

Blood, Sweat, and Urine: The Scent of Feminine Fluids in Anton Szandor LaVey's *The Satanic Witch*

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ABSTRACT

Anton Szandor LaVey wrote The Satanic Witch in 1970 as a response to the contemporary discourses of his time: feminism and the occult revival. This essay focuses on LaVey's treatment of the scent of feminine fluids—blood, sweat, and urine—in The Satanic Witch and selected texts in order to demonstrate that LaVey's emphasis on the importance of bodily secretions is an extension of his carnal-magical worldview; he employs the arcane language and aesthetics of the occult to methods of physiological and psychological manipulation in order to influence others and achieve desired ends. Throughout this essay I apply Mary Douglas' theories in Purity and Danger (2002 [1966]), which address our notions of contagion, dirt, and taboo; feminist rhetoric on 1960s and 1970s feminine hygiene products and their putative cleansing of natural feminine scent; and finally, the use of sexual fluids in esoteric magical practices such as described by Aleister Crowley. This article illustrates that LaVey's use of feminine fluids for magical efficacy reflects his notion that magic is firmly rooted within one own's body, and the capacity of one's own will, while also incorporating and responding to the surrounding discourses of his time.

Keywords

feminism, fluids, LaVey, sex magic, occultism, witchcraft

Introduction

I am a witch; I have power over men!

— A suggested proclamation for women,
Anton Szandor LaVey, *The Satanic Witch*, 1970.

The Satanic Witch, written by Anton Szandor LaVey and originally published under the title *The Compleat Witch: Or What to do When Virtue Fails* in 1970, is a book aimed at providing female Satanists (or satanic Witches) helpful tools of manipulation to achieve their goals. LaVey recommends methods of orchestration through dress, speech, mannerisms, and scent applied to a target for seduction, influence, and control. LaVey calls these methods “lesser magic”; that is, “basic psychology, glamour, non-ritual manipulative magic” (Barton in LaVey 2003, 277). The book is directed at women, often disregarded by male Satanists, and virtually ignored by scholars.¹ The current High Priestess of the Church of Satan, Peggy Nadramia, writes in its introduction:

I’m often surprised by how many [male Satanists] let the wisdom of *The Satanic Witch* just slip through their fingers. There are men of the Satanic persuasion who peruse its pages and then shelve it, figuring they’ll wait for *The Satanic Warlock* to come along and until then, take their fashion cues from heavy metal videos and vampire comics. Tsk, tsk, gentlemen; the parade is passing you by.

(LaVey 2003, *i*)

Nadramia insists that it is also useful for men; the same ideas can easily be inverted or adapted and applied for particular purposes, as the ultimate goal is a manifestation of desires (professional or personal) by whatever means are under the reader’s command. This manifestation of the will is deemed effective magical practice; magicians (male and female) applying various tools (through ceremonial magic or everyday manipulation) to achieve desired ends are considered skilled in the arts of enchantment.

The Satanic Witch places a strong emphasis on the materiality of the human body. LaVey’s methods to activate certain emotions, such as empathy, lust, and generosity, from a desired target are based on physiological, psychological, and aesthetic tools. One of the more fascinating means to manipulation within the book is LaVey’s suggestion for strategically using the scent of feminine fluids—blood, sweat, and urine—to stimulate lust in prospective partners. His use of bodily fluids is a variation on the notion of a love potion, as he claims that shamans, medicine men, and magicians from different cultures use semen, urine, and blood, among other fluids, from both human and non-human animals alike, for virility and fertility rites (LaVey 2010, 6). Jesper Aagaard Petersen notes that LaVey sanitizes satanic imagery through secu-

1. For exceptions, see Urban 2006, chapter 7; Petersen 2010; and Faxneld and Petersen (forthcoming). See also Per Faxneld’s article in the present issue, anticipating his PhD thesis on satanic feminism.

larization and “satanizes” the secular (2013, 181). LaVey expresses his ideas through the language of occultism and mysticism, continuously straddling the divide between rationalistic and esoteric positions. In *The Satanic Witch*, LaVey’s foundational carnal premise is enveloped in the syntax of seduction and magic, lending a theatrical hint and playfulness to some (at times) basic techniques of social interaction.

LaVey’s discussion on bodily fluids not only echoes the discourse of esoteric knowledge, but also of the sexual liberation movement of the socially turbulent American society of his time. The 1960s and 1970s saw many changes and upheavals of traditional worldviews: student protests, assassinated politicians, hippies, anti-war sentiment, birth control, sexual politics and feminism, drug culture, the civil rights movement, new age philosophies and religions, and rock/folk protest music, all reflecting a general critique of the status quo in public discourse. To a reserved 1950s society—at least on the surface—they were shocking, causing questions and concerns regarding the shift in social frameworks. Middle-class values, where divorce, pre-marital sex, interracial couples, and autonomous women were taboo, were being challenged by new ideologies. LaVey is firmly rooted within this social context.

This essay demonstrates that LaVey’s treatment of feminine fluids in *The Satanic Witch* and select publications functions twofold: as an extension of and emphasis on his claim of a solely carnal human condition, and a response to the contemporary socio-historical discourses of America in the 1960s and 1970s such as feminism and occultism. Throughout the essay I use a variety of texts to contrast and compare with LaVey’s notion of feminine fluids: Mary Douglas’s *Purity and Danger* (2002 [1966]), which addresses our notions of contagion, dirt, and taboo; feminist rhetoric on 1960s and 1970s feminine hygiene products and their putative cleansing of natural feminine scent; and finally, the use of sexual fluids in the esoteric magical practices of Aleister Crowley. LaVey’s ideas are a commentary on all these discourses, as he is emerging from and responding to the overarching discussions of his time.

