

Sacred Spaces and the Use of Abject Objects in Contemporary Witchcraft After the Rise of the Anthropocene

Elizabeth Campbell

Selwyn College, University of Cambridge

erc76@cantab.ac.uk

Abstract

Since the turn of the century, the concept of a human geological age has become widespread. The rise of ‘the Anthropocene’ in the popular cultural consciousness has manifested itself in artworks, music, and casual conversation. This case-study of one ecofeminist witch writing in the 1980s—Starhawk; and two witches working in urban areas in the 2020s—Sabrina Scott and Alice Tarbuck—illustrates the way that, in this subculture of non-Wiccan, neo-Pagan witchcraft, the impact of the concept of the Anthropocene has been revealed in changing habits in spellcraft and choice of sacred space.

Starhawk’s spellcraft focusses on natural objects and spaces and recommends the removal of trash from the ecosystem. Conversely, rather than eschewing artificial and discarded objects (so-called “abject objects”) the witchcraft of recent years, particularly that of Sabrina Scott and Alice Tarbuck, shows a radical embrace of trash, pollution, and abjection in both spellcraft and sacred spaces. This is illustrative of Anthropocene environmental thinking—that we cannot erase the human effect on the ecosystem and must therefore work alongside our waste. The Anthropocene consciousness expressed by contemporary witches includes belief in a flat ontology, inter-species conversation, and vital materiality. This case study may be illustrative of a more general trend in



Elizabeth Campbell, “Sacred Spaces and the Use of Abject Objects in Contemporary Witchcraft After the Rise of the Anthropocene,” *JOGTS* 2.1 (2021), pp. 31–50

which Anthropocene consciousness influences practical changes in spiritual practice, a hypothesis which I believe bears further investigation.

Introduction

Witchcraft in the Anthropocene has no choice but to recognise and work with that which is man-made. The defining feature of the Anthropocene era is that we have now reached the point where human action is the main contributor to the ecological state of our Earth. Not only is the climate human-made at this point, but many of the 'natural' objects which fill our ecosystem are in fact saturated with human influence. The seas are filled with micro-plastics,¹ as are the mountains,² and our own bodies.³ Beneath many a field or hillock is landfill or midden. Broken glass partially makes up the sand on the beach, and the landscape is irrevocably changed by thousands of years of human interference.⁴

I wish to argue that the modern, Pagan witches of the West have found it necessary to include abject objects in their craft. Sacred spaces, whether a copse of trees, a city park under a full moon, or a quiet corner of the bedroom of a third-floor flat, must widen in scope to include abject objects—those artificial objects which are discarded, unloved and unwanted. A simple definition of an 'abject object' is an object which is human-made but has fulfilled its purpose and has been discarded. For example, abject objects could include a plastic bottle, a pizza box or microplastics in the water system. Borrowing from anthropologist Mary Douglas's conception of pollution, an abject object necessarily entails the property of 'being out of place' or being found 'where it should not be.'⁵ For example, a drink can in a fridge would not be abject, for the object is in its place. Whereas the same can, once emptied and thrown onto a verge beside a motorway, is clearly abject. It does not belong in the place where it is found. In that regard, the abject object is described by philosopher Julia Kristeva in kind: "it is not then an absence of health or cleanliness which makes something abject, but that which perturbs an identity, a system, an order; that which does not respect limits."⁶

¹ X. Peng et al., "Microplastics Contaminate the Deepest Part of the World's Ocean," *Geochemical Perspectives Letters* 9 (2018): 1–5, <https://doi.org/10.7185/geochemlet.1829>.

² Melanie Bergmann et al., "White and Wonderful? Microplastics Prevail in Snow from the Alps to the Arctic," *Science Advances* 5, no. 8 (August 2019): eaax1157, <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aax1157>.

³ Kieran D. Cox et al., "Human Consumption of Microplastics," *Environmental Science & Technology* 53, no. 12 (June 2019): 7068–74, <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.9b01517>.

⁴ Jan Zalasiewicz et al., "The Stratigraphical Signature of the Anthropocene in England and Its Wider Context," *The Geology of England* 129, no. 3 (June 2018): 482–91, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pgeola.2017.06.004>.

⁵ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 2002).

⁶ Julia Kristeva, "Approaching Abjection," *Oxford Literary Review* 5, no. 1 (1982): 125–49.

Certainly, these abject objects still have power over us. Humanity has scarred the Earth with trash and pollution. But to respond by eschewing such abject objects will no longer suffice; these objects are as much a part of magical reality as the trees or the moon. Sabrina Scott, in *Witchbody*, tells us that, clearly, any magical ontology which forgets the artificial in favour of the organic cuts itself off from the fullness of the “flesh of the world.”⁷

In this essay I will compare the use of objects and sacred spaces in the works of three self-identified witches: Starhawk’s *Dreaming the Dark*, written in the 1980s; Sabrina Scott’s *Witchbody* from 2019; and Alice Tarbuck’s *A Spell in the Wild* from 2020. I propose that there is a distinct difference between the practices of Starhawk’s earlier witchcraft, which took place before the rise of the concept of the Anthropocene, and Scott and Tarbuck’s Anthropocene-conscious witchcraft. This is manifest in the way that Scott and Tarbuck are much more comfortable with the use of abject objects and working in human-made spaces, whereas Starhawk focusses much more on the ‘natural’ and tries to practice her witchcraft in environments which are unspoilt by human activity. The reason for this is the prevalence of the concept of the Anthropocene in post-2000, English-speaking culture, which has altered our concept of what it means for an ecosystem to be unspoilt, and this concept of the Anthropocene has therefore also changed witchcraft practices since 2000, leading to a greater acceptance and use of abject objects.

