

THE CARTOMANCER

NUMBER NINE UNIVERSAL YEAR

by Bonnie Cehoe

THE FOUNTAIN TAROT

INTERVIEW WITH
JASON GRUHL,
JONATHAN SAIZ &
ANDI TODARO

BEYOND SOOTHSAYING

by Katrina Wynne

THE DEVIANT MOON TAROT BOOK

Review by Dan Pelletier

TAROT TRICKSTERS, & ACCIDENTAL GRACE

by Barbara Moore

A QUARTERLY TAROT, LENORMAND & ORACLE JOURNAL

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The Cartomancer

Mission Statement

Our primary goal is to support an inclusive and mutually supportive community of Tarot, Lenormand and Oracle card readers worldwide through a quarterly journal that includes:

Well-written, informative articles by a wide range of experts for cartomancers of all levels, from novice to professional.

High quality divination inspired art from around the world and full color samples from some of the best recently published and classic decks for readers to explore.

A Marketplace for authors and artists to publicize and promote their books, decks and other Tarot, Lenormand and Oracle related products and upcoming events of interest to the community.

Reviews of new and classic decks from major publishing houses as well as independently published, limited editions by our in-house review staff.

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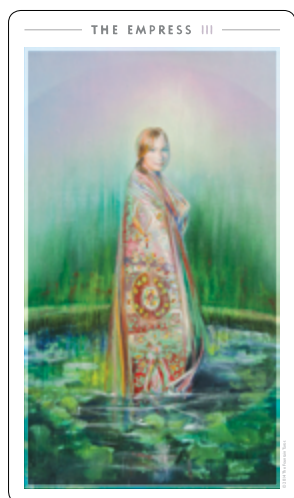
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The Fountain Tarot

The spring cover image is The Empress from *The Fountain Tarot* written by Jason Gruhl, created by Jonathan Saiz, and designed by Andi Todaro. Read the interview on page 6.

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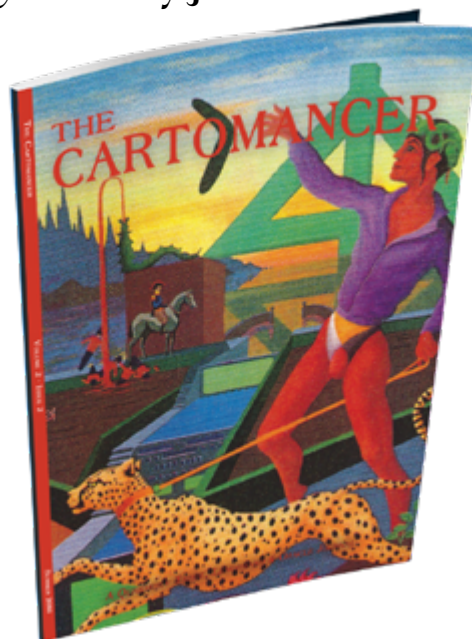
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NEXT ISSUE

The summer issue will be available in May and we are featuring the *Navigators Tarot of the Mystic SEA* by Julia Turk.



EDITOR'S NOTE

This spring issue marks the one year anniversary for *The Cartomancer*—a year filled with all of the joy that birthing and nurturing a project like this entails. *The Cartomancer* represents a community that works with the Tarot, the Lenormand, and Oracle systems as a tool for teaching, for learning, and for empowering. The entire staff and our regular contributors work professionally within these systems. We want to share what we have learned, and we want to learn from you.

We see *The Cartomancer* as an intrinsic part of the cartomancy community, one that reflects its history, art, and thoughts. Each of the three systems that we are focused on (Tarot, Lenormand, and Oracle cards) has a deep history of its own, and a unique manner of reaching out to individuals, and making a difference in their lives.

On March 19th we will be celebrating the Spring (Vernal) Equinox in the northern hemisphere. (Note: In the southern hemisphere, the celebration is that of the Autumn (Autumnal) Equinox.) This is one of two times each year when day and night are nearly equal.

The focus for the Spring equinox is on new life, and new beginnings. We will see the green buds of leaves on the trees around us, flowers will begin popping their heads above ground, crops will begin showing life in the fields, and we will see the birth of all forms of life, including birds and animals. We will also be celebrating Easter—each in our own way. It is a time of magic and potential. It is a time of balancing light and dark, and, on a more personal scale, of balancing the personal and professional areas of our life.

It is a time for each of us to decide what we want to birth over the coming year, both personally and professionally. Some of the questions that we might want to ask ourselves at this time include:

1. In what ways can I open myself to what is around me?
2. What are my priorities in my professional and personal lives?
3. How can I bring balance into my life?
4. Is there something that I need to release so that I can move forward?
5. Where do I feel comfortable and where do I feel uncomfortable?

Good images to focus on during this time are eggs and seed, as they both contain the potential for new life. As we work with these questions ourselves, we need to be thinking about how we can take this energy into our readings for others. All of us at *The Cartomancer* would like to hear from each of you—how do you work with the equinoxes? How do you work with your clients at this time? How do you help your clients implement new ideas, new energy?

We hope to hear from all of you over the coming year, and that you share your art and your thoughts, in whatever form they take. We would also like to remind you that *The Cartomancer* accepts ads, so that your work can literally reach a larger audience. To submit an ad, please go to <http://thecartomancer.com/advertise/>

We thank you for your help and support over the past year, and wish you all a joyful and productive 2016!

Blessings,
Bonnie, Jadzia, and Jay

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THE FOUNTAIN TAROT

AN INTERVIEW WITH CREATOR JONATHAN SAIZ, DESIGNER ANDI TODARO & WRITER JASON GRUHL

with Jadzia DeForest

Last June I was attending the Denver Tarot Con and, as you do at those events, I was wandering around the vending room looking at all of the goodies. As soon as I spotted *The Fountain Tarot* I knew I had to have it. It was unlike any tarot deck I'd ever seen—from the gorgeous box design, silver-gilded edges, to the modern imagery. Opening that deck was a sensational experience. After I bought my copy, a friend and I spent nearly an hour just going through the cards. Needless to say, I am delighted to feature *The Fountain Tarot* in this issue of the *Cartomancer*. Now let's hear from the creator, designer, and author.



Q: How did each of you get into tarot?

JS: The Tarot was always a forbidden thing for me—mainly because of a dogmatic religious upbringing and an ignorance about what it really is. So I always knew about it, but never explored it fully until I was introduced to it in a deeper way by both Andi and by Jason within the last 5 years.

AT: I had a very religious upbringing. My Uncle supposedly had decided not to do Tarot anymore because he saw an apparition and my mother told me this story a couple of times whenever I was interested in anything that wasn't to do with Christianity. So because of this, I had a very healthy respect for its supposed abilities. Flash forward quite awhile. I was at a party in college, and I had a friend show me his *Aquarian Tarot* and I was so drawn to it. So I immediately went out to my local metaphysical store and bought *The Aquarian* and drove home feeling like I had done something wrong. I didn't touch it for awhile. Then I had some really awful things happen to me and was feeling very isolated and did my first reading to get some answers, and ever since I have drawn cards when I felt like I needed guidance that my community couldn't give me. Since creating the deck I've had conversations with my Mother and Uncle, and he had never actually given it up, she had that part wrong. He had done some other kind of spell when he saw the spirit, but had always used Tarot. I thought that was a very healthy breakthrough for all of us to know the real story. Now Tarot

is a regular part of my life.

JG: I had toyed around with it in college, but mostly loved the imagery and the “idea” of what I thought Tarot was, which was probably something like a magical, dark tool for telling the future. At the time, it felt forbidden and taboo so I loved it. But honestly, I would say that it was through the process of making *The Fountain Tarot* with Jonathan and Andi, that I really fell in love with Tarot in the way that I think you mean it here. Researching the history, core and details of each card put me into relationship with them in a very intimate way. I think if you’re paying attention to the potential of each card and the possibilities of what each reflects in life, you can’t help but be moved by the depth and beauty of Tarot.

Q: What inspired you to create a tarot deck?

JS: I can’t imagine a richer world of symbolism and narrative to inspire the creation of visual art. This was a huge exciting challenge for me...an invitation to create from something bigger than me.

AT: Jonathan tells this story the best. It was his idea to create *The Fountain Tarot* to begin with, but it was through a long friendship of giving him readings when he came back to Denver after a trip away and was usually about his career and art and where to go from there. Apparently he had a similar relationship with Jason who read Jonathan’s cards on similar topics. It all seems foretold when I write this, that we were all destined to create it.

JG: It’s a huge undertaking, bigger than I could have known at the beginning. But like any project of worth, I think there’s a point at which you leap before knowing all the details and just start to tick it off, bit by bit. I think the collaboration piece for me was very inspiring. Both Jonathan and Andi are insanely creative, think-outside-the-box sort of people, and we all have our own brand of that which was mostly exciting (and sometimes maddening—haha). To the question though, I think my inspiration at first started as “Can I do this?”, so... kind of like a dare to myself. And then the inspiration changed fairly quickly to, “Wow, this can make a difference in



people’s lives and let them view the world in new ways.” That ultimately fueled me.

Q: I know each of you took on a specific piece of creating this deck, what was that process like for each of you?

JS: For me, the process was simple and uncluttered, but very long; take the writings and the stylistic ideas from Jason and Andi and disappear into my studio for a year to create my personal vision of that. I painted the entire series of 79 cards at the same time, so each image equally inspired the next one and it developed as a whole. After meaningful periods of development, I would check back

in with the team and let their evolving ideas influence the final collective visual voice of *The Fountain Tarot*.

AT: We have all worn different hats at different points in the creation of *The Fountain Tarot*. Even though it says writer,

artist, and designer we crossed over those roles a lot. There isn’t one piece of the deck that wasn’t touched by all of us and tons of help from other people mentoring in different areas. I think the truest distinction of our roles is more accurately the dreamer, the communicator and the skeptic, me being the skeptic. We’re the perfect parts

for coming to the best solutions through discussion and hard work, and I don’t think any of us would have been able to do it alone.

JG: This was fascinating because it didn’t go at all like I



thought it would, though looking back, it was perfect. Again, I have to thank Jonathan and Andi for being such amazing partners in this. None of us micromanaged the others, and yet there was a great flow of input, overlap and infusion throughout the whole process. I did the research at the beginning, collecting the images and definitions throughout time, and noting which ones changed completely,

morphed or stayed similar, etc. We then boiled each card down to a particular essence and then layered our own voice on top of that, as the lens of *The Fountain Tarot*. We gave ourselves permission to be something particular, which was liberating. We knew not everyone would love it, but I think you have to commit, and that made a difference for each of us in our creation. Jonathan then painted. I wrote. Andi and I reviewed Jonathan's work and gave critiques. Jonathan and Andi read my work and gave opinions. Andi would take inspirations from Jonathan's paintings and my writings and create design, and then ask for feedback from us. And then we'd repeat those steps over and over. It was really one of the best collaborations of which I've ever been a part.

There are so many books out there, and after reading tons of them, I feel like too many of them are dialed in, or saying too little, or disconnected from the actual human experience. After reading Barbara Moore's *Steampunk Tarot* manual, I took from that a voice that was really authentic, and conversational. For the first time, I felt like I was in conversation with the cards. And that was the thing that freed my writing in this book, to just let it be a conversation with a friend, and to keep it simple and genuine.

Q: I love the modern imagery of *The Fountain Tarot*. How do you think it contributes to and influences the tarot world as a whole?

JS: The contemporary experience of life is very different from the historical/social/aesthetic experiences that inspired the original Tarot imagery—so having a fresh visual interpretation from our time feels like an invitation for people of today to re-invest in Tarot and continue to develop it into tomorrow.

AT: There was a lot of discussion about this at the beginning of our process. We wanted so very much to contribute something meaningful to the long and beautiful history of

the Tarot through our aesthetics and writing. It was apparent to see what might be missing, which was imagery that wasn't from a specific period in time and writing that was accessible to anyone who might want to pursue a Tarot practice. This is not to say that there aren't other decks that accomplish this for other people, but for us we hadn't found it. Also, adding The Fountain card was important because we saw a meaning

and global understanding beyond The World that is pervasive in modern culture but not yet reflected in the Major Arcana. This 'oneness' from which we are all a part is reflected in technology, the internet and modern ideologies through practice in Yoga and mindfulness and other means.

JG: Well, we'll see as it goes along what it does. Our hope was that it would take the gift of Tarot and make it even more accessible to people living today. We wanted humans to look at it and to see themselves in the cards, to hear their voices, and to see possibility, not as an abstract, separate thing, but as real possibility. I love Tarot as a thing in itself—the cards, the words; I love the beauty of it. But its real power for

me is as a tool for opening new views, or shifting bankrupt ways of being to something that actually works, and leaves people feeling more free and in sync with life. We tried to combine beautiful, well-designed elements with relatable and thoughtful images and words, and hopefully that moves people to really be with the deck.

Q: What advice would you give to those who are considering making their own deck?

JS: Get a team together, find people that inspire you and who help you to see things in ways that are unique from your own set ideas of Tarot. It's a long, life-altering experience to create your own tarot deck so you're going to want to share the energetic weight of the journey. It took our mini village to raise this baby—when I was lacking inspiration or motivation I leaned heavily on the energy that Andi and Jason provided. Even in the many many many solitary moments of actual oil painting, I wasn't really alone and that made all the difference!

AT: Put your heart into it, and it will pay you back in the same way. The process, though difficult at times, has been one of the most wonderful experiences I have ever had. To know your art is changing people's lives, that is encouraging a practice of mindfulness and reflection, is humbling to say the



least. When I think about this project from the beginning I could not have known what it would become, which is a network of like minds and positivity. For the technical stuff, it's a lot of work, get help from people you know are experts in their service and don't give up. Kickstarter was how we were able to do this, so knowing a community of generous encouraging people is a big plus. It's constant maintenance, and we all have other jobs, Jonathan painting, and me with design and art, and Jason with writing and education, we've got a lot on our plates all the time, so make sure you want the commitment of running another business.



JG: 1. Don't feel like you need to know all of the details before you start. Just start. It begins to fall into place.

2. Expect moments of genius, and expect feeling like an idiot for large swaths of time. And keep going.

3. Know why your deck is different and care about what you're doing. The world craves authenticity and you are the only one who can express your particular brand of life's voice.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about *The Fountain Tarot*?

AT: I'd like to share about our collaborations, which is a project where we pair up with an artist external to *The Fountain Tarot* every season and ask them to reinterpret the



deck, or one suite from the Minor Arcana or the Major Arcana (coming in Feb 2016), in their art style. This is a great way we've involved our art community and seen our deck with new eyes. This cycle we've had Kristen Sink for Coins, Travis Hetman for Cups, Scott McCormick for Wands, Jacqueline Sophia Cordova for Swords, and next Mario Zoots for the Majors. See the collaborations on our site, <http://www.fountaintarot.com>.

And, to our fans, or soon to be fans, share your pictures and experiences and videos with us, we love to hear from you! We spend our weekends sharing what we've found with each other. We're always interested in getting into local shops in your area, tell us about them! And, thank you

to everyone who helped make *The Fountain Tarot* a reality, not only in the Kickstarter and original contributions, but getting the word out, sharing your pictures, giving us love, and for adopting it into your life.

JG: The Fountain card is one of my favorite things about this deck. We knew from the beginning that adding an extra card isn't always viewed kindly by the Tarot community. But that card was again one of the inspirations for making the deck. For me, it was the idea that, over time, The World card had lost some of its "universal" representation, and didn't really capture the larger consciousness that's more prevalent today. We wanted to see represented that "thing" (though by definition it is no-thing) which is changeless, the space in which cycles of birth and death, beginnings and endings happen, but which has no beginning or ending, the "is-ness". That concept was humming around, in and through so much of what we painted, wrote, and designed. You can't talk about The Fountain in my opinion without acknowledging that.

Q: Where can readers learn more about you and the Fountain Tarot?

Follow our Instagram, that's the dreamers territory, Jonathan, he does an amazing job bringing The Fountain Tarot more and more to life everyday in very creative ways. Our website <http://www.fountaintarot.com> to see the collaborations. And, Facebook /fountaintarot for updates and some possible new projects we're working on!

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Tarot Art



TAROT APOKALYPSIS

ERIK C. DUNNE AND KIM HUGGENS



Erik C. Dunne and Kim Huggens began their collaboration in 2012, when Erik was seeking an author to write the companion book for his almost—completed Tarot Illuminati. Following a brief meeting, they realized that their ideas about tarot aligned beautifully, and Kim became the voice for Erik’s artwork. The deck/book set and the extended companion book were released in 2013 and received several awards.

