

ፆ ህክግፊ ያህጥጥ ግፊኑ, ፋግ ጸ ጋጸጸጸጸፋፋፋፋ ግግግ, ቀጠጠ ግግግግ ...

Authentic Thaumaturgy

by Isaac Bonewits

Second Edition

Edited by Steve Jackson

Cover by Ray Snyder
and Eric Hotz

Cover Design by
Jack Elmy

Illustrations by Eric Hotz,
Ray Snyder and
Clifford VanMeter

Chief Operations Officer
Gene Seabolt

Interior Design and Production
Isaac Bonewits

Print Buying
Melissa Brunson

Art Direction
Alain Dawson



GURPS, In Nomine and the all-seeing pyramid are registered trademarks of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. *Pyramid* and Illuminati Online and the names of all products published by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated are registered trademarks or trademarks of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated, or used under license. *Authentic Thaumaturgy* is copyright © 1998, 2005 by Isaac Bonewits. All rights reserved.

ISBN 1-55634-360-4

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

ጋ ያህጥጥ ግግግ ግ ህግግግ ፋጸጸጸ ግግግግግ ርግግግግግ,

Fertility Magic 44
Sex Magic 44
Healing Magic 45
Money Magic 45
Political Magic 45
Smithcraft & Artificing 45
Weather Magic 45
Aquatic Magic 45
Summoning & Exorcising Magic 46
The Mantic Arts 46
Command Magic 46
Colors of Magic 46
Table 4.1: Colors of Magic for Gaming 47
"Ranks" of Magic Users 48
"Levels" of Spells 48

5: Creating or Converting a Magic User

Creation or Conversion? 50
"PRs" or "Character Stats" of
Magic Users 50
Your Character's Psi Potential 51
Determining Psi Potential 51
Your Character's Psi Talents 52
Tables 5.1 & 5.2: Psychic Abilities 52
Getting New Psi Talents 53
Your Character's Magical Strength 53
Formula 5.1: Magical Strength 53
Table 5.3: Magical Strength Adjustment
Term 53
Your Character's Magical Power 54
Formula 5.2: Magical Power
(10% Rule) 54
Table 5.4: Magical Power 54
Your Character's Magical Luck Limit 55
Table 5.5: Magical Luck Limit 55
Your Character's Magical Clarity Limit 55
Table 5.6: Magical Clarity Limit 55
Converting a Character 55
Table 5.7: Converting Experience Levels 55

6: The Laws of Magic

Figure 6.1: A Chart of the
Laws of Magic 56
The Nature of These Laws & Vice Versa 58
The Law of Knowledge 58
The Law of Self-Knowledge 58
The Law of Cause & Effect 58
The Law of Synchronicity 58
The Law of Association 59
The Law of Similarity 59
The Law of Contagion 59
The Law of Positive Attraction 59
The Law of Negative Attraction 59
The Law of Names 59
The Law of Words of Power 60
The Law of Personification 60
The Law of Invocation 60
The Law of Evocation 60
The Law of Identification 60
The Law of Infinite Data 60
The Law of Finite Senses 60
The Law of Personal Universes 60
Figure 6.2: Three Ways of
Viewing Opposites 61
The Law of Infinite Universes 61
The Law of Pragmatism 61
The Law of True Falsehoods 61
The Law of Synthesis 61
The Law of Polarity 61

ABOUT STEVE JACKSON GAMES

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of our products, including *Authentic Thaumaturgy* and the *GURPS* and *In Nomine* roleplaying systems. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for *GURPS* and *In Nomine*. It also covers all the hobby's top games – *AD&D*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Shadowrun* and many more – and other SJ Games releases like *INWO*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures* and more. And *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they're released.

New supplements and adventures. Should *Authentic Thaumaturgy* spur your interest in roleplaying, our *GURPS* and *In Nomine* lines continue to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new in both of them. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our Web site (below).

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all Steve Jackson Games releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request. Or download them from the Web – see below.

Q&A. We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

Gamer input. We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for an online catalog, errata and hundreds of pages of information. We also have conferences on Compuserve and America Online. Our games have their own Usenet groups, e-mail lists and discussion areas in *Pyramid* as well. Visit each game's web page for more information on resources available.

