejuvenates into a seductive young girl who casts spells on the village males, and everybody screws and kills everybody else; of course, it's her fault, so the villagers redrive the stake through her vamp heart. Is this archetype or stereotype?

The Sorceress, filmed on location in northern Sweden, shape-shifts the vicious crone into a seductress. This focus on the female as sexual destroyer came even clearer in *Les Sorcieres de Salem* (1957), a French screenplay by Jean-Paul Sartre based on Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. Sartre spelled out the ideosexual perspective of Miller's witch play more completely, said the *New York Times*, than did Miller himself, who was actually paraphrasing 1950s McCarthyism as a political witch hunt.

Even holy ladies aren't the simple sacred prostitutes they used to be. Luis Buñuel's "Krafft-Ebing" convent in *The Milky Way* (1970) was preceded by Jerze Kawalerowicz's *Joan of the Angels?* (1961). Based on the seventeenth-century trial of Pere Grandier, *Joan*'s source—like Ken Russell's *The Devils*—is the same as Aldous Huxley's *The Devils of Loudun*. The plot is conventional convent coven: the Mother Superior of a convent

of Ursuline nuns is possessed by eight demons; the other nuns follow her example, contracting themselves with minor demons; men die by the dozens as a result of these ladies' commerce.

No wonder monsters like *The Fly* (1958), *Konga* (1961), and *Reptilicus* (1962) think they "get the girl." Like seeks like. Folklore has long inferred the theory of "La Pucelle": that Joan of Arc and Robin's Maid Marian, and all the other mystical and magical women who traveled with men, were in fact altars of male covens. Robin Hood himself, woven through myth, is actually a merry prankster version of Satan. When guest-actor Anton LaVey explained his motivation as the Satanic Beast mounting Rosemary in *Rosemary's Baby*, he respun the Christian archetype of the Good Soul coupling in mystical union with Jesus. Prior to Polanski's frankness, personified "white middle-class female goodness" was continually being carried across sound stages by various "black masses" in *Curucu, Beast of the Amazon* (1956) or *Dinosaurus!* (1960). David O. Selznick's bestiality epic *King Kong* (1933) mined the deep psychological vein of race, phallic size, and blonde stereotype. King Kong, the protagonist, was the ultimate African symbol of sexual possession, who, although sympathetic, must die.

In the sex-guilt ethic, the attempt to lay blame for erotic feeling outside the self is as old as Adam accusing Eve. The running joke on the *Flip Wilson Show* (NBC, 1970–71) had the comedian repeatedly decked in drag, exclaiming in a pinched falsetto non sequitur, "The Devil made me buy this dress!" That, during the Watergate Scandal, became the national catchphrase joke for any wrongdoer who got caught: "The Devil made me do it." With similar disingenuous disavowal of personal culpability, the Middle Ages invented the female succubus to explain males' nocturnal emissions, and the male incubus to allay feminine guilt at erotic dreams. The secret tradition of the Western world has long regarded the frolic of intercourse as a horizontal Devil dance: good women merely submit to a necessary evil, and all men are beasts. In 1969, *Succubus*, a grind sexploitation flick, introduced to pop culture the forgotten medieval word of its title more on the strength of its sound than its meaning.

Psychologist Carl Jung often compared his theories of individual and collective memory to the movie medium. Film illustrated his archetypes because the camera is the machine most like the subconscious. Just so, filmmakers, like advertisers and witches, turn to psychology to package their product for maximum bounce.

In 1958, the producers of *My World Dies Screaming* used subliminal perception based on human physiology to increase the shock value of their

film.[15] To augment the horror, they interedited throughout the length of the movie the word *blood* so that it appeared on screen for only one-fiftieth of a second. The eye is accustomed to perceive whole motion at twenty-four sound frames per second on 16 millimeter film. Thus the queasy *blood* imposed over star Cathy O'Donnell's face could be perceived only subliminally, inducing a deeper, more unconscionable horror. Because terror in any audience's head is an immeasurable variable, another experimenter interedited the 1955 William Inge film *Picnic*, a romantic comedy, not with *blood* but with *Drink Coca-Cola* and *Hungry? Eat Popcorn* at 1/3000 of a second every five seconds. Confection sales, unlike terror, are measurable. With subliminal suggestion, Coke sales at the Fort Lee, New Jersey, theater rose 57.7 percent, and popcorn sales 18.1 percent. Producer Hal Roach Jr., planned similar occult subliminals for his film version of Henry James's *Turn of the Screw*, titled *The Innocents.* The presence of his ghosts was to be projected below the threshold of the viewer's conscious perception, much like William Castle's *13 Ghosts* (1960), for which movie-goers were given optional "ghost-viewing" glasses.

The occult has always been sensitive to human psychology. Spiritualists thrive on subliminal access to consciousness. Technology helps mediums and mind-reading mentalists update their settings from smoke and mirrors to soft subliminals created by film projectors, video, and audio run during the soft psychedelia of sittings. Catholic ritual, in particular, is so dripping with subliminal seduction of the psyche that other religions stand aghast. Reductive Protestantism removed art from its churches; Judaism forbids icons; and both sects have accused Roman Catholicism, which is the most magical of modern religions, of witchcraft. Even Walt Disney makes fun of the magic inherent in arcane Church Latin. His magician in *Cinderella* (1950), singing "Salagadoola mechika boola . . . It'll do magic, believe it or not," parodies the Gregorian chant of Roman Catholic plainsong in the singsong of "Bibbidi Bobbidi Boo." This is jokey satire in the same way that "hocus-pocus" mocks "Hoc est enim corpus meum," the essential line of transubstantiation in the Catholic mass.

These experiments illustrate how easily psychologist, artist, witch, and priest can plunder the human subconscious. The business secret of genuine as well as phony occultists is tweaking the hidden fears of their clients. Similarly, the horror film business projects on screen the repressed and subconscious anxieties deep within the viewer's self.

The screen monster most terrifying to an audience is, in the final analysis, the well-brought-out beast in itself.

The Lord of the Flies was built dramatically on the premise of Satan worship. The last reel reveals the source of evil was not the pig head Beelzebub (*Beelzebub* translates to "Lord of the Flies"), but was rather the evil in the boys' own selves. Again comes the unavoidable theme, and the horror-inducing existential twist, that the Devil rises from inside humans. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's little classic *Forbidden Planet* (1957), a camp retelling of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, offered the ultimate horror to the Freudian mindscape: the amok monster, unbridled of superego, turned out to be the id of one of the space travelers. Sold to television, *Forbidden Planet* is sometimes titled *Id: The Creature from the Unknown*, a label that divulges the entire plot.

If any film externalizes the horror of the self acknowledging its own secret mutations, it is Tod Browning's long neglected *Freaks* (1932). Based on the novel *Spurs* by Tod Robbins, *Freaks* is unique in film history. European critics have praised it for the same reasons American distributors have kept it at the bottom half of double bills in grind houses "where your feet stick to the floor and rats run across your shoes." The 1962 Cannes Film Festival Repertory balanced matters somewhat by selecting the thirty-year-old *Freaks* to represent the essential horror film. By the 1970s, the Browning revival of *Freaks* was in full swing.