Satan the (Sex) Rebel-Hero

Anton Szandor LaVey founded the Church of Satan in 1966 in San Francisco. LaVey’s *The Satanic Bible* (originally published in 1969) outlines the prime tenets of Satanism. Satan becomes a powerful symbol of individuality, self-empowerment, and antinomianism. Petersen defines modern Satanism as an individualized worldview consisting of the “double negotiation of a positive identity construction—self-actualization—and a negative identity construction—lack of conformity,” framed in the imagery of Satan (or Devil,

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Lucifer), and inheriting a countercultural position from LaVey, where a certain take on “balance, satanic nature, aesthetics, iconography, and rituals are general currency in the [satanic] milieu” (2009, 8). All Satanists adhere to a stance of rebellion against the status quo, heralding ideals such as non-conformism and individualized transgression of the norm (12).² A Satanist is “a carnal and emotional individualist against the cold ratio of science, the arid morality of Christianity, and the tyranny of political repression” (12). This stance is symbolized by the “most powerful symbol of resistance,” Satan (17).

In his article, “Sex, Science, and Liberty: The Resurrection of Satan in Nineteenth-Century (Counter) Culture,” Ruben van Luijk argues that contemporary Satanists draw upon ideas presented by the so-called “Romantic Satanists.”³ That is, the literary history that uses the figure of Satan as “an apt metaphor...to express a certain ideological or theological program in a certain number of poems” (Van Luijk 2013, 50). These enlightenment authors (Blake, Byron, Carducci, etc.) lament Satan’s status as a fallen angel and instead re-appropriate him as a symbol of rebellion (44). The “unlawful insurrection” of Satan in Christian mythology becomes a model of a rebel-hero, as a “champion of political and individual freedom” (45).

Van Luijk claims that from the time of the ancient apocryphal text of *The Watchers in Enoch*, the fallen angels (later associated with Satan in the medieval period) become connected to lust, temptation, and carnality (46). He writes:

This “pornofication” of Satan found ample continuation in later Christian lore and probably reached its apogee in the demonological fantasies of the early modern era. In this respect also, Romantic Satanism implemented a reversal of appraisal. The Romantics accorded an almost divine status to passionate love, transcending all human and godly laws; the Romantic Satanists, moreover, mostly supported ideas of the “free love” variety. If this was seen as belonging to the territory of Satan, the dark angel might be preferable to the stern, law-giving god of Christianity. (Van Luijk 2013, 46)

This association of Satan with sex and nature, carnality and seduction, is a prime component of the contemporary satanic worldview. Satanic sexuality

2. After LaVey founded the Church of Satan in 1966, contemporary satanic groups continue to develop, which range from the rationalistic/atheistic stance of LaVey’s Church of Satan to the esoteric/theistic stance of the multitude of other self-identified satanic groups, such as the Temple of Set. For the purposes of this article, I focus on LaVey’s primary texts, not their subsequent and varied interpretations.
3. It is important to note that the term “Romantic Satanist” is applied retroactively to authors whose ideas and themes influence the contemporary satanic worldview. These Enlightenment authors did not self-identify as practicing Satanists.

advocates all forms of sexual expression, provided it is between consenting adults (LaVey 2005, 66). LaVey considers indulgence in sexual proclivities in varied manifestations—masturbation, sadomasochism, transexuality, asexuality, polyamory, etc.—to be a healthy and productive part of living well, as long as it is done with the full self-awareness and consent of those involved (66–74). Amina Lap notes that LaVey viewed Christianity’s attitudes towards sexuality—that is, suppressing one’s natural sexual tendencies because they are deemed “evil”—as causative of neuroses (2013, 91). As LaVey promoted responsible indulgence and rejected a spiritual afterlife (2005, 91), engaging in legal sexual desires is considered a prime method to enhance a finite and final existence.⁴ The exceptions to LaVey’s sexual permissiveness are sex with children, animals, and those incapable of providing consent, which he categorically condemned.

Sexuality, to Satanists, is not only an enjoyable exploration of one’s desires, but also integral to the satanic worldview. The sexual self-empowerment of women has historically been denounced as the devil’s work; the feminine is more naturally carnal, seductive, and prone to weaknesses of the flesh, almost against her will. When LaVey founded the Church of Satan in 1966 and wrote *The Satanic Witch* in 1970, he incorporated these historical themes of sex and Satan, as well as the language and aesthetics of the counter-culture movements of sexual liberation and the occult revival.

For LaVey, the idea of women’s sexuality as evil and base is deliberately subverted and reinterpreted as a positive symbol of autonomous sexuality and an effective tool for manipulation within the satanic worldview. Per Faxneld notes that, “When a Satanist writes of the female gender’s intimate ties to Satan, it naturally means something completely different compared to when a Christian does so” (2013, 67). It is with the above context that *The Satanic Witch* and related LaVey texts were written and are now discussed: LaVey is at once incorporating the historic ideas about women’s sexuality and responding to the current socio-historical discourses that emerged in the 1970s.

The Satanic Witch

The Satanic Witch outlines LaVey’s notion of female sexual empowerment. In the prologue he states that, “many will feel it to be a treatise on man-catching” (2003, ix). He then claims this to be an incomplete understanding

4. Theistic and esoteric Satanists outside the Church of Satan have varying degrees of eschatological beliefs, ranging from reincarnation, to agnostic musings, to a spiritual awakening after death. To restate: in this essay I focus on LaVey’s primary texts, which promote a premise of functional atheism.

of the book. He clarifies:

Whether or not a witch needs any man other than the one she has currently chosen is relatively unimportant. What is important, however, lies in the fact that if a woman wants anything in life, she can obtain it easier through a man than another woman, despite woman liberationists' bellows to the contrary. The truly "liberated" female is the compleat witch, who knows both how to use and enjoy men. She will find the energies she expends in her quixotic cause would be put to more rewarding use, where she to profit by her womanliness by manipulating the men she holds in contempt, while enjoying the ones she finds stimulating.

