

“Mother Loving” by Rev. Ciacchi for EarthDay 2015

I submitted this article to the Radical Fairy Digest (RFD) for their ReWilding issue in January 2015 and I am not certain when it will be published or put on their website. I wanted to post it here in my blog in time for Earth Day 2015. Although it is not completely polished, and I am not completely finished with it, it is a summary of the focus of my life’s work for the past 8 years.



This image of earth cake(above) is an original piece or art by Linda Montana

“Mother Loving”

By Reverend Teri D. Ciacchi

No one needs to tell faggots, witches, and queers that the wilderness is synonymous with personal freedom. We know this from the word “pagani,” country dweller, the source of the word pagan. I assert that radical faerie sanctuaries function as Temporary Autonomous Zones where people have the opportunity to explore and develop sexual sovereignty, through ReWilding activities. Wolf Creek and other radical faerie sanctuaries offer a vital space for the ReSelfing of queer peoples.

Relaxation and the Imaginal Existence of God/dess

Research from the field of Ecopsychology gives scientific evidence that supports our personal experiences of relaxation and liberation in wilderness settings. Human bodies experience immediate benefits from even 20 minutes of being in wooded areas. In nature, our systems slow down, our peripheral vision is restored and widened, heart rates slow down, nervous systems relax. In nature, humans report a deeper sense of peace and well being accompanied by experiences of connection and spiritual expansion. It has also been established through research that people experience liberation in wilderness in part because of the lack of social policing that exists there.

Ecopsychology also offers us new ways to interpret mythology. My favorite example is Laura Shamas's 2009 article, "Aphrodite and Ecology: The Goddess of Love as Nature Archetype," extolling the usefulness of The Golden One as a symbol for the revitalizing fertility of all plant life and the fecundity of the earth. She asserts that sexuality, sensuality, and beauty are the domains shared by both Aphrodite and the natural world. Shamas quotes Thomas Moore, "Aphrodite's body is the archetype of the human body and also the body of the world" (*The Soul of Sex*, p. 21), concluding that Aphrodite "offers us a chance...to heal the dysfunctional relationship between the environment and humans – through creation and regeneration." Astrologer Tom Jacobs' depth psychology book, *Lilith: Healing the Wild*, extensively explores our need to embrace the dark feminine and end the war against Her. The importance of exploring the archetypes of Hermes and Pan are widely discussed in Dennis Merritt's book *Hermes, EcoPsychology and Complexity Theory*. Again, no one needs to tell faggots, witches and queers that the phallic thrust of trees against the sky is an invocation to Pan; we know it, we feel it inside us. Still it's nice to get academic back-up.



The Temporary Autonomous Zone of Wolf Creek

“There is no becoming, no revolution, no struggle, no path; already you’re the monarch of your own skin – your inviolable freedom waits to be completed only by the love of other monarchs: a politics of dream, urgent as the blueness of sky.” – Hakim Bey

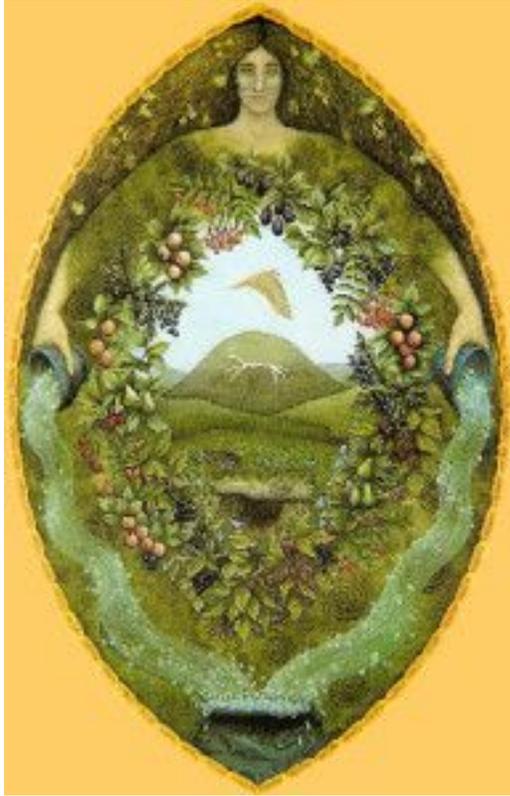
I live inside the edges of the city of Portland and, like many queer women, my economic stability comes from a hetero dyad. In February 2013 I was in a weekly house-meeting with my two straight-identified, male, cisgendered landmates. As always, I was speaking from my queer-centric poly-normative personal narrative about my goals for the year when one of them said, “I’m not really feeling the queer thing so much.” To which, the other man replied; “Me either.” This triggered a sermon from me about sociological economic oppression and my accusation that these comments were an act of micro-aggression against my own well-established queer identity. I requested that each of them give me \$100 so that I could take a queer vacation and be with “my people” by attending Beltane at the Nomenus Sanctuary in Wolf Creek.