Mexican director Alejandro Jodorowsky, while he was casting his mystical cult epic *El Topo*, stated that he was emboldened by *Freaks* as much as he was by *Viva la Muerte*, the 1970 film by Fernando Arrabal that began the "panic movement" in cinema that coincided with the first generation of Satanic panic films, *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *The Exorcist* (1973). In New York, Lincoln Center's spring 1970 film festival featured Browning's *The Unknown* (1927) with Lon Chaney Sr. and Joan Crawford. By the end of 1970, Browning's *Freaks* was commercially rereleased with Victor Halperin's *White Zombie* (1932). Because Southern Baptists were the first onward-marching soldiers opposing rock-and-roll, rock groups inevitably reacted by hailing religion's foes, Satanism and the occult. They chose for themselves from cult horror movies rebellious band names like Black Sabbath and White Zombie, the latter with its album *Sexorcisto: Devil Music Volume One*.

The difference between *Freaks* (art *changes* its audience) and 1957's *I Was a Teen-age Werewolf* (entertainment *diddles* its audience) is one of essence and surface. The essential horror film goes, like a vampire, for the jugular of the subconscious soul. The superficial fright movie cleverly exploits shock so that kids on a movie date have excuse to grab hold of each other.

The art of horror films is, well, almost seamlessly existential: the terror conjured (often by being offscreen) is real because it references the endgames of the human condition, like the fact that everyone in the theater will die, horribly slowly, or worse, horribly suddenly, killed before their time. The drive-in fright feature, from advertising to projection, is constructed with its scares onscreen like a ride through a haunted house: no one takes it seriously, and, like a magician's act, it easily falls into comedy and camp because the monster/villain/killer—for instance, King Kong—often becomes the hero the audience identifies with and cheers for. Because of the sexual revolution, horror movies have mated with soft-core porn and have changed the plot from the creation of monsters who eat cities to the trope of the "young woman in sexual peril trapped in her house." The master producer of horror films, Roger Corman, has revealed some of the secret erotic psychology of horror: "In a movie, a house is always a woman's body."

Browning's *Freaks* is the essence of Sartrean existential horror, because everyone in the audience secretly fears their own inner freak, which they hope no one else will notice. Browning, his career shaped by controversial film pioneer D. W. Griffith, earned his aesthetic reputation as "the Edgar Allan Poe of the cinema." His canon includes *The Unholy Three* (1925), *Mark of the Vampire* (1935), and *The Devil Doll* (1936). Never fashionable as camp, and certainly not exploitative, Browning, like Poe and Sartre, took everyday appearances and dealt with the realities that lay beneath. Browning began in the genuine folk world of circus and vaudeville, but matured up and out of the jolly theatrics of the sideshow in the same trajectory that Anton LaVey, on his way to founding the Church of Satan, was a lion tamer in the circus. LaVey, with his exquisite sense of pop culture, gathered funds to found his church by appearing on San Francisco's North Beach strip of adult clubs with an act he produced and billed as "Anton LaVey and His Topless Witches' Sabbath"—which was as far from serious as Richard Feiherr von Krafft-Ebing is from John Kander and Fred Ebb.

Many occultists claim that psychiatrists spend much time curing patients by talking them out of belief in their very real paranatural experiences. Occultists nevertheless fully appreciate artful films like *Rosemary's Baby* and *Freaks*, because they know that the artist, more than anyone else, can popularize paranormal experience. *Rosemary's Baby* did for the witchcraft industry what *Hair* did for astrology. Similarly, *Freaks* changed attitudes.

Apropos *Freaks*, Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) wrote in his Catholic theology texts that "grace builds on nature. The more perfect the body, the more grace is bestowed by God." This very high-school pecking-order

notion flips to a Platonic fascism: the less perfect the body, the less the access to grace. Point man Aquinas wrote *Summa Theologica* (written 1265–74), in which he modernized Catholic doctrine by appropriating Aristotle the way that Catholic ritual appropriated white magic. Aquinas, the greatest mind the Catholic Church ever produced—and then did not kill—also wrote *Summa contra Gentiles*, a work directed against Islamic philosophy infiltrating European culture. Aquinas's principle of a healthy soul in a healthy body seems, by comparison, less cruel than born-again Protestants selecting themselves as perfect and saved simply because they themselves say so. Witches, of course, celebrate everybody else—the sick, the deformed, the weird, the queer, the dark skinned, the outsiders—which accounts for witchcraft's strong appeal among teens alienated in high schools; among the young who are estranged from mainstream American politics, religion, and culture; and among homosexual noncitizens in a heterosexual culture in which penetration, breeding, and conception are the basic ritual of human measure.

Out of this body fascism, wherein only the beautiful people of the platonic ideal are full of grace, the Middle Ages condemned congenital deformity. Imperfection was a sign that the person was conceived from Satan's bad seed, which caused the deformity. Looking at this "body fascism" through a glass darkly, witches spin the right-wing Thomas Aquinas leftward. Witches teach that physical abnormality is a natural asset to occult powers. For reasons of dwarfs, bearded ladies, and strong-men contortionists, *Freaks* has become a coven classic on campuses. For the same reasons, audiences squirm when watching the movie *The Bad Seed* (1956), about a very mechanically nice little girl who, disguised in blonde pigtails twisted too tight, is the Devil's spawn.

In his *Satanic Bible*, Anton LaVey, who appreciated blonde Hollywood beauties like Marilyn Monroe and Tuesday Weld, wrote that looks mean a great deal where magic is concerned. A striking appearance, from the beautiful to the offbeat, is a great aid to bewitchment if a person knows how to enhance for enchantment. In his "Letters from the Devil" column in *The National Insider*, LaVey stated once stated, "If your ears are pointed, you are wise in taking pride in them, rather than feeling embarrassment, as that in itself is a very magical attitude. Whatever you do, don't attempt to cover or conceal them. In fact you might even consider shaving your head to emphasize them!"

This "physical language of magic," particularly the "language of eyes," speaks in oral storytelling and written fiction. Characters are often described

as "having a cast in their eye" inferring they possess if not the evil eye, at least an outsider's vision. Serial author Charles Dickens used this shorthand phrase, which his mass audience immediately recognized as meaningful. In *Pickwick Papers* Dickens characterizes the essence of his elfin Nathaniel Pipkin as ". . . a homeless . . . being, with a turned-up nose . . . rather turned-in legs, a cast in his eye, and a halt in his gait." In his ghost story, *The Haunted House,* Dickens summed up the minister in one stroke: "The officiating minister had a cast in his eye." Other popular writers citing the "cast in the eye" as a character-revealing physicality wherein the external body part referred to exposes the interior person are George Eliot in *Silas Marner* (1861), Mark Twain in *Saint Joan of Arc* (1904), and Enid Bagnold in *The Happy Foreigner* (1920). Popular woman's writer Bagnold (1889–1981) was a morphine visionary and the author of the novel *National Velvet* (1935), which as a 1944 movie made Elizabeth Taylor, with her unique violet eyes, a child star.

Roddy McDowell was the longtime friend of Elizabeth Taylor and star of *How Green Was My Valley* (1941), *Lord Love a Duck* (1966), in which he played the Devil, and *Planet of the Apes* (1968). He was at first rejected as a child actor because, according to casting agents, he had a cast in his eye, which was homophobic code that Roddy—who also became famous as a photographer—used his eyes the way gay men roll their eyes to signify secret knowledge, condescension, and irony. People are quite ready to believe that any anomaly undoing the balance of two eyes is evidence of the evil eye. In every world culture, anthropologists have measured faces and have found universally that the more balanced the facial features the more beautiful or handsome that face is considered in every family, tribe, society, and race.