Witchcraft

The history of witchcraft is lengthy, and as varied as the cultures in which it is practised or experienced. Therefore, I will not attempt to provide a comprehensive overview here. Instead, I will concentrate on witchcraft in the English-speaking West, beginning with the emergence of Gardnerian witchcraft. Gerald Gardner is the most well-known name in the rebirth of pagan religious practice in the twentieth century West. He claimed that he was initiated into a coven in the New Forest in 1939, which he claimed “had kept alive the pre-Christian fertility religion described by Margaret Murray in her *Witch Cult in Western Europe*.”⁸ Though the historical accuracy of his claims, and the historicity of the rituals found in early spell books, is disputed—it cannot be denied that Gardner “spawned the development of a vibrant new pagan religion that would, over the next few decades, generate numerous variants and pathways under the umbrella of ‘witchcraft’.”⁹

⁷ Sabrina Scott, *Witchbody* (Canada: Weiser, 2019). [*Witchbody* is a graphic work, and as such does not have page numbers]

⁸ Owen Davies, “Return of the Old Gods,” in *Paganism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 111.

⁹ Davies, “Return of the Old Gods,” 113.

Gardnerian witchcraft is seen by many as a rebirth of the “Old Religion,” which is alleged to be the pagan or occultist practice of ancient Britons. The attempt to reinstate the “Old Religion” stems from a desire to reclaim indigenous practices from before the Christianisation of the British Isles.¹⁰ Nevertheless, Gardnerian witchcraft, though claiming to be an authentic representation of the “Old Religion,” indubitably contains many new spiritual practices.¹¹

Though many witches follow some form of religious witchcraft, whether this is Wicca or some other neo-Pagan belief system; this is by no means ubiquitous. Wicca is a loosely defined religion, typically encompassing a duo- or polytheistic pantheon, centred around the triple Goddess and the horned God.¹² Many Wiccans abide by the moral system encapsulated in the statement “An ye harm none, do what ye will,” known as the Wiccan Rede.¹³ In the US, the Gardnerian strand of Wiccan belief is known as British Traditional Wicca, though this term is not widely used in the UK. Most Wiccans undergo some form of initiation ritual or ceremony, through which the witch becomes a member of a coven. Initiatory witchcraft has declined in popularity in recent years, which may be due to the dispersed community of witches online, and potentially due to changing societal attitudes to religious gatekeeping and institutions.¹⁴

The self-identified witches whose works feature in this essay (Starhawk, Scott and Tarback) would not consider themselves to be Wiccan, nor followers of any other religious form of witchcraft. They are, however, representative of a growing part of the living history and identity of witchcraft which is discussed in this essay.

The ecofeminist turn, which was established in the 1960s, and for many witches is embodied in the work of Starhawk, centred modern witchcraft around the Earth and nature, and espoused a mutual relationship between those who wield magic and the Earth. Sociologist Shai Feraro ascribes the love of rurality in witchcraft circles to the influence of British Romanticism on the occult through the work of Gardner.¹⁵ A different source for a similar idea is found in the work of scientist and futurist James Lovelock’s Gaia hypothesis which also influenced the ecological turn in mid-twentieth century witchcraft, combining environmentalism with dedication to an Earth-

¹⁰ Ethan Doyle White, *Wicca: History, Belief and Community in Modern Pagan Witchcraft* (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2016), 2.

¹¹ Doyle White, 2.

¹² James R. Lewis, *Witchcraft Today: An Encyclopedia of Wiccan and Neopagan Traditions* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1999), 123, 146.

¹³ Gail Wood, “The Old Religion: Websites on Wicca: A Quarterly of Women’s Studies Resources,” *Feminist Collections* 20, no. 2 (January 1999): 15.

¹⁴ R.A. Jones and K. Klostermann, “Wicca,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, 2016, 2, <https://doi-org.ezp.lib.cam.ac.uk/10.1002/9781118663219.wbegs322>.

¹⁵ Shai Feraro, “A Song of Wood and Water: The Ecofeminist Turn in 1970s-1980s British Paganism,” in *Radical Change in Minority Religions*, ed. Beth Singler and Eileen Barker, (Abingdon: Routledge, Forthcoming).

goddess in neo-Pagan thought¹⁶ and a “respect for the environment as a spiritual entity.”¹⁷ Though Lovelock himself was not involved in witchcraft or neo-Pagan religion, his ideas proliferated through these sub-cultures.

However, there is evidence to suggest that there has been a noticeable shift in self-defined witches, from initiatory Wiccan traditions to a more eclectic conception of witchcraft during the early twenty-first century.¹⁸ Starhawk, Scott and Tarbuck all have loose definitions of what constitutes witchcraft, and a wide definition of what magic is. For Starhawk, magic is “the art of changing consciousness at will.”¹⁹ For Scott, magic is “a way of being with, it is collaboration and building relationships with non-humans to connect and get stuff done”²⁰ and “a movement toward shifting knowingness about what bodies are and can do.”²¹ There is a shift between Starhawk’s magic and Scott’s magic: a transfer from consciousness to embodiment, a move that enables non-thinking beings to be included as participants in the magic. Starhawk would reject any mind/body duality, and yet, I find nothing in her writing which indicates that she believes in the magical participation of bodies without minds, though she writes frequently about the participation of minds without bodies. For Tarbuck, witchcraft is inherently linked to the environment in which the witch works. She emphasises the seasonal cycle, foraging in one’s local area, and casting spells using found objects.²²

One may conclude that there is little which can link these writers together, that all Starhawk, Scott and Tarbuck have in common is the self-claimed identity of “witch.” However, the link between these contemporary witches is their environmentalism. The thing which divides them is their understanding of how a witch must practice their environmentalism. This divide, I will argue, is due to the rise of the Anthropocene in English-speaking, Western cultural contexts.

The Anthropocene

Starhawk and her fellow witches in the 1980s would not have used the word “Anthropocene” to describe their own epoch, though, by almost all definitions, they were living in it. First formally appearing in print in 2000²³—though the idea had been present for some years before this—the

¹⁶ Ronald Hutton, *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹⁷ Davies, “Return of the Old Gods,” 119.