(LaVey 2003, *ix*)

In essence, LaVey notes that, because women are perceived objects of men's lust, then they can exploit it to achieve their goals. Even though much of the book is written in a hetero-normative⁵ perspective, he claims that a "true witch," being an orchestrator of her own destiny, can also bewitch women and homosexual men, regardless of her own sexual preference. Playing on medieval notions of alleged witchcraft, LaVey states, "In order to be a successful witch, one *does* have to make a pact with the devil, at least symbolically" (2003, 5). By this he means that the potential witch must take pride in her ego and acknowledge that the arts of enchantment are meant to enhance her life and pleasure. The "pact" is a commitment to herself to release any feelings of guilt or shame in regards to her sexuality. Lesser magic, then, is the idea of recognizing a woman's sexual nature, harnessing this (perceived) power, and applying it to a witch's advantage.

The rest of the book details how to maximize on a witch's natural attributes in order to enhance her visual appeal. LaVey advocates rejecting popular fashion fads in dress and body type, instead focusing on how a woman can project an image that features her natural physique. He notes that a thin woman with dark hair could create the persona of a "vamp"; an older woman can adopt the mystique of "crone"; a full-figured woman becomes the cuddly nurturing type (2003, 63–65). He emphasizes that embracing a woman's body type (especially if it runs counter to the popular standards of beauty) means that one will attract mates that respond specifically to that body type. As an example, if you are naturally prone to weight gain, do not attempt drastic weight loss as you will attract men expecting you to be thin. Instead, embrace your "bulges" so as to attract men that respond to the Rubenesque. LaVey, with a known predilection for voluptuous blonds, proclaims: "you

5. LaVey does not use this term, and might denounce my use of it here as I am reflecting contemporary academic discourses and nomenclature.

need starve yourself no longer” (65).

Aside from aesthetics (such as wearing garters and stockings), a witch employs voice, mannerisms, touch, and the “Law of the Forbidden” (which suggests that greater stimulation is achieved by exposure to the clandestine, such as cleavage through an unbuttoned blouse, or soiled underwear) with chapters devoted to each, in her reserve of sorcery. The most relevant means to achieve one’s goals for the purposes of this essay are LaVey’s suggestions for the deliberate and strategic use of natural odors in feminine bodily fluids: blood, sweat, and urine.

The bibliography of *The Satanic Witch* indicates that these techniques of manipulation are derived from psychological, biological, social scientific, neurological, physiological, as well as magical and occult texts and manuals, old and new.⁶ Various fields of study dealing with human behaviour and interaction employ the theories listed and detailed within. LaVey uses the examinations on human behaviour in the biological and psychological texts and presents them in the language of the occult and magical. He claims that all human behaviour is animal behaviour, quantifiable and predictable by scientific method, and thus malleable to the educated and clever. One of his methods is a “Personality Synthesizer Clock,” which is a guide to determining core personality types based on physical traits. It is meant to provide useful hints at categorizing people (and oneself) as a tool for improved manipulation. This manipulability of human behaviour is how LaVey defines the notion of “lesser magic”: to realize ones desired goals through careful maneuvering, and the scent found in feminine fluids is a prime means to achieve this type of influence.

The Scent of Feminine Fluids: Blood, Sweat, and Urine

Mary Douglas’ *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo*, originally published in 1966, examines the notions of dirt and contagion. She posits that, although the details of what is considered dirt vary from culture to culture, “dirt is essentially disorder” (2002, 2). By this, Douglas explains that our notions of dirt are the product of a twofold system: organization and classification, and the subversion of those categories and classes. Allow Douglas to elaborate examples of basic household items:

Shoes are not dirty in themselves, but it is dirty to place them on the dining-table; food is not dirty in itself, but it is dirty to leave cooking utensils in the

6. Examples of titles are: *Amulets and Talismans*; *Aphrodisiac—from Legend to Prescription*; *The Black Arts*; *Behaviour Control*; *The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism*; *The Psychoanalysis of Love*; *The Folklore of Sex*; *Psychology of Sex*; *Essentials of Endocrinology*; and *A History of Magic, Witchcraft, and Occultism*.

bedroom, or food bespattered on clothing; similarly, bathroom equipment in the drawing room; clothing lying on chairs...In short, our pollution behaviour is the reaction which condemns any object or idea likely to confuse or contradict the cherished classifications. (Douglas 2002, 44–45)

Dirt, then, is not independent; it is a concept relative to the social systems in place, where convention is disrupted, and this disruption labeled as a pollutant or taboo. “Where there is dirt there is a system,” writes Douglas (35). In the chapter “External Boundaries,” Douglas continues: “pollution fears do not seem to cluster round contradictions which do not involve sex. The answer may be that no other social pressures are potentially so explosive as those which constrain sexual relations” (194). Douglas is referring to the taboos around sexual contact and fluids; which behaviors are tolerated, celebrated, exalted, condemned, and ignored, and what these classifications reveal about a culture’s values, fears, and concerns.

For example, Douglas notes that all systems of classification and convention are vulnerable, especially at their margins (2002, 150). These points of vulnerability are then symbolized in the margins of the body—where it secretes, bleeds, sweats, and voids, or, conversely, where it ingests and inhales or is penetrated. For instance, the Israelites saw blood as the divine force of life when contained inside the human body; but blood must be ritualistically addressed when exiting the body through the margins. The margins, those seeping bodily orifices, are “dangerous” as they cannot be contained, and put the rigidity of the social system at risk (149–150). Taboos and notions of pollutants around these margins then symbolically protect the values of the society.

Blood and The Satanic Witch

Douglas’ theories are easily applied to LaVey’s treatment of feminine fluids in *The Satanic Witch*. LaVey writes in the chapter, “On the Importance of Odors”:

As a witch, you should learn some basic principles of enchantment through odors. First of all, DON’T SCRUB AWAY YOUR NATURAL ODORS OF SEDUCTION. It doesn’t matter how much brainwashing has been done to make certain bodily odors undesirable. Millions of years have seen to this that such scents will never be reacted to in a negative way. (2003, 95)

LaVey is lamenting the tendency for modern women to excessive bathing and cleanliness with chemicals and soaps. He stresses that basic hygiene is certainly necessary, but that one’s naturally producing bodily fluids are paramount in attracting mates and seducing partners. As LaVey was born in

1938, he describes how the attitude to bathing shifted from the occasional bath, where people regularly wore the same clothing on consecutive days, even undergarments, to daily bathing and clothes washing (1998, 146–148). To LaVey, this excessive bathing nullified a woman's powerful natural odiferous aphrodisiac. He details several ways in which women can use their bodily fluids to attract a mate with the sense of smell. Her blood, sweat, and urine are considered potions, when used properly, to appeal to the animalistic nature in us all.