The official distributor's press release for Tod Browning's *Freaks* reads,

> Prior to World War II nearly every carnival and circus had its collection of human monsters or freaks—persons deformed in birth or horribly maimed—who were proudly exhibited to the public for a price. Browning assembled the most famous of these performers from all parts of the world and employed them in a story of intrigue in the circus. In its plot, a beautiful "normal" aerialist (Olga Baclanova) learns one of the midgets (Harry Earles) has inherited a fortune. She contrives to marry him, planning to kill him. In one of the many memorable scenes, almost surrealistic in quality, the midget's fellow performers, unaware of the aerialist's intentions, organize a wedding celebration wherein they offer a macabre toast and honorary position to her

with an orgiastic chant of "We accept you . . . we accept you . . . gooble gobble . . . one of us." Later, both the midget and his friends discover the poisoning attempt and, in hair-raising climax, the freaks set upon the aerialist and maim her.

The maiming scene in the *Freaks* epilogue, where the freaks turn the "normal" woman into a freak, has been called the most horrible scene in film history.

Freakiness, as the happy hippie freaks and Jesus freaks demonstrated, may be relative, and every minority group takes pride in its essential difference from the norm: black pride, gay pride. Anton LaVey teaches, "Everything is attitude." *Freaks* in 1932 paved the way for Hollywood in 1939 to film an analog of *Freaks*, *The Wizard of Oz*. In Frank Baum's story of white witches, wicked witches, and wizards, the magical Munchkin "freaks" accept the perfect outsider Dorothy (Judy Garland), but they do not maim her. From *Freaks* to *Oz* is a major jump in pop culture—from the genre of *horror* to the genre of *musical comedy*. What a double feature at the midnight picture show! When Judy Garland accepted the leprechaun Munchkins, she could hardly have known that life would imitate art. Her identification with the outsiders was magnetic. For the rest of her career, Judy Garland's core audience was homosexual men who understood the code of the suffering warble in her nevertheless invincible voice. What witchery lies in the timing that five days after Judy Garland died on June 22, 1969, New York City's Stonewall Riots, started by shape-shifting drag-queen freaks, broke out near midnight on June 27–28, 1969, beginning the gay liberation movement?

CUT TO

TV

Significantly, *The Wizard of Oz* has become an annual classic on television, where sorcery reigns. So rich is *The Wizard of Oz* that pop-culture lore insists that the rock band Pink Floyd's concept album *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), if started the moment the MGM lion roars the third time, creates an eerie alternative soundtrack that reveals mystic secrets buried in the film. Nielson ratings chart the immense popularity of occult programs: the domestic comedy of *Bewitched*, *I Dream of Jeannie*, *The Flying Nun*, *My Favorite Martian*, *Topper*, *The Ghost and Mrs Muir*, and *The Nanny and the Professor*; the Saturday morning *Archie* cartoon show with

its character, Sabrina, the teenage witch; the gothic stylizations of *The Addams Family*, *The Munsters,* and the actress Vampira; the playful animism of *My Mother, the Car*, and the "lycanthropy" of the talking horse *Mr. Ed* ; and the supernatural turns of *One Step Beyond* and *The Twilight Zone.*

I Dream of Jeannie is pop-culture product from ancient Islamic demonology that came to Europe and then America *via* medieval Spain. The grimoire spell books of the time teach how a master can conjure and control the little service-demon called a *jinn* (a *genie.*) In Chicago, the Pontifex Maximus of the Sabaeans, the pagan white witch Frederic de Arechaga, pointed out that Ray Bolger's classic scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz* is more occult than parents might first believe. The scarecrow in the Old Religion of pre-Christian times was stuffed with straw as a symbol of fertility. "In a sense, it still is, because it is placed in a field to scare off birds and keep them from eating the crops. In this way," Arechaga noted, "it remains a symbol to preserve growth."[16]

The Wizard of Oz fixed the popular stereotype of the good witch and the bad witch. Billie Burke is barely remembered as the good witch Glynda; but no one forgets Margaret Hamilton as the wicked witch of the west. Happy to be recognized as an actress, Miss Hamilton wished she were not remembered only for her iconic role in *The Wizard of Oz.* "It was a lovely picture," she once said, "but I was injured, you know. Not only did I become typed. I broke my ankle. All my disappearances in that cloud of smoke happened because I was dropped through a trap door—pointed hat, broom and all." If Margaret Hamilton could have trademarked her image, Hallmark cards, Disney Studios, and other crone caricaturists could have made her a rich woman.

More overt than the subtle *Wizard of Oz*, the NBC occult soap opera *Dark Shadows* operated five days a week, fifty-two weeks a year, for a total of 1,225 episodes (1966–71). Partly a computer creation, *Dark Shadows* mixed staple soap-opera sudser with popular witchcraft. ABC's evening soap opera, *Peyton Place* (1964–69), introduced to prime time Mia Farrow (who became Satan's mother in *Rosemary's Baby*), as well as the soap cadences of the afternoon: intrafamily tension followed by prolonged critical illness leading to accidental or homicidal death followed by prolonged courtroom drama causing rearrangement of identities, spouses, and heirs to build new intrafamily tensions, illnesses, suicides, murders, and trials. *Dark Shadows* used these staples, but the plot was bounced off the wall of the supernatural.

With existences in "parallel time," no one need stay permanently dead and the villain need not be human. *Shadow*'s lovable vampire Barnabas Collins, in fact, became so popular that Barnabas-actor Jonathan Frid guested at the 1969 White House Halloween party hosted by Tricia Nixon-Cox, who transformed the north portico of the White House into a giant jack-o-lantern guarded by a cauldron and two witches. Inside the Great Ballroom, the Devil played a trumpet and the ghouls danced the night away. This historical fact shows the levity regarding witchcraft that existed in American pop culture prior to hysterical press coverage of the Manson Family. Times have so changed that one can only imagine the horror this Nixonian nonseparation of Satan and state must cause the born-again right wing that has since so demonized Halloween.

Vampire Frid once explained the success of *Dark Shadows*: "Fascination with evil is the whole thing. College kids and matrons are the main ones. People want to meet me for weeks and then they run in utter horror. I haven't studied the occult, but the fascination and repulsion attraction is, I think, rather obvious." Frid, during the interview, gladly and easily slipped in his vampire denture. "A show is a success in this business when it's imitated. ABC copied us with *Strange Paradise* for a while. We on *Dark Shadows* have used every classic horror theme. We're the worst plagiarists going. We've stolen Mary Shelley and Henry James. In fact, I base the whole thing on *Macbeth*. Personally, my interest comes from the old Universal Studios' horror pictures. It's hard to top Maria Ouspenskaya's unforgettable line, 'You bent up the pentagram, young man.' I think the writing and special effects on *Shadows* are about the best in the image business."

Johnny Carson, on NBC's *Tonight Show*, repeatedly featured the mystic shtick of his "Carnak the Magnificent." Carnak, channeled out of vaudeville, was a cartoony Persian guru who held sealed envelopes to his oversized turban, pronounced the answer ("Zazu Pitts"), then opened the envelope to reveal the question ("What do you find in Zazu prunes?"). To the moaning audience Carnak cursed, "May the fairy-god-camel leave a hump under your pillow." Nevertheless, despite the spoofing, Carson often showcased the serious occult (Jeane Dixon) and questioned his more pop-culture guests about their own occult practices. NBC, with an eye to policy, vetoed Carson's wish to feature a séance on his show Halloween night, 1969, two months after the Manson Family murders.