¹⁸ Hannah E. Johnston and Peg Aloï, *The New Generation Witches: Teenage Witchcraft in Contemporary Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 47.

¹⁹ Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman Limited, 1982), 13.

²⁰ Scott, *Witchbody*.

²¹ Scott, *Witchbody*.

²² Alice Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild: A Year (and Six Centuries) of Magic* (London: Two Roads, 2020).

²³ Paul J. Crutzen and Eugene F. Stoermer, “The Anthropocene,” *IGBP Newsletter* 41 (2000).

Anthropocene is a name for the geologic epoch which follows the Holocene.²⁴ It is disputed when the Anthropocene began, but it is well established that at some point, perhaps between the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the 1800s and the first atomic warfare in 1945, human activity began to have a global and irreversible impact on the Earth's climate and ecosystems. The Anthropocene is, put more poetically, "a period in time where the earth can no longer forget our deeds."²⁵

According to Colin Waters and co-authors, "any formal recognition of an Anthropocene epoch in the geological time scale hinges on whether humans have changed the Earth system sufficiently to produce a stratigraphic signature in sediments and ice that is distinct from that of the Holocene epoch."²⁶ Waters concludes that there are anthropogenic markers in the stratigraphic record including aluminium, plastics and concrete which coincide with global spikes in fossil fuel combustion. The Anthropocene is therefore defined as beginning where geological analysis of the Earth shows evidence of human activity; the "concept thus includes, but also transcends, the idea of anthropogenic climate change."²⁷ It is undeniable that human activity is driving climate change, and for the past fifty years the rate of change has been accelerating.²⁸ However, worldwide carbon usage is drastically unequal. Most carbon emissions come from the global north, and the industrial revolution was driven by a tiny section of society in the West.²⁹ Some critiques of the concept of the Anthropocene are driven by this fact. Scott Gilbert says that a major problem with the Anthropocene "is its global pretensions. We should not talk about Earth as a globe, because it is not a unified space."³⁰

The Anthropocene expresses a reckoning with our human power and human fragility. By turning to magic, the witches of the twenty-first century have attempted to reconcile the fact that we have both the power to create a new climate, and the inability to save ourselves from it. As Tarbuck writes, "Witchcraft starts happening when our bodies come right up to the edge of their

²⁴ The Holocene is defined as the most recent, warm geological epoch beginning with the Holocene glacial retreat, 11,700 years ago. N. Roberts, "Holocene Epoch," in *Encyclopedia of World Climatology*, ed. J.E. Oliver, *Encyclopedia of Earth Sciences Series* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2005), <https://doi.org/10.1007/1-4020-3266-8>.

²⁵ Hannah Malcolm, *Words for a Dying World* (London: SCM Press, 2020), xxx.

²⁶ Colin N. Waters et al., "The Anthropocene Is Functionally and Stratigraphically Distinct from the Holocene," *Science* 351, no. 6269 (January 2016): 137, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aad2622>.

²⁷ Noel Castree, "The Anthropocene: A Primer for Geographers," *Geography* 100, no. 2 (July 2015): 66–75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00167487.2015.12093958>.

²⁸ Mark Maslin, "Evidence for Climate Change," *Climate Change: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 45.

²⁹ Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg, "The Geology of Mankind? A Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative," *The Anthropocene Review* 1, no.1 (Jan 2014): 62.

³⁰ Donna Haraway et al., "Anthropologists Are Talking—About the Anthropocene," *Ethnos*, 81 no. 3 (Nov 2016): 540, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00141844.2015.1105838>.

sensory and linguistic abilities and life keeps going anyway.”³¹ The inescapability of the climate crisis—and the anthropogenic ecosystems in which humans live—is also reflected in the way rituals are conducted. Therefore, I propose that the acceptance of the era of the Anthropocene is one of the major drivers of the change in witchcraft, both in practice and self-conception, between the 1980s and today—as represented in the work of Starhawk relative to Scott and Tarbuck.

Magic, Sacred Spaces, and Abject Objects

Metaphysics

In the Anthropocene, that which one may consider ‘nature’ is not all ‘natural’, for the ‘natural’ objects and spaces which we have encountered have near universally been affected by human activity.

The earlier worldview of Starhawk emphasises living beings over non-living beings. She writes: “Deep ecology challenges our anthropocentric view of the world and speaks for the inherent value of all *living* beings.”³² However, Starhawk also sees interconnectivity with reality as the medicine for our destruction of the environment. She names our malady “*estrangement* because its essence is that we do not see ourselves as part of the world.”³³ And yet, despite this commitment to interconnectedness, Starhawk’s *things* are almost always “natural” and the artificial is eschewed from the vision she paints of an immanent world. For example, she writes: “this cluster of *things*: a naked woman, a snake, a tree, an apple.”³⁴ And again, in *The Spiral Dance* she speaks of love of the Goddess being found in “love of trees, of stones, of sky and clouds of scented blossoms, and thundering waves.”³⁵ She continues in her litany, and yet never mentions any artificial objects; there is no trace of the Anthropocene in this list. This is due to an ontology in which Starhawk prioritises the living and the natural above the artificial and the lifeless. She writes: “All living beings are worthy of respect.”³⁶ Whereas a contemporary, Anthropocene-conscious witch would be more likely to say that all beings (i.e., living and unliving, natural and artificial, sacred and abject) are worthy of respect.

Sabrina Scott, by contrast, embraces the unnatural and the urban within the circle of magical objects. Scott writes:

³¹ Alice Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild: A Year (and Six Centuries) of Magic* (London: Two Roads, 2020), 5.

³² Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*, xvi.

³³ Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*, 6; emphasis added.

³⁴ Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*, 26.

³⁵ Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess* (New York: HarperOne, 1979), 39.

³⁶ Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, 6.

