

The members of the circle are still. Some move slowly in place while others bang on tambourines. Some witches hold finger cymbals similar to those of a belly dancer's as they chant, calling back and forth to one another.

Carole Queen, a prominent witch in Eugene until her recent move to the Bay Area, talked about the power generated by ceremony in an interview last year.

"If you feel like you are plugging into the power of the

universe then that's power. Maybe the atheists are right. Maybe there is no power in the universe but if I think there is then there is.

"So we can be as skeptical as we possibly want to be and still have that power that we can call up within ourselves. Basically it's a matter of self-confidence," Queen said.

Some negative stigmas have been attached to witchcraft by people who have abused the power found in the Craft, says Samantha. "There are two kinds of power, power-over and

power-with. A person with 'power-with' assumes authority of his or her own life. People who have 'power-over' have a need deep in their soul that in order for him or her to feel safe he or she has to feel powerful over others."

There are some people possessing "power-over" traits in politics and witchcraft. "Satanism has neither (trait) because it is strictly against the Church," Samantha says.

The main objective in witchcraft is established by the standard law of the Craft. "An ye harm none, do as ye will."

That's the only true law of Wicca," Queen said.

"There are some people who add an element of revenge, but the intent is never to harm. The intent is to stop harmful actions," Samantha says.

People who practice black magic will get their just rewards, according to Queen as it is believed in the Craft that "anything you do will be returned to you three times."

"It is the Eastern concept of karma, if you go messing

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MOONSTRUCK

The full-moon has been the subject of folklore and scientific inquiry.

Most people have heard stories of how werewolves, witches, and lovers exult in the full-moon. And, perhaps, you suspect your roommate of acting more crazed than usual when the moon is full, but how about these theories:

- The Dow Jones Industrial Average tends to be higher during a full moon.
- Suicide attempts are more successful when the moon is full.
- Deviant voting patterns are associated with a full moon.
- Earthquakes are triggered by phases of the moon.
- Moonlight stimulates the pineal gland, activating more enzymes and hormones.

These theories are just a sampling of the topics of full-moon research projects that have been going on in recent years. The mysterious moon has captured the imagination not only of primitive cultures, medievalists and occultists, but also of scientists.

Moon mythology has survived into the 1980s. A recent study found that 49 percent of college undergraduates surveyed, believed "some people behave strangely when the moon is full."

Another survey found that

74 percent of the psychiatric nurses at one mental institution believe the moon affects mental illness. In fact, the word 'lunatic' is derived from 'luna', the Latin word for moon.

Many ancient cultures saw the moon as a female goddess. Some cultures, such as the ancient Greenlanders, believed standing in moonlight was an aid to fertility. The moon's association with femininity and fertility probably sprang from the correlation between the moon's cycle and menstrual cycles.

Witches put a lot of stock in moon magic. The full-moon is considered best for white magic and beneficial rites, but the waning moon represents dark, destructive forces. Black magic and sorcery are believed to be at their prime during the dark moon. Ghosts are also said to rattle through the countryside on moonlit nights.

Scientists have attempted to link the moon's phases to precipitation patterns, biological tides within the human body, electromagnetic forces and air ions. What has all this intriguing research established?

Not much, at least in the way of concrete facts.

For every study that suggests homicide rates or admission rates to psychiatric hospitals jump during the full-moon, there are counter studies with opposite conclusions. Scientists continue to debunk each other's statistical methods in moon-influence studies, and the speculation continues.

One researcher reported people do strange things during the new moon, crescent moon and the quarter-moon. In other words, people do strange things, period.

Dr. James Kemp of the University astronomy department is also skeptical of the moon's effects on human emotions. "People are indoors too much — they don't even know what the phases of the moon are, so how could it influence them?" he asks.

Better not take any chances. Be wary if you notice your roommate looking wild-eyed on Nov. 16, when the next full-moon is due. And remember, a rabbit's foot is more potent if it comes from a rabbit killed in a graveyard on a full-moon night.

— LAURIE SCHWARTZ



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