NBC quickly corrected its hypersensitivity and followed its audience's taste for the occult during its last hour of prime-time telecasting in 1969. On that New Year's Eve, the weekly series, *Then Came Bronson*, based on

occult imagery, closed the 1960s with Thomas Drake's teleplay, *Sybil*. The Bronson character was played by gay favorite Michael Parks, who had been a peek-a-boo Adam when he and his penis starred in John Huston's epic film *The Bible* (1966). Bronson was not Brando in *The Wild One*: Parks played Bronson as a sensitive motorcyclist loner who magically solved people's problems each episode. In the opening credits, he was identified as the tarot deck's Knight of Cups, announced his sign as Taurus, and painted the All-Seeing Eye in a triangle on his cycle tank. The *Sybil* episode featured "supernatural" cinematography as old as silent film: distortion angles and shots through candle flames; standard "supernatural" dialogue: "Demons we summon you!" "Make a choice, Sybil, the living or the dead!"

NBC cashed in on the occult to capture the Nielsen families, yet the network soothed its sponsors. Bronson's final sermon protested a bit too much: "I believe very much in the spirit. I believe it continues, but I don't believe it's connected to magic, or conjuring, or prediction. I believe a spirit breathes in man. An undiscovered country causes man to run there to cure his ills, to avoid the problems in the one he's part of. I believe you're surrendering *your* responsibility for *your* reactions."

CUT TO

Consumers and Advertising

The media of popular culture exist to capture consumers' dollars. In the dark night of the soul on late-night radio, offbeat stations broadcast occult programs at midnight the same way that talk-radio stations broadcast religious programming in the afternoon. No different than radio preachers selling Protestant books between their gab, the seductive female radio host who bills herself as "Big Witch" broadcasts regularly to peddle her "How to Form a Coven" pamphlet, mailed from her post office box. Even "America's past-time," baseball, telecast from among its billboards and endorsements, has—among all its superstitions of spitting and lucky charms—Pennsylvania Dutch hex signs hanging on the Philadelphia Phillies dugout in Connie Mack Stadium. The combination of baseball and Satanism played for sexy laughs in *Damn Yankees* was immediately understood by fans of this most superstitious sport: never stepping on the white lines, not wearing the number thirteen, and sometimes showering in uniform to wash out the gremlins. The occult is a multimillion-dollar-a-year business. It not only sells itself; it pushes, through media advertising, everything from Ben Gay to Hunt's Manwich Sandwich.

How can witchery prevent exploitation in the merchandising of popular culture? It can't. The marketplace rules. Witchcraft is accustomed to appropriation, particularly by procrustean corporate advertising, which co-opts everything. In the 1960s, when environmentalists suddenly rose up after reading Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), Madison Avenue jumped to spin the semantics. Ecologists had claimed many products glorified by Madison Avenue were pollutants. The surprised agencies immediately began co-opting the ecologists' very words to pitch that their products "pollute *less* than our competitors' products."

In a similar fashion, student revolutionaries marching on Washington in the summer of 1970 were called "bums" by the Republican administration. Spinning the Richard Nixon–Spiro Agnew semantics, the students carried prideful signs: "We're all bums on strike for peace." They took their cue from 1960s hippies who had also reversed the semantics of the slur *freak* and turned it to optimistic synonym for *enthusiast* (as in "acid freak," "rock freak," "peace freak," and "freak freak"). Advertising loves co-opting the occult. Casper the Friendly Ghost's friend Wendy the Witch endorsed Pepsi-Cola, and a cute little Devil himself touted Orange Julius as "a devilishly good drink." The 1970 television season saw seventeen Roman-collared clergymen postured with teacups in a rectory drawing room. They had each shaved successively with the same blade, proving that the shaving product advertised would give at least seventeen shaves to a blade. After all, would a room full of clergymen lie? Not any more than the preceding season's Dracula knock-off, "Count von Throat Pain," who told the whole truth about his agency's throat-lozenge account.

Literary mystic T. S. Eliot wrote that "the greatest treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason." Had astrologers warned him, he might have prevented, after his death, Andrew Lloyd Webber's use of his poetry to create the anthropomorphic—if not downright "lycanthropic"—musical *Cats.* Cats come into magic via Egypt, a kingdom steeped in ancient magic, which also gave name to the Gypsies. While most genuine witches shy away from the limelight, witchcraft as a concept is often eager to sell itself for motives of money, propaganda, and proselytizing. Witchery is not always the unwilling victim of the big sell, no matter that its "right thing" is often subverted by adventurers within the occult as much as by abusers from outside. Witchcraft, in short, has been willfully merchandised into a business by witches as well as by the average Christian bookstore, which at tidy Christian prices sells antiwitch supplies such as holy water, crucifixes, and books "revealing all" about witchcraft. Virtually every village in America

has a "religious book store." Occult supply stores in those same villages are more hidden, usually behind the counters of health-food stores, crystal jewelry shops, beauty shops, and women's tiny bookshops and tea rooms.

Walk into a botanica in any major American city and leave behind the perceived sense and sensibility of White Anglo-Saxon Protestant Christian culture. This leads deep into the voodoo world of the 1960 hit movie, *Macumba Love*. This is a noncampy world of spirit. The primary colors rise invocative out of "primitive" cultures. The sensual smells are pure head trip. Folk poets Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel, in the song "Scarborough Fair," hailed the powers of "parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme." That song has been appropriated by Wiccans, who sing it as a hymn of white magic. Botanicas add cinchona bark, hasp, Devil's shoestring root, Canadian snake root, buckeyes, waahoo bark, Irish rowan berries to ward off bad magic, and graveyard dust. For uncrossing voodoo spells, for financial success, aphrodisiacs, and black artistry, a botanica is the *in*-gredient shop.

Because belief in good spirits predicates a belief in evil spirits as well, orthodox religion should not be surprised to see the traditional picture of the "Sacred Heart of Jesus" on aerosol cans marked, "Blessed Spray, Matthew 2:11. Contains Genuine Frankincense and Myrrh Oil. Caution: Contents under Pressure." Nor should the fainthearted be shocked to see the Sacred Heart itself beating in a pulsating plastic sculpture lit from within, or bloody statues of saints who died rapturous deaths of sex and violence like Jesus himself hanging on a crucifix of bones and chicken feathers. In botanicas, "Saint Anthony" candles in quart-size vigil glasses promise to "find lost people and lost things." Next to them stand candles of "Saint Christopher, Patron of Journeys," in a row of multicolored vigil lights painted up for each astrological sign, and next to them, the "Death unto My Enemy" vigil lamps deliciously "guaranteed to burn." The great American philosopher Peggy Lee, who summed up existentialism in her song, "Is That All There Is?" also summed up the theology of witchcraft in her "Fever! (What a Lovely Way to Burn)."

Witch Elisa in the Bronx devotes the enterprising length of her bathtub to the burning of *chango* candles that are wax *fith-fath* figures of men or women whom she wishes harm. To neighbors who have curse-or-bless candles and no place to burn them, Elisa rents tub space at a dollar a week per candle. For that fee she tends up to a hundred candles and adds reinforcing curses and prayers of her own. How is her tub different from the banks of votive candles lit by millions of believers, and burning night and day in every Catholic church in the world?

The botanica, long a staple of Hispanic culture, crossed over during the hippie 1960s to mainstream popular culture. George Agee, who operates a Detroit boutique/botanica says, "The hippies are able to feel unfavorable vibrations, and they must seek some power to offset them." Anton LaVey has observed that middle-class people are tired of invoking a God who does not hear them. They prefer a more providential Satan who does hear them, and actually intervenes. To contact God or Satan, or any of the saints and angels and spirits in between, seekers need candles, incense, and mojos. Classified ads offer plenty of guidance:

> Call Prophet Smith. This God-sent man can help. No case beyond help. Are you troubled or unlucky?
>
> Reverend Dr. Anthony Burns. Witchcraft, spells, evil annoyances removed. By appointment only.
>
> What is your trouble? Love-crossed condition? Advisor for home, marriage, or success.

