

THE ILLUMINATI

SECRETS OF THE DARK ART CALLED DUCDAME

BLACK MAGIC & CURSES

by Robert Anton Wilson

zounds! I was never so bethump'd with words since I first call'd my brother's father dad. -
- *The Bastard in John Act II, Scene 1 by Wm. Shakespeare*

People sometimes ask me, "Doctor Bandler, do you have to use that kind of language?"
And my answer is "Fuck, yes!" -- *Richard Bandler, Neuro-Linguistic Programming
Workshop, Los Angeles, 1999*

Dr. Harold Garfinkle, a UCLA sociologist, has written a whole book recounting
experiments that demonstrate that it takes remarkably little breeching of local Game
Rules before subjects begin to show disorientation, anxiety, anger, panic, delusions,
"inappropriate" emotions etc. -- wiggling out or going ballistic in lay language.

Even standing with your nose closer to a person's face than the social norm for
conversation can provoke remarkable uneasiness with remarkable alacrity; it may even
trigger "homosexual panic." Doc Garfinkle did experiments to prove it.

To treat one's parents with the politeness and formality usually given to landlords and
landladies can produce memorable freak-outs, sometimes involving pleas for psychiatric
intervention Etc. [More experiments. See Garfinkle, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* ,
Prentice-Hall, NJ, 1967.]

Garfinkle's data demonstrates that humans at this primitive stage of terrestrial evolution
have so many taboos that they cannot remember or articulate most of them; but they
quickly become physiologically "disturbed" when even one of the rules seems even
temporarily suspended. This disturbance may culminate in serious injury, or death.

Thus, when I first moved to Santa Cruz, the world capital of Moral & Political
Correctness, I made the mistake of quoting a George Carlin routine at a party. One line of
this shtick goes, more or less,

Why, why, why do all the women you see at anti-abortion protests look
like nobody would want to fuck them in the first place?

A psychiatrist standing nearby said to me, sourly, "I don't like cursing." This caused me considerable confusion. I had obviously violated a local taboo, but I did not know which one, and worse yet, I had never considered "fuck" as a curse or malediction. I felt like a guy who wanders into the local branch of Al Qaeda under the impression that he has found the Department of Motor Vehicles, or --even more-- like a ginkus who opens a door in his own house and finds The Three Stooges in a phaser-gun shoot-out with Darth Vader and Mother Teresa.

I feel grateful to that psychiatrist now, of course. Mulling over how he came to classify "fuck" in the category of curses, led me review all that I knew about the art and science of effective Cursing and about Black Magic in general. The results of my meditations will appear as we proceed. [Thanks, Doc!]

This sort of head-banger or mind-bender happens more and more in our postmodern & multicultural world, especially if you travel as much as I do. A basic sociological and anthropological law holds that while every culture (and every sub-culture) has different Game Rules regarding speech and behavior, each tends to believe that its own tribal rules represent the only "correct" way for humans to interact with each other. Among savages, you must learn the local tabu system quickly or your life may pay for your ignorance. Of course, as Veblen pointed out long ago, among the Higher Barbarians, they will not take your life but only your liberty; yet because confinement in a cage causes much suffering in all mammals, including humans, this threat terrifies the majority as much as the threat of death.

Among the Politically Correct, milder reprisals for tabu-breakers vary from economic arse-kicking [denial of tenure] to cruel & unusual punishments [compulsory "Sensitivity" Training.]

I first experienced this sociological phenomenon when, after three years in Ireland, I had a lecture-tour in the United States. I found that tabu systems had changed rapidly in some places but not in others: no city on the trip prepared me for the Game Rules in the next city. E.g. in Dallas, they still thought it polite to hold a door for a lady and boorish not to, but in New York they thought it insulting to hold the door for a lady, thereby making it necessary for me to navigate with extreme delicacy to avoid either holding the door or allowing it to slam rudely in her face.

If you fully understand the anthropological significance of the above, you know enough to write a whole book on black magic. Otherwise, read on. I will reveal the secret inner dynamics of how to hurl a truly nefarious curse -- knowledge previously reserved only to the greatest Adepts of the Art called Ducdame.