Magic can act as a trans-species pedagogy where ontology is inscribed and reinscribed through the repeated co-performance of magical acts. Anthropocentric hierarchies of being are disrupted through an inherent noticing and recruitment of materiality's inherent ability to act.³⁷

There are three fundamental beliefs underlying this statement. First, Scott writes about the power of magic and magical thinking as a vehicle for re-learning our relationship, as human beings, with the rest of reality. This 'magic as pedagogy' belief is not a religious creed, but a way of living and paying attention that Scott believes will transform humanity's relationship with 'nature' (here meaning all that is, both artificial and organic), and will enable us to act in ways that do not harm the Earth on which, with which, and through which we live.

Second, Scott shows a belief in 'thing-power' or vital materiality, such as that espoused by Jane Bennett in *Vibrant Matter*.³⁸ Bennett's work forms part of the recent movement known as New Materialism, a philosophical framework which attempts to "highlight the interactive flux of materiality and the entanglement of humanity within the material rather than as separated from it."³⁹ Matter is therefore neither inert nor passive, formed by some external force, but it is self-organising and vital.⁴⁰ Scott writes: "we must account for the fallen, the dead, the changed, the unnoticed, the ugly and embrace them in our environmentalism. They aren't leaving. They are here and they shape us, and they are us. We become each other."⁴¹ We are not the only actors on the world stage, we are acted upon by so-called *objects*, including abject objects. We must also recognise the subjective power of these objects, that is, recognising the power of these objects to act as subjects in our interactions. Bennett gives an example of this collaboration of self-organising, vital matter: "The sentences of this book also emerged from the confederate agency of many striving macro- and microactants: from 'my' memories, intentions, contentions, intestinal bacteria, eyeglasses, and blood sugar, as well as from the plastic computer keyboard, the bird song from the open window, or the air or particulates in the room, to name only a few of the participants."⁴² This participation is even true of those abject objects which we would rather dispose of in landfill as if they did not exist, or ignore altogether.

Third, Scott advocates for a flat ontology—that is, a conceptual framework in which all things possess the same degree of 'being-ness.' Flat ontology, derived from Manuel DeLanda's *Intensive Science & Virtual Philosophy*, was popularised in philosopher Graham Harman's framework of

³⁷ Scott, *Witchbody*.

³⁸ Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 21.

³⁹ Eric Trozzo, "Review of John Reader (2017). Theology and New Materialism: Spaces of Faithful Dissent," *Postdigital Science and Education* 3, no. 2 (April 2021): 614–19, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-020-00159-8>.

⁴⁰ John Reader, *Theology and New Materialism* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 5.

⁴¹ Scott, *Witchbody*.

⁴² Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, 23.

Object Oriented Ontology (OOO). Whereas the prevailing view of reality is that only living beings have the ability to be a subject in a relationship, flat ontologies ascribe subjectivity to all objects, and consider all subjective beings to also be objects. In other words, everything can be as much a *subject* as any human or living being and anthropocentrism is not just incorrect, but actively harmful. This is imperative, for Scott, because “[b]eing selective about whose bodies we take seriously impedes ecologically sound environmental education.”⁴³

If one directly compares Starhawk’s litanies with the litany of Scott in *Witchbody* the difference is clear: for Scott, the living and unliving are given equal standing, the ‘natural’ and the ‘artificial’ mingle together. As she elucidates: “We shouldn’t only pay heed to manicured candy-coated lawns but also waste, garbage, forest, marina, skyscraper, landfill, prosthesis, everything in between.”⁴⁴ The Anthropocene witch cannot draw neat lines between natural and artificial, because that distinction is no longer possible. Everything natural is now artificial too.

On the other hand, perhaps all three witches in this essay are experiencing a nostalgia for an experience which never existed. In *We Have Never Been Modern*, philosopher and anthropologist Bruno Latour argues that there is no nature/society distinction.⁴⁵ This Anthropocene-consciousness is not a recent invention, but a return to recognition that “the Earth has now taken back all the characteristics of a full-fledged actor.”⁴⁶

The way that Scott has engaged with the subjectivity of all objects is an advantageous safeguard against what Latour calls “dreams of mastery.”⁴⁷ In the same way, the explosion of the Anthropocene in our collective consciousness leads to a greater awareness of both our tendency towards anthropocentrism, and our tendency towards organo-centrism (i.e., favouring living beings over lifeless things). This mindset also lends itself to designating some objects as ‘natural’ and others as alien, artificial, abject, or intruding.

How does one distinguish between natural and abject? Timothy Morton, a philosopher exploring the intersection of object-oriented ontology and ecology, does not believe that such a delineation is easy, and perhaps it is not even possible. He writes, “as I reach for the iPhone charger plugged into the dashboard, I reach into evolution, into the extended phenotype that doesn’t stop at the edge of my skin but continues into all the spaces my humanness has colonized.”⁴⁸ For Morton, objects are not merely themselves, they are perforated by other beings. Whether those beings

⁴³ Scott, *Witchbody*.

⁴⁴ Scott, *Witchbody*.

⁴⁵ Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Hemel Hempstead, UK: Harvester, 1992).

⁴⁶ Bruno Latour, “Agency at the Time of the Anthropocene,” *New Literary History*, 45.1 (2014): 3.

⁴⁷ Latour, “Agency at the Time of the Anthropocene,” 5.

⁴⁸ Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 27.

are living or unliving, artificial or natural, it does not matter—they are all part of you, and you are a part of them. Morton writes in the foreword to Scott's *Witchbody*, "I'm open ended. Your tweet is open. The dove is open. Everything is full of gaps and holes and everything is perforated which is why we can love things and shape worlds [...] It's all weirdly open, it's all full of portals."⁴⁹ Rather than seeing beings as self-contained, objects as self-sufficient, instead Morton (and following him, Scott) propose that all beings and objects are constituted within and by one another, as a woven tapestry of being, or like a cloud system, as that single entity will at various time produce individuals that rise and fall from the system.

