

not your mother's broomstick

new Witch

A Beginner's
Guide to Body
Art pg.57



**Surfing with
the Goddess**

**Sex, Magic, and Healing:
Five Steps to Reclaim Your
Power and Find True Love**

**Entice Your
Creative Muse**

**Gaia Consort
Breaks the Rules**

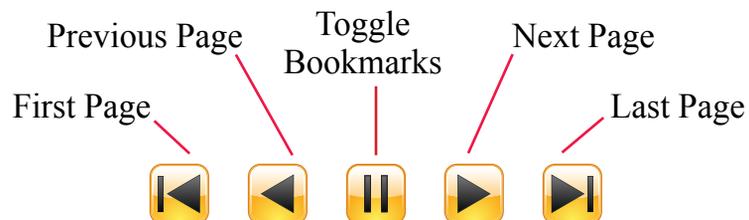


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And suddenly, without any warning at all, the Fringe is Mainstream.

I mean, look around. A Witch on SciFi. *Queer Eye For The Straight Guy*. Harry Potter. *A Wrinkle in Time*. Gay marriage. *The Lord of The Rings*. Fantasy has become so bloody mainstream that the Academy gave Peter Jackson so many Oscars that no one cares what he wore to the ceremony. There are Witches on soap operas. Soap operas! The Goddess is alive, and magic is available on about fifteen percent of your cable channels at any given moment. We have, I think, fallen right through the Looking Glass.

We're also now Above the Radar, and that's something to reckon with. Tolerance may be on the rise, but the Religious Right is more strident as they become more paranoid. Human beings don't like being backed into corners; they get all primal and try to rip your arms off.

So with all this weirdness going on — the Fringe becoming Mainstream, the Mainstream becoming Fringe, people putting up and taking down Ten Commandments monuments, protests against Barbie, and other events too varied and bizarre to list, what's to do?

First, take a deep breath. Don't panic. I get lots of letters, both as the Managing Editor of *newWitch* and as the Membership Coordinator of Pagan Pride, from people who are scared and angry and panicked and just-plain-running-around-like-a-chicken-with-its-head-cut-off. You can't do anything effective, even stick your head in the sand, if you're panicking. Panicking plays right into the cultures of apocalypticism and paranoia and general fear that the so-called Powers-That-Be are working overtime to inculcate into every man, woman and child on the planet. Don't give in to the fear.

Second, don't let up. We — meaning human and planetary rights activists of all stripes — are winning. If we weren't winning, they (meaning fas-

cists of various stripes, colors and inclinations) wouldn't be panicking. So get back out there! March, protest, work, play, pray — pick a cause that needs your fire and go give it freely. I recently went through a wonderful men's weekend program (which I promise not to get preachy about, really). I remember saying to one of the facilitators at one point, "There are plenty of causes to fight for. No man should leave this place without picking a good fight and going after it." The same thing applies to women, children, and everyone else. There are plenty of causes. Pick one. I prefer local causes because community activism is the most grounded, the most earthy, and the easiest in which to make visible progress. Pick an injustice and make a noise about it; make people see the things they try to pretend aren't there. If you're a U.S. citizen...vote this fall, dammit!

— "Meditations"
Marcus Aurelius

Third, stay informed. Pay attention to the news and don't just settle for the rancid pablum dished out by the mainstream sources that everyone else uses for news. Check out alternative sources, lots of them. Read between the lines, lift up that CNN crawler and see what's under there. Be a skeptic. An informed skeptic.

Fourth, make your money work for the causes you believe in. Buy green. Buy organic. Even if you don't have much money — and trust me, I don't — you can find ways to support small farmers and small producers. Shop at local stores, co-ops and farmer's market; Goodwill is the original example of "reduce, re-use and recycle." Buy fresh food rather than processed. Eat no meat, less meat, or better meat. (It may not only save the environment, but your brain cells as well.) Buy handmade goods from people you know, or second-hand or thrift store goods. Best of all, make it, grow it, create it yourself — breadmaking, knitting, and gardening

are all wonderful therapy. Finally — remember we

are not powerless. We have the power to change the

world; we have already changed the world, and we will continue to change the world. When a neat "underground" thing becomes mainstream, it's not a defeat for our side, it's a victory. Yes, it can be a bummer to lose our "outsider" status, but get over it already; when the causes and lifestyles we believe in and espouse become mainstream they can't be persecuted, ignored, and slandered so easily. In the end, it's a net energy gain for the Fringe; mainstream institutions give us the only energy they understand: fame and fortune. We become powerful. Stronger. More able to move on and create the next new thing. We are Witches, and we change things. Let's get out there and keep doing it!

in which your humble editor tells it like he sees it



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