After three days of being on the land I noticed an unprecedented sense of well-being and relaxation in my body. I was, at the time, still recovering from a major abdominal surgery, and so my sense of ease was quite dramatic. I realized that I was experiencing a reprieve from the daily psychological pressure of having my queer identity denied or erased. I had stumbled into a Temporary Autonomous Zone. A Temporary Autonomous Zone or TAZ is well defined in the book by that name written by Hakim Bey. Bey quotes Stephen Pearl Andrews as saying a TAZ is “the seed of the new society taking shape within the shell of the old” (IWW Preamble). The sixties-style “tribal gathering,” the forest conclave of eco-saboteurs, the idyllic Beltane of the neo-pagans, anarchist conferences, gay faerie circles – all these are already “liberated zones” of a sort, or at least potential TAZs.

Harry Hay and other radical faerie who created the sanctuaries did so in order to give each other a much-needed TAZ for the exploration of their sexual expression without punishment, policing, or judgment. My personal herstory is informed by many conversations and experiences with radical faerie boyfriends in the early 80s. I understood the identity politics behind choosing a radical faerie identity and the importance of Hay’s insistence that faggots were essentially different from other men, in part because of their spiritual understanding of nature’s importance.

But in May 2013, I experienced for the first time, a Temporary Autonomous Zone of queer and faggot-inclusive cultural space in the woods that I had not intentionally created for myself. It was generated for me by the presence of my queer elders and Wolf Creek land stewards and this intentionally created sanctuary allowed me to deeply relax into the comfort of my own sexual sovereignty. The ashes of hundreds of gay men who died in the 1980s plague of HIV/AIDS and left their behests for the purchase of Wolf Creek land left this space as a sanctuary for the exploration and actualization of sexual sovereignty.

Attending events at radical faerie sanctuaries gives us a rare and much-needed opportunity to drop the socially constructed personas that are a requirement of entering capitalist social environments. The Wolf Creek Beltane festival gave me the freedom to be myself without the habituated defensiveness of needing to assert my queerness. A social context existed where I could reveal myself to myself. My own essence arose and was available so that I could then interact authentically with others from my core identity. Only in an environment that accepts and celebrates my queerness could I engage in the “subject to subject” relatedness that Hay so eloquently articulated.



The Evocation of Interior Wilderness

What is Wild? wild adjective: 1. (of an animal or plant) living or growing in the natural environment; not domesticated or cultivated. Synonyms: untamed, undomesticated, feral. 2. uncontrolled or unrestrained, especially in pursuit of pleasure.

In her article "Body As Place: A Somatic Guide to ReIndiginization," embodiment practitioner Nala Walla writes powerfully about the need for all people to tend to their "Zone Zero." Like other social permaculturists, she has borrowed the permaculture paradigm of zones of care and effectively merged it with ecological systems theory to create a new framework that locates Zone Zero in our own interior, felt experience. Using magickal language as found in the Emerald Tablet attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, we have known this intellectually as "As Above, so Below," reframed in systems theory as macrocosm/microcosm. Somatics is the art and practice of sensing the soma, or "the body as experienced from within." Ecosomatics is an acknowledgment, an inknowing that our individual somas interpenetrate and are imbedded within greater social and planetary (Gaiac) bodies. Ecosomatic perspectives and practices see ecological health and sustainability as inseparable from personal health.