Following its success, the pair began work on a sister deck, the Tarot Apokalypsis, which frames the traditional tarot archetypes in the imagery, symbolism and wisdom of mystery religions and myths. The Tarot Apokalypsis invites the reader to initiate themselves into the mysteries through the Major Arcana, presents the Court Cards in the faces of the gods from various cultures, and shows in the Minor Arcana how mankind in four different civilizations – Norse, ancient Egyptian, Graeco—Roman and the Khmer Empire – has related to the divine in their everyday lives.

Tarot Apokalypsis (forthcoming June 2016): <https://www.facebook.com/Tarot—Illuminati—283151041725608/?fref=ts>

Tarot Illuminati (Lo Scarabeo, 2013): <https://www.facebook.com/Tarot—Apokalypsis—291635957686519/?fref=ts>

The Roaring 20s Kipper Cards are a 43 card deck with the normal 36 cards plus an extra Man, Woman, Partnership, Journey, Thoughts & Gloom/Doubt card so the reader can customise their deck to suit their tastes or reading requirements.

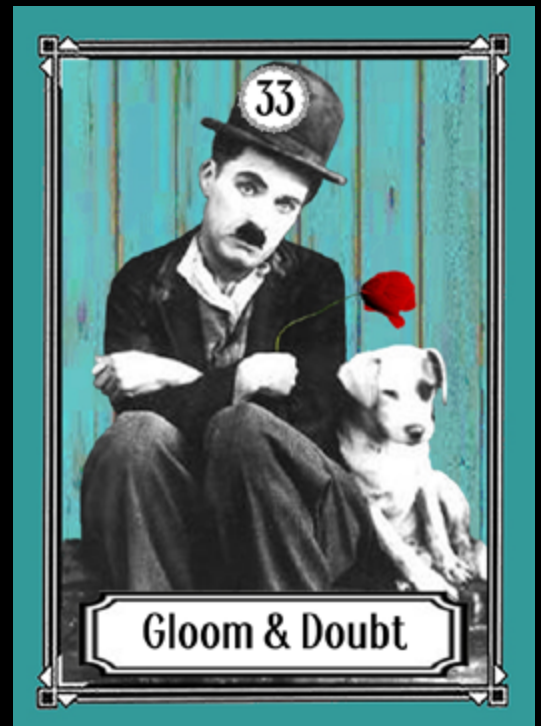
Most of the available Kipper decks have originated in Germany at the end of 19th century so I designed the Roaring 20s Kipper Cards in Art Deco 1920s & 1930s style to bring a more modern, colourful & fun style to this system – Charleston dancers, Deco architecture, dashing men, elegantly dressed women, headbands, feathers & top hats!

Kipper cards are very similar to Lenormand and can be read the same way. They differ from Lenormand in that there are more “people” cards in the deck to describe situations or emotions, whereas Lenormand has more animals & plants cards. In the Kipper system, you will find equivalents to virtually every card that exists in the Lenormand system.

Lynn Boyle, RN, Reiki II channel & Australian Bush Flower Essence Practitioner lives in Sydney Australia with her husband & 3 adult children & 2 Cairns terriers. She is a professional Lenormand, Tarot & Oracle card reader, designer & teacher with (to date) 35 decks self-published & sold around the world. <https://www.etsy.com/>

ROARING 20s KIPPER CARDS

LYNN BOYLE



CATTAROT

CAROLE-ANNE ESCHENAZI



My name is Carole-Anne Eschenazi. I've always been very fond of heroes. I've always found in their stories or in their paths the deepest inspiration. I would simply wonder: What would Scarlett O'Hara, or Cyrano de Bergerac, or Peter Pan, or Cleopatra, do in my situation? The answers often provided ways to resolve my problems. Therefore, my favorite heroes soon became companions for me, and even coaches in a way. Being also a tarot lover and collector, the desire to create a tarot deck using universal heroes slowly grew in my mind. I began working on it. Then one night, as I was writing with my beloved cat Câline sleeping on my knees, an idea sprang suddenly: why not convert all of my heroes into... cats?! That's how this deck was born. All those cat heroes are here to give you any advice you may need. They will escort you and will help you reveal the one true hero that lays inside of yourself

Find out more online:
<https://www.facebook.com/Carole-Anne-Eschenazi-Oficiel-254247308021877>

<http://www.loscarabeo.com/>

Artwork by

Diana Cammarano

The Chalice Pack is a full colour 78 deck of Tarot cards originally started in the late 1980's so it is long on its inception. Each card is 100 percent hand-drawn on A6 size colour card paper with colour pencils and pen and ink outlines.

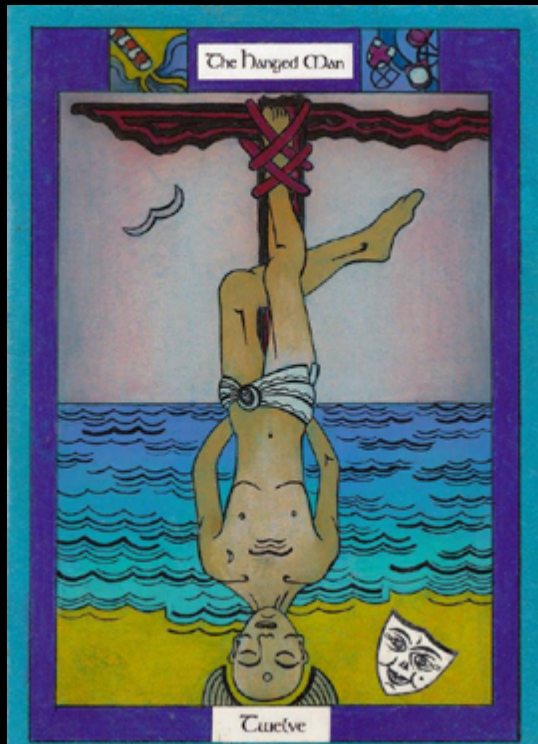
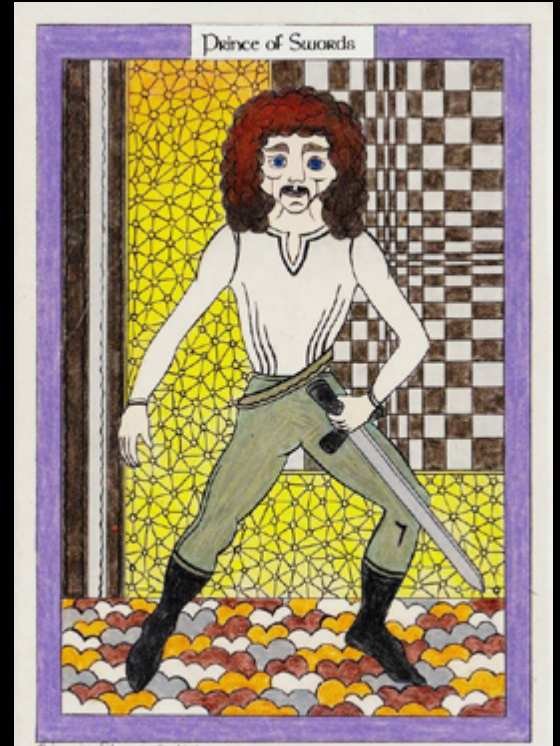
The images are semi-figurative, interwoven with colour and pattern symbolism - the colour and pattern symbolism used is as important to each card as figures or concrete images used.

The Guru corresponds to the Hierophant - I wanted to blend traditional and modern interpretations of the Cards throughout the Pack. Strength of Fortitude comes after the Chariot and Justice before the Hanged Man.

The Chalice represents my own commentary on Tarot and is fluid and open-ended, rather than designed to represent any last word or dogma on what Tarot is supposed to be about. I drew on the ideas of Jung, mythology from sources ranging from The Golden Bough and Campbell to Gimbutas, and borrowed a lot from astrological symbolism. Likewise, I have a diploma from the Mayo school of astrology and used to use my Pack at psychic and mystic fairs in the UK until I left the UK.

THE CHALICE TAROT

LYNDA STEVENS



JOY AND SORROW ORACLE

ROXI SIM



Joy and Sorrow is a Goddess inspired deck designed to help people reclaim their lives after loss or trauma. The artist, Roxi Sim, studied Art Therapy and used painting as her art therapy to recover from the loss of her health, her 9 year old son, and mother in a short period of time.

Joy and Sorrow is derived from images painted over the past 18 years. Reclaiming the images from old photographs and low resolution digital images, resizing them and rendering them in a new medium for the deck. Moving from paint into coloured pencil, the images have taken on a life of their own, yet hold onto the original intention, healing and moving into a place of well-being.

Each card will have a guided meditation or write ups intended to allow one to release their grief while also looking forward to a time when life will shine once again. Each card will have an action, such as meditate, sleep, escape, read, mentor, and so on. You will be able to choose from a selection of 33 cards for a card of the day, or for the moment, or for inspiration and meditation. The bright colours will uplift and the joyful imagery will give a moment's solace.

This deck is almost done and will be produced in borderless jumbo size and shipped internationally. www.RoxiArtWork.ca

In 1979 Pamela purchased her first tarot deck at the urging of her cousin and best friend Maya. After procuring a copy of the *Rider Waite Smith* and carefully going through the cards one by one, Pamela asked Maya, "Where's the rest of them?" Maya hurried over and after careful consideration announced they were all there. Pamela disagreed. There was no card for Absolute Personal Truth, nor young women, etc.. With a rather dramatic eye roll, Maya told her to just read with them. End of discussion.

In October 1999, Maya called to ask if she would create a signature tarot deck for a budding publishing. That afternoon Pamela gathered supplies and sat down to draw the image that became the Ace of Pentacles. By June 2000 the *Steele Wizard Tarot* was finally out of her brain and onto paper. The publisher fell through, but the vision remained. The *Steele Wizard* had evolved into an 88-card tarot complete with an illustrated companion book.

In January 2006, while attending INATS East she met with the man whose company became her printer. Pamela sold her house to finance the project and July 31, 2007 the first shipment of the *Steele Wizard Tarot* arrived at the door of her new home. The rest is history.

STEELE WIZARD TAROT

PAMELA STEELE





Dear Wizard, why is the Fool zero? Shouldn't it be 1?

Signed, Stumped in Saskatchewan

Dear Stumped,
Rather than Zero, The Fool card is technically a non-numbered card. Because at any point in your life, you can again, become a Seeker (Fool) the Fool is able to float through the entire deck at will. He or She has no assigned place therefore can at any moment, begin a new adventure.

To clarify this, I shuffled the Wizard's Pets Tarot and drew the Tower card. To clarify, the Fool can represent absolute endings as well as beginnings. Say for instance, you'd just completed secondary education and were about to embark on a new career. You go to your favorite Reader for advice from the tarot and the card that appears is the Fool. Well, it's a foregone conclusion if you're smart enough to

get a degree in your chosen field, you're no Fool. BUT (and it's a Big But) at this point in your life's journey you are inexperienced and about to begin a new chapter. The advice is to approach the new position with open eyes and an open mind. Remember

to hold the same child-like wonder in your heart that inspired you to step onto this path.

For all intents and purposes the Fool is a reminder to always live in the Present Moment of Now and tells us "The choices you make today define your tomorrow."

The Tower is telling us that even, or especially, in the face of great change, it's again time to become the Fool (having no assigned numbered spot) and embrace the future with joy while always remembering to choose wisely.

Sincerely, with hugs,

~The Wizard

Dear Wizard, what's the big deal about animals in the court cards?

Signed, Perplexed in Paris

Dear Perplexed,

As you know by now, each tarot card is filled with symbolic meanings that enhance the message of every card. Animals are meaningful additions in they bring added layers of information in the guise of cute (often) furry critters.



To illustrate, the Queen of Wands has appeared to demonstrate the relevance. She is shown (in most RWS versions of the cards) seated on a throne holding a staff (Wand) of authority in her right hand and a lovely sunflower in her left hand. Seated at her feet is a cat. Traditionally a black cat...which is why Jasper is wearing a black mask in the Wizard's Pets Tarot

version.

Cats are an ancient symbolic Celtic (and since I'm an ancient Celt I'm going with this version) animal that represents the guardian of the Otherworld or Underworld depending on your personal beliefs. Cats are silent, stealthy, mysterious and completely independent which in turn represents self reliance, keeping one's own counsel, and perhaps being a bit secretive while all the time attracting those who would benefit from their knowledge. Other symbolic meanings include clever, selective, watchful, and resourceful. To sum it up, the Queen of Wands and her cat are telling you that "Resources you have will help the situation."

As you delve into the deeper meanings of the tarot, you will notice subtle influences from animals, plant

life, weather, clothing and even minerals. Don't drive yourself crazy trying to figure it all out. Just become Cat and let it come to you in a natural, organic way.

Blessings and joy,
~The Wizard



Articles & Stories

BEYOND SOOTHSAYING: EXPANDING COMMUNITY DEFINITIONS OF TAROT WORK, PART 2

by Katrina Wynne

Excerpts from a paper presented at the Popular Cultural Association, Boston, MA — 2012 by Katrina Wynne, M.A.

This past Winter Solstice, my neighbors and friends gathered to celebrate our rural community. Many of those who attended are folks I have known for 25 years. We represented a variety of roles: from artists to public employees including musicians, craft people, homemakers, retirees, forest workers, farmers, heavy equipment operators, and small business owners.

At one point we gathered in a circle, held hands, focused on the vibration of the singing bowl. Taking turns, we reflected on what brought us together in unity. When my turn came, I told the group I was writing an article about Tarot and Community and then shared the inspiration for it was a story about a former next door neighbor.

“Remember Ralph?” I asked. For the new neighbors, I described him as a fundamentalist Christian who drove a logging truck. One day as I stood on his tractor talking with him as he mowed the field for my annual Tarot Retreat campsite, he asked me “Are you a witch?” The question came up so innocuously. I felt quite surprised, yet delighted. I knew it must have taken a great deal of courage for him to ask directly



about my lifestyle.

Many people in this Oregon Coast community used to make their living in forest industry jobs, either cutting trees, hauling, or planting and growing trees. Being a self—proclaimed “Forest

Mystic”, I happen to be on the tree growing side, while Ralph hauled clear cut trees to a sawmill. Our values and lifestyles seemed to be far apart. No wonder he asked whether I might be a witch, worrying I might be doing black magic or something.

I responded, “If a witch is someone who hurts or tries to manipulate others with spells or other means, then no, I am not a witch. But, if a witch is someone who loves the Earth and cares for living things, then I certainly am.” Everyone in the solstice circle laughed with me. They started casually calling me a witch, then calling themselves witches. Suddenly, we were a room full of earth—loving witches celebrating the sun-return together.



For many of us this is the way it began with our Tarot or oracle work. I was a solitary practitioner 18 years before I invited a small circle of friends into my first Tarot Temple (my attic retreat) to share Tarot cards. Fast forward a few years and I am living here on the Oregon Coast and have new friends inviting me to teach them Tarot. My reputation

grew and more invitations appeared to read at fairs and offer advanced classes. Eventually, I was producing little psychic fairs here in my town.

Over the years, that quiet Oregon Coast community has changed from fear of a “witch”, to hosting one of the largest psychic fairs in the country. How did this happen? Naturally, with time and with connecting to my neighbors, speaking openly about my interests and skills, reaching out to network with alternative health and other practitioners in my county, and establishing a very professional and ethical tone in my practice.

This tone reflects the values I carry throughout all my work and into my lifestyle much like the description of the earth—loving witch—I’m here to support life, growth, understanding, and compassion for self and others.

As mentioned in the first of this two-part series (*The Cartomancer* Winter 2015), my 27 years of training and experience in the art of psychotherapy are reflected in my counseling attitude as well as the skills I utilize when working with others, including my Tarot work and teaching. A question I ask myself is how can a reading reveal an opportunity for opening and growth for the client, as well as for myself?

Building upon the Torus-like model for incorporating multiple levels of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs pyramid presented in the previous issue, how can a Tarot session open awareness to physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual possibilities?