For the people who consult the advertisements of this spiritualist subculture, the botanica serves as a convenient drugstore. A reader named "Edgar," who calls himself "the dean of the Chicago botanica owners," sent a Cuban family back to their spiritualist because the quantity of laxative recommended had not been specified. Botanica owners, to a person, tend to be close-mouthed. The "House of Candles and Talismans" on Stanton Street in New York City caters largely to Puerto Ricans. The Irishman who manages the store knows his Catholicism from obeah. (*Obeah*, often invoked by Tennessee Williams in plays such as 1957's *Orpheus Descending*, is necromancy, conjuration of good or evil spirits and magic—the same rituals Anglo-Saxons do when they sleep on wedding cake, knock on wood, or throw spilled salt.) Yet making his distinction, this Irish-named botanica manager will answer no questions, tired as he is of curious tourists and wary as he is of police, reporters, and his widening Anglo-Saxon clientele. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration likewise watchdogs botanica wholesalers, like Oracle Laboratories in New York, as well as the Prayer Candle Company and the Universal Botanic, both of Brooklyn. Wholesaler and retailer alike carefully note on much of their packaging in as small letters as possible: "Sold as a curio."

Botanica shelves seem to be stocked by two main product lines: "So-Called" and "Alleged." In the "So-Called" line there is "So-Called Holy Oil Double Strength with Alleged Lucky Roots," "So-Called Essence of

Murder" (Universal Botanic), and "Alleged Dove's Blood Oil." For suburbanites too sophisticated for the friendly Hispanic botanica, "Genuine Dream Oil Fortune-Teller Spray" can be mail ordered.

International Imports of Prescott, Arizona, offers from P.O. Box 2505 their twenty-fifth anniversary mail-order catalog. The list contains thousands of occult book titles, herbs, and oils (four dollars for four ounces, and up), opium pipes, red satin Satan's capes and Devil's hats (all-rubber pates with horns and pointed ears), crystal balls, imported straw voodoo dolls (red for love, black for hate, green for money, yellow to counter evil, and pink for success; each includes voodoo pins to stick in the doll), stereo recordings of the actual Anton LaVey and of the impersonated Marquis de Sade, tarot cards, "psychedelic" black lights, an *Illustrated History of the Horror Film*, as well as peace symbols, slave chokers, and Saint Christopher medals. International Imports notes, "All items are sold *as curios only*. We do not guarantee nor imply any supernatural qualities attributed to any of our products." A coiled snake on the catalog cover spits: "Warning! This book is dangerous—to ignore."

With all the finesse of a Coco Chanel, Los Angeles Witch Rita Norling advertises her white-magic aromatherapy with a high-fashion brochure: "Rita Norling has conjured up a remarkable new bath oil . . . astrologically formulated . . . The Rita Norling Mystique . . . Step into the Magic Circle of Rita Norling's world." In a voice accented somewhere east of Zsa Zsa Gabor, Rita says, "One of the main reasons I got into this business was because there were so many swindlers dealing through the mail. I always give the customer exactly what he wants." (Rita Norling, interview with the author). Some of what Rita's customers want are bone of black cat, heart of swallow, bat's heart, hog's heart (all wrapped in plastic baggies), petrulli root, oils, and candles. She caters primarily to the matron trade, who would faint in a botanica.

Botanicas of one kind or another are everywhere, including hundreds of over-the-top religious art and curio shops outside the four major Virgin Mary shrines at Lourdes in France, Fatima in Portugal, Guadalupe in Mexico, and Knock in Ireland. In the United States, mainstream shoppers flock to botanica boutiques that are West Side Puerto Rican, or African American, or universal hippie, or gay sex shops selling very insertable priapic sculptures, oils, and aromas such as amyl (butyl) nitrite, which by lowing the body's blood pressure causes out-of-body experiences that feel like flying. A botanica is a business built on dreams and fears. Because the

First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects witchcraft in its many forms as a religion, the only monitor of the brisk trade in "snake oil" is through consumer protection by the Food and Drug Administration as well as the Better Business Bureau. Neither can do anything about the efficacy of products "sold as a novelty only."

Whether it be "Alleged Aerosol of Love" or "Zodiac Charm Bath," the fact is that most of the herbs, charms, aromas, lotions, and potions are shipped to all major American cities from Louisiana, which as culture, location, and port is the point of entry for occult goods from all around the world, particularly the Caribbean with its gris-gris, Macumba, and Santeria. Gris-gris, pronounced "gree-gree," are amulets, bangles, and charms worn to conjure luck and conquer enemies. Macumba is a Brazilian trance cult of possession with human transformation into jaguars rather than werewolves. Santeria is one of the many combo religions of the African-Cuban diaspora combining evangelical Catholicism and even more evangelical blood sacrifice traced back to the Aztecs. Even in jurisdictions with antique laws against the occult, the bunko police try to keep the dealers on their guard. Because the occult is defined as an alternative religion, often tied to review-proof ethnicity, what separates the legal from the illegal is a shadow.

Cities, with problems more pressing than occult practitioners, allow the botanicas, the palm readers, and the mystic healers to keep their doors and post office boxes open as "doctors," "reverends," "fathers," "daddies," "mothers," "prophets," "madams," and "bishops." These counselors are small-business people who collect five to five hundred dollars for their services. Who dares say that their skills emerge from the blind faith of clients clutching at last straws? What is the difference between voodoo, the power of positive thinking, and the miraculous cures caused by the Virgin Mary at her many shrines worldwide, including her house of curative waters in Ephesus, Turkey, venerated by Muslims and decorated with Arabic quotations from the Koran about the Catholic Virgin? The mainstream success of a Jeane Dixon or of a Peter Hurkos, the spiritualist who unmasked the Boston Strangler and almost revealed the Manson Family, causes even the skeptic to begin to suspend disbelief. Popular medium John Edward—whose clients gladly join a three-year waiting list for a reading—has carried the psychic torch to the twenty-first century with books such as *Crossing Over* (2001); CDs, *Developing Your Own Psychic Powers* (2000); and television, particularly his show, *Crossing Over with John Edward.*

Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are absolute dogma. The occult is relative ambiguity.

Buy "garlic amulets with prayer sheets" for gambling success and to fend off evil spirits. Buy "Black Cat Jinx Remover" and "Chinese Floor Wash" to keep evil out of the house. Buy black candles to affect enemies; blue candles for healing; red candles for seducing; white candles for contacting spirits. Buy a gold needle to stick in an enemy's black candle. Buy *The Master Book of Candle Burning,* by Henri Gamache (1942), which has sold nearly two hundred thousand copies. Buy imported seed necklaces from Haiti. Buy in a botanica; buy in a Wiccan boutique; or buy by mail. The magic word is *buy*.

Botanica marketing has made a triumphant entrance into commercial popular culture. In 1970s television advertising, Miles Laboratories, amid lightning and thunder, suggested that Mr. Hyde, who "wasn't feeling himself," drink Alka Seltzer to change back to good old Dr. Jekyll. The TV genre of the wizardry sell surfaced first in the 1960s with "Wanda the Witch" shilling Hidden Magic Hairspray. Wanda was quickly joined by the Ajax White Knight, the Man from Glad, white doves (Dove dishwashing detergent) and white tornado omens (Ajax liquid cleaner), and the disembodied Ultra-Brite Toothpaste kiss mystically bussed to a young man's cheek.