If, according to Douglas, the margins of the body represent a certain vulnerability of social systems, LaVey, then, takes a cue from the subversive nature of the devil himself, and challenges modern conceptions of cleanliness by appealing to a naturalistic and bestial approach to hygiene. LaVey begins with the premise that humans are animals; we are solely carnal, finite beings. As such, our scents function in the same way as that of the animal kingdom; we respond to olfactory cues for mating and survival. He writes:

This obsession to scrub away dirt (and with it sin) is a by-product of the kind of puritanism and Calvinism that defies all the laws of nature. The Huguenotes even had a hymn equating bodily odors with sin, called: "Everybody Stinks but Jesus." There is no doubt that to many women, a bar of soap has replaced the confessional. (LaVey 2003, 96)

LaVey laments what he deems as Christian holdovers of denouncing bodily fluids as a sign of our flawed materiality, which translates into undue cleansing rituals; we unconsciously wish to denounce our animal natures by washing away its very odiferous essence. Douglas notes that Christian ritual purification is on the decline, "With every century we become heirs to a longer and more vigorous anti-ritualistic tradition" (Douglas 2002, 76). Yet LaVey would claim that modern excessive cleansing is a relic from historical Christian practices. We no longer bathe for theological purposes, but the practice of excessive hygiene remains, without an official spiritual intent.

LaVey focuses on female bodies as he advocates the deliberate inversion of religio-historical feminine sexual repression. Douglas contends that a woman's body is often considered a symbol for the vulnerable conventions of her social group. A woman that violates the conventions is considered to be dangerous, not necessarily for herself, but society's morals; what a woman does to her body represents the culture as a whole. According to Douglas, the special nature of the corporal feminine represents the culture at large: "Female bodies are correctly seen as, literally, the entry by which the pure content may be adulterated" (Douglas 2002, 156). In order to preserve a pure content,

the body must be cleansed. LaVey considered this type of repulsion of bodily odors via its fluids as a disconnect with biological realities; realities in conflict with humankind's ostensible divine nature.

LaVey claims that, like many an "old witches' charm," blood is a powerful component for a magical potent seduction. He writes: "Unless the human animal is to be considered the only exception in nature, you are theoretically appealing, rather than offending, during your period" (2003, 100). This follows from the premise that humans are responding to olfactory cues for one of their most basic biological drives: reproduction. Like all animals, the female is most alluring when in heat. He writes:

Some of you may have noticed that men seem to swarm around you most when you have your period. Undoubtedly, such a situation has proved disturbing to many of you, as you feel it an inopportune time to really get involved, especially where sex is concerned...the changes that take place in your system at this time are such that the normal sexual odor is highly intensified and, because of this, carries further. (2003, 98)

According to LaVey, the scent of a menstruating woman, then, communicates her fertility (if not at the moment of menstruation, then during ovulation), and thus her sexual desirability, at unconscious levels. LaVey suggests that the period-produced scent "potentially has tremendous drawing power perfume-wise but at a time when you can't gracefully do anything about it" (100). To overcome this, he suggests retaining some menstrual blood in a portion of a sanitary napkin or tampon, and keeping it in a small pouch or amulet to be worn around a witch's neck. He stresses that "any odor, if strong enough, becomes unpleasant," and the use of menstrual blood as olfactory tool of seduction should be subtle, but recognizable (99). LaVey claims that men will react to it, whether they know what is contained in the pouch or not, as olfactory cues are the basis of all attraction. He writes:

If the odor that attracts us in the form of a perfume or cologne, it is usually made from the sexual odors and mating scents given off by beavers (castoreum), cats (civit), whales (ambergris), muskrats (*Musc Zibata*), deers and goats (musk) and numerous plants and flowers whose odors, we mustn't forget, are intended by nature to attract for the purpose of survival and pollination. (LaVey 2003, 96)

On their own these scents are too potent to be pleasing, says LaVey. It is only when they are cut with a diluting substance or minimized that they are effectively appealing. LaVey argues the same for menstrual blood.⁷

7. As this paper was being prepared for publication, I asked a small handful of female con-

LaVey's use of feminine menstrual blood violates contemporary western taboos, inherited from a Victorian era. Menstruation was considered a harmful pollutant to female bodies and their environment (Crawford 1981), or as a symptom of the female body being an imperfect male (Laqueur 1992). Today, menstrual blood is always to be disposed of privately, virtually unmentioned in polite conversation, and certainly not worn around one's neck. Recall Douglas' notion of dirt being "matter out of place"; LaVey considers menstrual blood not only as inoffensive in and of itself—and therefore not contagion nor taboo—but actually a potent and effective means to subvert the very taboo it represents. Put another way, if menstrual blood is taboo because it emits from female bodies, and female bodies conventionally suppress their sexual desires, then LaVey subverts and exploits this idea by using menstrual blood for the very thing that stems from its taboo: sexual attraction. He is subverting the social system from within using a pre-existing social framework: blood as a means to attract, not repel. The menses of a human woman, as just another animal, is a (biological) tool to be used for (magical) manipulation, sexual or otherwise.

Urine and Feminism

During LaVey's initial founding of the Church of Satan in 1966 and subsequent writing of *The Satanic Witch* in 1970, cosmetic manufacturers in Europe and North America began producing so-called "feminine hygiene products." These products were chemicals applied to the vulva or inserted into the vagina in order to ostensibly improve her vaginal odor. LaVey lambasted all use of such products. He even wrote a poem condemning astringent soaps and extolling the virtues of naturally sweaty female thighs and sexual secretions in a later publication:

That I might be so fortunate
 That I might yield to speculate
 What I might do to violate
 The sanctity of crotch revealed;
 Stained and sodden,
 So tantalizingly concealed
 Within those naked, sweaty inner thighs. (LaVey 1998, 122)

tacts within the Church of Satan if they had ever applied LaVey's recommendation for wearing menstrual blood around their neck in an amulet or pouch. Only one attested that they had, but all claim to have applied various other techniques throughout *The Satanic Witch*, to positive outcomes. I stress, though, that my inquiry was informal and extremely limited. A more extensive sampling would perhaps indicate different results. My ethnographic study on members of the Church of Satan is currently in progress, and I anticipate collecting data corresponding to ideas in *The Satanic Witch*.