Yet, even in this flat ontological landscape, we cannot help ourselves anthropomorphising. It may be that we simply cannot avoid humanising those things with which we interact, and we are in turn perceived by the objects which interact with us. Jane Bennett writes in *Vibrant Matter*: "Maybe it's worth running the risks associated with anthropomorphizing (superstition, the divinization of nature, romanticism) because it, oddly enough, works against anthropocentrism: a chord is struck between person and thing, and I am no longer above or outside a nonhuman 'environment'."⁵⁰ Anthropomorphism is not an inherent problem, provided one recognises that one is also "morphised" by the other objects which one encounters. As Latour puts it "[one has] to deal with all sorts of contradictory "morphisms," because they try to explore the shape of those unknown actants."⁵¹ In other words, when you gaze into the iPhone, the iPhone also gazes into you. This is a result of the flat ontology described above. Since, on this view, all objects are also capable of subjectivity, person and iPhone are both subjective actors in any relationship. Within the context of witchcraft, it means that the notion of a witch *using* inanimate objects to cast spells is incorrect. Instead, the witch must see spellcasting materials as co-wielders of magic.

Scott's radically flat ontology is also clearly present in the worldview of Alice Tarbuck, another urban witch working in the 2020s. She writes:

There is now a persuasive argument that animism is not a belief about the world—rather it is a way of perceiving the world, a way of existing within it [...] Everything is not just alive, but equal [...] Fighting for a better climate then becomes not a distant or intellectual process—instead, it is a way of advocating for the world that is as much myself as I am, that I am as much a part of as a spider.⁵²

This quotation illustrates the core tenets of Scott's flat ontology, namely that everything is "alive," "equal" and "as much myself as I am"—as Morton describes above, all existence is interwoven and constituted of the other; the taxonomy of alive or inanimate, object or being is useless because

⁴⁹ Timothy Morton, "Foreword," in *Witchbody* (Canada: Weiser, 2019), iii.

⁵⁰ Bennett, *Vibrant Matter*, 120.

⁵¹ Latour, "Agency at the Time of the Anthropocene," 12.

⁵² Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild*, 203-4.

everything is included in the other. Therefore, Donna Haraway's concept of a cyborg may be useful in describing any entity, but most useful for describing a witch. A witch, then, is more akin to a 'cyborg': "a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction."⁵³ Abject objects are also creatures of social reality and fiction; it is our cultural narratives which make them abject, and our cultural narratives also have the power to make these objects sacred.

Even if trash may never be seen as fully sacred, it is worth the risk to include it in spellcraft. If the flat ontology proposed above, particularly as it is utilised by Scott, is to be taken seriously, then the subjectivity of all objects, desirable and abject, must be respected. This means that the magical properties of trash are real and valuable—to fail to recognise this means missing an entire dimension of the magical landscape set before a witch. Therefore, in the attempts made by Morton, Scott and Tarbuck to achieve symbiosis with the world outside—as it is, not as we would wish it to be—witches are encouraged to include abject objects in their spellcasting and sacred spaces. In the Anthropocene mindset, there is no alternative. The abject objects are not merely intruders to be cleared away; they are a part of our bodies and our air and cannot be ignored anymore.

Objects

For Mary Douglas, "reflection on dirt involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death."⁵⁴ For a witch, whose spellcraft works with all these things, why should there be a limit drawn on which objects are sacred? Which are beings and which are abject objects?

In the past, human-made objects were often eschewed from sacred spaces, unless specifically created for the purposes of ritual. From Starhawk's books of the late twentieth century one can extrapolate that the appearance of a discarded plastic bottle on an altar would seem incongruous to a witch of the second half of the twentieth century. In *Dreaming the Dark*, Starhawk describes picking litter with a friend of hers.

"I know we can't clean it all up" [Mary] said, "But I believe in picking up the garbage that you find in your path."

⁵³ Donna J. Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," in *Manifestly Haraway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 6.

⁵⁴ Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo*, 6.

The beer can principle, as I think of it, has served as an ethical guideline that allows me to keep my sanity in a society filled with exploitation, pollution and destruction.⁵⁵

Here, Starhawk sees the beer cans as intruders, alien to the natural landscape and objects which must be cleared away to rid sacred nature of these agents of “exploitation, pollution and destruction”.⁵⁶

Starhawk’s *The Spiral Dance* is a primer for political and ecological witches, written in 1979, purporting to be “A rebirth of the ancient religion of the great goddess.”⁵⁷ *The Spiral Dance* was described by a reviewer as “a broad philosophy of harmony with nature, of human concord, sexual liberation, creativity, and healthy pleasure, as expressed and celebrated in freewheeling worship of the universe,”⁵⁸ and indeed, Starhawk intends for *The Spiral Dance* to be more than a textbook for burgeoning witches. *The Spiral Dance* also outlines a philosophy of natural witchcraft which gives respect and worship to the Earth goddess through environmentalism. For politically engaged witches of the 1980s, Starhawk’s body of work provided a corpus of philosophical, political, and environmental thought that drove the witchcraft movement, along with second wave feminism, into a distinctly ecotheological and political direction.

Yet, throughout the book, there are notably very few mentions of human-made objects which have not been specifically created for ritual use. As Starhawk writes: “Tools can be charged—imbued with psychic energy—and consecrated within a group ritual, during an initiation or individually.”⁵⁹ The exceptions include items such as children’s toys—objects which are beloved, or at least ‘useful.’ Incidental items, or abject objects, are notably absent when compared with Scott’s description of magical items. For example, in the illustrations of Scott’s *Witchbody*, a pizza is drawn alongside candles on an altar, trash swirls around the witch as she ritually bathes, and mobile phones fill her dreams, alongside herbs and incense.

Scott writes: “There is magic and wisdom in our tables and chairs, in our computer cables, in our organic soy lattes and recycled post-consumer cups. It is in the trees, too; in the fish in our algae-filled lakes, polluted with beer cans and chemical runoff.”⁶⁰ All items—whether precious to Scott, or items that she would rather not live alongside—are included in the magical environment that she describes. The description of objects in witchcraft may be described by some as a kind of “commodity fetishism” which is defined as the “view that the value of a commodity is intrinsic and

⁵⁵ Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*, 33.