The Law of Dynamic Balance 61
The Law of Perversity 62
The Law of Unity 62
Additional Notes on the Laws 62
Similarity, Contagion &
"The Golden Bough" 62
Invocations & Evocations 63
Universe Hopping 63
Tactical Polarity 63
Perversity & Wishing 63
Combining Laws 63
How the Laws Affect Spell Success 64
Table 6.1: Effects of the Laws of Magic
on PoSS 64

7: The Mage as Juggler

What is a "Variable?" 66
Internal Variables 66
Specialty, Experience & Rank 66
Knowledge of Target/Subject
& Goal 66
Variables Involving the Target/Subject 67
Being Magically Thrifty 67
Mass, Complexity & Resistance 68
Spell Repetition, Entropy & Decay 68
Variables in the Environment 70
Own Quarters Bonus 70
Magical Range Factors 70
Formulas 7.1: Spacial Magical
Range Factor 70

Formulas 7.2: Temporal Magical
Range Factor 70
Mana Density 70
Table 7.1: Effects of Mana Density
on PoSS 71
Ley-Lines 71
Psychic Static & Countermagic 72
Variables That Ain't 73
Gender 73
Race 73
Technological Background 73
Religion 74
Species 74
Occupation 74
Morality 74

8: The Mechanics of Magic

Basic Spell Casting Procedure 76
Raw Talent Use 77
Table 8.1: Raw Talent Use Probabilities 77
Full Spell Use 77
Table 8.2: Full Spell Use PIs 77
Table 8.3: Basic MP Costs 78
MPs Needed for Various Tasks 78
Formula 3.1 (Repeated): MP
Equivalents 78
Formula 8.1: To Levitate
Something/One 78
Formula 8.2: To Throw Something/One
Horizontally 78

- Formula 8.3: To Throw Something/One
Upwards at 1G 78
- Formula 8.4: To Pump Heat 79
- Formula 8.5: To Warm or Cool Air 79
- Formula 8.6: To Cook Living Tissue
(Well Done) 79
- Formula 8.7: To Magnetize Steel 79
- Formula 8.8: To Create Light 79
- Formula 8.9: To Throw a Lightning Bolt 80
- Formula 8.10: To Teleport or Apport
Something/One 80
- Formula 8.11: To Command an
Intelligent Being 81
- Formula 8.12: To Blow a Hole in
Someone 81
- Formula 8.13: To Heal with CPK 81
- “Raising” Mana 82
- Visual Techniques 82
- Auditory Techniques 82
- Erotic Techniques 82
- Kinesthetic Techniques 82
- Erotic Techniques 82
- Mental Techniques 82



- Biochemical Techniques 82
- Spiritual Techniques 83
- “Tapping” Mana 83
- Tapping From the Ether 83
- Tapping From a Magical Device 83
- Tapping From a Familiar 84
- Tapping From Other Characters 84
- Tapping From Spirits 84
- Tapping From “Lands” 84
- Table 8.4: Tapping From Various
Sources 85
- Spell “Decay” & Failure 86
- Table 8.5: MP Cost to Alter
Spell Decay Rates 86
- Spell Failure Types 86
- Some Spell Failure Examples 87
- Table 8.6: Probability of Spell
Persistence (ProSPer) 87
- Table 8.7: Determining
Spell Failure Types 87
- Anti-Psi Shielding 88
- Blocking 88
- Vector Change 88
- Meaning Change 88
- Power Change 88
- Combining Anti-Psi Shields 88