Feminist discourse, then and now, began to echo LaVey's concern over the popular devaluation of natural feminine scents—especially as it pertains to feminine “hygiene” douches. Elana Levine writes that companies peddling these vaginal deodorants “promised to make women’s bodies cleaner, fresher, more appealing, and more socially acceptable” (2002, 37). Her article begins with a telling 1970s advertising slogan: “Having a female body doesn’t make you feminine” (36). In 1968, American manufacturers of this new range of “gyno-products” gained approval from the National Association of Broadcasters review board to air television adverts (39). Marketed as “hygienic” they were, in fact, medically dangerous. By the early 1970s, women lodged complaints with the Food and Drug Administration that these products cause “genital burning, irritation, and infection” (43). The medical community also supported the discontinued use of these “cosmetics”; their classification as cosmetic, not pharmaceutical, meant that the products did not have to withstand the same rigorous testing before being sold to consumers. Feminist objections became increasingly louder about the products, declaring them unsafe and exploitative of women’s anxiety over her natural vaginal secretions. Women were “‘the victim of an ancient taboo, a primal flaw in her sex,’ because they portrayed her as obsessed with cleanliness yet perpetually unclean herself” (Hennessee and Nicholson in Levine 2002, 44).

If Douglas notes that culturally-specific notions of dirt represent culturally-specific notions of immorality, then presenting women’s bodies as requiring a cleansing echoes the puritanical ideal of feminine chastity and purity; female bodies are impure both morally and materially, and must be cleansed. The female body becomes a microcosm of social structure. If this microcosm (the female body) is seeping at its vulnerable margins (the female body’s orifices), the leakage must be addressed and contained to maintain order. A repulsion with bodily fluids is then a repulsion for social disorder, and a denigration and cleansing of those fluids is a means to uphold social stability.

What is most interesting to note, is that the marketing of feminine hygiene products in the 1970s was geared towards them being associated with sex, not purity. “Some saw the product as a gift to women, a gift of sexual pleasure after years of frigidity” (Levine 2002, 38). They were sold as reputed aids to sexual freedom, the avenue by which to liberate after rigid Victorian attitudes towards sex. The feminist backlash then highlighted a similar concern as that of LaVey; by stating that a feminine “cleansing” is necessary for sex to be enjoyable, the underlying implication remains that “sex is still dirty, smelly, messy, and unsightly (qualities that bespoke what many saw as its sinful nature), and these unpleasant qualities were located in the female body”

(Levine 2002, 38). The female body seen was more “naturally” self-polluting, her vaginal odor a real problem, and the products were thus a solution to the preexisting problem (Kane in Levine 2002, 40). Feminist rhetoric highlights that the male body, by contrast, required no hygienic adjustment, and the purported unpleasantness of sex were not its responsibility.

LaVey had no such concerns over gender politics—at least, not in the same way, and not with the same social interests—but he did agree that any association with sex as dirty or pollutant was a morality-based artifice. While feminism declared sex to be natural and healthy, and therefore not “dirty,” for LaVey, the contention that sex was messy and smelly was actually a compliment to sexual activities, and an idea that should be embraced without imposing morals; sexual fluids and their scents were a reality of sex, not to be touted as either good or bad polarities. He comments: “It is inconceivable to think that human beings could be the only creatures without appealing sexual odors, yet odors that originate in the sexual parts are considered anathema by a large majority of them” (2003, 96–97). For example, he states that the sight and scent of feminine soiled undergarments is an appeal, not a repeal, for most heterosexual men (98). He notes that, “Urine is another odor which has only been erotically by-passed by the human animal and there are more men who are stimulated by the smell of urine than will ever admit” (102). LaVey extolled the scent of feminine genitals mixed with urine and sweat, and stated that folds in the flesh of the upper thighs were designed to retain these aromas. “Heed the fact that the most common article of clothing that is employed as a fetishistic substitute are panties, and the ritual accompanying the acquisition of same invariably consists of the sniffing of the crotch, performed in an epicurian fashion” (2003, 98).

Again in a later publication, LaVey wrote about the erotic fetish of women peeing in their underwear: “elective incontinence...is sexual excitement derived from wetting oneself, and is practiced almost exclusively by women... Panty pissing is a fetish which gives pleasure to the viewer but, more importantly, to the perpetrator” (1998, 73–74). He notes that the embarrassment of urinating in one’s undergarments, and allowing a suitor to view it, is part of subverting an activity normally deemed for solitude, and improper for sexual excitement; the scent is alluring, and the act is taboo, which both enhance the titillating nature of the experience for perpetrator and audience. Granted, urophilia is likely a fetish particular to LaVey, and not all-pervasive throughout heterosexual men. Notwithstanding this, his notion of scent in urine as an appeal is based on his premise that humans are animals, and thus we react to similar sexual stimuli as four-legged creatures.

Despite the tenuous accord of feminism and LaVey in regards to a theoretical female sexual empowerment, the means by which to exhibit that empowerment differ. LaVey lamented the de-emphasis on feminine aesthetics from the feminist movement. As his many references to stockings, heels, skirts, and lipstick in his writings can attest, he bemoans the tendency of feminists in his day to sweepingly denounce affectations of feminine gender as oppressive or misogynistic.⁸ He writes: “I believe that woman is the dominant sex, with or without feminist validation” (1998, 35).