In television ad lore, eating bread topped with Imperial margarine magically puts a crown on the bread-eater's head. Hertz lowers clients into their rented cars via an invisible magic carpet. Keebler Cookies are made by elves who front themselves with factories "because people believe in factories, not elves." Popular personalities like Ruth Buzzi of *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* costume themselves in witchcraft drag to pitch mainstream products. Chicago's Marshall Field department store sells antiques spiritedly in *The New Yorker*: "Of other voices, other rooms, in antiques brought together now in grand design for more than a shade of their former selves. A spirited and splendid collection. . . . The rarest of 18th-century craft in an entity of past, present, And future? . . . At Field's in Chicago. . . . Our new Trend House has everything but ghosts."

Playtex, with its "Living Gloves," has a strangle-hold trademark on the shape-shifting "Living Bra," which is a sexy animism akin to the hair of Medusa. Cannon towels' TV spot features an invisible girl wrapped in a shapely terry cloth towel sarong, with the voice-over saying, "When a girl can't be seen, it's important what she be seen in. Available at your favorite

haunts, to liven your spirits." Vaudeville comedian Bert Lahr, dressed in a red union suit playing the Devil, tempts for Frito-Lay Potato Chips. His Devil-with-chips subway poster appears in the film *Dutchman* (1966), written by beat poet LeRoi Jones, now Amiri Baraka. Cashing in on his *Frankenstein* image, Boris Karloff, in a mad-doctor laboratory, recommends, "A-1 Sauce: Experiment with it!"

Bigelow Carpets has conducted the largest national astrology promotion. Carpet stylist Barbara Curtis travels nationwide to Bigelow dealerships to conduct "Astrology Carpet Clinics" that forecast carpeting color and pile according to the natal signs of the customers who line up in droves for the seminar. Full-page Strega liqueur ads picture the black-hooded face of a seductive neowitch, with the copy, "Every woman needs a little unfair advantage. If you have your eye on the future, serve him Strega, the spirit with a past. Explain that this ambrosial liquid was created centuries ago in Italy by the beautiful witches of Benevento. Whisper the legend of Strega—that when two people share the golden spirit, they are united by the Love that Lasts Forever. Will the legend work its magic?—Supernaturally! But don't share it with just anyone—forever is a long, long time. Strega, 80 Proof."A similar siren shills for the spirits of Lang's 8 Scotch Whiskey, claiming, "My name is Nadine. Call me collect. Learn what the Zodiac says about your future. If you're planning an affair for a hundred people or just two, tell me your birth date, and I'll tell you what your horoscope promises. And remember, any affair is more successful when you serve Lang's 8 Premium Scotch. Give my brand a try, and call me collect in Los Angeles at (213) 787-2840."

To figure out who reads a magazine or who watches a TV show, look at the advertising. Ads reflect the audience demographic. Daytime TV sells to women wanting "miracle cleaning" products for the house, and seductive botanicals like "vanishing creme," "Black Magic Shampoo," "Hidden Magic Hair Spray," and "aromatherapy bath-oil beads." The wizardry sell is a constant theme, because the consumer wants things to change, and magic promises to effect the change. Glidden Paints advises, "When your house begins to haunt you, use Latex Spred Paint." Madison Avenue commercially confirms American belief in the occult.

With such confirmation, Western Culture has come full circle. Deuteronomy gave the ancient rules for witch-testing. Modern witches are no longer tested. Popular witches endorse every kind of marvelous, magical, and fascinating product.

CUT TO

The Newsstand

MAD Magazine cover: *Rosemia's Boo-Boo*

Everyone is talking about the recent movie that has shocked the nation. (Not THIS nation . . . Upper Slobovia!) We're referring to the picture that has suspense, witchcraft, sorcery, religious fantasy, and most important of all—a couple of shots of naked ladies . . . all of the elements necessary for good "Box Office" today . . . mainly, bad taste! This picture obviously was intended to offend people . . . you're sure to be offended by our *MAD* version of *Rosemia's Boo-Boo.*

MORT DRUCKER AND ARNIE KOGEN, *MAD Magazine*, January 1969

Long before *Rosemary's Baby* became a popular book and movie, publishers from *Summis Desiderantes* on knew that the occult was a cash register. *The Old Farmers Almanac* has been making a profit out of white magic since 1792. Some of its imitators are successfully into their own second hundred years. *The Moon-Sign Book*, one of the more recent (not yet a century), sells steadily by defining "dates for breeding and setting eggs" and making "astro-guidance for romance, homemaking, farm and garden, fishing and hunting." Such agrarian panaceas sell next to the sexually desperate *How to Find Your Mate through Astrology: The Bachelor Girl's Practical Guide to Locating, Landing, and Loving Her Man.* While Bachelor Girl is interviewing, she might purchase the *Zodiac Sign-In Book*, advertised as "fun at parties, birthdays, and seances." By the time she lands her fish she will likely need *Your Baby's First Horoscope.* And the baby may need *You Were Born on a Rotten Day.* Occult titles hide in plain sight in the "self-help" section in stores afraid of having an out "occult" section.

Nothing, however, is financially less risky than the risqué. Sex always sells. Witchcraft has always been the code word for sex. The porno occult has come out from under the gloriously funky counters of the late, lamented 42nd Street porn shops documented (and causing latter-day nostalgia) in *Midnight Cowboy* (1969), *Taxi Driver* (1976), and *Cruising* (1980). In the way that water always seeks its own level, occult erotica has flowed out to clean, well-lit suburban drugstores and supermarkets. At magazine and book racks where *Fate* magazine once stood alone with innocent articles about UFOs, customers take to the coded occult genres like Rosemary stroking her baby. Barry Cuff's *Damned Spot* (1969) is frank porno witchery. Wilson Tucker's *The Warlock* (1967) reveals what everyone "always knew": that

the CIA is into the occult. Heinrich Graat's *Revenge of Increase Sewall* (1969) could easily trade promo blurbs about an evil-shadow-overhanging-a-town's-unspeakable-rites with Elizabeth Davis' *Suffer a Witch to Die* (1969). The popularity of 1970s occult novels, such as Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976), is porno-Gothic enough to frizzle the hair of Nancy Drew. What essayist Erica Jong did for sex with the platonic ideal of the "zipless fuck" in *Fear of Flying* (1973), she did for women and sex in her provocative *Witches* (1981).

Joseph R. Rosenberger's *The Demon Lovers: A Psychosexual Study of Witchcraft and Demonology* (1969) is as porno pop as it is pop scholarly. Rosenberger alternates historical documentary with erotic "sociological" reportage. Rosenberger cannot be lightly dismissed. If he writes non-fiction, he reports too well the dark side of suburban demonology; and if what he writes is fiction, he sells too well to be dismissed. He represents the new diverse scholarship that must be considered by critics of both witchcraft or popular culture.

