

## **Chaos Magick: Magickal Terrorism**

The practice of magick is generally agreed to be the attempt to create change in conformity with the will of the magician. This change can range from a simple acquisition, such as creating circumstances favorable to getting a job, to the highly metaphysical, such as conversing with the angelic entities of the Elizabethan magus John Dee. Chaos magick, the most recent development in the Ceremonial Magickal Tradition, is an innovative, modern, and disturbing approach to the realization of the Magickal Intention.

Chaos Magick derives primarily from the work of Austin Osman Spare and Peter Carroll in the first and third quarters of the 20th Century respectively. Both magicians aggressively argued against the exclusion of sorcerous techniques from magickal practice and both developed systems of magick that were inclusive, eclectic and innovative. Both generally spurned traditional magick as needlessly complicated, discriminatory, and impotent. Spare, being an artist, was clearly influenced by other magickal artists such as William Blake, and was also influenced by the relatively new field of psychiatry, particularly by the work of Jung and Freud on the subconscious. Spare stressed the integration of magick into all areas of his life, and so it is not possible, in examining Spare's drawings, for example, to distinguish between them and magickal work. Spare's drawings are spells. Spare's work is mostly out of print. Some of his writings are available online. Carroll, writing soon after the development of Chaos Scientific Theory, was equally influenced by the possibilities of using the language and tools of magick as a means to discover and influence the subatomic interactions of the quantum universe. Carroll also founded the Illuminati of Thanateros (the IOT), an Order of Chaos Magicians. The Order is somewhat controversial in the greater community of Chaos magicians since it is a secretive degreed hierarchy. Secrets, degrees, and hierarchies are often considered to run counter to the Chaos current. Carroll's introductory work "Liber Null and Psychonaut" is the most widely available work on Chaos Magick. It remains in print. More recently the ideas of Chaos Magick have been extended further into art by Jan Fries, whose brilliant and friendly excursion into drawing, "Visual Magick", is, unfortunately, only available in England. Stephen Mace has privately printed fascinating analyses of the interface between demonology and Chaos Magick, "Stealing the Fire from Heaven" being the most widely read. Phil Hine has published pamphlets on Chaos Magick and the Necronomicon. Finally seminal forays into the application of Chaos Magick to social dynamics and communications theory by Hakim Bey have recently extended the theories of Chaos Magick into music, performance art and the Internet.

In more general terms Chaos Magick uses the deconstructionist theories of Jacques Derrida, the interest in random phenomena of John Cage and Minimalism, and the humor of Dada to create ritual spaces for magickal acts. To view Chaos Magick solely as a reformulation of traditional magick, however, would be inaccurate. Chaos Magick is something new, an attempt to deconstruct consensual belief structures, free the energy trapped by these beliefs, and radically alter the movement of the quantum flux. Chaos Magick is an assault on normative belief patterns, an attack on the mind's status quo, guerrilla war on the careful considerations of consciousness.

Chaos Magick focuses on the mechanism of belief, and suggests that the process of belief rather than the object of belief is the critical element in magick. Chaos Magicians will adopt or refute positions of belief as needed for the successful resolution of magickal acts. This orientation, which stresses adaptability as a prime asset and greets change as an accurate reflection of the true nature of reality can be extremely destabilizing for individuals whose sense of personal identity requires that the universe be perceived as an ordered and meaningful place. Chaos Magick specifically refutes the possibility of eternal rest, of eternal order. It views the universe as a phenomena of complexity at an order of magnitude too great for normal human psychology to understand. In fact, Chaos Magicians would argue that the universe is in such a state of flux and apparently random movement that only devious techniques such as those of Chaos Magick, which deliberately subvert the conscious, rational mind have any chance of creating change in conformity with the will of the magician.

Chaos Magick is self-annihilating, bearing commonality with the crazy wisdom of the fringe elements of the nyingmapa school of Tibetan Buddhism, with the mad monks of Zen Buddhism, and with the theoretical structures of Nagarjuna and the Madhyamaka schools of Buddhism. One of the two central Sutras (Buddhist teachings) of Madhyamaka is the Prajna Paramita, a Sutra whose title is loosely translated as "Beyond the beyond, there lies awakening", and whose structure, in which form and emptiness (Chaos and Order) are identified with one another, resembles that of contemporary chaos ritual. The founder of the nyingmapa school of Tibetan Buddhism was the sorcerer-buddha Padmasambhava, and some of the rituals, such as the graveyard rituals of Chod practice, are hardly distinguishable from the Chaos magician's use of the Eldar Gods of the Necronomicon. The koans of Zen Buddhism are designed to short circuit the discursive mind and bring about a state of mind similar to that sought by the Chaos magician.

Chaos Magick can be considered to be a psychological approach to magickal ritual. Bearing many similarities to the Stanislavsky system of Method Acting, the ritual systems of Chaos Magick aim at blocking the conscious mind and generating a state of consciousness known as “gnosis”, a state of mind in which the defenses of the discursive mind are overthrown and the magickal intention of the magician can be driven deep into the Absolute, that is to say into the quantum flux of the universe. Like Method Actors, Chaos Magicians seek to forget their identity in order to achieve their will, the change in the universe that is the goal of the magickal act. To do this Chaos Magicians use gesture, ritual, sound, visualization, the cues of their senses, meditation, and generated emotional states such as anger, fear, disgust, boredom or despair. Any method that can create the momentary state of gnosis is considered acceptable. Favorite techniques frequently involve sex, pain, and confusion. Chaos Magicians use sigils (magickal intentions that have been transformed into symbolic structures), rituals from any source, the artefacts of esoteric or popular culture to form a magickal space that might bring about gnosis.

Chaos Magick is non-discriminatory and refutes dualism. Rooted in the realization of the quantum flux and recognizing that ideas are not reality (although they may influence the perception of reality) Chaos Magick does not discriminate between White, Grey and Black Magick, between evil and good, between right and wrong. Consequently Chaos Magick is probably not for those who have not internalized a personal moral or ethical code. In fact, most Chaos Magicians would probably define themselves, if pressed, as Black Magicians but may, in this self-definition, be referring to Magick that has to do with that which is hidden, or in darkness, and so is black. Chaos Magick is neither for the squeamish, nor for those who wish to argue points of ethics, nor for those obsessed with establishing varieties of social order. Ceremonial Magick and Wicca provide ample opportunities for those who wish to do the latter. Chaos Magick is concerned with developing magick that works, rituals that have specific effects, that create change in conformity with the will of the chaos magician, that are testable and can be replicated, that affect the Chaos Magician’s deep self in sometimes catastrophic ways, that are non-judgmental, non-hierarchical and devious.

Those who are interested in the practice of Chaos Magick are warned that Chaos Magick can be destabilizing. Since it is designed to deconstruct belief, dearly held opinions, the stories we tell ourselves to lull ourselves into a sense of security will tend to fray and unravel. Unless the magician is willing to forsake these old

ideas, to allow the boundaries of personal identity to be disrupted the result of magickal action may be chaotic indeed. Dramatic life changes, sometimes perceived as being for the worse, are a commonly reported result of Chaos Magickal Rites. Fundamentally, Chaos Magick is not about discovering one's True Will, nor communing with the Mother Goddess, nor even associating with demons, but with the direct, startling apprehension of the Chaos current, the quantum flux of an unhuman universe. Chaos Magick is magickal terrorism.