9: The Fastest Wand in the West

- Macho Spell Casting? 90
- “Condensing” Spells 90
- Table 9.1: Practice Needed
to Condense Spells 91
- Formula 9.1: Spell Condensation 91
- Spell Variations 91
- Formulas 9.2: Spell Variation Factors 91
- Spell Recipes 92
- Table 9.2: Spell Recipe Format 92
- Table 9.3: Sample Spell Recipe 92
- Fast “Non-Spells” 93
- Raw Talent Use 93
- Formulas 9.3: Raw Talent Use 93
- Instinctive Psychic Defense 93
- Formulas 9.4: Instinctive
Psychic Defense 93
- Dying Curse 93
- Formulas 9.5: Dying Curse 94
- Magical Devices 94
- How Magical Devices Work 94
- Types of Magical Devices 95
- Amulets & Talismans 95
- Magical Weapons 95
- Magical Books & “Instant Amnesia” . . 95
- “Degrees” of Magical Devices 97
- Working on Higher Planes 98
- Half-Lives of the Witch & Famous 98
- A Gentle Reminder 98

10: The Gods Are Alive, Magic Is Afoot!

- Warning! 100
- All the Worlds’ Deities 100
- What Are the Gods? 100
- Support Your Local
Nature Goddess! 102
- You Rang? 102
- Sleepy vs. Wide Awake Deities 103
- Head vs. Gut Deities 104
- Other Sorts of Spirits 104

- Nature Spirits and Elementals 104
- Fairies and Faeries 105
- Ancestors, Heroes &
Other Dead Folks 106
- The Devil You Say! 107
- Why Bother With Demons? 108

11: Divine & Human Interactions

- What is Worship? 110
- Sacrifices 110
- A Pattern of Worship Rituals 112
- Mt. Olympus Savings & Loan 112
- Clerical Magic 112
- Clerical “Tapping” 113
- Power, Power, Wonder-Working
Power 114
- “Pardon Me, But It’s Your Job” 114
- Piety vs. State of Grace 114
- Communicating With Spirits 115
- Visions & Visitations 115
- Possession Is Nine-Tenths
of the Loa 115
- Mono-, Duo-, and Polytheisms 116
- Figure 11.1: The Nature of Spirits
According to Monotheism,
Duotheism, & Polytheism 117
- Differences in Attitudes of Clergy
and Laity 118
- Interactions With Competing
Faiths 118
- Differences in Magical Ethics 119
- Vocational Guidance for Clerics 120

12: The Quest for the Sacred Mehleelah

- Historical Background 122
- Our Characters & Their Stats 122
- The Quest 123
- Disaster Strikes! 123
- The Arrival 123
- Spell of the Clairvoyant
Coffee Crystal 123
- The Outer Dreckness &
the Bath of Doom 124
- Spell to Exteriorize Tibetan 125
- Spell of Feeling Full of Beans 125
- Attack of the Decaffeinated
Zombies 126
- Inverto Veritas Spell 126
- Ear, Ear Then Spell 127
- A Javacrucian Mantra 127
- The Wrath of Don Juan! 128