Rosenberger's chapter on the Great Beast Aleister Crowley (1875–1947) recounts with delicious prurience Crowley's "Raising of the Devil" through ritual sodomy, fellatio, and sadism with his opium-head friend, Edward Allen Bennett. "As Crowley wrote years later, in his masterpiece, *Magick in Theory and Practice*, 'Satan appeared in the triangle, but only for a moment or so; yet he did appear, as a very beautiful boy with golden curls, a naked, handsome boy with a sexual organ that was shaped as a trident.' It was a terrible experience for Edward Allen, however. He screamed and fainted when he saw Satan."[17]

Like the Crowley-Bennett ménage à trois with Satan, the literature of demonology is often inverted, erotic, and sadomasochistic. Number 22 California statute 16603 defines the horror comic book as "Any book or booklet in which an account of the commission or attempted commission of the crime of arson, assault with caustic chemicals, assault with a deadly weapon, burglary, kidnapping, mayhem, murder, rape, robbery, theft, or voluntary manslaughter is set forth by means of a series of five or more drawings or photographs in sequence, which are accompanied by either narrative writing or words represented as spoken by a pictured character, whether such narrative words appear in balloons, captions on or immediately adjacent to the photograph or drawing."

If the legal definition of *horror* and *comic* mixes, then the lurid photos and print of the mass-circulated tabloids are the "fun" horror comics of the adult occult. In comparison to *Screw, Pacer, Tattler, Gay, Midnight*, and

other pop-sex sheets, the *National Enquirer* is the granddaddy of junk journalism, which often means it has revealed embarrassing human truths polite people don't talk about. The *Enquirer* loves the occult, and so does its huge readership. Available in supermarket checkout lines everywhere, the *Enquirer* has the largest circulation of any weekly paper in America. Before the *Enquirer* "righted" itself with religion and Republican politics in 2000, a typical week's issue often carried four or five occult articles under teaser headlines like:

> Movie Star Eddie Bracken's Occult Experience: Spirit Message from a Dead GI Leads Eddie Bracken to the Soldier's Grave
>
> After 11 Years, Man Is Fired Because Handwriting Expert Says He Is Not Suited for the Job
>
> Doctors Confirm that Woman Dying of an Incurable Disease Recovered Completely after Seeing Vision of Pope John XXIII
>
> Witch Sybil Leek Says Horoscopes Can Help Men and Women Choose Right Careers

Tennessee Williams, writing in *Esquire*, August 1975, called the original-recipe *National Enquirer* "the finest journalistic review of the precise time we live in."[18] In volume 44, number 42, the *Enquirer* editorialized how its staff created its content: "During his twenty-three years with the Newspaper Enterprise Association syndicate, Hollywood reporter, Dick Kleiner, has talked to hundreds of stage, screen, and TV personalities. Kleiner tabulated that seventy-five out of every one hundred actors have had psychic experiences and he tells of these dramatic experiences in his book, *ESP and the Stars.*

Even as one generation of actors descends to the next in the tabloids, some things never change. Michael Jackson made an autobiographical film titled *Ghost* that debuted (and mysteriously disappeared), Halloween 1996. The singer Sting and his wife, Trudy Styler, claim their home has a ghost, as does Dan Ackroyd, the star of *Ghostbusters.* Uma Thurman moved from her home because of ghosts. Nicholas Cage has seen a ghost in the attic of his uncle, Francis Ford Copplola. Keanu Reeves, star of *The Devil's Advocate*, saw ghosts as a child, and Paul McCartney has sensed the ghost of John Lennon.

The Enquirer has run millions of mystic classified ads:

Fortune Telling Cards. Amazing Deck with Instructions. $2.00. New York.

"Your Horoscope and Your Dreams," Book of Deep Insight into Self, with Astrology. Louisiana.

Computerized Horoscope. Personalized, Fifteen Pages, Startling revelations. Love, Career, Forecast. Send $5.00, Birth date, Birth time, Birth place, Sex. California.

Become an Ordained Minister, and Doctor of Divinity. Degrees issued immediately. Donation: $5.00. Vermont.

Where Witches and Warlocks Abound! Write to The Psychic Club. Ohio.

Witchcraft! Genuine Herbs, Roots, Oils, etc. Free List. Instructions. California.

WITCHCRAFT LIVES! Hexcraft-magic-occult headquarters. Books, supplies, curios. Sorcerer's Apprentice Manual: 25 cents.

Voodoo doll kit $2.00. Cult Handbook illustrated, $l.00. Arizona.

Every serious reader of the contemporary occult knows of the two famous books by Anton LaVey: his theoretical *Satanic Bible* and its practical companion volume, *Satanic Rituals.* In the age before LaVey reinvented Satanism for modern urban culture, Lewis de Claremont had written the two best books of ritual: *Legends of Incense, Herb, and Oil Magic* (1936), and *The Ancient's Book of Magic Containing Secret Records of the Procedure and Practice of the Ancient Masters and Adepts* (1940). *Legends of Incense,* as a kind of list, details the materials needed for ritual, and *The Ancient's Book,* as a workbook, details the form for mixing the materials, particularly those sold by its publisher, Oracle. Catharine Yronwode of the Lucky Mojo Curio Company has noted that *Legends of Incense* was "basically European and Medieval in orientation, but it has from the first been packaged for sale to hoodoo practitioners in the African-American community. It has proven consistently popular and has never gone out of print, despite the fact that in 1966 an important chapter [chapter 10] on seals and talismans was eliminated by the publisher."[19]

Both Lewis de Claremont books are controversial. Fans feel the books give access to deep secrets. Critics argue the books are a mail-order sales gimmick. Could they be both? Pontifex Maximus Frederic de Arechaga, in interview at his Babylonian-style temple in Chicago, said that while de Claremont reveals some worthwhile information, the books are profanations

of old Sabaean texts which should themselves be published without de Claremont's mass-media dilutions. De Arechaga founded his Sabaean religious order in Chicago in 1968 when he took over his mother's occult supply store, El Sabarum, on Sheffield Street. (Pontifex de Arechaga's original 1969 interview appears in the final chapter of this book.)

Despite controversy, for a novice needing a ritual primer, or a basic catechism, de Claremont's tidy manuals give access to otherwise inaccessible and out-of-print texts that, perhaps, the person writing under the name "de Claremont" might have learned in some thereafter lost oral tradition. Times change, and stories die out. Of course, Lewis de Claremont may have been a supremely talented creative writer expressing what his imagination told him. He would have fit the grimoire pattern of copying and recopying secret mysteries and rituals. Gerald Gardner, who claimed he inherited the *Book of Shadows* in fragments during his initiation in 1939, was also accused of being the author of his "found" book. Anton LaVey frankly authored his *Satanic Bible* out of many "found" texts which he made his own. Tracing solo authorship always reveals the same fact. The beating heart of nearly all secret, ancient literature—including the Bible—is the rhythm of a multitude of voices speaking in whispers under the roar of the world.

De Claremont, Gardner, and LaVey are three voices crying in the centuries-long wilderness caused by the occult holocaust of torture, murder, and book burning that has kept the hereditary craft of witchcraft, both white and black, oral and written, underground. Debunkers may declare de Claremont a fraud, Gardner a plagiarist, and LaVey a huckster; but the student of the occult will read these authors and glean from them as much of the hidden history of the occult as possible.

CUT TO

SNAPSHOT: Abbot's Magic Company, "Magic City," Colon, Michigan, 1970.

In Colon, Michigan, the local gas station attendant hops on his motorcycle. He roars past a bearded Amish man who leads his three barefoot boys across the cracked pavement of Blackstone Avenue. On the opposite curb, the boys' mother smiles at her family from under her plain bonnet. The sound of the cycle fades. The family regroups and enters the Magic City Hardware. Every day of the year, the 1000 residents of the village live

quietly. But four days every August, Colon lights up to what it is: "The Magic Capital of the World." Each summer's end, nearly one thousand international magicians double Colon's population for "Abbott's Magic Get-Together." The elementary school becomes a gigantic showroom, and the high school hosts "Four Gigantic Stage Shows" by professionals. Registration is $20 per person.