Hugh B. Urban disputes LaVey’s notion of female sexual empowerment, instead claiming that LaVey’s ideas in *The Satanic Witch* and other texts are an “at once classic expression of the rhetoric of sexual liberation and also quite blatant statement of male chauvinism” (2006, 210). Because LaVey reinforced notions of a ritualized male-dominant/female-receptive dichotomy, his position is counter to feminist ideologies (210). I agree that LaVey did indeed, as Urban states, reinforce a patriarchal system: “The witch is not only to *become* a sexual object and focus of the male gaze, she is even to *internalize* that male gaze. Subject herself to it in her imagination, and thereby use it to her own advantage” (216). However, I dispute Urban’s claim in part because it ignores the whole of LaVey’s worldview; LaVey does indeed reinforce gender polarities, but sanctions individuals to choose which gender they decide to channel. In *The Satanic Rituals* he notes that a group ritual with solely homophiles could potentially have more magical impact than a mixed-gender ceremony, but that the altar of flesh (which is typically a female) would be a male that nevertheless *represents* the receptive qualities (1976, 24–25). LaVey explains that his ritual scripts are suggestive, not prescriptive, when it comes to gender roles for priests and celebrants:

Whenever reference in this book is made to a priest, the role may also be taken by a woman who can serve in the capacity of priestess. It must be clarified, however, that the essence of Satanism—its dualistic principle—necessarily imposes an active/passive dichotomy upon the respective roles of celebrant and altar. If a woman serves as a celebrant, then for all intents and purposes she represents the masculine principle in the rite. The pervasive theme of active/passive (Yin/Yang) in human relations cannot be stifled, despite attempts to create matriarchal, patriarchal, or unisexual societies. There will always be those who “might as well be men” or “might as well be women,” depending upon their endocrinological, emotional and/or behavioral predilections. It is far sounder, from a magical standpoint, for an ego-driven or forceful woman to conduct a ritual, rather than a shy, introspective man. It might prove awkward, however,

8. Later factions of feminists themselves also critiqued early second-wave feminism in the form of sex-positive feminism.

to cast a passive man in the role of Earth-Mother—as the altar—unless his appearance conveyed the image of a woman... It must be stressed that both male and female principles must be present, even if the same sex portrays both. (1976, 24–25)

For LaVey, being a subject or object is not solely the purview of women versus men or a question of genitalia, but entirely within the realm of individual choice, depending on their preference and sexual orientation. He notes polarity is inherent in sexual attraction, as duality is inherent to magic; tension creates dynamic magical experiences. What he despised most was androgyny.⁹

LaVey was not overly concerned with being an advocate of any political agenda, which would include our modern-day notions of LGBTQ¹⁰ concerns and rights. Yet he was, from the onset, clearly accepting that all forms of (legal) sexual expression were natural and normal. LaVey's tendency towards heteronormative framing and nomenclature are reflective of his time and place, as well as (primarily) his own sexual preference; he appears to take as a given that his audience can and will adapt his ideas to their particular needs. His chosen terms and language are devoid of our current-day's extreme sensitivity to gendered terminology and inclusivism. This is especially problematic within academia, wherein we are encouraged to use value-free and neutral terms. But to LaVey, neutrality itself is an issue—he lambasts androgyny and uni-sexuality exactly because it is not polarized and dynamic. His prime contention with feminism is that it wished to erase the gender divide, and render everyone unisex. This reduces sexual tensions, as LaVey celebrated the differences. He lamented androgyny as a political act, but not asexuality as a natural choice (2005, 67). For LaVey, promoting a particular sexuality to prove a social agenda is reactionary, not in keeping with one's personal nature, and therefore undesirable (66–67). Erasing gender differences violates LaVey's notion of lesser magic as presentation and appearance are an essential aspect of manipulation. As he states, good looks are not necessary, but “Looks Means Everything” (2003, 121).

LaVey's stance on feminism is perhaps a direct result of the initial births of the Church of Satan and feminism; they both emerge out of the Ameri-

9. LaVey's focus in *The Satanic Witch* is usually directed at straight women, but there are several (smaller and less detailed) references to persons of differing sexual orientations throughout his writings. In his various texts LaVey: denounces notions that transgendered persons are “nuts” and encourages them to seek medical advice on transitioning from amenable psychiatrists (2010, 40); extolls the virtues of healthy transvestitism (1); claims homosexuals are the only truly sexually liberated (1992, 99); and allows for masculine women who want sex changes as an act of self-fulfillment (2003, 38).

10. Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer.

can counter-culture movements of the socially turbulent 1960s. LaVey and liberal feminism are part of this context, reflecting the larger counterculture statements of a changing society. As such, they are presented as an indication towards a decrease of the hegemonic, traditional American society; they are both challenging the status quo, but taking different positions in their revolution. When second-wave feminism first emerges in the 1960s, it rejected all aspects of what it deemed as sexist popular culture, including enhancing (and flaunting) feminine beauty.¹¹ This puts early second-wave feminism in direct opposition to LaVey's notion of female sexual empowerment. LaVey's negative response to feminism, while certainly not all-pervasive throughout the satanic milieu,¹² can be still stated to be a relatively common sentiment within the Church of Satan, even today. Lap notes that LaVey is, "not only critical against Christian norms; he also criticizes the new sexual morals proposed by the counterculture," (Lap 2013, 91). This includes the feminism of his era.

Sweat and Sex Magic

LaVey is not the only one to use bodily fluids, especially when it comes to sex magic. The contemporary Neo-Pagan/Wiccan worldview is heavily informed by feminism, and uses sex, fertility, and menstrual blood in rituals as a form of re-appropriating feminine attributes typically viewed as negative:

Some covens include a strand of sex magic where life partners either symbolically or literally have intercourse as a means to empowerment, and their union affirms both the goddess and the god. With the strong emphasis on empowerment for women in Wicca, many practitioners include ceremonies celebrating fertility, menstruation, menopause and postmenopause. As the bearers of offspring, female devotees affirm their fertility in these menstrual rites, and in a wider sense feel connected with the lifegiving power in the natural world. In some rites menstrual blood may be saved for ritual blessings over plants or mother earth. (Johnson 2008, 1).