⁵⁶ Starhawk, *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*, 33.

⁵⁷ Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, title page.

⁵⁸ “The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess by Starhawk,” *Kirkus Reviews*, 1979, <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/a/starhawk-3/the-spiral-dance-a-rebirth-of-the-ancient-relig/>.

⁵⁹ Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, 95.

⁶⁰ Scott, *Witchbody*.

the corresponding failure to appreciate the investment of labour that went into its production.”⁶¹ Birgit Meyer addresses this idea in her work *Commodities and the Power of Prayer: Pentecostalist Attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana*.⁶² However, in my opinion, there is a tension between the capitalist society which Scott inhabits, which views objects as commodities and her professed flat ontology, which would consider those objects to be fellow beings.⁶³

It is also instructive to compare Starhawk’s magical items with Alice Tarbuck’s notes on spellcasting. Tarbuck writes: “Magic does not, and witchcraft does not, rely on material objects. We bring things into relation with ourselves to help us practise effectively but those things can be, well, almost anything. Empty pizza boxes, our child’s crayons whatever we have to hand”.⁶⁴ Though Starhawk may agree that witches are, at heart, pragmatists, Tarbuck’s depiction of trash as co-creatrix of magical spells could not be more different to Starhawk’s depiction of the same litter as exploitative and polluting.

This spell work with abject objects is clearest in Tarbuck’s *Ecological Spell*, which calls for “nine things you have found in the place you are in, or the local area. They don’t have to be plants—scraps of paper bags, stones, moss, gaudy bits of rubbish.”⁶⁵ Not only do the abject objects make it into the spell work, but their integral place in the local ecosystem is also verbalised: “The bright red of the litter helps this place to flourish.”⁶⁶

Furthermore, in an interview for the *Magic and Ecology* series, Scott asserts that the artificial parts of her own body, namely cosmetic fillers, are co-creators of magic.⁶⁷ The abject objects (here the acids and plastics of the dermal fillers) have become part of the self, and thus play a part in the witchcraft. The abject object has not only become a part of witchcraft, but the abject object has become a witch.

The rise of Anthropocene-awareness in the English-speaking, Western cultural context (i.e., Starhawk, Scott and Tarbuck are all witches in urban, Western settings) has driven the embrace of object-oriented ontologies in witch worldviews—especially the acceptance of artificial, abject objects into spellcasting and ritual activities. This dramatic change, allowing abject objects to become sacred through spellwork, is driven by the Anthropocene becoming such an important

⁶¹ "Commodity Fetishism," *Oxford Reference*; Accessed 16 September 2021, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110810104638104>.

⁶² Birgit Meyer, "Commodities and the Power of Prayer. Pentecostalist Attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana," ed. P. Geschiere and B. Meyer, *Development and Change* 29, no. 4 (1998): 751–76.

⁶³ An in-depth analysis of this tension lies beyond the scope of this paper.

⁶⁴ Scott, *Witchbody*.

⁶⁵ Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild*, 287.

⁶⁶ Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild*, 288.

⁶⁷ Sabrina Scott and Lillith Dorsey, *Magic and Ecology: WITCHBODIES*, interview by Alice Tarbuck, 29 January 2021, <http://www.crash.cam.ac.uk/events/29535>.

cultural touchstone. The metaphysical worldview which underlies Scott and Tarbuck's work cannot escape anthropocentrism without flattening the ontology to such a degree that a discarded coke can is as 'real' a being as a human.⁶⁸ The onset of the Anthropocene has alerted our culture to the reality that artificiality is now the defining feature of our ecosystem. Therefore, witchcraft has had to account for the fact that the microplastics will not leave our bloodstream, and the carbon will not leave our atmosphere. And so, witches must widen their magical sphere to make these abject beings sacred, in order that humans may interact with the Earth in a healthy way, neither rejecting any object-being, nor denying the catastrophe that the Anthropocene invokes.

Sacred Spaces

Witchcraft is a practice which is strongly linked to place. The most well-known examples of this are the druidic rituals which take place at Glastonbury and Stonehenge each year during the solstice, and the popular image of witches' covens meeting in a forest clearing at midnight.

As the Anthropocene takes hold, 'unspoilt nature' is becoming ever harder to find—if, indeed, it was ever possible in the first place. The stone circle may be adjacent to a car park, and the town's boundaries encroach on the forest more and more, as suburban housing estates are built. It is more common for witches to live in cities than in rural cottages—and this was even so in Starhawk's time. However, there is certainly a shift in the way that Starhawk speaks about sacred space, when compared with the sacred spaces described by Scott and Tarbuck.

Again, Starhawk's focus is squarely on the natural when she assesses a place as 'sacred'; she writes: "At a time when every major ecosystem on the planet is under assault, calling nature sacred is a radical act because it threatens the overriding value of profit that allows us to despoil the basic life support systems of the earth."⁶⁹ She continues: "The heart of my connection to the Goddess [is] what I notice when I step outside my door: that oak leaves fall to the ground, decay and make fertile soil."⁷⁰

Scott, on the other hand, is critical of the idea that unspoilt nature is the ideal when choosing a sacred space. She writes: "Feeling affection for pollution or garbage or industrial sites in the same

⁶⁸ A flattened ontology is necessary to escape anthropocentrism according to Scott, Tarbuck, and Morton. However, this is not a universal perspective; there are many environmental philosophers who find a middle ground between harmful anthropocentrism and a completely flat ontology.

⁶⁹ Starhawk, "Religion from Nature, Not Archaeology: Starhawk Responds to the Atlantic Monthly," 2001, <https://www.starhawk.org/Goddess-Pagan/Religion%20From%20Nature%20Not%20Archaeology%20Starhawk%20Responds%20to%20the%20Atlantic%20Monthly.pdf>.