Classic counseling skills and values I recommend and teach include:

- o Listening – more than speaking
- o Awareness – being present with oneself, client, & life
- o Boundaries – respect for self and limitations, honor of client’s limits
- o Descriptive– not prescriptive, just the facts
- o Supporting and Exploring– not leading and predicting
- o Engaging – inviting the client’s feelings, intuition, and self-direction

To enhance this list of counseling skills are “Metaskills”; a term coined by Amy Mindell, co—developer of *Process Work*



Psychology, to describe the feeling—toned skills that a counselor brings to a session:

- o Compassion – cares for and tends to all aspects of the querent, including the “Shadow” material
- o Beginner’s Mind – see with new eyes, new possibilities
- o Play & Humor – free, spontaneous, & fun at times (James Wanless is a wonderful model of this skill)
- o Detachment – observation without judgment
- o Creativity – an open, co-creative experience between reader, client, and cards
- o Fluidity & Stillness – centered while going with the flow of the reading
- o Balance – finding the middle way, even if it includes exploring both extremes

Experimenting with and developing these skills will enhance any reading. Working with the whole Self—body, heart, mind, and soul—helps to create an environment where change can happen from the inside, out. This embodies the art and science of psychology, beyond the soothsaying style of reading, described in Part 1 of this series. When we apply our oracular to facilitate opening of a door that allows a client to access all levels of awareness, we not only expand horizons with that client, but also move beyond the narrow definition of what is otherwise assumed to be a reading.

Where does one begin when starting a revolution, aligning with the evolution of a culture or system? One looks for kindred souls to share the passion of change. What are some of the resources and ideas available for us to expand our community and promote such a paradigm? Here is a two-pronged approach.

THE READER

First, let’s start with readers and our opportunities to push the envelope of what defines a Tarot reading within the “Tarot community.” Here are a few suggestions I recommend for establishing a strong and broad foundation for increasing personal and collective talents:

- o Counseling skills & ethics classes for new and advanced Tarot learners

- o Tarot books & articles – Introducing these new ideas in various forms of media

- o Inspire new and established readers to try advanced skills and to expand their personal definition of their service. Examples: *The Cartomancer* magazine, my book —*An Introduction to Transformative Tarot Counseling*

- o Educational and challenging articles posted on websites & web blogs

- o Presentations at Tarot Conferences – *Northwest Tarot Symposium, Bay Area Tarot Symposium, Reader's Studio*, and more

- o Offer presentations at Tarot Meetup groups in your area and when traveling

- o Social networking – developing special topic groups & dialogues

- o Interface with other disciplines and institutions

- o Every opportunity to expand and enrich the experience of Tarot

THE COMMUNITY

Second, we can expand collective consciousness about Tarot, breaking away from fear-based stereotypes while presenting our art as helpful, holistic and/or spiritual.

(Mass Media/Community)

This is already happening, as you may have noticed in today's mass media:

- o TV shows, music videos

- o Cindy Lauper plays a respectful Tarot Reader on the science-oriented crime show—*Bones* (Season 5, Episode 1)

- o Tarot musical “The Bitter Suite” on *Xena the Warrior Princess* (Season 3, Episode 12)

- o *Long Island Medium* with Theresa Caputo

- o *Psychic Investigators* presents real crime cases solved with psychic mediums

- o Madonna's Tarot music video with Rider-Waite/Smith card images projected on huge screens during her live performance in the 2010 “Re-Invention” tour

- o Tarot films, such as Enrique Enriquez's Tarology project, *The Magical Trio* by LB Johnson with me performing a reading for the Oregon Country Fair, etc.

- o Challenging antiquated and prejudicial statutes and rules

- o Integrate your oracular work with your local community

To influence a community, you need to be a real and active part of that community. Change on the personal, relational,

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group, community, or world level moves from the inside, out.

“If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him. ... We need not wait to see what others do.” - Mahatma Gandhi

Who you are, how you carry yourself, the way you practice your art, says just as much about you as it says about your chosen pastime or profession.

These days my local community has changed from fear to celebration of the magical, as I find myself invited to read at local fundraisers and at a prom night party in a town where the major industry is a sawmill. With a prom night theme called ‘Wilderness and Red Necks’, I wore overalls and my plaid flannel work shirt, Tarot cards in tow, and inspired the next generation to be their most authentic selves as they face their future.

My annual *Tarot Tour* takes me to Tarot Conferences, new age bookshops, and Tarot Meetup groups around the globe, connecting personally with our growing Tarot community of readers and clients. This little *Forest Mystic* has expanded her reach, redefining what Tarot can be in our world. Will you join me in this peaceful evolution?



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Website: TarotCounseling.org | Weblog: MySacredJourney.org | Podcast: OracleSoup.org

Webinars: <http://globalspiritualstudies.com/tarot/katrina-wynne/>

HOW TO ACT DURING A TAROT SESSION

by Raven Mardirosian

 For any psychic session, for that matter.

1. Ask questions about your reader. I make it easy for new clients and say, “Is there anything about me or my work that you’d like to know?” before we start. Check out your reader. Just because your best friend had a great reading doesn’t mean that you’ll resonate with that psychic. Look up their website, read testimonials, look into their eyes. NEVER continue a reading if you are uncomfortable or feel like you shouldn’t be there, even if it means you bite the fee. You don’t have to find yourself in that position if you check them out beforehand. Trust your gut.

2. Step back from your identity as a reader/healer. When I get sessions for myself, I act like I don’t know anything about the cards.

I’ve had clients who are Tarot readers who question my interpretation of the cards because they base what they see as the answer (i.e., “the King of Wands always means this”). I bounce off the symbols and do an entirely different type of reading. I’ve done Tarot long enough that I don’t need the cards to do a session, but they are helpful for us to focus on. Receive the message and relax. You’re not there to control a session.

3. Stop testing your reader or think that they must be 100% accurate before you can trust them. I mean, really. We are helpful guides, human just like you. If you don’t trust your reader, go back to #1. No one will ever be 100% because

you are not a robot who is force-fed information. You are a thinking, intuitive being who can use whatever advice you’ve gained from the session. Discard the rest.

4. Take notes or record the session (ask before you do so). I have an envelope full of notes from sessions that stretch back 6 years. I love to re-read them and see what came true. It also shows a trusted, consistent reader if you’ve gotten sessions with them for some time -- again, never 100% but very concise and helpful.

5. Ask your reader if it’s okay to ask questions during the session.

Some enjoy them (like me) and others want complete silence. We all receive information in different ways and a chatty client can distract. Never interrupt. Even if you’re nervous over what you see in the cards, be respectful and listen, knowing that your questions will be answered to the best of their ability.

6. Great readers are worth the money. Just like you wouldn’t take your car to a shitty mechanic, don’t cheapen your soul by finding the lowest-priced reader. It’s all about an intuitive connection. Words have power. Like the old saying, “Marry for money, work for every penny”, the same goes for a quality reading vs. a haphazard one. If you hook up with the wrong reader, you might be paying for that cheap session for a long time. Go for the gold.

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RAVEN MARDIROSIAN is the author of 13 books, most notably *The Reluctant Tarot Reader: Adventures in the Gypsy Trade*.

She developed and hosted the popular BlogTalk show, “Tarot Talk” and is a sought-out Tarot reader, teacher and Reiki Master who has given thousands of sessions to clients worldwide for a decade. Known for her humor, sensitivity and insight, she continues to offer her gifts through sessions, consulting, classes and books.

Connect with Raven at <http://shivayawellness.com>

AN INTERVIEW WITH LINDA MARSON

by Bonnie Cehovet

Many of us in the Tarot community know Linda Marson from Australia through her Global Spiritual Studies website (<http://globalspiritualstudies.com/tarot/linda-marson/>). Linda has worked with such luminaries as Pamela Steele (*The Steele Wizard Tarot, Wizard's Pets Tarot*), Roxi Sim (*Pearls of Wisdom Tarot*), Mary Greer (*Tarot For Yourself*) and Rachel Pollack (*78 Degrees of Wisdom*). Linda is a former President of the Tarot Guild of Australia, and author of *Ticket, Passport, and Tarot Cards*. She is also involved in tours of sacred and spiritual sites in the UK and Ireland.

Her latest endeavor is a Kickstarter project to raise funds to produce a new Tarot learning resource called TarotNav—a GPS for life. This will be a film, e-book and online forum to show you how to harness the power of the Tarot to navigate your way through life. In the film, an animated version of The Fool will play the role of Linda's Higher Self as she takes us on a lovely, in-depth journey through the Major Arcana.

Linda has agreed to speak with us about her project, and what TarotNav will bring to the world of Tarot learning.

BC: Linda, thank you for taking the time to speak with us about your project. Where did the idea for TarotNav come from and what was the impetus for putting the Kickstarter project together?

LM: It's 10 years since I wrote *Ticket, Passport and Tarot Cards* and produced the companion TV series for Australian community television. I know from the response to both book and TV series that my approach to showing people how to use the Tarot in a practical way, works. In addition, I've developed a wide range of Tarot learning resources for my course, Live and Learn the Tarot, which is available through Global Spiritual Studies.

The impetus for the Kickstarter project was my desire to bring everything together into a single package, but what this new 'thing' would be, and how to finance its production wasn't quite so clear. As so often happens, a casual conversation started the ball rolling. About 18 months ago, someone told me about crowd-funding. I browsed around several sites and quickly became excited at the prospect of using this innovative, people-power approach to fundraising. So, I had the answer to one question, but the nature of the 'thing' still eluded me.

A year went by. Then, bingo! The concept for TarotNav came to me one morning six months ago after returning from a journey to the UK and Europe. Travel has always been a big part of my life. I love the new perspectives that come from leaving the everyday world behind for a while. And true to form, that journey led to the Kickstarter project...by far the

most exciting idea to spring from a 'time-out' journey!

BC: Why did you decide to make TarotNav available on a USB flash drive? What are the advantages here? (I personally think this is a great idea!)

LM: There are a number of advantages to distributing TarotNav on a USB flash drive. First and foremost, is the ability to store large files on a small object that works on any computer or device with a USB drive. I'll also be able to set up a user-friendly navigation system so that users can quickly and easily find

what they want, including direct links to the online forum on the Schoology website and other external web resources.

BC: How do you see people using TarotNav? How do you see them actively tapping into the wisdom of the Tarot in their lives?



LM: We all encounter the energies of the Tarot cards every day of our lives. You know what I'm talking about—a day when everything is on track has the energy of the Chariot. A day when you feel overburdened by the number of things on your plate is a Ten of Wands day. A lover paying you special attention is the Knight of Cups. There's a card for everything!

The key to tapping into the wisdom of the Tarot lies in understanding that seeking advice from the Tarot opens a channel to your Higher Self, your intuition, your Spirit Guide...however you perceive that part of yourself which dwells beyond the everyday world and knows what you're truly meant to be doing in this lifetime. Ask the Tarot a question and the images on the cards you select provide the answer. The GPS analogy is remarkably accurate—key in the destination (that is, ask a question) and out come the directions!

I'm absolutely passionate about showing people how the Tarot GPS works, how to read the cards, how to ask the sort of questions that put them in the driver's seat.

I want people to use TarotNav to help them get the best out



of life, to keep them on track so that they reach their destination without going the long way round, without running into road blocks and dead ends.

BC: What is the “universal human journey” you refer to?

LM: I'm referring to the human journey through the archetypal energies embodied in the 22 cards of the Major Arcana. I'm a Rachel Pollack disciple. Her way of dividing the Major Arcana into three rows of seven cards with The Fool standing outside, made instant sense to me and countless other people who see her *Seventy Eight*

Degrees of Wisdom as the Tarot reader's bible. Her structure mirrors Joseph Campbell's concept of the Hero's Journey.

In a nutshell, the first row from The Magician to The Chariot represents the issues and challenges we face in the outer world—the fact that life is full of dualities (The Magician and The High Priestess) and we see this playing out in our lives

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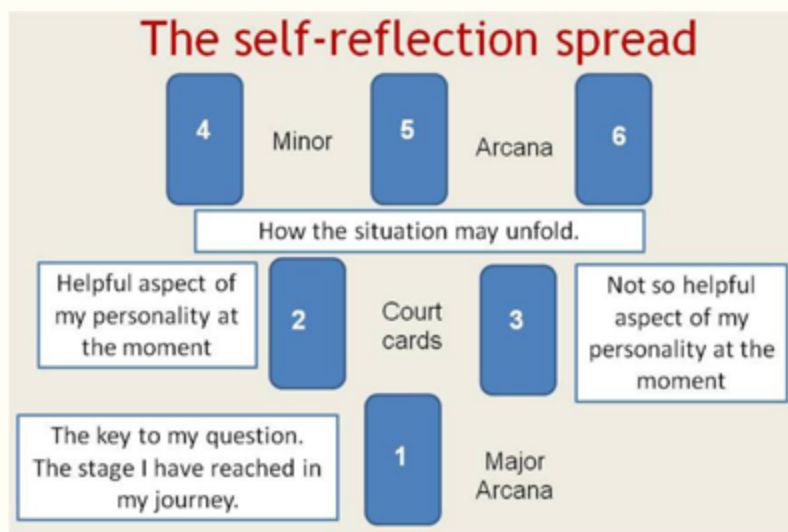
through the archetypal energies of mother, father and society (The Empress, The Emperor, The Hierophant). Once we understand all the implications of those energies in our own lives, we can make informed decisions (The Lovers) and drive forth confident in our ability to work with dualities (The Chariot).

However, life is not as simple as that! Something always comes along and throws us off balance. We then find ourselves in Joseph Campbell's underworld, the second row of the Major Arcana from Strength to Temperance. Here we grapple with stuff lurking below the surface. Our reward for overcoming these is transition (Death) to a place of balance and harmony where we know the magic formula (Temperance).

But wait, there's more! Just as you feel you've done the alchemy and got the magic formula, you're tempted back into old ways and you realize, with a shock, that you haven't actually made it back into the upper world. There are more challenges—in Rachel's words, the journey from dark (The Devil and The Tower) through three types of light (Star, Moon and Sun) before you can rejoice in transformation (Judgement) and know that you've successfully walked the Hero's journey, the universal human story (The World).

And where does The Fool fit in? For me, the energy of taking a leap of faith and trusting that the Universe will support you, is precisely the energy you need to clear blockages. If you're stuck for some reason, at The Hanged Man, 'think The Fool' and you'll find yourself skipping forward to the change you're seeking, symbolized by the next card, Death. The Fool is the joker—he/she fits anywhere on the map and helps you to clear road blocks.

The TarotNav film is all about the universal human journey. Through stories drawn from my own life, I show you how the energies of the Major Arcana cards have played out for me in real life. In the film, I call home to my Higher Self with questions using a layout called the Self-Reflection Spread. My Higher Self is an animated version of The Fool. You learn about the Major Arcana from the way she interprets the cards that answer my questions. Our conversations take place on Skype, so she's a tech-savvy Fool!



The film will consolidate the 22 segments of my *Ticket, Passport and Tarot Cards* TV series into a single film. Information will be re-written and there will be new stories—after all, a lot has happened to me in the 10 years since I made the series! For an idea of what I'm talking about, watch videos for The Fool, The Star, The Sun and Judgement here—

<http://globalspiritualstudies.com/tarot/linda-marson/ticket-passport-and-tarot-cards-book-only/> .

BC: What will the focus of the e-book be?

LM: This is my opportunity to revise and update *Ticket, Passport and Tarot Cards*. The e-book will contain:

- simple meanings for all 78 cards in the deck
- navigation tools or road maps...a series of layouts and guides to navigating your way through relationships, work situations, family issues...anything that life throws at you!
- sample readings that show you how to interpret layouts, so that the message from your Higher Self is clear.

BC: How will the online forum work in conjunction with the film and e-book?

LM: In the e-book, I'll be encouraging people to jump in at the deep end and try their hand at readings right from the start. After all, reading Tarot is about reading the pictures on the cards. Don't wait till you 'know' the meaning of the cards before doing readings. There's no one definitive meaning for a card—so much depends on the question being asked, the other cards in the layout and how they inter-relate.

But how do you know you're on the right track with your interpretations? This is where the TarotNav online discussion forum comes in. Everyone who purchases TarotNav will have access to a private discussion forum on the Schoology website. There you'll be able to post readings, ask questions and generally interact with others who use TarotNav. At regular periods during the year, I'll participate in the forum—your opportunity to ask me questions or get feedback on the way you've interpreted a layout. I'm applying the model that works really well with my Live and Learn the Tarot course where I provide 16 weeks of online mentoring to support the

recorded classes.

BC: Tell us a bit about the spreads you're designing for TarotNav? (Check out the TarotNav Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/TarotNav>) for examples!)