In this context, menses in rituals is less about magical and/or biological properties of the blood itself, and more about transforming how women's bodies are perceived and understood. The use of blood has a socio-political agenda of personal acceptance, and reversing what was normally considered taboo. Among the varied self-identified Neo-Pagans, those with more esoteric

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11. Second-wave feminism also denounced all religious institutions as inherently sexist, furthering the distance between religious Satanism and feminism.
 12. I have known and conversed with dozens of Satanists in the Church of Satan; there exists of wide variety of approaches and identification with feminism in its multiple modern forms, among both male and female members. See also Faxneld's article in the present issue.

leanings may also use blood for magical purposes.

In the practices of twentieth-century rebel magician Aleister Crowley, the use of bodily fluids in ritual is also significant, but for different reasons. Hugh Urban notes that imported notions of Tantric practices into the West heavily influenced Crowley's use of corporal secretions: "In India generally, bodily fluids, and above all sexual fluids, are considered both powerful and potentially polluting, as the ambivalent leftovers that overflow the boundaries of the body. In the Tantric rite, however, the sexual fluids are the ultimate source of power" (Urban 2006, 285). These "power substances"—such as semen and menses—being necessary for conception, became identified with gods and goddesses and considered evidence of their energy and power (White 1996, 4). Exclusively trained *yoginīs* in Tantric schools ritualistically produced, offered, and consumed procreative fluids; orgasm became a means to achieve god-consciousness (4).

Crowley took from these Tantric practices and infused his own form of esoteric and transgressive ideas. Both the sex act and the associated fluids play a part in sexual magic, symbolically and literally, as an expression of mystical union and the "Great Work" of the magician (e.g. Crowley 1994, 128–138; Crowley 1997, 204–211, 267–269). Today, the initiatory Ordo Templi Orientis still celebrates Crowley's "Gnostic Mass," where the consumption of "cakes of light" containing burnt blood marks the consummation of a dramatized cosmic intercourse (Crowley 1997, 584–598).¹³

Neo-Paganism, Tantric sex, and Satanism were all part of what Marcello Truzzi called the "occult revival" in the 1970s, subgroups of the cultic milieu, alongside New Age, UFO, Theosophical, and Esoteric groups (1974, 22–23). Francis King, writing about sorcery, tantrism, and occultism in his 1971 book, *Sexuality, Magic, and Perversion*, presents LaVey's Church of Satan as a small, secretive yet publicity-conscious sect, which he names a "kooky" organization (149). He describes LaVey's magic as a simplified version of the "Ordo Templi Orientis," remarking that LaVey's notion of satisfying indulgence is a "pale" reflection of Crowley's mantra:

There is no Grace, there is no Guilt
This is the Law, Do what thou Wilt. (151)

King laments LaVey's notion of sex as a purely physical gratification and "crudely hedonistic, bearing more resemblance to the philosophy of the pro-

13. Using blood in the cakes of light is optional, but suggested by Crowley himself in *The Book of the Law* (Crowley 1997, 315, chapter III, 23–25; see also note 238 on page 267). It is interesting to note that Crowley hid sexual references behind concepts such as "bloody sacrifice" and "the formula of the rosy cross," failing utterly in making it less provocative.

prietor of a strip-joint than they do to the subtle intellectual systems of occultists as Reuss and Crowley” (1971, 152). As King places a poetic emphasis on the mystical element to orgasm, it is not surprising that he judges LaVey’s notions as a “crude” sexuality, void of an esoteric interpretation, and calling it a “vulgarization and degeneration” of Crowley’s ideas on sex-magic (152).

King’s disappointment is reflective of a particular approach to LaVey’s writings; to judge LaVey’s ideas on sex magic as esoterically void is to hold it to a mystical standard LaVey himself rejects. LaVey introduces *The Satanic Bible* thus:

This book was written because, with very few exceptions, every tract and paper, every secret “grimoire,” all the “great works” on the subject of magic, are nothing more than sanctimonious fraud—guilt-ridden ramblings and esoteric gibberish by chroniclers of magical lore unable or unwilling to present an objective view of the subject. (LaVey 2003, 21)

In his essay “On Occultism of the Past,” LaVey calls Crowley “drug-befuddled,” uttering “Kabbalistic mulligatawny” (LaVey 1971). He distances himself from previous occult writers, yet filters and retains select language, principles, aesthetics, and ideas. Petersen claims that LaVey made an appeal to tradition as a “black magician” using stereotypical diabolist imagery and occultist knowledge (2011, 128), but also rejected the mystical and esoteric elements (130). The emphasis on “magic” as a psychological phenomenon is an additional appeal for legitimacy, but this time it is an appeal to science (130). From the onset, LaVey maintains a dual position, echoing both counterculture and secular ideas. Thus, Petersen claims, that LaVey’s worldview “is both steeped in the occult underground and holding it at arms length” (130).

When LaVey uses bodily fluids he is denying their purported transcendent properties just as he rejects many esoteric ideas and the tradition of occultism. He contends that certain magical practices found across cultures involving the use of bodily fluids actually have their basis in scientific findings. He writes in regards to scientific developments:

One thing stands out above all else, concerning estrogens, hormones, glands extracts, and other modern virility and fertility substances; without exception, the very same ingredients, principles, and procedures were crudely suggested or primitively performed by tribal medicine men, ancient wizards, and other assorted witches and warlocks. Rites and ceremonies involving the use of semen, urine, menstrual blood, etc. in potions may have had more validity than suspected by those who assumed such ingredients to be used for nothing more than blasphemy. (LaVey 2010, 6)¹⁴

14. Interestingly, there are several contemporary scientific studies investigating the purported

This translates into LaVey's idiosyncratic treatment of feminine blood, sweat, and urine in witchcraft and lesser magic: use the biological procreative imperatives stimulated by odiferous bodily fluids to manipulate your desired target. His contention that scent can be used to seduce and control is an extension of his hybridist carnal-magical worldview.¹⁵

This manipulation (or lesser magic) works both ways. LaVey writes: "Women also find male odors tremendously appealing. Some women for example get turned on by sweaty men. In fact many folk dances contain a gesture in which a scarf held under the armpit during the dance is waved about the man's partner" (2003, 97). LaVey makes note that the armpit, as a retainer of natural scent, has, at times, been considered an erogenous zone in many places other than the USA (2003, 135–136). Hair, especially in creases of skin, retains scent. LaVey recommends dispensing with deodorant occasionally, and allowing your natural bodily odours to collect in the folds of flesh, such as armpits and inner thighs. "Your built-in perfume should be a perfect blend of acid and alkaline substances generated by secretions of the Bartholin glands, perspiration, and urine" (98). The modern advocates of soaps, perfumes, douches, deodorants, and excessive bathing and washing erase our particular odiferous identities and mask the animalistic instinct to olfactory arousal.