⁷⁰ Starhawk, "Religion from Nature, Not Archaeology: Starhawk Responds to the Atlantic Monthly".

way we love a meadow may seem unachievable. We can't keep trying to find organic bodies untouched by our humanness. We can't run along elsewhere once a body seems 'too impure'."⁷¹

Both Scott and Tarbuck deny that there is any place which can be designated 'pure' and assert that to look for purity is to detach oneself from reality and therefore from real magic. Tarbuck writes: "we cannot work with the world as we wish it to be. We cannot do magic only when the air is clear, only on the tops of remote hills, only with the purest herbs. We must instead work in the world; do our magic among pizza boxes and microplastics. We must welcome the world in as it is, valuing every strange, broken scrap of it."⁷²

Scott also expresses a close relationship with her own urban contexts and writes about how the infiltration of the organic ecosystem by artificial objects is not a hinderance to witchcraft, but that these non-organic bodies, whether they are plastic bottles, tarmac pavements, or tooth floss, are indispensable in our interaction with reality as it is, as opposed to reality as we feel it should be.

Scott writes: "Lands are not sequestered and romanticized pristine pockets. For the witch, nature is everywhere. Lands coated in concrete, penetrated by steel rods' skin is metal, wood, Styrofoam. Glass, grass, flower, fur."⁷³ For Scott, pretending that there is no Anthropocene cannot return us to a halcyon epoch before humanity marred the Earth irrevocably. The only response a true environmentalist can make is to invite the non-natural into the magical sphere. Paradoxically, by inviting the Anthropocene into the sacred space, we can heal the rupture which has happened between humankind and the Earth; "If witches are to help resist and find alternatives to our current environmental catastrophe then perhaps it is best to begin to tune our bodies back into the world."⁷⁴

Furthermore, for Scott, "ultimately the power of sacred sites is reciprocal. The place has power but equally so does our attention towards it."⁷⁵ When witches turn their attention towards the abject spaces and abject objects, be they building sites, landfills, and car parks, or stone circles, meadows, and forests, they gain the power to respond to the presence of magic in the Anthropocene.

In essence, to be a witch in the Anthropocene is to relinquish the idea that purity is linked to sacredness. Not only are all objects permeated with one another and permeated with Anthropocene markers, but all places are also permeated with human activity and human destruction. Yet they are still magical. As Scott writes: "Magic can happen in a forest with cedar

⁷¹ Scott, *Witchbody*.

⁷² Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild*, 74.

⁷³ Scott, *Witchbody*.

⁷⁴ Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild*, 159.

⁷⁵ Tarbuck, *A Spell in the Wild*, 283.

and pinecones and candles, or it can happen in a shoebox apartment downtown with some toilet paper and floss.”⁷⁶

The ecosystem in which witches work can no longer be designated either ‘natural’ or ‘artificial’ as all ecosystems are now affected by human activity. All sacred spaces must include human-made elements because there is no other space available in which to practice magic. From the deepest ocean to the highest point of Mount Everest, the witch will not be able to find an untouched space to cast a spell. Therefore, this knowledge of the Anthropocene has forced the hand of environmentally-minded witches: they must now find the magic in these artificial ecosystems.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have shown that Sabrina Scott and Alice Tarbuck, who are practicing witchcraft after the proliferation of the concept of the Anthropocene in the 21st century, emphasise the need to embrace abject objects in one’s spells, and to practice magic in all environments, both ‘natural’ and human-made. This is especially clear when Scott’s and Tarbuck’s writings are compared with those of Starhawk, who, writing in the 1980s at the height of the ecofeminist turn in witchcraft, emphasised, to a much greater degree, the need to connect with ‘nature’ as opposed to that which is human-made.

The cultural consciousness of the Anthropocene has forced English-speaking Western cultures to grapple with the ubiquity of human effects on the environment, from the climate to the water systems, to our own bodies. This has in turn been reflected in the changing practices and beliefs of self-identified witches who also consider themselves environmentalists. Though Scott and Tarbuck both engage philosophically with New Materialism and flat ontologies, the wider neo-Pagan community is also having to reckon with the proliferation of the concept of the Anthropocene throughout the western cultural consciousness.⁷⁷ In other words, with the growing awareness of anthropogenic geologic change, any Earth- or nature-based religion or magical practice must reckon with the reality that human activity is inextricably bound up with that Earth.

For Scott and Tarbuck, the embrace of abject objects in witchcraft reflects a belief in a flattened ontology, that welcoming non-living and unwanted objects into the same level of ‘beingness’ as living creatures is a path to living in a truly eco-friendly way. For a witch, this means working magic

⁷⁶ Scott, *Witchbody*.

⁷⁷ Whilst several contemporary practicing witches, especially Scott and Tarbuck, are engaging with Anthropocene spellcasting in an active way, the entire neo-Pagan community is having to reckon with the Anthropocene, the climate crisis, and other current issues regarding the way they practice magic. This is undertaken in a passive way in some communities, influenced by the cultural conversations about ethics in spiritual practices. Many are also actively aware of the need to address anthropocentrism in Paganism.

with the abject objects, in urban sacred spaces in order to be in relationship with the objects, thereby granting them the same care as those 'natural' objects which are more traditionally associated with eco-witchcraft.

In future research, further thought may be given to a class analysis of living amongst abject objects.⁷⁸ For those living in poverty, there is little choice about one's space being populated with abject objects and trash. Wealthy people appear to have more choice to seek out 'purified' spaces, free of trash and human activity. Nevertheless, even those whose living conditions are more desirable find that human activity has infiltrated even the purest space. The Anthropocene has not affected all of humanity equally, but it has affected everyone to some degree. Still, the disparity between witches in terms of economic power is a problem which may be central to the exploration of the relationships between Anthropocene objects and witchcraft.