Colon got magic by association. Outside of town, on Sturgeon Lake, is the island where the famous Blackstone the Magician (1855–1965, born Henry Boughton in Chicago) built his first summer retreat, "the one that burned to the ground." Millie Bouton (changed from *Boughton*), the wife of Blackstone's brother and stage double Pete, still lives in Colon. But the grand times are gone. Sally Banks, the wife of Blackstone's stage manager, is now Colon's Avon Lady.

Businesses like "The Magic Carpet Bar" and "The Magic Pocket Pool Hall" anchor the two blocks of Main Street where true showbiz lives. The town theme is everywhere, but the town's essence stands behind a new supermarket in two black buildings painted with white skeletons and ghosts. This is the Abbott Manufacturing Company, the world's largest manufacturer of quality magic.

Abbott is its own perfect museum of the popular culture of commercial magic. It was founded in 1927 by Australian magician Percy Abbott, who came to Michigan one summer to visit Blackstone. Abbott's memoir is *A Lifetime in Magic*. Owner Recil Bordner claims a mailing list of ten thousand names. *The Wall Street Journal* lists Abbott's annual take at $200,000.

The genteel Bordner, who resembles actor James Stewart, readily admits to the commercialism of demand and supply. "We're in show business," he says. "We manufacture what our customers want. In 1966 we built the magic illusions for the touring skating show *Holiday on Ice*. Our shops were clogged for months. Several of the illusions were so big we had to assemble them in the streets."

His Abbott Publishing Company prints undated titles like *A Magician Goes to Church: A Guide to Gospel Magic*, by Jim Dracup of the Fellowship of Christian Magicians, and *Lessons in Scripture: Magic Trick Patter*, by the Reverend Donald Bodley.

Of fundamentalist Bible magicians like Andre Cole, who is sponsored by the business entity Crusade for Christ, Bordner says, "Many of them are excellent illusionists. Their magic makes the Bible miracles quite graphic for youngsters. So they're very popular with churches throughout the country.

I personally think they're defeating their purpose trying to duplicate scriptural miracles. If a man can do the same miracle as God, God must seem a little less. But if they want it, we'll supply it. If they write a book, we'll publish it. I don't think it's best, but I'm not my brothers' censor."

Bordner, in fact, distributes many monthly periodicals of magic like *Genii: The Conjurors' Magazine* from Los Angeles, and *The New Pentagram* from Peter Warlock in Britain.

The Abbott showroom is a fascinating study in nostalgic carnival color. A stage jammed with floor models emphasizes the vaudeville-show atmosphere. Red and black paint enliven the exhibits. Mandarins, rabbits, and genies decorate illusions like "The Girl-without-a-Middle Cabinet" ($650), and Andre Cole's "Chinese Chopper" for the head and wrists ($95). Levitation illusions range from $77.50 to $1500. Magic wands cost $2 to $6. Crystal balls—glass from England, plastic from the USA—cost from $7.50 to $20.

"Never leave your crystal ball in your auto," Bordner warns. "Several of our magicians' finest tricks have been sending their cars up in flames. They catch the sun, you know."

The Abbott catalog likewise cautions, "Be very careful in selecting merchandise. . . . A valuable part of every magical effect is its secret. Once you have learned the secret, we cannot exchange or refund money on tricks or books unless there is a flaw in materials or workmanship."

"When we ship internationally—even to our one Russian who deals through West Germany," Bordner says, "we declare only half the list value because half the price is for the sharing of the secret, and they can't tax that intangible."

Bordner points with pride to a magician's table. "I cut the stencil for that design," he says. "You saw it in the Tony Curtis film *Houdini* [1953]. Paramount Studios borrowed quite a lot of equipment from us for that movie."

In the Abbott cellar, Arturo, a prized craftsman among Bordner's twenty employees, explains, "Hollywood paid me to use both my name and my straitjacket escape for *Eternally Yours*. That was around 1939 with Loretta Young as the wife of magician David Niven."

The books as well as the "restraint-and-torture" equipment of guillotines and such in the main showroom could be perverted to a bondage fetishist's delight—particularly the setups, but not the solutions, of a manual called *Escapes: Secret Workings for Handcuffs, Ropes, Boxes, Bags, Chains, Padlocks, Strait Jackets, Wrist Stocks*. On the cover is a rather alarming fetish-like photo of a uniformed cop handcuffing a boy in swimming

briefs preparatory to the youngster's underwater live burial and suspense-filled escape.

Bordner realizes his products can be appropriated to anyone's fancy or fantasy. He has, in fact, received requests for botanica ingredients as well as farmers' requests to remove curses from oat crops. One woman caller, a self-identified witch, left disgruntled that Bordner supplied materials for popular stage magic, but not natural magic. Bordner muses that while he carries tarot cards, his doves—alive and cooing at six dollars a pair—are for the stage, not the stew.

In point of fact, hard-core occultists amuse the Abbott firm, which goes no farther into dogma than stage magic. At least, that's what Bordner says founder Percy Abbott said; but where there's smoke, there's usually a trick, and behind it a trickster.

The Abbott Manufacturing Company has a monthly magazine, *The New Tops*, which at $7 a year does not lack a sense of humor. In its news items, *The New Tops* was happy to see the media-savvy witch Louise Huebner stump the TV panel, who could not guess her occupation on the television show *What's My Line*, May 4, 1970.

The ceiling of the Abbott showroom is plastered with a fortune in original posters of the magicians Thurston and Harry Houdini, as well as of the circuses of Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey.

A portrait of Percy Abbott hangs glowering on the wall, with Satan looking over his shoulder.

"It's melodramatic, isn't it?" Bordner says. "Some say he had the Devil in him. He and Blackstone were both very temperamental."

Over Bordner's head, an old and peeling poster reads:

GEM THEATER: CASSOPOLIS MICHIGAN
10 PM SHOW TIME
The Spirit of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
presents
SAX—ONA
in his Sensational Spiritualistic Seance
and GHOST SHOW
No Children Admitted
Ladies Must Have a Male Escort
Doctor and Nurse in Attendance

In a nearby showcase stands a magician's gag sign. It reads: "Applause, Please."

CUT TO

Inner and Outer Space, Apollo 13

Because the occult seems to answer questions in areas of human experience where the only real answers are increasingly intelligent questions, consumers will use, wear, read, and view anything to open the mysteries locked within themselves.

"Houston, we have a problem."

The Marathon Oil Company's *Apollo 13* drinking glass commemorated more than that damaged moonship's desperately shaky return to Earth in 1970.

It proved humans will buy amulets, crucifixes, and filling-station glassware to exorcise their innermost fears. Owning the popular "*Apollo 13* Safe Return" glass was like owning some kind of team chalice for a magic toast. "If the astronauts made it, so can we."

The news knew.

Everyone knew.

The very return of the ill-fated moonship, astrologically named *Aquarius,* was a miracle.

Numerologists had warned the National Aeronautics and Space Administration not to launch *Apollo 13* on Wednesday, April 11, at 13 hours and 13 minutes (Houston time), carrying the 12th, 13th, and 14th men to the moon, because the spaceship would be traveling on Friday the 13th, the date the explosion actually occurred.

What of this numerological coincidence?

Titanic was launched in 1911, on April 1—April Fool's Day.