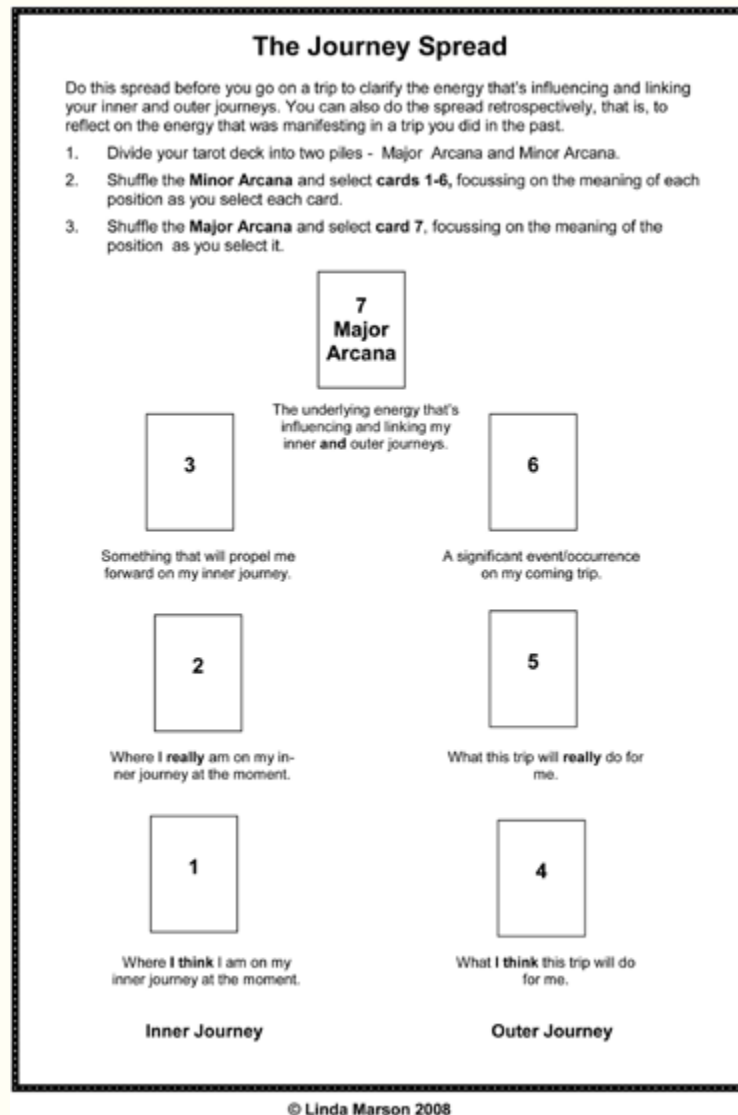
LM: Well, there's the Self-Reflection Spread, which is the basis for all the sample readings and stories in *Ticket, Passport and Tarot Cards*. There's also a Journey Spread and other new ones, as well as my take on standard spreads like The Celtic Cross and the 'seven card horseshoe' spread.

An important aspect of my guide to layouts is about designing your own five-card spread in the shape of a cross. You can use this shape to explore anything. Think of it as a tree...put three cards on the horizontal line which represents the ground, the real world, the here-and-now of a situation. The card at the bottom of the vertical line represents the roots of the situation and the card at the top represents what it might grow into (the branches).

BC: Your funding campaign on Kickstarter is underway and ends on 11 March. Tell us a little about it.

LM: TarotNav is an absolutely unique Tarot learning package. The combination of film, e-book and online forum will be entertaining, informative and interactive. However, I do need funds to put it all together! My target is \$40,000 AUD (approximately \$28,000 USD). This will be used to cover animation and film production, project management, writing (film script and e-book), copyright fees and fees associated with the Kickstarter campaign, flash drives (printing, data loading, packaging and freight) and postage of rewards to backers.

Pledges start at \$5, but the most popular is sure to be \$30 AUD which gives backers a copy of TarotNav at a 25% discount (the retail price will be \$40 AUD to which postage will be added). If you pledge during the campaign to help me



reach my target, the \$30 includes postage. There are higher pledge amounts which attract a whole range of rewards.

Kickstarter has an all-or-nothing funding model, which I think is both sensible and fair. When you pledge, you give your credit card details, but your card is not charged unless I reach my target. This way, creators always have the budget they scoped out before moving forward. And, most importantly, you can rest easy because your credit card won't be charged unless the target is reached.

BC: Linda, do you have any parting words for our readers?

LM: Tarot is an amazing divination and personal development tool. Tapping into its wisdom has helped me in so many ways and I

want to share those experiences with you. We all learn from stories and examples and that's what TarotNav is all about—a resource that shows you how to harness the power of the Tarot so that you get the best out of life.

BC: I want to thank Linda for taking the time to speak with us. TarotNav is an amazing project, one which I'm backing to the best of my ability!

VISIONS

by Cynthia Tedesco

She came out of the art supply shop with her tote packed with cardboard, colored pencils, some pastels and turned down the street to the grocers to pick up a small sack of flour to make paste for her paper theatre's figures. The small sack was heavy in her arms and she wished she hadn't taken an umbrella as well. So what if her hair got wet? She considered going back and asking the shop's apprentice to deliver her packages but then changed her mind. Too expensive a price when she could walk. Just a few minutes more she thought. To her right, as she slowly made her umbrella and package-burdened way, a blacksmith was at work. The way he was bent over the creature's slender bent leg, the hammer, the sound and smell of iron on iron was a familiar chanted spell to her as he deftly re-shod his horse. Where had she seen this man? Memories flooded her mind as she watched as time turned on itself and moved backwards. The stranger raised his face to her, his eyes gripping hers. She stopped breathing, surely not, impossible! This is England not Jamaica and Pamela struggled to understand how a Myal practitioner was here with her on this London street.

Suddenly she felt the Myal man behind her. His breath and herb-scented sweat slicked her neck, his heat flowed through her clothes and her hair. From the top of her head she felt his divinity, his Ogun, leave him and enter her. She almost lost consciousness. Ogun was far too masculine and powerful a deity for her yet this was a struggle she could not afford to lose.

When she came fully back to herself, she was still standing holding her packages with no concept of time or place.

Ogun's commanding voice was still in her ears, his sweat now her sweat, his breath now her breath. She didn't see the horse or the carriage or the owner. She didn't see anything at all on the street. From someplace floating on high above she saw herself as a little girl pulling at the red skirts of her Nanny. It seemed to Pamela that she was back in Jamaica, a child, watching Nanny beg a Myal man for favors. What favors? Why were they here? Papa would surely be outraged. Nanny could lose her job! She sees herself crying, "I want to go home! I'm scared Nanny, take me home!" She sees the Myal man reaching for her. He doesn't hurt her but he does stare into her eyes, her small body in his hands. She sees that self of long ago collapse. Coins pass hands. Nanny is picking her up. She hears Nanny thanking him. Then she sees herself in her own bed with Nanny fanning her and singing.

Pamela does not know how she got home that rainy day so far from Jamaica. She does not know how she came to be lying on her bed dressed in her nightdress and robe, her day clothes hung up neatly. She does not know how the seemingly magical paper theatre with characters from the folktales of her Jamaica of long ago came to be so delicately, so perfectly made ready for her hands and her voice. Afraid to touch



the little stage, the cleverly crafted finger-puppets: she keeps her distance. Would it disappear? Could she ever hope to make something this perfect into an exquisite rendering from the happiest days of her childhood? She did not ponder long as she fell into a dreamless sleep. For three days, as three is a number sacred to Ogun, Pamela would sleep. When she awoke the theatre was not there. In its place she found on her round oak table in the center of the room small vials of powder for paints of verdigris, aqua, crimson, black and pearl. Many others lay alongside large sheets of fine, white paper and canvas while a

spattered cloth is carelessly flung over a verdant green chair: no matter it is threadbare.

This must be why Nanny was begging the Myal man. She

wanted him to bring down the power of Ogun to give her beloved 'baby' girl the gift of stories and art to pass on to others. Nanny wanted to be remembered by Pamela. With ink, paint and crayon on paper or canvas memory can outwit time past, time present, and time yet to be.

Arthur Waite has approached her with a huge project. He has conceived a tarot for the masses and wants to direct her in its artistic execution. Pamela needs money. She is in dire financial straits. She has accepted the job out of necessity. Tarot images are seventy-eight in number and such a number is daunting. Fortunately Pamela knows art isn't a merely cerebral or physical activity. Now, thanks to Ogun, she feels she can accomplish Arthur's tarot project.

Today she will tackle the Minor Arcana's pip cards. In tarot there are forty pips in the Minor Arcana, sixteen Court Cards and twenty-two Major Arcana cards. Upon Arthur's suggestion she has been to the British Museum to examine the photographs of the ancient Italian, Sola Busca Tarot recently donated to the museum. Her time with the photographs is spent sketching aspects of what she admires in this unique tarot. The pips of the Minor Arcana are fully illustrated! She had never seen that before.

She felt her deck might require a bit of 'carney' as she recalls Coney Island's colorful carousels. Carousel history is imbedded in the 12th Century Islamic game of pre-jousting on horses. In this bit of history it was said that the balls the knights used to throw at each other for points were filled with perfume. The knights could tell who was 'out' by scent.

To Pamela this was an alchemical practice she had first heard about in one of her Golden Dawn courses. She believed alchemy, amongst other arts and sciences, had been taught to humanity by fallen angels. The ancient knights practiced on wooden, legless horses that became popular with women and children. Some enterprising soul added legs to the horses in a circle that eventually evolved into the carousel

we know and love. She needed the familiar alongside these strange images. She had spent many happy hours on Coney Island with its tattoo artists, fortune-tellers, and wonderful carousels. Her years in Brooklyn educated her as an artist in more ways than simply going to school at Pratt Institute. She felt light-hearted in spite of the dark images of the Sola-Busca Tarot. To Pamela, these new photos of a very old tarot hinted

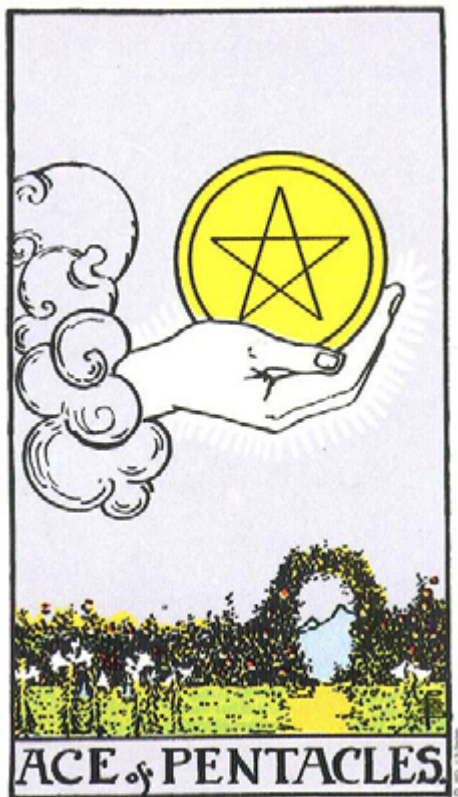
at fallen angels searching the skies for salvation or rescue from above.

Brilliant! She would illustrate her pips by emulating the Sola Busca Tarot no matter that 'it simply isn't done!' How thrilling to take inspiration from an obscure Italian tarot. Arthur should be excited by the prospect of a modern fully illustrated deck. She would charm him into seeing The Minor Arcana, her way, illustrated and evocative. Soon she would have a few examples done.

Pamela began the outline for her first ace, the Ace of Pentacles, representing the elemental earth. Arthur wanted her to call this The Suit of Pentacles. Pamela preferred to call them Coins as in the French Tarots and here she would compromise in order to get her Minors illustrated as she now envisioned them. Arthur thought Pentacles or Pantacles sounded more magical than Coins. He suspected the audience for their tarot would not understand the mind-set of how magical money (indeed, one should say, alchemical) had appeared to the people who first printed or painted the tarots of Europe, nor would they, without his instruction, know how precious gold is in Alchemy, nor how spiritual.

Pamela thought otherwise. Doesn't every budding magician delight the audience by pulling a coin from the ear of an unwitting subject? Ah well, here Arthur would hold sway. Pamela now had more important issues to talk Arthur into than quibbling over suit titles.

Staring at the lovely sphere of gold she was creating, Pamela fell into one of her reveries. "What would The Fisher King need?" She wanted to ask the right question! In her vision she perceived the swords to be held by soldiers grandly attired and the wands brandished by peasants in simple garb. Both were from a long ago time and place dressed similarly to the costumes for the Theatricals done at the Lyceum with Ellen Terry. Pamela had coordinated the costuming and stage designs. Her vision had that familiar Shakespearean element to it. Suddenly, a great war broke out amongst them in her vision. Then she heard a trumpet's long sad moan and the



soldiers and peasants came to a halt and somberly re-aligned themselves. “Ah! Thank you!” Pamela whispered to her daemon and muse, “now I’m quite sure I am right. I will fully illustrate my Minor Arcana and it will be as unique as the Sola Busca Tarot and speak to people everywhere with images from the theater and from my own experiences.”

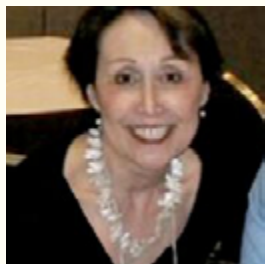
Jolted by the sound of her own voice, Pamela shook her head to come back to herself for she had yet to complete her Ace of Pentacles as she had lingered long in her visions and merely thought it complete. She would make a real contribution to her art from her own life and intuition. Soon the knights and the Seven of Wands would be birthed. Pamela held her hands over the as yet unfinished Ace of Pentacles and said a silent prayer of gratitude.

The precious daylight was fading from gold to orange to purple as Pamela completed her first Minor Arcana painting. She longed to tackle the Knight of Coins next and would have to work fast if she was to meet Arthur’s deadline for publication. Pamela, however, badly needed the payment from such a time consuming project as a seventy-eight card oracle that was to be Arthur’s ‘corrected tarot.’

“Corrected it would be then!” She laughed to herself.

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Rider Waite Tarot used with permission, US Games Systems Inc. 1971



CYNTHIA TEDESCO M.A.

Tedesco worked for many years as an Audiologist and Speech/Language Pathologist for the Lexington School For The Deaf. She is certified as a Kaizen-Muse Creativity Coach using skills as a professional tarot reader to assist clients in their creative work.

Tedesco’s poems have appeared in Apex of The M; Avocet, Barrow Street (and former editor), Black River Review, Caliban, The Cape Rock, Coffee House Poets Quarterly, Columbia Poetry Review, and many others.

Tedesco lives in N.Y.C. with her husband and two Havanese dogs. The Tedesco’s are serious collectors of vintage tarot decks. She can be reached at: INTUITIVEARTSENTERTAINMENT@gmail.com

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tarotshaman.com




A colorful illustration for 'The Wizard's Pets Tarot'. It features a rainbow arching over a landscape with a white unicorn in the foreground holding a golden scepter. A large red banner with the word 'Tarot' is draped across the scene. In the background, there's a small house with a smoking chimney and a sun on a pole. The text 'The Wizard's Pets Tarot' is written in a stylized font. At the bottom, it says 'available from Devera Distributing' and 'Visit us at www.wizardspets.com or' followed by social media icons for Facebook, Pinterest, and Twitter.

READING THE TAROT INTUITIVELY, A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

by Donna M. Evleth

*H*aving a hard time bridging the gap between your intuition and your tarot cards? Don't stress! It's a common issue. The tarot was actually meant to be a direct pathway to the inner chambers of your particular intuition. Yes, you heard that right. YOUR intuition. Here's the simple recipe for sweet success: First and foremost, intuition and symbolism are the two primary ingredients in your recipe for reading tarot; no matter which deck you choose. And of course, there are no better helpers in the kitchen than your guides.

To begin, take a large heap of symbolism (created by the artist/author of your choice) and mix well with your pre-seasoned intuition. Add a sprinkle of 'trusting your gut,' a dash of 'choosing the right vocabulary' and a pinch of 'love and light.' And voila! You're cookin' baby!

All kidding aside, tarot is a great way to develop and enhance your intuition. Most readers who are new to reading or intuitive work tend NOT to trust the information that they are receiving, or overthink it SO much that they 'get in their own way.' This also tends to occur when more experienced readers try to read for themselves. Here are some pointers to help you get past that and nail it right the first time.

In my experience, the first thing that pops into your mind (before you start to rationalize with your alter ego), is almost always the correct answer. You may not agree, but hey, you asked. Don't get a debate going inside your head, and please do NOT bring rationalization into the mix.

Spit it out. Yes really. But choose your words wisely. That's the tricky part. Take time here, this is important. A mentor wisely advised me, "when speaking to the querent, try to remember that even though the person sitting across from you may look like an adult, try to think of them as a small, vulnerable child." I have found this to be very true as they are opening up to you on a level that they may not even

truly understand, therefore, they are trusting you with their heart. Not only is this an honor for you, but it is a great responsibility.