We all, to some degree, think in "magical"* categories. Books on anthropology have sold better than any others in social science because they all shed as much light on our own

tribal tabus as on whatever so-called "primitives" they depict. We need to understand Magic to understand ourselves.

What do we mean by Magic? As Aleister Crowley, Epopt of the Illuminati, 97th degree Order of Memphis and Mizraim, 33rd degree Scotch Rite, 10th degree Ordo Templi Orientis, "Baphomet" to the profane and "Phoenix" within the Sanctuary of the Gnosis, the Great Beast 666, etc. wrote:

MAGIC is the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in Conformity with Will. Illustration: it is my Will to inform the World of certain facts within my knowledge. I therefore take "magical weapons," -- pen, ink and paper; I write "incantations" -- these sentences -- in the "magical language," i.e. that which is understood by the people I wish to instruct; I call forth "spirits," such as printers, publishers, booksellers, and so forth, and constrain them to convey my message to those people.

--Magic, by Aleister Crowley, Weiser, New York, 1997, p 126]

In other words, the distinction between "Magic" and "communication" exists only in our traditional ways of thinking. The uncanny Egyptians attributed both inventions to a single deity, Thoth, god of speech and other illusions.

In the existential world -- in the sensory-sensual continuum -- Thoth still reigns and language still has Magic. All communication contains sorcery and/or hypnosis, because humans use howls, snarls, yaps, purrs, gargles, gurgles etc. -- noises of many sorts -- to create a neuro-semantic "grid" projected upon all incidents and events. We generally call these grids languages. We literally "see" incidents and events only as they register upon that grid.

If I use certain words that cause you to have certain predictable neuro-somatic reactions, I have cast a spell upon you. I have enchanted you. I may even have cursed you. [Sure you want to know more about this?]

My method of spellbinding or enchanting or cursing may not involve the traditional drums and rattles of the tribal shaman, but the laws of neurolinguistic programming governing the transactions do not differ. I once triggered widespread scotoma, primate herd panic and psychoclonism in one nut cult called CSICOP simply by ridiculing them. They thought of themselves as Rationalists but I "magically" turned them into terrorized savages acting exactly like the ancient Irish kings who ordained death for any Bard writing satire against them. [No applause, please.]

To understand the language of Magic one must first understand the Magic of language. Let me define certain key terms. It may help disperse the fog of ignorance and superstition that has covered this subject for centuries.

By the sensory-sensual continuum I mean all that humans can experience, as distinguished from those "things" [or non-things, or nothings] that they can only make noises or chatter about.

Examples: [A] I can say "If you open that box of candy, you will find three chocolates inside." Going to the box and opening it, in the sensory-sensual continuum, will quickly confirm or refute my statement, because you will inevitably find [1] less than three chocolates, [2] exactly three chocolates, or [3] more than three chocolates. Results [1] and [3] refute my statement; [2] confirms it.

But [B] I might also say "Opening God for similar investigation, you will find three persons inside," as in fact Romish Magic does say. No investigation of the sensory-sensual manifold can ever confirm or refute this. Scientific philosophers generally describe such statements [about things beyond confirmation or refutation] as "meaningless". Without speaking that harshly, I venture that we cannot fathom our situation in space-time if we habitually confuse ourselves by mixing type [A] statements with type [B] statements. We may never achieve Total Clarity [short of infinity] but we should at least have the ability to distinguish between what humans can experience and what they can only blather about.

Distinguishing between these two types of statements seems necessary for sanity and survival, because all forms of illusion, delusion, mob hysteria, hallucination etc., dogma, bigotry, "madness," intolerance etc. "idealism," ideology, idiocy, obsession etc. depend upon confusing them. The people who released poison gas in the Tokyo subways, the Nazis, the Marxists, nut-cults like Objectivism, Heaven's Gate, Scientology, CSICOP, etc. represent some of the horrors and curses unleashed by mixing Class [A] statements with Class [B] statements.

All forms of Black Magic therefore depend on confusing and mingling these two classes: the nonverbal experiential and the verbal nonexperiential.