Moving from these definitions of wild and soma, I ask us to turn to the parts of ourselves that the fading uber culture has thrust to the edges of our lives: sexuality and sexual identity. I ask that we enter deeply into our collective inner wilderness and begin to gather, harvest, and preserve the disassociated parts we have abandoned. There, in the hedgerows and far-away edges of our inner landscapes are the frozen, unmet needs of childhood awaiting the golden light and awareness of our own attention and time. Let us tend the wilderness in our inner cores. Erect an inner pillar of glittering immanence. Clear out the pollution of others ideas of what we "should be" and how we "should act." The potential power of our collective holistic healing is a crown of jewels I long to offer as a courtship gift to my lover Gaia. Until we attend to and accomplish our own sexual healing, the World; the actual physical Earth we live upon, cannot have our conscious attention. Sexual Healing is now the existential responsibility of every human who is interested in having human evolution be a part of the Earth's future.



Re-Wilding as ReSelfing: Restoration at Zone Zero

“We do not “come into” this world; we come out of it, as leaves from a tree. As the ocean “waves,” the universe “peoples.” Every individual is an expression of the whole realm of nature, a unique action of the total universe. This fact is rarely, if ever, experienced by most individuals. Even those who know it to be true in theory do not sense or feel it, but continue to be aware of themselves as isolated “egos” inside bags of skin.” – Alan Watts

Doing ReWilding is like doing something to and for Nature, but it may be more useful to reframe it as an act of *Being*, an act of uncovering our essentially loving ecstatic core. ReSelfing: self-restoration. Something we do for ourselves as we are not separate from Nature. There is something important, precious, and unique that arises inside of a human being when they attend to and heal their core wounds of toxic shame, sex negativity, and sexual abuse. When we give our beautiful, open, curious attention to what is there inside of our bodies and inside of the earth, we are engaging in ReWilding. When we attend to our own healing from the early abuses and traumas of childhood, adolescence and our early 20s, we begin to uncover our essential wild natures.

There is a fundamental shift that occurs when we sit with, acknowledge, and begin to feel into our core wounds, whether they were emotional and energetic wounds, psychological physical violence

and violation from hitting, or sexual violence that included our genitals. The soma reawakens, the Wild One begins to move and evolve in us when we attend to these wounds. This wounding can come from parents simply acting as if they owned your sexuality, your body as a thought form, or through an actual act of violation that went against our will. Dr. Betty Martin, in her ground-breaking Learning to Touch workshops, says “All of us have at some time or other been touched against our will.” And those touches leave energetic cellular remnants in our bodies.

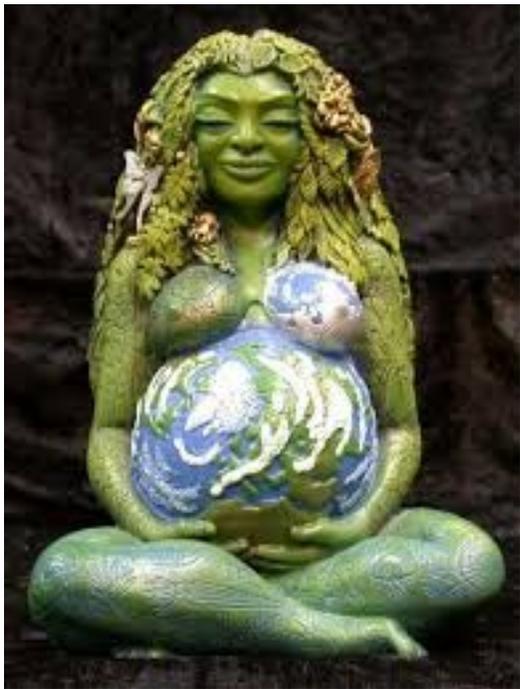


Courting the Gaic Bodies

Tomi Hazel Ward of Siskiyou Permaculture Institute teaches that we need to develop reciprocal relationships with the land. When we commit to the land, the land restores us. Tomi Hazel talks about how the land misses us, feels abandoned, is bereft without our conscious, aware attention and tending. I am curious about what would happen if we let our selves become aware of and attend to the deep grief the land holds. It holds all of the knowing of the destruction of indigenous ways, the burning times, the ownership of land and the subjugation of it. At Wolf Creek the land specifically holds the ashes and bones of our faggot ancestors of blood and love.