Ask a ton of questions. Yes, this is NOT a one way conversation. It's a dialogue. The querent's input is so very important and can help get to the bottom of many issues (and time efficiency), as well as identifying who the cards are referring to (the signifier) in the reading. Of course, you will need to initiate. Tell them the plan upfront. Most people are not sure what to expect, so lead them. It helps put them at ease. Even if they've had a reading done before, reader's styles and set ups are different. I personally have all of my clients 'trained.' They know my format and what to expect before they even walk into my reading room. If they know what to expect, they are usually less defensive, as well. Defensiveness is never good for either party. Also, before you begin, agree upon what type of reading your client needs. Does she have a particular question, or would she like a 'general' reading to see what comes up?

Don't set limitations. Limitations are very restrictive (and who imposed those limitations, anyway?). Think outside of the box (spread). Why stick to a specific number of cards with a specific placement? I like to let the 'story' play out. Keep throwing cards, as needed. Use your intuition. Use a second deck to back up your first. You'll be amazed at how often they reinforce one another. Liberate yourself...your intuition will be forever grateful (and you'll develop it so much quicker!).

It's okay to use other tools in your readings such as a pendulum for specific answers such as questions of time or to verify the information that you're receiving is accurate and for the greatest good of the querent.

If it doesn't feel 'right,' it's probably not. Period.

Don't let your client rush you. After all, it's in their best interest that you get it right! Do NOT rush your answers because the clock is ticking (especially difficult for telephone readers). Take your time to think it through and word your responses appropriately. When I'm in the reading room, my minimum is 30 minutes. The clients know this up front.

So, there you have it! Some other skills that you might find helpful are learning to identify body language, understand social cues, and develop your emotional intelligence. These will help you immensely. For most empaths and intuitives, this comes pretty naturally. But it's still important to observe. Over time, a lot of folks have learned to mask or internalize what they are thinking and feeling very well. Your job is to see behind the mask...to see the little child. I myself, as a highly



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sensitive Empath, can feel when I've hit a nerve. Sometimes it feels like a punch to my gut (so, imagine what it feels like for them). Remember the child sitting in front of you, even if he looks like a big brawny man!

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DONNA EVLETH has been an Empath/intuitive for her entire life. She began managing her gifts in her early 30's. She first became a Reiki Practitioner by studying with John Harvey Gray and Lourdes Gray in NH. She then went on to study Psychic Development with Dr. Kevin Ross Emery at Circles of Wisdom in Andover, MA. Donna followed that up by studying Tarot with Ann Hentz in Haverhill, MA. Tarot became her passion and the focus of her studies for the past 12 years. Donna is the founder of Saratoga Intuitive Tarot - a teaching organization dedicated to the accurate education and advancement of Intuition through the use of Tarot. She has also been a reader for a popular Psychic Network and currently works out of Tushita Heaven in Saratoga Springs, NY. Donna resides on a farm in the Capital District of NY with her beloved horse, dogs and cats and bird.



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THE FIRST TAROT BOOK IN THE UNITED STATES

by Sherryl E. Smith

Tarot arrived in the United States enveloped in a golden haze of esoteric magic. Americans had no tradition of playing the game of tarot, and no clue about its Italian origins. The US was a clean slate where myths about Ancient Egyptian magi, gnostic heretics and card-reading gypsies were accepted uncritically. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which had temples in New York City, Boston, and other major cities, introduced Americans to tarot in the late 19th century. The Golden Dawn, founded in London in 1888, put tarot's kabbalistic correspondences at the heart of its teachings. By the mid-20th century, this had become the dominant paradigm in Anglo-American tarot.

In the decades just before and after the turn of the twentieth century, anyone interested in alternate spirituality and New Age thought gravitated to Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society. Theosophy teaches that Hermeticism and Neo-Platonism are the keys to understanding all religion, philosophy and science. It also taught concepts from Asian religions such as reincarnation and karma that continue to pervade new age thought. There was a good deal of overlap in membership between the Theosophical Society and the Golden Dawn, spreading tarot to a wider audience.

Two of Blavatsky's followers, the Americans Homer and Harriett Curtiss, were prolific writers of inspirational and esoteric books and pamphlets. They founded the Order of Christian Mystics in 1908, offering correspondence courses in occult subjects through their own publishing house. In 1915 they published the first tarot book written by

an American: *The Key to the Universe and the Key to Destiny*, one book in two volumes.

The book tells us the laws of the universe are expressed in numbers and mathematics. The first sixty pages of *the Key to the Universe* are devoted to the history and symbolism of numbers. The rest of the book is comprised of a discussion of the twenty-two tarot

trumps, with three chapters devoted to each card. First is a chapter on the symbolism of the card's number, then a chapter on the corresponding Hebrew letter, followed by a discussion of the card's imagery, specifically Oswald Wirth's deck.

The Curtiss's approach to Tarot is deeply rooted in 19th century French esoteric Tarot with its number symbolism and Hebrew alphabet attributions. They use the continental

European method of assigning Aleph to the Magician then running the alphabet up the Major Arcana. This system was taught by French occultists like Eliphas Levi, Papus, and Oswald Wirth, and differs from the Golden Dawn's "rectified" system that has become the default in the English-speaking world. The Golden Dawn assigns Aleph to the Fool, shifting the symbolism of the Hebrew letters to the adjacent card. If you're interested in the esoteric approach to Tarot symbolism, but you aren't committed to one system, it may be useful to read Curtiss side by side with a Golden Dawn author such as Paul Foster Case to determine which system resonates with you.

The book's style is straightforward and readable.





Every page contains a rich web of myth, symbols and spiritual teachings, with liberal quotes from Madame Blavatsky, Oswald Wirth, Eliphas Levi and the Bible. The book is steeped in Christianity, associating the first ten major arcana cards with the Ten Commandments. This book could be a rich source of inspiration for people wanting to combine Tarot with their Christian faith.

I find it fascinating that the book is illustrated with four decks that are still in print; yet only one of these decks is widely known and used in the USA today. It seems the American tarot scene was rather eclectic until the Waite Smith tsunami in mid-century. Let's look at these four decks.

OSWALD WIRTH'S TAROT

One of the giants of French Tarot, Wirth still has a large following on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1887 Wirth designed a Tarot de Marseilles with cabalistic and Egyptian flourishes. A translation of Wirth's book *Le Tarot des Imagiers du Moyen Age* has been published by Weiser as *Tarot of the Magicians* with a foreword by Mary Greer.



TAROT DE MARSEILLE (TDM)

This deck emerged in fifteenth-century Italy as a card game, evolved into its current form in late 1600s France, and is now the standard deck for tarot reading in Europe. This deck

illustrates nearly every contemporary European tarot book. Occultists like Etteilla and Wirth used the TdM until they designed their own decks. Members of the Golden Dawn used the TdM until they drew their own copy of the order's deck. The TdM is currently enjoying a revival, with numerous artists producing updated designs and facsimiles of museum decks.



FALCONNIER—WEGENER EGYPTIAN DECK

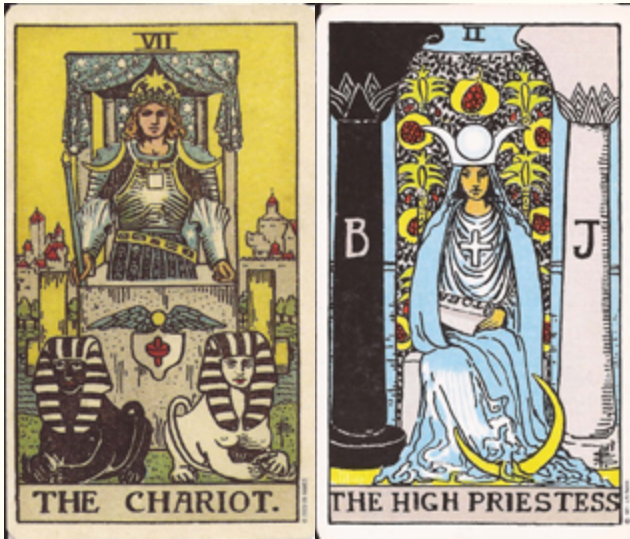
In his 1870 book *The History of Magic*, Paul Christian described 78 Egyptian Tarot cards. In 1896, M. O. Wegener used these descriptions to illustrate a book on hermetic tarot by R. Falconnier. This deck was widely distributed in the US via C. Z. Zain's Church of Light correspondence courses. In 1980 U.S. Games Systems published the deck as the *Egyptian Tarot*, and also offered a colored version called the *Ibis* tarot. These two decks have been superseded by the *Brotherhood of Light Egyptian Tarot*, which has slight design changes and more subtle coloring. A small but steady supply of tarot books has Egyptian tarot illustrations.



WAITE SMITH

This deck (originally called the *Rider Waite Tarot*) was created in England in 1909 by two former members of the Golden Dawn, A. E. Waite and P. C. Smith. It's distinguished by having scenes on all forty number cards. The major arcana is influenced by Waite's Christian mysticism and the Egyptian flourishes of French occultists. In 1918 the American publishing house DeLaurence pirated the deck and Waite's

accompanying book *The Pictorial Key to Tarot*, so it seems there was a market for this deck early on. By the mid twentieth century this deck became synonymous with Anglo-American tarot.



List of Illustrations

Curtiss, Key to the Universe, 1917, page 360, illustrations for the *Wheel of Fortune*.

Four Magicians showing contemporary versions of the same decks arranged as in the book illustrations.

Fool and Wheel of Fortune: Tarot Oswald Wirth, AG Muller/U.S. Games Systems, 1976

High Priestess: The Rider Tarot Deck, U.S. Games Systems, 1971.

Chariot: Smith-Waite Tarot Centennial Edition, U.S. Games Systems, 2009

Emperor and Devil: Egyptian Tarot, U.S. Games Systems, 1980

Lovers: Ancient Tarot de Marseille, France Cartes/B.P. Grimaud, 1930

Pope: Tarocco Italiano, Dotti 1845/Il Meneghello 1985.

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BOOK INFORMATION:

First editions are readily found online:

- Curtiss, Harriette Augusta and F. Homer. *The Key to the Universe and The Key to Destiny* (two volumes). Hollywood, CA: Curtiss Philosophic Book Company, 1915.
- Subsequent editions were published in 1917 by The Curtiss Philosophic Book Co., Washington, D.C. and in 1919 by Dutton and Co, New York.
- Newcastle Publishing Co, North Hollywood, CA, republished both volumes in 1983.
- Kessinger Publishing of Whitefish, Montana (www.kessinger.net) reprints books on obscure subjects that are in the public domain and sells them on Amazon. They have reprinted the Curtiss's numerous pamphlets on occult subjects, as well as their Tarot books.
- Download a digital version of this book and most of the Curtiss's other writings at OrderofChristianMystics.co.za



SHERRYL E. SMITH writes about tarot history, reviews decks and books of historical interest, and offers readings at www.tarot-heritage.com. Her website is a resource for exploring tarot's 550-year history, and for learning to read with the Tarot de Marseille and other historic decks.

Her website is <http://tarot-heritage.com/>

JOURNEY WITH THE QUEEN OF WANDS

by Ailynn

Every morning I wake up and make a beeline for the kitchen, because life does not start without my first cup of tea. I grab the black tea kettle, fill it to the rim with fresh water, and then begin the search for my green tea. I picked up my favorite early morning tea, a beautiful, organic Gunpowder Green and then just as quickly as I had picked it up, I sat it back down onto the shelf. No, on this particular morning I wanted a deep, dark and delicious chai blend with cardamom, ginger, and cinnamon. This would be the perfect morning brew. After mixing the ingredients for the tea, I took a deep breath so as to inhale the magical scent of the fiery spices. Nothing left to do now but to wait. I stood before the stove and waited for the water to boil. It was then that I started to drift off into a waking slumber, losing myself in the land of dreams. Although I still had my gaze upon the steam that was slowly starting to rise from the kettle, I gently felt myself being pulled into another reality, a moving, magical and fluid dream.

All of a sudden, I find myself out in the middle of nowhere with a shovel in my hands digging a hole. “Keep digging,” I hear. “You are stirring up the dirt and the earth for recommenting. Start thinking about that which is no longer needed, then release it by mixing it in with the earth as you dig. Recomment yourself, give back to the earth.”

“Once you have dug and dug, add a small layer of sand before you fill the hole with wood.” I continue with my chore when four men emerge carrying a huge cauldron and sit it upon the earth. As I watch

in amazement, enchanted by the magnitude and beauty of the cauldron, I again hear the voice speak. “This cauldron has been gifted to you, since you now understand the power of fire. I hand this one down to you, to bid your work.” The four men then pick up the cauldron and hang it over the wood pile and the fire is lit. I know that you hold the power of water. “Now you must stand by the cauldron and fill it with the energy of your elemental flow of water. Watch and wait for it to boil.” I stand there, watching the water flow from my hands into the cauldron and I wait and wait until the water starts to boil. Steam rises and I can sense that she (the cauldron) is ready for work. As the fire grows higher and hotter and the air shifts to a warm, spicy temperature, I begin to feel the presence of heat behind me.

I turn and bow before the Queen of Wands who now looks deeply into my eyes. She is radiant and beautiful. She wears a dress of bright yet deep red with yellow and orange flowing tips that seem to dance like flames in the breeze. Her hair is deep red and her skin has a youthful glow. She has leaves of many colors within her hair and she wears a beautiful fire opal upon her neck. She speaks with authority, yet with an energy that somehow requires me to listen. There is an intense heat

building inside of me along with the desire to be her servant, her student, her apprentice. I sense that this is my one opportunity and I reach out for her as she extends her hand of knowledge.

“You are to make a potion, a tea out of some of the boiling water. I want you to combine the essence of you that is water, with the essence of me, that is fire and I want you to drink this in. Now is the time to combine our essences.” As the blending begins, I watch as the boiling water suddenly shifts to a rich dark brown and I feel myself somehow dissolving in the water and merging with the Queen. In my amazement, I feel myself totally one with the Queen of Wands, and as she speaks, it as if the words are coming directly from my lips. I feel hot, powerful, and beautiful with an intense energy radiating from



Queen of Wands

my body as the words begin to flow from my mouth: “I am the Queen of Wands. I am passion, energy, creativity, I am

will and I am transformation.”

“Take out a cup of hot water, which represents you and add these things that I give you that represent me.” She then hands me some herbs and oils to add to my water. “I am fire so I am ginger, I am cinnamon, I am clove, and I am orange. Mix these ingredients into the water along with a slight of honey and drink. You bring into your body the power of the wand. This is your tool to create your magic. Use it wisely.”

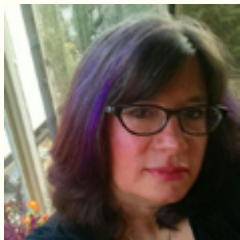
As I sit and drink in my wonderful tea, I feel the energy of her essence warming my soul. As she steps out and away from me, I rest. She, on the other hand, never sits and never stops working. “I am so inspired by your courage and your decision to work with me. You are so much more powerful than you may believe. Turn around and look at the path behind you, this is where you have been. This path has been the creation of you. Now here you stand. Who are you and where are you going? Continue to work with the cauldron within to create your being.

“Who is it that you want to see in the mirror? Now is the time to create that image. Stand before the mirror and envision the power you hold. Take that first step toward your desire. Throw your dreams into the cauldron and allow them to cook and steam upwards into the heavens to become. Throw all that is no longer needed into the fire beneath the cauldron to recombine into earth. We all must transform at

times, and if we do so with our own being rather than by volcano, we will find our power within. As you bring the potion to your lips and drink it in, remember that Fire is held within the abdomen, the 3rd chakra area. This is where digestion happens, where acids recombine that which is no longer needed and help to break down that which needs to be seeped into your being. This is your will. Hold the cauldron here where you can transform and create anew. Fire is change, fire is energy. I embody change, I create energy. Always remember your passion and your inner beauty. Never stop creating and know that you have the power of the wand within your reach. The wand holds the energy of the snake. This allows you to shed your skin when needed. I give you the ability to step into a new being of you. Always remember: Live and Let Die.”

Then as if bewitched, in a puff of smoke she is gone and I am left alone stirring my cauldron with my wand. I hear the tea kettles whistle begin to blow and reach to turn off the stove. I have awoken from my dream yet within by soul I carry the words of the Queen of Wands with me. I now hold new wisdom within my inner cauldron and wisdom within the tea, the potion I am about to drink.

© Ailynn



AILYNN

Elemental Tarot Reader, Teacher, Aroma-therapist. Through her study of the elements, she has designed a line of aromatherapy sprays known as The Queens of the Tarot by Ailynn. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance.

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PSYCARDS - A NEW ALTERNATIVE TO TAROT: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

by Catt Foy

The great psychoanalyst and student of Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, spent the greater part of his career exploring the meaning of the symbols and signs arising in the human mind in an effort to understand the psyche. He formulated the idea of archetypes—ideas and symbols that seem to have a universal meaning to all people regardless of culture, history, or language. These archetypes are often the symbols seen in dreams, captured and described in poetry, and used to convey meaning in myths and fairy tales.