By the neuro-semantic field I mean the total vocabulary, grammar, syntax, logic etc. by which an extremely rapid system of feedbacks synergetically links the verbal centers of the brain to the neuro-muscular, neuro-chemical, neuro-immunological, neuro-respiratory etc. systems of the organism-as-a-whole. In other words, I explicitly reject, not only the traditional verbal division between "Magic" and "communication," but the equally fictitious splits between "mind" and "body," between "reason" and "emotion," between "thought" and "reflex" etc.

All words transmitted as sonic or visual signals -- sound waves or light waves -- rapidly become photons, electrons, neurotransmitters, hormones, colloidal reactions, reflex arcs, conditioned or imprinted "frames." physiological responses etc. as they impact upon the total synergetic organism.

Let's take that a bit slower:

All words transmitted as sonic or visual signals -- sound waves or light waves -- rapidly become photons, electrons, neurotransmitters, hormones, colloidal reactions, reflex arcs, conditioned or imprinted "frames" physiological responses, etc., as they impact upon the total synergetic organism.

"Perception" consists of a complex series of codings and decodings as information transforms itself through successive sub-systems of the organism-as-a-whole.

[Please re-read the last two sentences.]

We never experience "thoughts," "feelings," "perceptions," "intuitions," "sensations," etc. We invent those categories after the fact. What we experience, nanosecond by nanosecond, consists of continuous synergetic reactions of the organism-as-a-whole to the environment-as-a-whole, including incoming verbal signals from others in the same predicament. These incoming verbal signals also produce in us reactions of the organism-as-a-whole sometimes culminating in a return signal.

That much seems simple neurobiological savvy.

But suppose I point a shamanic death-bone at you? Or utter a Magic Word that alarms and threatens you as much as a simple "fuck" threatened that Santa Cruz psychiatrist?

We never "know" organismically all that we know theoretically. Parts of us remain simian, childish, "ignorant," murky, inertial, mechanical etc.

Illustration: Consciously and will-fully remind yourself that you can tell the difference between a "movie" and "real life." Then go to see the latest ketchup-splattered horror/slasher classic and pay attention to how many times the director "magically" tricks you into real gasps, internal or overt cringe-reflexes, dry mouth, clutching [seat-rails, coke can, companion's arm etc.] or other symptoms of minor but real [polygraph-diagnosable] anxiety and short-term near-panic, sometimes verging on vomit-reflex.

Illustration #2: With the same conscious and will-full reminders about the difference between "movies" and "real life," rent a hard-core XXX porno DVD. Observe how long it takes before physiological responses indicate that parts of you at least have lost track of that distinction.

To repeat an earlier point, in Neurolinguistic Programming [NLP], Dr Bandler makes a distinction between the "meta-model" and the "Milton model." The meta-model, continually revised, updated and expanded, consists of the class of all scientifically meaningful statements available at this date. We should revise our meta-model every day, by keeping in contact with others in the same predicament. Since Scenario Universe

always and only consists of -- as Bucky Fuller said -- nonsimultaneously apprehended events [coherent space-time synergies], such continuous feedback appears necessary.

If everything happened at once, we would know Absolute Truth at once: but since space-time events happen nonsimultaneously, we need feedback.

The "Milton model," on the other hand, named after Dr. Milton Erickson, "the greatest hypnotist of the 20th Century," consists of the class of all scientifically meaningless statements that "magically" make us feel much better, or much worse -- or, in occult language, the class of all blessings and all curses. [General Semanticists call it the class of all purrs and all snarls.]

This Heap Big Magic, bwana. You can fucking kill a guy with this stuff. And, of course, if you have Dr. Erickson's compassion, you can repeatedly heal the seemingly helpless.

Four score and something years ago, Drs. Ogden and Richards, in *The Meaning of Meaning*, brought forth a distinction between the denotation of words and the connotation of words.

In the denotation, any word or group of words belongs in the meta-model if it conforms to the test of the model, viz. scientifically meaningful reference in the experiential-phenomenological world.

And in the connotation, any word or group of words belongs in the Milton model if it conforms to the test of that model, viz again, scientifically meaningless reference to nothing-in-particular and everything-in-general so packaged as to make us feel better, or worse.