The teachings of my Tibetan Buddhist root teacher, Reginald Ray of Dharma Ocean and most especially my attendance of Dathun 2011 gave me specific tools that help me woo and become a better lover of Gaia, Aphrodite, and Pan. Reggie’s practices of 12-fold breath, 10-point grounding, and Bodhicitta helped me develop the skill of feeling into the earth’s bodies/soma, Gaia. I also learned from Reggie the idea of the earth as a bodhisattva who holds immense compassion for us; whose darkness holds the somatic experience of traumas throughout herstory. Dharma Ocean’s embodied meditation techniques teach you how to access the energy bodies of the earth and the cosmos through the portals of your own body. One of the many precious teachings he transmitted was the embodied knowing that I can sit in meditation and reach into a feeling for the land, experiencing the death and grief our lover the earth has for us. I have a morning meditation practice of tapping into and being with these sensations and energy fields, I can release a great deal of the tension in my body and then move into a deeper more rooted and ever-widening circle of healing

that I believe is one possible path forward, a movement toward healing the ancestral traumas held within the earth's energy field.



EcoSexual Magick Offers Us Sexual Sovereignty

I have made up that it is my responsibility to invent and teach EcoMagicks that give humans the skill to release and heal their own traumas in Zone Zero; right now I call this work Cascadia Holistic Peer Counseling (CHPC). I do my best to engage in a daily practice of embodiment meditation, sitting outside focusing on the sky and the cedar tree. I give myself, and the Gaiac bodies around me an opportunity to release and integrate through energetic merging and being with. I intentionally see this energetic merging as an intimate act of love making, as an offering to my lovers Pan Aphrodite Hermes Gaia. I have fun being a sort of chaos magician: applying the different practices I have learned from neo-tantra, sex magick and Tibetan Buddhist consort practices, mixing them up with ecology and Ecopsychology and calling it EcoMagicks. I have created a form of social permacultural remediation called LLR Aphrodite Temples, a TAZ where people agree to use the co-created magickal event space to attempt to become transpersonal resources of love for themselves and the planet. I am co-generating a yearly event called Surrender: The EcoSex Convergence with Lindsay Hagamen at Windward (www.ecosexconvergence.org). Surrender is also a whole-time space/place for those who want to explore their EcoSexual identity in a safe and intentional way.

Sexual sovereignty is “knowing” your own erotic power from an embodied physical experience that comes from being able to access the sensations and feelings that arise in your body. Understanding and restoring sexual sovereignty is one of the missions of Living Love Revolution, founded on a belief that it is important to energetically inhabit and be able to feel every part of our bodies in order

to tap into the immanence that dwells there. To hear more about this framework, listen to the “Sovereignty & Embodiment” podcast at livingloverevolution.com.

I specifically emphasize embodiment in my definition because while many of my personal experiences have been based on the ideas of sexual liberation and the concept of personal freedom, there is a huge difference between a concept and a lived experience. It is completely possible for queer people to perform acts of sexual liberation without experiencing and inhabiting sexual sovereignty; I have performed sex this way many times. Sexual sovereignty is arrived at by doing the work of removing the energetic possession and presence of the fading Uber cultures programming from your body. It does not matter where the trauma came from: your family of origin, your early experiences of social anxiety and trauma, early discomforts from engaging in sexual experiences that occurred within a cultural context of enforced ignorance, and sex-negative, anti-body, anti-pleasure propaganda, all of this may still be lodged in the lived experience of your Soma.

In childhood, in our early twenties, last week, these experiences accumulate and are held in the cells and muscles and blood and bones of our bodies. Until we address, release and integrate these traumatic pasts, we cannot fully inhabit our own bodies much less offer similar healing attention to the land.



Becoming an EcoSexual

How does being on the land help us restore our sexual sovereignty? How do we become lovers with the earth? Power, spaciousness and certainty arise inside of humans being when they attend to core wounds of sex negativity and sexual abuse. When we give our beautiful, open, curious attention to what is there inside of our bodies and inside of the earth, when we attend to our own healing.

There is a power that arises from sexual sovereignty that allows one to inknow, “It is not okay to live in a way that denies the experience of the land,” a spaciousness that cries out to be known, an

eruption of desire that incites the release of fluids upon the dewy grasses. Fucking other humans outside generates palpable fields of bliss for Gaia, entices our inner child selves and allows more freedom and sovereignty to exist. Having sex in nature and having sex with nature is a holy act of self restoration. Facilitating self-pleasuring rituals, EcoSexual actions, and sacred sexual group healings dedicated to ourselves and the earth is fabulous Selfing. Henry David Thoreau wrote, “In Wildness is the Preservation of the World.” And I would say “In Sexual Sovereignty is the Selfing of All Beings.”