A student of both psychology and poetry, Nick Hobson was a young advertising writer when he had a dream that spoke to him in symbols, showing his life laid out before him in neat parcels, representing different areas of his experience. The dream inspired the creation of the deck, Psycards.

Today, Psycards are sold the world over, and many users of card oracles (cartomancers) have adopted them as among their favorite decks. This column, over the coming months, will explore the Psycards and some of their many possible uses, meanings and interpretations.

Nick intended that the Psycards make accessing and understanding these archetypes available to anyone without the need for the interpretations of the esoteric language of

the Tarot. Inspired by Tarot's major arcana (and containing four cards in common with it), Psycards seeks only to show, through beautiful illustrations, the direct revelation of these archetypal meanings.

This issue we are exploring the first card in the Psycards deck—The Inquirer.

The Inquirer is the Self. It is often used as a representative card for the person receiving the reading, although I prefer to shuffle it with the rest of the cards and read it only as it turns up in the reading.

The pattern represents the maze that is your own psyche, your own complex inner landscape. Note that it has a light side and a dark side—the yin and yang of your self. It can indicate that any answers already lie within you, or that to find the answers you need to examine your own heart and mind with care.

The Self, but not the Ego—rather, it is the full transcendent self. Seek to connect with your deepest knowledge, your Higher Self, in order to address the issues involved in your current situation.

In the center of the card is an Elizabethan knot. Nick writes, “it tells us we must find a way out of the complex labyrinth that is our own inner life and untie some of the mysteries within ourselves.” Note the sense of balance and beauty of this card's design.

Take note of where this card falls in a spread and the cards that are closest to it. These will indicate the influences which are closest to the person being read.

When this card is upright, it can indicate a strong sense of self, of knowing what you want and who you are. Associated with Aries and the first house of the zodiac, it can also represent the courage to be self-expressive and therefore may be connected to creativity of all kinds.

If this card falls upside down, or in the reversed position, it usually indicates that the sense of self is weakened, or confused. It may indicate self-doubt, problems with self-esteem or feeling inadequate or insecure. It can also indicate that the current situation makes the

person feel “upside down” or that the questioner is going through a process of having to redefine themselves. This is not necessarily a bad thing—there are many passages in life



where we are called upon to reinvent ourselves, adding new layers and experiences to our existing selves.

If this card falls in a “past” position, it may indicate that the individual is living in the past, or stuck in the past. In that case, it is a gentle reminder that it may be time to release the past and move forward.

If it falls into a “future” position, it may indicate that the person is still forming their self-identity and the fullness of that is yet to come. It may also mean that the individual tends to live in the future—always planning for next week, or next year, or ten years from now, but may be missing the joy of the present.

If it falls in the center of any reading, it means that in the current situation the person should be focusing on themselves and their needs and personal growth.

Readers are welcome to share comments and alternative interpretations for possible inclusion in a new book on Psycards.

© Catt Foy



CATT FOY introduced Psycards to the U.S. in 1988 and is the author of Psycards—A New Alternative to Tarot. She teaches classes and seminars on Psycards and makes appearances at mind, body, and spirit events and bookstores throughout the western U.S.

You can contact her at psycardsusa@gmail.com, or visit www.psycardsusa.com.

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- *The issue you most need to focus on.*
- *The action needed.*
- *The direction this New Moon is taking you.*

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WHILE THE WHEEL IS SPINNING, SPINNING, SPINNING...

by Monica Bodirsky

The Wheel of Fortune is not simply an ancient myth, a 1950's song title, nor a seemingly never-ending game show; it is also the 11th card in a tarot deck's major arcana.

When this card emerges during a reading, I discuss individual as well as universal notions of control, and, how we can achieve balance in a fluctuating environment. A sensitive subject indeed. For some clients, this card represents an opportunity to use the concept of fate to sidestep accountability, for others, it seems like a karmic rap on the knuckles for simply allowing life to happen rather than actively participating. Regardless, it is a fascinating card with a deep history.

In life, and in the realm of tarot, the idea of cycles, destiny, what is, and, what is not within our control, is affected by many factors including personal experience, historical awareness, and spiritual viewpoint. While many readers and enthusiasts understand the concept of fate, I will compare the artwork from various decks to illustrate a few differences, similarities and intricacies of the enigmatic wheel of fortune card.

The ancient myth of the wheel began in Babylon and references the circular motion of the zodiac signs—the wheel represents celestial bodies as well as the space within which we revolve. The same idea appears later in Greek philosophy as the 'rota fortunae' and is symbolic of our fate as dictated by the stars and universe. Tyche, the Greek goddess of luck and the equivalent of the Roman goddess Fortuna, is often illustrated turning the wheel, sometimes wearing a blindfold to represent impartiality.

During medieval times, religious devotees often used the Wheel of Fortune as allegories of morality. These visual metaphors focused on the destructive or negative qualities

such as greed, and avarice, and, depicted the subsequent downfall of those who would abuse their position of authority. The wheel was not only used to remind people of the cosmic repercussions of their actions, but also to illustrate the stages of life we all pass through: ascension, reigning, and then descending, in one continuous motion. In western culture this myth persists. It has appeared in forms as diverse as the written instructions for the ruling classes such as Nicollò Machiavelli's, *The Prince*, circulated in 1513ce, to the pop-culture game show, *Wheel of Fortune*, which remains the longest running, syndicated television show.



The *Ancient Tarot of Lombardy*, was printed by publisher Ferdinando Gumpenberg, of Milan, Italy, in 1810, and is in a neoclassical style. The original Italian tarot or Visconti decks were created during the 1400's ce, however, during the 1600's ce, production of the decks was oppressed largely due to the restrictive influence of the Spanish. In the 1700's ce, during the Napoleonic era, Austria governed Milan, and a revival of tradition occurred. The Tarot of Marseilles deck from France was also enjoying popularity at this time, and, the use of oracle cards in general began to

increase dramatically.

In this deck, 'la ruota della fortuna' or the Wheel of Fortune, a naked man appears to have recently fallen on the ground, a barking dog ascends the wheel, an elegantly dressed woman stands on the ground and turns the wheel's handle, and, at the top, a winged man carries a sceptre in one hand and a spilling cornucopia in the other. Are we seeing the impartial goddess Fortuna without a blindfold? We could project ourselves into the card and identify with the person who is in control. or. we could see ourselves as the fallen man, the winged being on top, and, perhaps even the dog. The wheel is fastened to the earth on a pole making it accessible to the everyday person. Being grounded this depiction also implies our fates are within reach, and therefore, even if illusory, we have some control.

In the *Rider Waite Smith* deck, this card can be a bit overwhelming for the beginning reader, and



clients unfamiliar with Hermetic concepts. This deck was created in 1910 and illustrated by Pamela Colman Smith, and, at first glance, the combination of creatures, lettering and alchemical representations create quite a symbolic stew, yet a similar cast of characters appear.

At the top of the wheel we see a sword-wielding sphinx, a difficult creature that demands answers before allowing you to move forward, to the left, a snake or Typhon, an evil being, seems to have fallen off the wheel, and on the bottom right, Anubis, the jackal-headed god of the underworld, appears to be ascending. The three together symbolize justice, the trials we encounter along the way and triumph. None of which seem to be within our control physically because no one is turning the wheel, and, it is suspended in the heavens beyond our reach. The lettering and symbols within the wheel speak to internal forces at work, and, the celestial beings reading books in each corner represent wisdom. Whether this references wisdom gained from our own experiences or wisdom of the gods or deities at play, or both, is ambiguous.



Although the eleventh card, it is designated as number ten because the fool begins as a zero. This holds a great deal of significance, because it represents both completion and beginning, and reinforces the concept of repetition and cycles.

Illustrator Fergus Hall's *Tarot of the Witches* deck is both quirky and colourful. Appearing in the 1973, James Bond movie 'Live and Let Die', and in an

episode of the X-files, this deck has many fans as well as critics. This can be a tricky deck to read if you aren't familiar with reading the minor arcana without illustrations to assist. Hall's wheel is brightly painted and perched in the crook of two Picasso-like trees, and, though the grass is green, the mood is barren and slightly ominous. Some of the child-like symbols painted on the wheel include a star, rainbows, a broken heart, a sun and a thundercloud. No one in this card turns the handle and no creature clings to the wheel as it rotates. A small, red string dangles from the handle enigmatically, and, a single, tiny, black bird, perched on one of the leafless tree branches, is the only sign of life. The overall impression is that you've come across an abandoned amusement park and can



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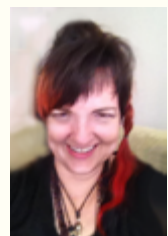
play if you like, there is no consequence implied, no external deities, and, it feels as though the scene is a reflection of our collective subconscious. The wheel is clearly man-made and the art reflects our ability to imagine as well as participate in our own destinies.

The *Bohemian Gothic Tarot* deck, by Karen Mahoney and Alex Ukolov of Prague, created in 2007, contains a very unique Wheel of Fortune card. A matronly, bonneted woman leans forward speaking and pointing with crooked fingers at a tarot spread. With only one candle and light filtered in through the glass door, the room is dark and shrouded in shadows. A stylishly dressed younger woman, seated at the same table, looks down at the tarot cards thoughtfully. They are both dressed in 19th century period clothing, and, the sense of nostalgia for a mysterious and bygone era is unmistakable. The message offered at a glance is that truth is subjective and depends on how much you allow your destiny to be interpreted or dictated by another. Another interpretation may be to seek counsel about your current fortune from those well versed in the spiritual arts. The dark ambiance of the room signifies that



not all is revealed at once, and as many of us understand, readings can be ambiguous, and often we can only read what fate would have us know or share. Though melancholy, the depiction of humans as opposed to deities makes the idea of fortune fairly easy to comprehend and therefore accessible to a wider audience.

The *Tarot of the Old Path* by Howard Rodway and Sylvia Gainsford, 1990, is intended for



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pagan readers, and, Wicca practitioners Stewart and Janet Farrar, as well as Margot Adler, gave input to its creation. The illustrations are clean, colourful and detailed, and the deck depicts a mythological, early agrarian lifestyle. The interior of this wheel is contained by a snake (ouroboros) perpetually eating its own tail, revealing the alchemical principle of the ceaseless creation and destruction of matter in the universe. Interestingly, both regent and peasant occupy the uppermost position on the wheel, and, a court jester is lying on his back with his legs raised and offering support and stability to the wheel in an unconventional manner. Hunters, people tilling fields, and a nude woman with a skull all preside at the centre of the earth—wheel. The overall feeling invoked is one of the myriads of roles we all witness and occupy throughout our lives. The square frame at the bottom of the wheel, in addition to the jester, emphasizes the overall feeling of stability despite change. This card seems to be saying less about control than about transformation, and, how we all alternate between witnessing and participating in life.

As we can see, the wheel of fortune is about fate, perpetual change, control, and, the style as well as the interpretation of tarot art contributes greatly to how we understand these abstract concepts. When reading tarot, enjoy destiny and its many nuances, and, in the meantime, the wheel keeps spinning, spinning, spinning.

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KAY STARR
"Wheel Of Fortune"

The wheel of fortune
Goes spinning around
Will the arrow point my way
Will this be my day

Oh, wheel of fortune
Please don't pass me by
Let me know the magic of
A kiss and a sign

While the wheel is spinning,
spinning, spinning
I'll not dream of winning
fortune or fame
While the wheel is turning,
turning, turning
I'll be yearning, yearning
For love's precious flame

Oh, wheel of fortune
I'm hoping somehow
If you'll ever smile on me
Please let it be now

While the wheel is spinning,
spinning, spinning
I'll not dream of winning
fortune or fame
While the wheel is turning,
turning, turning
I'll be yearning, yearning
For love's precious flame

Oh, wheel of fortune
I'm hoping somehow
If you ever smile on me
Please let it be now

Gilbert ends this story saying that she imagined that this “is what the trickster priests had in mind the entire time.”

TAROT, TRICKSTERS, AND ACCIDENTAL GRACE

by Barbara Moore

At the end of *Big Magic*, in a chapter called Accidental Grace, Elizabeth Gilbert tells the story about the growth of tourism in Bali. When Western tourists started coming to Bali, they wanted to see Balinese dance, which is a magnificent art form and a holy act. Gilbert was told “these dances are intended to do nothing less than to keep the universe intact.” Sacred, important work, indeed. Western tourists flocked to the temples, sat on the floor, and watched the dance.

Eventually so many people started coming that the temples couldn’t hold them all. Besides, the temples were damp and uncomfortable. The Balinese, true to their hospitable nature, thought it would much better to do the dances on the beaches of the resorts, where people could be comfortable and enjoy a drink.

The tourists were upset and appalled because surely it was wrong to do sacred dancing on a beach at a resort. The Balinese didn’t understand this because to them everything is sacred, even (or maybe especially) the beach. But they didn’t want the tourists upset so they invented new dances, guaranteed to be “divinity-free.” And everyone was happy. For a while.

Over time, the Balinese dancers infused the “for entertainment only” dances with vibrant new energy and the dances transformed into transcendent experiences. The dancers were now “tripping over God every single night, and everyone could see it.” Some considered the new dances to be even more transcendent than the old ones that now seemed stale. So the Balinese priests moved the new dances to the temple as well. The tourists were not happy because now the holy and profane were all a confused mess.

As someone who has spent a lifetime searching for Capital T “Truth,” I do have some sympathy for those confused tourists. However, the older I get, the less important Capital T “Truth” has become. The changing and evolving holds more interest for me than the static and staid. Studying tarot has reinforced this evolution in my values. It is difficult to spend much time with tarot and not realize that from the very beginning, tarot has constantly changed. The cards have changed, the numbering and naming have changed, the way they are used has changed.



For example, the Strength card has changed both its number and its image. Older decks show a Hercules character beating a lion with a club. Newer decks usually feature a female character in a much gentler relationship with the lion. We are all, of course, familiar with the *Rider Waite Smith* version of the card, which shows a woman either opening or closing the lion’s mouth. There is still an element of control in that image. Over time, even that has changed in many decks to show a more symbiotic relationship or one where the woman is helping the lion.

This reflects our culture’s changing attitude toward what, once upon a time, was called our grosser nature and what we now often refer to as our shadow self. The card changed so that it became more relevant to us and our understanding of reality. This has happened with many cards, such as some of our most beloved Major Arcana: the Fool (who used to be shown as a madman with his bum hanging out and not the pure spirit ready to descend on an earthly journey of discovery), the High Priestess (who was shown as the sacrilegious, heretical Papess and not the intuitive mystic), the Magician (who used to be shown as a street magician and a conman, and not the master of the elements), and the Hanged Man (who was a traitor at worse or a martyr at best and not the noble character willing to

sacrifice for enlightenment), to name a few. There are a few that I think need further evolution, such as the Hierophant and Judgement, for example, but that is another article.

Sometimes people seem okay with acknowledging the changes from the original decks (well, we don't know for sure if they were original, but they are the oldest existing decks that we know of) from the Renaissance, but things get a little stickier when we start messing with the *Rider Waite Smith* structure, symbolism, and assumed meanings. For some reason, that deck is held to a different standard, assumed to be full of esoteric wisdom and “real” meanings. Perhaps at the time it was revolutionary and held the spiritual wisdom of that particular group of people and of that time and place. I have to wonder, though, if that wisdom is still relevant today. For example, Waite said of the suit of Swords that they “are not usually symbolic of beneficent forces in human affairs.” Today, we associate swords with the intellect and focus on the ability of our minds to create our reality, which definitely seems like it could be a “beneficent” force in our lives (or destructive, depending on how you use it).

So few of us have read Waite (I know I can't stomach much of him myself), although it is true many of the most commonly accepted meanings today do include echoes of his writing. While his words may be fading, the images and symbols have become almost carved in stone. On one hand, there is plenty of Christian symbolism as well as astrology and other esoteric influences. These are, to me, problematic. Think back to the Renaissance decks, which had no words on them. They didn't need words because they included symbolism that “everybody” knew. People didn't have to study to know what symbols went with what angels or how to identify a saint. Today, our world is so diverse that there is no one symbol set that works for most of us (by us, I mean Western civilization in general and America in particular). When cultures were more isolated and homogenous, there were shared symbol sets, which would make divination, among other things, easier. That is no longer true today. So to insist that a card needs to have a certain number of yods in it to be authentic or symbolically sound doesn't make sense to me, especially since many people don't even know what yods are. Symbols “work” because people recognize and relate to them. A lot is required of symbols. For them to be effective we need understand them consciously and connect with them subconsciously.