Glossary 129

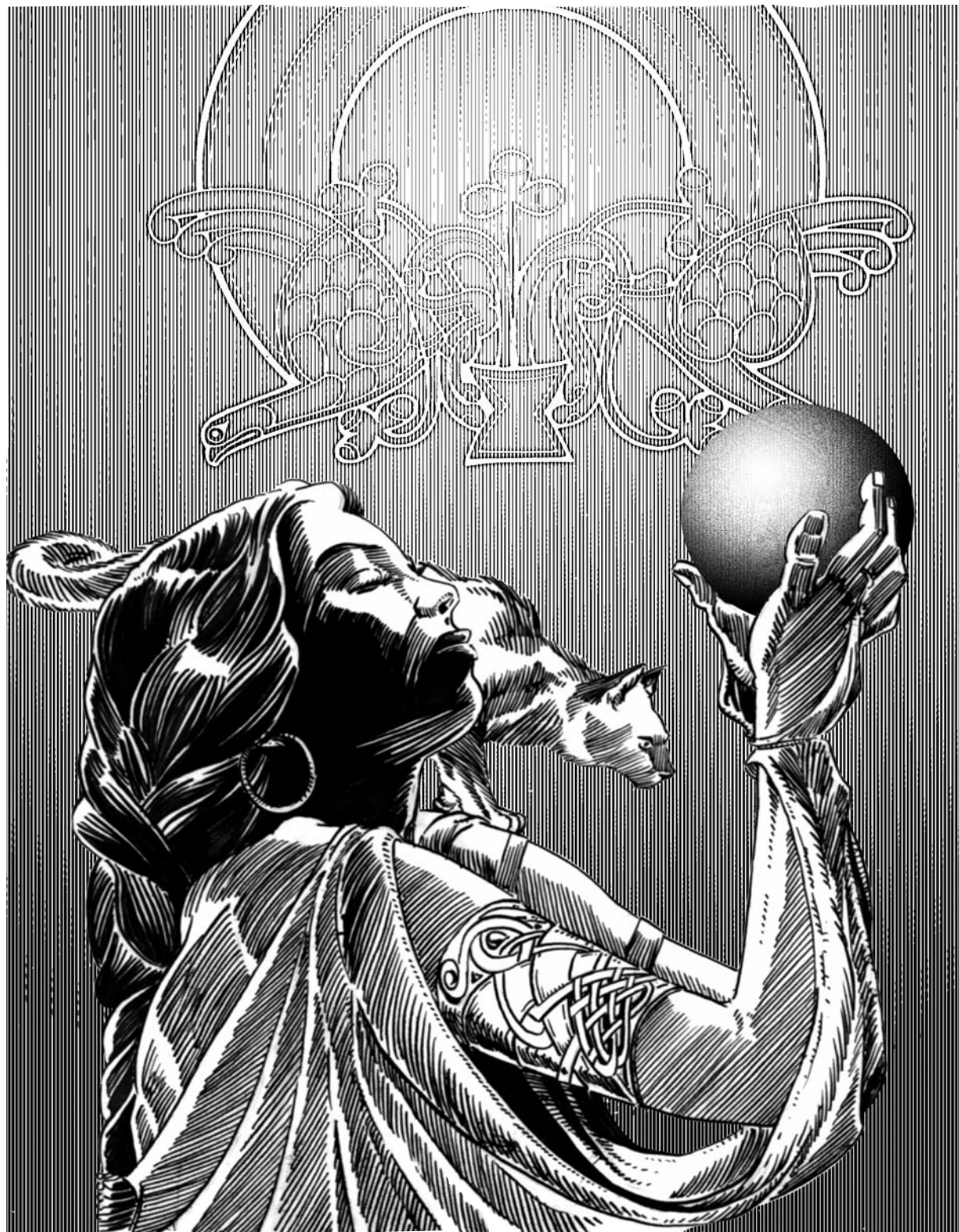
Bibliography & Ludography 140

Types of Non-Mages 141

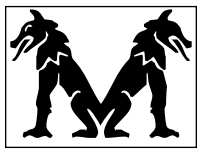
Index 143



Why This Book?



i
n
t
r
o
d
u
c
t
i
o
n



aking Magic “Realer”

The average player of fantasy games is swamped and sometimes bewildered by different games, supplements, magazines, and other publications, many of which claim to be The Best Way to Play™. Some may feel that the last thing they need is another writer telling them how to play their own games, and may wonder why they should take my word over anyone else’s. The first answer I can give to this is that I am a professional in the magic field. I have spent many years doing research, writing books (the best known of which is my first, *Real Magic*, still in print from Samuel Weiser Publications) and articles, giving lectures and running classes in minority belief systems, including magic, Witchcraft, Druidism, psychism, Voodoo, etc.

I was originally asked by a game publisher (Chaosium) to write this book on how players of fantasy games could improve the realism of their magical characters. Several well known GMs in the San Francisco Bay Area went over the manuscript before its first edition, including Clint Bigglestone, Dave Hargraves, Carole Rode, and of course, Chaosium founder Greg Stafford. The tables and formulas were originally constructed with the help of professional mathematician, game player, and friend Larry Press.

Additional editing and updating was suggested by the staff of Steve Jackson Games before this current edition was printed (though I am solely responsible for any shortcomings the book may now have) and my sincere thanks go out to all of them. Despite the many improvements that have been made in game magic systems since *AUTHENTIC THAUMATURGY* or “AT” was first published, the folks at Steve Jackson Games concur that there is still a need for accurate books about “Magic in Theory and Practice” (so-to-speak), written for gamers,

especially the players of the older games and designers of new ones.