Our major problem, in the elementary blessing and cursing game called social conversation, lies in the fact that quite often -- very, very often -- the same word may have "objective" denotations in the scientific meta-model but also have "emotive" neurosemantic connotations in the magical Milton model. In other words, we hypnotize ourselves, and one another, with remarkable ease. In only a few minutes, a dedicated dogmatist can have you heatedly shouting something in the form of the Primary Magic Theorem, which declares that any non-verbal incident or event encountered and endured "really" "is" some noise or grunt we choose to label it with. [One corollary holds that sticking pins in a doll will hurt the person sharing the doll's label, and a second states that throwing darts at an image of the Enemy Leader will "help the war effort."]

Illustration: by persistent reiteration of medieval logical forms, the anti-choice people in the abortion debate have hypnotized the pro-choice people into interminable haggling about whether one non-verbal event inside a woman "really is" [the noise or grunt preferred by my side] and "really" "is" not [the gargle or gurgle preferred by the other side]. Since the various noises, grunts, gargles, gurgles etc. have no experiential or

experimental or phenomenological or existential referents in the sensory or sensual or instrumental space-time manifold, this contest transpires in the Milton model, each side trying to hypnotize the other.

But, even more nefariously, this has the structure of what Watslavick called, in *Pragmatics of Human Communication*, the Game Without End. This Game --which word "really" "is" the non-word --gives great entertainment and self-esteem to those who really like that kind of thing; but it causes Kafkaesque and "nightmarish" sensations throughout the organism-as-a-whole among those who want to get out of the Game and go back where language made sense, but nonetheless remain spellbound . & "cursed" for the seemingly infinite length of the Game Without End.

The Game Without End begins with the attempt to decide which bark or howl "really" "is" a nonverbal existential event.

None of this represents abstract theorems. The role of magic in all language transactions has very concrete and exhilarating/terrifying implications; viz. the tris:

Well-documented case of a man literally killed by a shaman's curse and a "death-bone" -- *The Psychobiology of Mind-Body Healing* , by Ernest Lawrence Rossi, Norton, 1988, page 9-12.

Equally well-documented case of another man, a cancer patient, "miraculously" blessed by remission and recovery due to a placebo [with tumors shrunk to half their previous size], then cursed back into critical condition when learning of deaths of others receiving the same placebo -- same book, page 3-8.

Robert Houdin, often called the greatest stage magician of the 19th Century, once said, "A magician is only an actor -- only an actor pretending to be a magician."

Similarly, what French anthropologists call participation mystique ["at-one-ness" or even "holy union"] -- a state allegedly limited to "savages" -- occurs every day, in every modern city, in nonpathological forms, at our theatres and movie houses, and on our TVs, VCRs and DVDs.

This mystic trance, in which [for instance] Laurence Olivier becomes "Hamlet" right before our eyes only mutates to the pathological if we cannot break the spell --if we continue to see, and relate to, Lord Olivier as Hamlet even if we chance to meet him in a pub: "I say, old bean, you seem to suffer from compulsive rumination, as the shrinks call it. Just kill the old bugger and make a run for the frontier."

Here the Milton model has replaced the meta-model in the wrong space-time locale [territory not defined as play acting space.] Madness lies but one step further.

My mother never stopped hating Charles Laughton for the sadistic glee he projected in the punishment sequences of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. She'd never look at another movie with Laughton in it.

Orson Welles, with considerable experience as both actor and stage magician, said "I have been an acting-forgery all my life." He said it in his last film,* a fake documentary about a partially fake biography of a totally fake painter -- *F For Fake*, based on a seemingly true but partly bogus biography called, even more bluntly, *Fake!*

Some of us have become postmodern whether we like it or not. As the Poet wrote,

I saw a man upon the stair,
A little man who wasn't there;
He wasn't there again today -
Gee, I wish he'd go away!

Of course, we all clearly understand that the little man who "wasn't there" simply "wasn't there" and hence can't go away, but the structure of Indo-European grammar so spellbinds and enchants us that we illogically feel that the spooky little bastard should go away, just to conform to the syntax.

Whosoever speaks in any tongue gives birth to blessings and curses. & if the uncanny Egyptians made Thoth the father of both language and Magic, the canny Greeks made Hermes, their version of Thoth, the god of both language and fraud.

* Not the last film he acted in, just the last film in which he had control as writer/producer/director/actor