Tarot is not so much a written in stone set of truths but rather a template for exploring one's own set of truths. If you are not a Christian mystic or following a Qabalistic path, then the symbolism in the *Rider Waite Smith* tarot does not

reflect your personal beliefs, your truth. At least not directly, although you may be able to make it work through layering correspondences, moving from yods or whatever toward symbols that resonate with your reality. Clones (or decks heavily influenced by the RWS images) keep their ties with Christian mysticism and Qabala energetically if not overtly and often do not transform the truths presented in any material way.

In addition to the Christian and Qabalistic teachings and symbols in the RWS, there are the “unintentional” parts of those cards that we've elevated to symbol under false pretenses. For example, consider the black cat on the Queen of Wands or the mismatched shoes on the 7 of Wands. Interestingly, the black cat has actually evolved to be a meaningful symbol that most of us understand immediately whereas the mismatched shoes has not coalesced into a coherent symbol, although it can spur some fun discussions. These stories, and more, are told in the *Secrets of the Waite-Smith Tarot* by Marcus Katz and Tali Goodwin.

Years ago, I used to argue with my dear friend, Riccardo Minetti, the editor at Lo Scarabeo. He said that we need to free ourselves from the stranglehold of the RWS deck. I argued that we did not, that the RWS has become, at least for most American tarot readers, the absolute Truth in tarot. If we veered too far from it, I said, then tarot would cease being tarot and would become something else. Hopefully he will never read this because I will never live it down if he learns that I now think he is right. Tarot teaches us these two things: first, tarot is full of life and like all life, it is always changing; second, the real mystery and magic lies in the tension between opposites. I think we find the pulse of the Divine when we try to dance in the space between, for example, tradition and innovation, between reason and irrationality, between logic and intuition. That is, at a crossroads, where we usually find the trickster.

In *Trickster Makes This World*, Lewis Hyde writes:

“In short, trickster is a boundary-crosser. Every group has its edge, its sense of in and out, and the trickster is always there, at the gates of the city and the gates of life, making sure there is commerce. He also attends the internal boundaries by which groups articulate their social life. We constantly distinguish—right and wrong, sacred and profane, clean and dirty, male and female, young and old, living and dead—and in every case trickster will cross the line and confuse the distinction.... Trickster is the mythic embodiment of ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox.”

Hyde also shares a theory about why the coyote is often associated with the trickster. I think this theory can also explain why tarot has continued to fascinate us all for so long:

“One reason native observers may have chosen coyote the animal to be Coyote the Trickster is that the former in fact does exhibit a great plasticity of behavior and is, therefore, a consummate survivor in a shifting world.”

I think that tarot is like those Balinese trickster priests. And I think that when we dance in the tension between, we are showered with accidental grace. The profane becomes sacred and the sacred, profane.

This article, I hope, follows in the Trickster tradition. It provides no answers, no recommendations. Just more questions and more things to think about. People often ask me what I think will be the future of tarot. I imagine so many possibilities but prefer not to speak them. It is so much more interesting to watch the mystery unfold bit by bit.

© Barbara Moore

Strength image from the Rider Waite Tarot, US Games Systems Inc. 1971



At a party someone put a tarot deck in Barbara's hands. She's held on tight ever since. Her life has been a crazy-quilt of experiences—beauty school drop-out, theatre geek, stay-at-home wife, history student, editor, academic, Catholic, fundamentalist Christian, Methodist, Nothing, Everything, pagan, shaman—and tarot helps her make sense of the eclectic soup that has been her life.

Barbara lives in St. Paul, Minnesota with her wife Lisa and their two dogs, Whiskey and Norman. Every morning, she takes Whiskey for a walk and they play hide and seek with the Divine, finding magic (and burrs) everywhere. She also loves cake, art supplies, summer, traveling, and playing Magic: The Gathering, a few of the things that convince Barbara that the Divine loves us and wants us to be happy.

Since her wife won't be her sugar momma, to earn her keep Barbara spends her days consulting for Llewellyn and Lo Scarabeo, creating decks, writing books, presenting at conferences, reading for clients, and teaching.

Website: www.tarotshaman.com

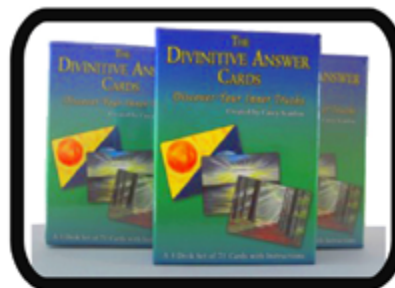
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THOUGHTS ON JUDGMENT

by Pamela Steele

*H*umans abhor change and tend to resist it at all costs. That being noted, when change happens, as it often does, something else will step into the void. Why?

Because we also know Nature abhors a vacuum.

The problem usually starts when we believe we've failed. Relationships, goals, jobs, and any number of life altering quests can detour without even so much as a 'by your leave.' But, if we tweak our beliefs, what we perceive as personal failure will be seen by our Inner Divinity as an opportunity for growth.

For instance, when a giant redwood tree dies after many centuries, the earth that supported its life absorbs the elements of its physical being back into the soil, thereby changing the energies of decay into potential for new life. I'm fairly sure the giant redwood doesn't consider its lack of survival as a personal failure. As for us, we can mourn its passing or rejoice in the gift that's been created.

This is life. It is a journey not a destination. We define our journey by our perceptions of who and what we believe ourselves to be. If we see failure and chaos, destruction and pain, war, hatred and all the other icky stuff that bombards our newsfeeds, it's a short step to find these elements within ourselves. We can embrace these as reality or we can accept them as our perception of reality. Yes, we have a choice.

There is a difference between what you are shown and what is true. To observe without judgment is to not take what we are shown personally. This is choosing to be more neutral... like Switzerland. The Creator doesn't judge, condemn, or punish. The All-That-Is observes us as an infinite variety of expression of Itself. No judgment. No punishment. Just experience. This is the only way that which we call "God/Goddess" can know Itself. Through us. The lowly mortals. (That's a joke...laugh...we are anything but 'lowly' We are unique individual expressions of Divinity.)

The answers to questions we ask are not 'out there'. They reside next to where the question originated. It's all within. There is nothing 'out there' except a reflection of what's 'in here'. So how do you go about changing it?

1. Allow change.
2. Allow mistakes, you don't learn by always getting it right. Besides, 'right' is a perception, not a fact.
3. Know there's nothing out there that can stop you. The only force strong enough to stop or defeat you is you.
4. Trust your inner guidance. It never lies. You just have to learn how to listen and speak the language.
5. Face your fears. Completely. Fully. They're there to signal when you're getting outside your comfort zone. The comfort zone isn't all that comfortable or you'd be happier. It's a barrier, not a fortress. It's keeping you in, not keeping life out.

6. Know that you're never alone. It's impossible to be alone. You can be lonely, but not alone. You can be in company you don't like, but if you don't like your own company that's where the problem lies. Work on that.

7. It took every millisecond of every heartbeat to bring you to the here and now. It's a good place if you let it be.

8. You are surrounded by love because each person is reflecting an aspect of you back to you, courtesy of the Creator...the Universe... Life Force...whatever. That's how it works. If you're encountering opposition and hatred, you're either opposing and hating yourself or you have a judgment on that which



you're observing. Ease up. Get out of your own way.

9. Find your own truth. Obviously adopting someone else's truth doesn't work. You've tried it, I've tried it, it doesn't work. Find your own. It's right inside. You know what is and is not right for you. You know what does and does not serve who you are.

10. Start treating yourself as you treat your children or those who you love as much as life its self. Do this with compassion, gentleness, love and understanding.

See? It's easy. Don't try to dissect anything or complicate the matter with facts. Take a deep breath and simply Be.

© Pamela Steele

Judgment image - Steele Wizard Tarot



PAMELA STEELE is a registered massage therapist, professional bar tender, event organizer, horse trainer and has taught tarot reading, art and belly dancing. With over 50+ years art experience and over 35 years reading tarot, Pamela has created the *Steele Wizard Tarot*, the *Wizard's Pets Tarot* and the currently in-progress *Eternal*

Seeker's Tarot. She gets bored easily and can be distracted by everything or nothing. Her founding passions are fantasy art and horses which you will see blended into many tarot images. She has shown and sold art internationally for over 30 years and her work has graced graphic novel covers, D&D publications, the German Sci-Fi Annual, coloring books, children's books and new age books and magazines. She's online at www.SteeleWizard.com.



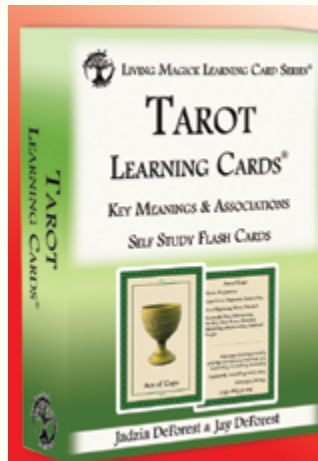
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NUMBER NINE UNIVERSAL YEAR – THE HERMIT

by Bonnie Cehovet

We are already a couple of months into a number 9 universal year ($2+0+1+6=9$). Shall we have a party? Why not ... let's do that! We should honor and celebrate the energy of each year, and reflect its qualities in our lives. After all, life is all about cycles! So ... just what is this “universal year” thing? “Universal” indicates that this is energy that applies to all of us. It can be viewed as collective energy.

Note: A universal year is calculated by adding up the numbers for each year, until they are reduced to a single digit. The only exceptions are the numbers 11 and 22, which are considered Master numbers.

The energy of a universal year overlays the energy of an individual year, and works together with it in all areas of our lives. The energy of a universal year is in effect over a calendar year, while individual energy is in effect from one birthday to the next birthday. For each individual year, we will see the overlay of the energy of two different universal years.

The number 9 carries the energy of closure, endings, and completion. It is a year of transition on personal, community, national, and global levels. It is also a year of looking back, a year of reflection. Where are we, and how did we get there? What do we need to know to move forward? What are the lessons to be learned?

The number 9 is ruled by Mars, making it very active, fiery energy. However, it can also be considered humanitarian energy. Some of the qualities of a number 9 year are compassion, generosity, and wisdom. The vision for a number 9 year is a global one, and there is the ability to communicate in a very persuasive manner. The goal for a number 9 year is that of learning from the past, and expanding personal and global perspectives. With the fiery Mars energy, the

challenge inherent in a number 9 year is expending energy in an unfocused manner, and perhaps being a bit intolerant or self-indulgent. We may also be looking at situations where we tend to lose control of our emotions.

Moving into the world of Tarot, a number 9 universal year is associated with the archetype of the Hermit. The energy of the Hermit is largely that of introspection, of finding one's own truth, and then carrying that truth into the world. We need to remember that there are degrees to everything –

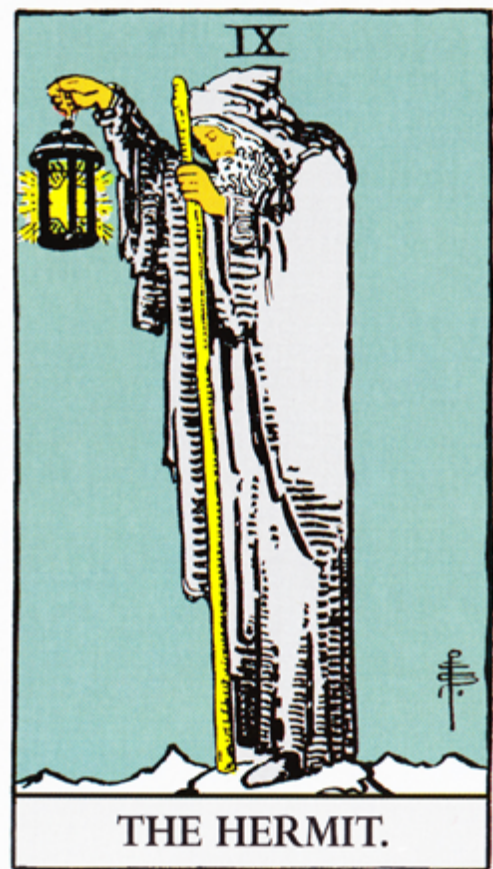
from very positive to very negative, and all that is in between. Decisions and actions that are taken by world leaders on a global level may reflect wise choices with great spiritual intent, or they may reflect a sense of isolation and refusal to participate with others. As the Hermit functions as a teacher, we will see education in all forms taking precedence.

On a more personal level, a number 9 universal year speaks of going on an inner journey either as an individual, or as part of a community (local, national, or global). It is to find the answers within ourselves, and then take them out into the

community through teaching and/or mentoring. It is a time for tying up loose ends, bringing projects to completion, and getting ready for a new cycle.

A Hermit year requires patience, as we are journeying within ourselves for our answers. We are having to deal with issues that have presented challenges for us, so that we can move forward. As the Hermit's lantern is held aloft to provide light for others, it is first held aloft internally so that it reveals our own dark shadows, the corners of life that we have not wanted to address. Here we will find our own truth.

The flip side of the Hermit is our inability to seek our own truth. We may fall under the spell of a charismatic charlatan, we may choose to ignore our intuition (especially as it comes through dreamtime), we may take the advice of others at our



own risk, or we may simply not be willing to take the solo journey that the Hermit represents.

Many of you are professional readers. The energy of the number 9, along with the energy of the Hermit, is something that you will first experience for yourself, and then you will take into readings with your clients. They will benefit from your experience, and you will benefit from helping them to understand this energy. In a teacher/student (or, in this case, reader/client) relationship, the teacher or reader is also a student.

As we reach out to others, and help them define their lives, we are also getting them ready to help individuals within their sphere. Always remember that the answer is only as good as the question that is asked. Frame your questions well,

and help others to frame their questions well. In this manner we can fulfill the best that the number 9, Hermit year has to offer!

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Hermit image from the RiderWaite Tarot, US Games Systems Inc. 1971



BONNIE CEHOVET is a professional Tarot reader with over twenty years experience, is a CTGM (Certified Tarot Grand Master), and a Reiki Master/Teacher. She is a published author, including *Tarot, Birth Cards, and You* (Schiffer Publishing, 2011). *Tarot, Ritual, and You* (Schiffer Publishing, 2013), and *Surviving the Holidays* (through Amazon.com). She is co-author, along with Brad Tesh, of *Seek Joy ... Toss Confetti* (through Amazon.com).

Her reviews and interviews can be found on her site (www.bonniecchovet.com), and on the Aeclectic Tarot website (www.aeclectic.net/tarot). Her writer's blog can be found here — <http://www.bonniecchovet.blogspot.com/>.

A promotional graphic for the 'Tarot of Empowerment' deck. At the top, a central eagle logo with spread wings is positioned above the text 'Tarot of Empowerment'. Below the logo, several tarot cards are displayed in a semi-circular arrangement. The cards shown include 'QUESTER', 'WHEEL OF FORTUNE', 'INTROSPECTION', 'SUN', 'MOON', 'STAR', 'DETERMINATION', and 'WORLD'. The background is a light blue gradient with a subtle sunburst effect behind the central logo. Below the cards, the text 'A TOOL TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE! Become EMPOWERED!' is written in a bold, yellow, serif font. Underneath this, a paragraph in black text states: 'The Major Arcana deck that was created specifically as a tool to guide you to understand your options, gain new perspectives, and make decisions in your highest good.' This is followed by 'Available as a Limited Collector Edition Set' in a bold, yellow, serif font. Then, another paragraph in black text says: 'Each of the 250 sets are numbered and signed by co-creators, author Judyth Sult and artist Gordana Curgus.' Below this, the text 'Each card available as giclee print on canvas, and as a wall hanging.' is written in a bold, yellow, serif font. Finally, at the bottom, the website 'TarotofEmpowerment.com' and the phone number '(360) 305-1491' are listed in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

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Reviews



THE LAKOTA SWEAT LODGE CARDS: SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS OF THE SIOUX

Review by Bonnie Cehovet

Author: Chief Archie Fire Lane Deer, Helene Sarkis

Artist: Alexander Sarkis

Destiny Books - 1994

ISBN #978-089281456-5

The Lakota Sweat Lodge Cards are the product of a collaboration between Lakota Chief Archie Fire Lane Deer, Ann Louise Goulene, Wendy Meg Siegel, and Helene Sarkis. Through their shared Sweat Lodge and Inipi experiences, they have created a beautiful deck of 50 brightly colored cards that are essentially in the nature of teaching cards, based on the sacred Inipi purification ceremony of the Lakota Sioux.