According to Douglas, "The danger risked by boundary transgression is power," and that social boundaries are represented at the vulnerable margins of the body (2002, 199). The counter-culture movements of LaVey's day were

existence and influence of pheromones in human scent. One such study states: "The idea that human physiology and behavior might also be influenced by pheromonal cues is a natural extension of the finding of pheromonal responses in other animals. But, despite a widespread research effort, it has been difficult to identify robust and reproducible effects. This doesn't necessarily mean that human pheromones don't exist, but complexities of modern human society may diminish their biological significance and make it difficult to identify consistent effects. Human axillary secretions from the armpit and genital regions provide a rich source of putative pheromonal signals" (Brennan 2010).

15. Despite LaVey's firm emphasis on the carnal, he positions himself as an occult magician. As Petersen notes, the lines of the satanic milieu are "fuzzy," and individuals or groups interpret the notion of magic with variety and nuance (2009, 5). The divisions between the rationalistic and esoteric worldviews are particularly intertwined, as some atheistic Satanists are widely knowledgeable of esoteric texts and ideas and use them in their rituals, while others are firmly secular with little interest in occult writings. Esoteric Satanists range from gnostic interpretations to magical and occult perspectives, with varying degrees of secular worldviews, some of which practically mirror rationalistic Satanism. The dichotomy between an atheistic/secular and theistic/esoteric Satanism is necessary for the academic in order to quantify their areas of research and identify the larger themes within the movement. These distinctions, despite being necessary, are not firm separations within the satanic milieu itself.

heavily invested in transgressing these boundaries via the vulnerable margins: feminism was concerned with transgressing the boundaries of polarized gender identities; Neo-Paganism was concerned with a politically-informed magical transformation of women's bodily fluids; Crowley was concerned with subverting social structures through the ritualistic consummation of taboo bodily fluids. LaVey's boundary transgression via bodily fluids is in the domain of transgressive corporality—we are animals, carnal and finite, and thus our behaviour is measurable and quantifiable by the scientific method. LaVey's ideas on scent and attraction are an extension of his notion of magic being firmly rooted in the body, in the power of one's own intellect and will. Satanic magic, for LaVey, is therefore a hybrid of rational and esoteric ideas, responding to the contemporary discourses of his time, as he openly rejects feminism and esotericism, but also selectively incorporating elements of both.

Conclusion

"It is utterly heretical in our society to even consider such things as revealing your soiled underwear, gaining some extra weight, or skipping the use of deodorant for a day or two," writes Magistra Peggy Nadramia (in LaVey 2003, *xiii*). She warns that readers of *The Satanic Witch* may feel outraged or scandalized. They should take this as evidence that the ideas are truly occult, and not the ideas commonly held by the contemporary cliché of heavily make-upped goth chicks in bondage gear (in LaVey 2003, *xiii*). Within its pages, women are encouraged to wear stockings, heels, and make-up, and choose their clothing to enhance natural attributes, all the while basking in their sexual desires. The calculated use of her bodily odors through fluids to manifest these desires is not the advice usually found in women's magazines, which, even if they recognize modern scientific research in regards to human scent and arousal, are largely marketing tools to sell the soaps, chemicals, and beauty products that would negate those findings. "Don't bathe," defies LaVey, in response to this constant bombardment of advertising messages (1998, 134).

Recall Douglas' notions of dirt and contagion; what we view as a pollutant reflects our morals and values. She notes that many anthropologists have dismissed ritual cleansing in "primitive" cultures as symbolic, not hygienic. She writes:

Our washing, scrubbing, isolating and disinfecting has only a superficial resemblance with ritual purification: we kill germs, they ward off spirits. This sounds straightforward enough as a contrast. Yet the resemblance between some of their symbolic rites and our hygiene is sometimes uncannily close.

(Douglas 2002, 40)

If dirt is disorder, then the modern western culture is obsessively attempting to create order by removing all traces of dirt (the scent of our bodily fluids) through various soaps and astringents. LaVey would argue that, symbolically and literally, excessive hygiene erases our animal natures, as a “clean” body is designed to align us with our ostensible spiritual nature; “Cleanliness is close to godliness,” as the saying goes. When LaVey declares “don’t bathe” and allow one’s bodily fluids to retain their natural odour, the boundary transgressed is not one with a social agenda (such as with feminism), nor one with as esoteric leaning (such as with Crowley); instead, he is transgressing the boundary of considering humans as anything but an animal. Excessive hygiene obfuscates our primal drives: procreation and survival. For LaVey, this animal nature should be embraced, channeled, and enjoyed, not shamed, suppressed, or masked.

When LaVey comments that excessive bathing has replaced the confessional, he is noting the moral implications and ritualistic cleansing of seemingly secular hygienic practices. Douglas agrees: “The analysis of ritual symbolism cannot begin until we recognize ritual as an attempt to create and maintain a particular culture, a particular set of assumptions by which experience is controlled...The rituals work upon the body politic through the symbolic medium of the physical body” (2002, 158). Soaps, chemicals, and perfumes are symbolically maintaining that social order on the individual body; they project a morally superior, organized civilization, and camouflage our baser animalistic, disorderly selves. A self with which LaVey positively acknowledged: “There is a beast in man that needs to be exercised, not exorcised” (LaVey in Barton 1992, front matter).

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