Because many players are still using a simplistic approach to magic, they are missing a great deal of what their characters would consider the real fun of spell casting, which is in the use of tiny amounts of psychic energy to produce large and complex results.

The whole artistic and intellectual joy of magic is in the subtlety of it all, and in the occasional need for instantaneous rational and/or intuitive judgements about life and death situations. All this is missing, and so is the simulation accuracy, when a magical wand becomes just another sort of laser pistol.

The whole purpose of the book you hold in your hand is to get people thinking about subtlety and creativity in game magic. By understanding the nature of psychic powers and magical techniques as they appear to operate in this universe, as well as the psychological rules by which magicians operate, the true relationships between “magic” and “religion,” the limitations of magicians and of spirits, proper technical terms for different kinds of magic users, etc., you will be ready to play any of the currently popular fantasy games with far more realism than before. This will be true whether you wind up “believing” in magic or not, and whether you decide to adopt any of my suggestions or not, because after reading *AT* you will know how the overwhelming majority of real magicians here on planet Earth think and behave. After all, if players and referees can learn how to fight with real swords and shields, in order to play their warrior characters more realistically, there is no sane reason why players of magic-using characters shouldn’t learn how it is that real magicians do Real Magic.

“Will it Ruin My Games?”



Because I'm an occultist and not a game designer, it's possible that some of my suggestions may be difficult to work into your favorite game in a playable fashion without drastic changes. So I want to emphasize that I do not have the One True Right and Only Way. Perhaps one of the reasons that Steve Jackson Games decided to publish this new edition of *AT* is that, like *GURPS (THE GENERIC UNIVERSAL ROLE-PLAYING SYSTEM)*, it's designed to be as compatible as possible with many different games, by suggesting ways in which people can, if they wish, modify the magic systems they are now using. Readers should feel free to take all, part or none of my suggestions, depending upon how they think the ideas would fit with their game universes. Since the ideas are based firmly on authentic occult theory and practice, however, every suggestion followed will add yet another touch of magical realism to your games.

Using the *AT* system, realistic magic-using characters will wind up being more powerful in some areas of game activity than before, but also weaker in others. This should keep the balance of the games intact.

Type & Terminology Clues



This book is going to (a) include references to various *GAMES* and related *GAME BOOKS AND SUPPLEMENTS*, (b) define many *Technical Terms*, including various *Psychic Talents/Abilities/Powers*, and (c) discuss various sorts of *SPELLS, MAGICAL TOOLS, AND GAMING ACTIONS*. In order to try and keep them all straight, avoid the use of billions of quote marks (which you may have noticed already), and save normal italics for regular book titles and emphasis, I'm assigning these different sorts of words the type styles just shown, at least the first time each is used in the (b) and (c) categories.

Different games use different words to label the folks who do magic in them. Often these terms don't make a lot of sense, so a large part of Chapter 4 is devoted to clarifying occupational terminology. When I want to make a general point, however, "magician," or "magic user" will be the common terms I'll use for all controllers of psychic powers, in the real world(s) as well as in fantasy worlds. I'll use "Mage" when I'm referring to a broad classification of game character types, and then mostly for contrast to the equally broad category of "Clerics."

The tables and formulas in this edition of *AT* have been completely reformatted and integrated into the main text. Their numbering system is now based on the order of their appearance in each chapter.

Some fair Warnings



Details about certain earthy aspects of magical theory and practice have been deliberately omitted from this work. Adults should have no trouble extrapolating appropriate spells and rituals for your characters to perform.

There are now hundreds of fantasy games on the market – so it's been impossible to keep up with *all* the changes in fantasy gaming. If you agree with my suggestions and comments, then see if they can be applied to your favorite game, whether I mention it or not.

This book is *not* a full introduction to magic and readers should *not* attempt to do real world magic based only upon these pages and the rules of whatever game you regularly play.

You should *especially* avoid attempting to perform summonings or worship rituals of any sort unless you are *absolutely* sure that the entities you are attempting to contact (a) are friendly, and (b) are forgiving of amateurs! Contrary to opinions in some quarters, genuinely nasty spirits are rare, but ones with weird senses of humor are fairly common!