I started working with these cards many years ago. Then I gave them away, intending to purchase another deck for myself. I never got around to doing that until now. This is the time for them to come back into my life, and I would

like to share them with you.

The cards are broken down into three divisions:

The Sixteen Great Mysteries (aspects of the Great Spirit):

Great Spirit, Sun, Motion, Mother Earth, Stone, Moon, Wind Satisfaction & Passion, Thunderbeings, Bison Nation/Man, Bear, the Four Directions, Whirlwind, Spirit of Man, Ghost, Intellect, The Material

The Eight Supernaturals (Planets):

Woman with Two Faces, Spider, Old Woman Sorceress, Goddess of Water, Old Man Sorcerer of the North, Eight Directions of the Wind, Wind, Whirlwind & Storm)

The Elements of the Sweat Lodge:

Cloud, The West-Black, The North-Red, The East-Yellow, The South-White, Sweat Lodge,

Sacred Pipe, Tree of Life, Morning Star, Grandfather's Breath, Sacred Herbs, Prayer Ties, Sacred Songs, Fire Pit, All My Relations, Sacred Mound, Water, Air, Fire, Earth, Swan, Grandmother, Moontime, Mole, Crying for a Dream

The cards are approximately 3 3/8" by 4 3/4". The backs have a 1/8" white border, with a dark green inset overlaid with a white symbolic pattern, and are not reversible. The faces of the cards show a 1/8" white border, with a color coded strip across the top, and the card name in white, in the Lakota language. There is a colored strip across the bottom of the card, with the title in English, and the card number in the lower right hand corner, in white

numbers against a black background.

The deck is accompanied by a 177 page instruction book that includes a preface by Helene Sarkis, and an introduction by Chief Archie Fire Lane Deer. There is an explanation of the sacred Inipi

purification ceremony, which includes a graphic detailing the Wheel of the Lodge. And an explanation for each of the spirit energies. Instructions are given for using the cards for daily and weekly meditation, along with New Moon and Full Moon meditations. Spreads include the Four Directions Spread, the Elemental Spread, the



Inipi Spread, the Grandfather's Breath Spread, the Grandmother's Path Spread (the Firekeeper's Walk). The Tree of Life Spread, and the Morning Star Spread.

The description for each card includes a black and white scan, where the card fits into the Lakota tradition, the traditional meaning, card explanation and a specific meditation.

The intent of this deck is not that of divination - rather, it is meant to help the practitioner access the creative energies within that they need to help them deal with daily life issues. It is a deck of self-discovery and self-empowerment. Through the use of



these cards, we are lead to a greater understanding of our being and our purpose, and a better understanding of how to walk the balance between the conscious (physical) world and the world of Spirit.

Chanli Wapakta (Prayer Ties) speaks of social consciousness. In making prayer ties, we are being given the opportunity to offer prayers for others.



Chunupa Wakan (The Sacred Pipe) speaks of prayer. The figure in the card is that of White Buffalo Calf Woman who brought the Sacred Pipe to the people from the creator.

Iktomi (Spider) speaks of the fear of the unseen. Iktomi is a spirit that always attempts to deceive, building webs that ensnare.

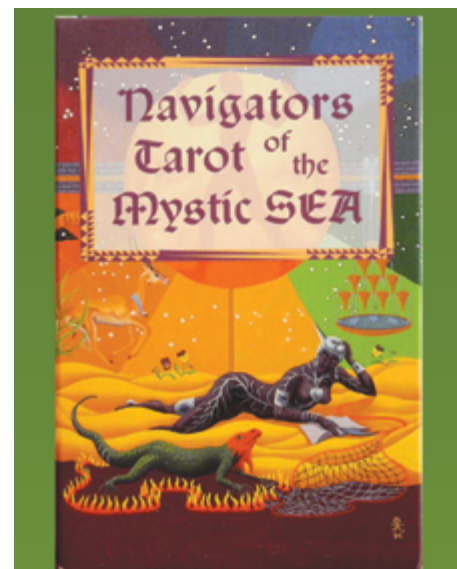
Skan (Motion) speaks of manifestation. (I love the energy portrayed in this card!) Skan sets the stars and planets moving on their path, and release the winds to travel.

Wakan Tanka (Great Spirit) speaks of the Source. It is the Great Spirit, the Great Mystery, the Grandfather and Creator of all things.

Whether used in combination with another divination system or on its own, the Lakota Sweat Lodge Cards take us deeply into the world of knowing ourselves.



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THE SACRED WORLD ORACLE

Review by Bonnie Cehovet

Author: Kris Waldherr

Artist: Kris Waldherr

U.S. Games Systems Inc. - 2013

ISBN #978-1-57281-709-8

Kris Waldherr is one of my favorite artists (and authors!). Her quality work keeps on coming with the *Sacred World Oracle*, a 44 card oracle deck based on the four elements (Fire, Water, Air, and Earth), accompanied by a 48 page LWB (Little White Book).

Waldherr draws from myth, folklore, and nature to celebrate the beauty and diversity of the earth, and to bring gentle guidance into the lives of those that choose to use it. I loved that the point was made in the introduction that the cards both contain the message, and act as the vehicle to bring the reader the message. Our personal experiences act as a frame of reference for interpreting the cards in view of our

daily life. We are essentially, according to Waldherr, releasing information that is already deep within our psyche.

The spreads presented are the three-card Past/Present/Future spread, and the four card Black Swan – White Swan spread.

The deck is broken down into four quadrants, representing the four elements. Each quadrant has animals associated with it:

Quadrant of Earth: Earth, Cat, Dog, Rabbit, Ram, Bear, Lion, Fox, Bull, Snake, Elephant

Quadrant of Water: Water, Whale, Salmon, Turtle, Swan, Dolphin, Crab, Crocodile, Frog, Seal, Carp

Quadrant of Air: Air, Owl, Spider, Dove, Dragonfly, Bat, Peacock, Butterfly, Raven, Bee, Bluebird

Quadrant of Fire: Fire, Firebird, Horse, Dragon, Chimera, Firefly, Scorpion, Falcon, Salamander, Centaur, Phoenix

The cards are presented in the LWB with the card number, name, keywords, and a short paragraph on how to interpret the card. A sample card from the LWB reads:



II Cat

Keywords: Fertility. Beauty. Magic. Independence.

The cat is perhaps the most mysterious of mammals. The ancient Greeks associated the cat with the Moon Goddess, Artemis. In Europe, cats were believed to be the familiar of witches and wizards. However, in Japan and China the cat was honored as good luck talismans. While cats are prized pets all over the globe, no culture has ever surpassed the Ancient Egyptians in revering them. Four thousand years ago, the cat was worshiped there as the sacred animal of Bastet, the Egyptian goddess of happiness, love, pregnancy, and childbirth. The Cat card challenges you to find ways to express your individuality. How can you create more magic and beauty?

The cards are 3.6" by 4.6", which can be a bit awkward for small hands. However, I have small hands, and had no problem working with the cards. The backs have a 1/4" white border, surrounding a reddish brown background, with gold icons in the four corners. In the center is a circle, divided into four quadrants to represent the four elements. The circle has a fine gold border. In white letters above and below the circle are the words "As Above, So Below". While



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each quadrant is color coded, I still view the backs as reversible.

The card faces have a 1/4" white border, followed by a color-coded border. Earth is a dark green, Water is a light



blue, Air is purple, Fire is a brownish-red. An ornate gold border surrounds the imagery, which appears within an arch. The name of the animal depicted, along with the card number (in Roman numerals) is placed in white letters across the bottom of the card. The effect is beautiful—that of looking through a window.

This is a deck that could be used by anyone, of any background, and any age group.

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THE DEVIANT MOON TAROT BOOK

Guest Review by Dan Pelletier



do it right”. It is a stunning book. It’s beautiful. The hardback full-color embossed cover, the weight of the paper – it is a four pound, three hundred forty page adventure for your eyes and mind.

This is the new standard in tarot companion books, and like the deck, it was not rushed to market. You can tell that it was created with love.

This is not just a book that’s about a deck. It is a book that demonstrates the evolution of the Art and the Artist, and it takes us on that evolutionary journey.

This is a book for art students and artists who will appreciate and grow from the shared journey.

This is a book for people who would like to understand the dark and the fantastic.

This is a book for people who love the Deviant Moon Tarot, want to see what’s behind the curtain, and have the rest of the story revealed.

Patrick joyfully recounts his creation process, and how his organic and narrative approach to art is the result of thirty years development. He shows us his edits, the images rejected, and entertains us with the stories of creation.

Please don’t clear off a spot on your bookshelf for this book, as it won’t be there collecting dust. Its beauty and the heirloom quality of its content will be appreciated time and time again when

I’ve used the Deviant Moon Tarot deck, both with and without borders, for the better part of seven years. When it first came out I had questions about some of the minutiae in the imagery. So I corresponded with Patrick Valenza. I was surprised with his willingness to share portions of the story with me and fascinated with what he shared with me.

Those early conversations with Patrick revealed that this was not a deck rushed to market like so many other decks these days, and I was left wanting to know more about how the drawings matured.

Then I began to hear rumors about a book.

On Christmas Eve, the postman dropped off a package. Upon opening it my first thought was, “When US Games Systems does something, they



THE PARALLEL WORLDS TAROT

Review by Jadzia DeForest

Artist & Author: Astrid Amadori

Self-published - 2014



The *Parallel Worlds Tarot* is a delightful new deck. It came to my attention as Astrid was in the process of creating it and sharing on Facebook.

What caught my eye were the vibrant, pure colors, and mixture of imagery styles. In this deck the clothing alone ranges from modern office attire, victorian, military, mystical, to midieval.

The cards are standard tarot size, borderless, and come in a two-part box. The box could be a little



heavier paper, but it's the same weight as a standard tuck-box, which gets the job done.

A 66 page booklet accompanies the cards. It has a color cover and black and white interior. However, it is full of artwork from the cards and beautifully laid out for a LWB. In the booklet is a brief introduction, short card meanings, and three spreads: The Healing Spread, The Junction, and The Celtic Cross.

While the cards are borderless, each has a colored bar at the bottom in which the card's number, name or keyword, and astrological association is typed in black. The bar is color coded for each element: Black for earth, red for fire, yellow for air, and blue for water. The

The Major Arcana all have the traditional Waite-based titles, although you'll find some of the imagery fascinating and unique. The Aces through Tens have a keyword or short



phrase as titles. I have mixed feeling about that as I think it often sticks a single meaning on the card, but at the same time can be helpful for those who want a memory jog or are learning.

In this deck the suits are Coins, Wands, Swords and Cups. And the Courts are King, Queen, Knight, and Squire.

One of the cards that I found most interesting is Strength. The image is a lady in a long

white dress and laurel, but before her is a ceature that looks like Gollum from *Lord of the Rings*! That gives me a much more visceral reaction than the traditional lion.

Speaking of visceral reactions...The Devil card is a clown. I, like a lot of people I know, are terrified of clowns. This card is wonderful in that the imagery is simple but meaningful. The clown has cloven hooves and carries a torch as he looks down at two prisoners.



Another one that caught my eye is the King of Swords. A man in a blue business suit and yellow tie. Gripping a sword, he perches on cold grey rock. His expression is stern, all business, and yet he seems relaxed and confident.

The *Parallel Worlds Tarot* is ideal for those who are comfortable with the RWS imagery but want something a little more modern. There are plenty of new ideas mixed in with traditional symbolism in this deck.

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THE SHERLOCK HOLMES TAROT

Review by Bonnie Cehovet

Author: John Matthews

Artist: Wil Kingham

Eddison Sadd - 2014

ISBN #978-1-4549-1022-0

I love it when one of my passions finds its way into the Tarot. The story of Holmes, Watson, and 221B Baker Street is as I hold it in my mind. What a gift that it!

This is a 79 card deck, along traditional lines, with cards retitled to fit the theme of Sherlock Holmes. (Examples include Inspector Lestrade as the Fool, The Great Detective as the Magician, and Irene Adler as the High Priestess.) The extra card is listed as a Wild Card (represented by the Giant Rat of Sumatra). The suits are Observation (Swords), with an eye as an icon; Evidence (Wands), with a foot as an icon; Analysis (Cups), with a magnifying glass as an icon; and Deduction (Pentacles), with a question mark as an icon. The Court cards are Baker Street Irregular (Page), Peeler (Knight), Lady (Queen), and Inspector (King).

The deck and 160 page companion

book come in a sturdy cardboard box with a lift-off top, featuring Holmes and Watson on the cover.

In their preface, Matthews and Kingham talk about this deck as reflecting the “inner landscape” of Sherlock Holmes. I dearly love Sherlock Holmes (in my mind as portrayed by Basil Rathbone, with Nigel Bruce as Dr. Watson).

In Part One: The Wisdom of Holmes & Watson, we read about Arthur Conan Doyle, the man who imagined Sherlock Holmes and his deductive abilities. The stories were popular from the very beginning, which is understandable.

I have read them all over and over and over again! It was also interesting to read about real individuals that may have been used as prototypes in building the character of Holmes. The authors pose the question of whether Holmes himself would have approved of the Tarot, and come up with some interesting conclusions! In this deck we see the wisdom of Sherlock Holmes applied through the Tarot – IMHO to great advantage!

In Part Two: The Greater Mystery – The cards and their meanings, the game is literally afoot! This section starts out with a listing of renamed titles for the Major Arcana, the retitled suits and Court cards, and the icons that represent each suit. Each card is represented by a black and white image, The Game (a summary of the meaning of the card), The Fog (reversed meanings), Keys (shorter meanings), and Holmesian Wisdom (quotes from the Sherlock Holmes canon). Note: I love that the Holmesian Wisdom quotes are presented within the circle of a magnifying glass!

In Part Three: The Art of Investigation – Working with the cards, the authors talk about what each of the suits does, and how to use the Wild Card. Spreads include the four card Lens Spread, the eight card Great Detective Spread, and the nine card Enquiry Spread. Several pages are left blank at the end of the book for notes and observations.

The Major Arcana depict figures and locations from the Sherlock Holmes stories, while the Minor Arcana depict

scenes from specific stories. (It was a joy to go through this deck for the first time, and recognize so many people and scenes!)

The artwork brought the theme together in a wonderful fashion – one could believe they were in the Victoria era, even if only for a short while. The high hats, candles, and gas lamps, along with foggy streets, tell the story. Tarot

aficionados will be happy to note that Caitlin Matthews graciously agreed to pose for some of the cards in this deck!



The cards are 2 7/8" by 4 7/8". The backs are gold, with 221B back to back in the middle of the card. (We all know who lived at 221B Baker Street!) The card faces show a 1/4" white border, surrounding the card image. The card number and title is across the top of the card, in black lettering against a gold background. The Minor Arcana show the card number or title, but not the suit. Suits are indicated by icons placed in the upper right and left hand corners of the card.

I am still not used to Inspector Lestrade as the Fool ... but I am getting there. As The Fool, we see Lestrade, in a brown overcoat and hat, facing away from us. He looks to be on the docks, gun in his right hand, lantern in his left hand. Holmesian Wisdom is "I take a shortcut when I can get it."

The Great Detective shows Holmes sitting in a chair, facing the reader, his hands in a "V" in front of him, his legs crossed. On the table in front of him is a lit candle, books, and other items of detection. He appears pensive, as only Sherlock Holmes can appear. Holmesian Wisdom is "A conjurer gets no credit once he explains his trick."

Irene Adler is shown as young woman,



seated in what appears to be a restaurant or tea shop. She is dressed for public with a hat, and is seated next to a table with a teapot and teacup. In the background we see both men and women standing. The Holmesian Wisdom is "Woman are naturally secretive, and they like to do their own secreting."

The Baker Street Irregular of Observation (Page of Swords) shows an envelope coming in through the mail slot in a door. The slot is open, and we see a pair of eyes looking through it. The Holmesian Wisdom is "They can go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone."

The Five of Evidence (Wands) shows a candlelit room, with Holmes standing in the background, in a dark overcoat and hat. Holmes is seen subduing a red headed man. The Holmesian Wisdom is "I know, my dear Watson, that you share my love of all that is bizarre."

The Ace of Analysis (Cups) shows Holmes sitting in the middle of a candlelit room, wearing an overcoat and hat, and smoking his pipe. Papers are strewn all around him. The Holmesian Wisdom is "I can only see two things for certain. It's the chain between them we are going to have to trace."

The Lady of Deduction (Queen of Pentacles) shows Mrs. Hudson standing in front of a red door, holding a tea tray. The Holmesian Wisdom is "I do not encourage visitors."

This is not a learning deck – but it is a deck that would be thoroughly enjoyed by someone that likes themed decks, and/or someone that loves Sherlockian lore.



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