Preparation for such ceremonies should include a great deal of research (about such rituals in general and your chosen entities in particular) and a consultation with your rabbi, pastor, guru, minister, swami, priest, or priestess. Speaking of which . . .



Dungeons & Demons?

That section title, of course, will scare the “devil” out of a lot of right-wing parents and busybodies who’ve been pumped up by a swarm of books, pamphlets, and sermons claiming that fantasy games are a tool of the Forces of Evil™. Little Johnny or Suzy plays *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS*, *GURPS MAGE*, or *MAGIC: THE GATHERING* for a few weeks, gets a few non-fundamentalist ideas about the nature of magic and religion, and in a couple of weeks the kid naturally starts invoking real demons, going to orgies at the referee’s house, and sacrificing babies to Satan! Of course, the purveyors of this nonsense are the same folks who claim that the entire entertainment industry, the FBI, the CIA, the United Nations, and the leaders of major (competing) churches, are all secretly led by an International Conspiracy of Hippie Commie Pervert Devil-Worshippers who just *happen* to also be billionaire international bankers with Jewish-sounding names.

Let’s ignore for a moment the fact that the fascists, jerks and psychopaths who actually populate the subculture of modern Satanism are a tiny bunch of losers who can’t organize their way out of a wet paper bag, let alone run a world government. Instead, let’s look at the people preaching so vigorously against fantasy games:

These are the same hardcore members of the Religious Reich who also oppose the teaching in public schools of evolution, cosmology, astronomy, geology, sexual hygiene and AIDS awareness. They try to suppress rock and roll, MTV, meditation, yoga, martial arts, homes for battered wives and public anti-child abuse campaigns. They actively advocate discrimination against Buddhists, Hindus, Taoists, Neopagans, Santerians, Native American religionists, and members of every other non-monotheistic religion on the planet (and several competing faiths that *are* monotheist). In short, they oppose every concept that might disagree with their narrow-minded religious, economic, sexual and political agendas.

Obviously, a hobby that teaches young people how “reality” is a socially constructed concept, that many people have had different religious and magical ideas over the millennia, that one faith’s demons are another faith’s deities, and that anyone can easily invent their own religion (complete with “infallible” scriptures), is going to be a direct threat to wealthy and powerful men who

would rather not let such “dangerous” knowledge spread. At this point, trying to scare the kids off with demonic bogeymen is the pathetic best they can do.

In fact, the first edition of *AT* received a “review” of sorts from Bob Larson, a third-rate radio evangelist, in his 1989 magnum opiate, *Satanism: The Seduction of America’s Youth*:

“Isaac Bonewits, a well-known practicing Witch, considers *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* such a good instructional mechanism to Paganism that he has written a book showing players how to move from *D&D* into real sorcery. His special manual on demons describes the appearance and power of evil entities with accompanying sketches.”

Obviously, his knowledge of *AT* was second or third hand, since one of the points I repeatedly made then was that the original version of *D&D* was a *bad* source of information about the occult and that a study of real occultism (or, dare I say it, *Real Magic?*) could only improve the absurd magic rules then in widespread use. He deliberately reversed the whole point of this book, which is to move from “real sorcery” to better gaming. His description of *AT* as a “special manual on demons” can only have been based on the deliberately silly cartoons that filled the first edition (the “accompanying sketches”) rather than any in-depth theological analysis.

But then, theological depth is not what we should expect from hysteria mongers and professional witchhunters.

So I’ll have to assume that newly printed copies of this edition of *AT*, along with boxes of *AD&D*, decks of *MTG*, and books of *GURPS* and *STORYTELLER* rules, will continue to be denounced and burned on fundamentalist church steps. The preachers’ kids and their friends will, of course, continue to read and play fantasy games whenever their parents aren’t looking. Perhaps when enough young people have learned the tolerance, flexibility and creativity that becoming good game players requires, the Greyfaces who’ve built their empires of anger, hatred and fear, will finally fall – and the real Illuminati will be able to rejoice!

Fnord.

~ Isaac Bonewits