This essay has focussed exclusively on contemporary Pagan witches. However, I propose that the argument could be broadened out to reference much wider human concepts of natural and technological change, addressing what it means to be human in the Anthropocene and what relationships are possible between different strata of 'beings'. I suggest that further case studies on the effect of the Anthropocene on various sub-cultures—including transhumanists, science fiction followers, and techno-futurists—would be valuable.

References

Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Duke University Press, 2010.

Bergmann, Melanie, Sophia Mützel, Sebastian Primpke, Mine B. Tekman, Jürg Trachsel, and Gunnar Gerds. 'White and Wonderful? Microplastics Prevail in Snow from the Alps to the Arctic'. *Science Advances* 5, no. 8 (1 August 2019): eaax1157. <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.aax1157>.

Castree, Noel. 'The Anthropocene: A Primer for Geographers'. *Geography* 100, no. 2 (1 July 2015): 66–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00167487.2015.12093958>.

'Commodity Fetishism'. In *Oxford Reference*, n.d. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oi/authority.20110810104638104>.

⁷⁸ Whilst Scott and Tarback do not directly address issues of class and privilege in the books referenced here, they discuss such issues on their social media timelines, showing that they have an awareness, at least, of the intersection of privilege and witchcraft. Nevertheless, the resources to deal with these issues are not found in their more widely published material.

Cox, Kieran D., Garth A. Covernton, Hailey L. Davies, John F. Dower, Francis Juanes, and Sarah E. Dudas. 'Human Consumption of Microplastics'. *Environmental Science & Technology* 53, no. 12 (18 June 2019): 7068–74. <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.9b01517>.

Crutzen, Paul J., and Eugene F. Stoermer. 'The Anthropocene'. *IGBP Newsletter* 41 (2000).

Cunsolo, Ashlee, and Neville R. Ellis. 'Ecological Grief as a Mental Health Response to Climate Change-Related Loss'. *Nature: Climate Change* 8 (April 2018): 275–81.

Davies, Owen. 'Return of the Old Gods'. In *Paganism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780199235162.003.0007>.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Doyle White, Ethan. *Wicca: History, Belief and Community in Modern Pagan Witchcraft*. Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2016.

Feraro, Shai. "'A Song of Wood and Water: The Ecofeminist Turn in 1970s-1980s British Paganism'". In *Radical Change in Minority Religions*, edited by Beth Singler and Eileen Barker. Routledge INFORM Series. UK: Routledge, Forthcoming.

Haraway, Donna, Noboru Ishikawa, Scott F. Gilbert, Kenneth Olwig, Anna L. Tsing, and Nils Bubandt. 'Anthropologists Are Talking – About the Anthropocene'. *Ethnos* 81, no. 3 (26 May 2016): 535–64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00141844.2015.1105838>.

Haraway, Donna J. 'A Cyborg Manifesto'. In *Manifestly Haraway*. Minneapolis, UNITED STATES: University of Minnesota Press, 2016. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/cam/detail.action?docID=4392065>.

Hutton, Ronald. *The Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198207443.001.0001>.

Johnston, Hannah E, and Peg Aloï. *The New Generation Witches: Teenage Witchcraft in Contemporary Culture*. Aldershot: Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007., 2007.

Jones, R.A., and K. Klostermann. 'Wicca'. In *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Gender and Sexuality Studies*, 2016. <https://doi-org.ezp.lib.cam.ac.uk/10.1002/9781118663219.wbegs322>.

Kristeva, Julia. 'Approaching Abjection'. *Oxford Literary Review* 5, no. 1/2 (1982): 125–49.

Latour, Bruno. 'Agency at the Time of the Anthropocene'. *New Literary History* 45, no. 1 (2014): 1-18,153.

Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Translated by Catherine Porter. Hemel Hempstead, Herts, UK: Harvester, 1992.

Lewis, James R. *Witchcraft Today: An Encyclopedia of Wiccan and Neopagan Traditions*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1999.

Malcolm, Hannah, ed. *Words for a Dying World*. London: SCM Press, 2020.

Malm, Andreas, and Alf Hornborg. 'The Geology of Mankind? A Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative'. *The Anthropocene Review* 1, no. 1 (2014): 62–69.

Maslin, Mark. 'Evidence for Climate Change'. In *Climate Change: A Very Short Introduction*, 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780198719045.003.0003>.

Meyer, Birgit. 'Commodities and the Power of Prayer. Pentecostalist Attitudes Towards Consumption in Contemporary Ghana'. Edited by P Geschiere and B Meyer. *Development and Change* 29, no. 4 (1998): 751–76.

Morton, Timothy. 'Foreword'. In *Witchbody*. Canada: Weiser, 2019.

Morton, Timothy. *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Reader, John. *Theology and New Materialism: Radical Theologies and Philosophies*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

Roberts, N. 'Holocene Epoch'. In *Encyclopedia of World Climatology*, edited by J.E. Oliver. Encyclopedia of Earth Sciences. Dordrecht: Springer, 2005. https://doi.org/10.1007/1-4020-3266-8_96.

Scott, Sabrina. *Witchbody*. Canada: Weiser, 2019.

Scott, Sabrina, and Lillith Dorsey. *Magic and Ecology: WITCHBODIES*. Interview by Alice Tarbuck, 29 January 2021. <http://www.crash.cam.ac.uk/events/29535>.

Starhawk. *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*. Boston Mass.: Unwin Hyman Limited, 1982.

Starhawk. 'Religion from Nature, Not Archaeology: Starhawk Responds to the Atlantic Monthly', 2001.

Starhawk. *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*. New York: HarperOne, 1979.

Tarbuck, Alice. *A Spell in the Wild: A Year (and Six Centuries) of Magic*. London: Two Roads, 2020.

'The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess by Starhawk'. *Kirkus Reviews*, 1979. <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/a/starhawk-3/the-spiral-dance-a-rebirth-of-the-ancient-relig/>.

Trozzo, Eric. 'Review of John Reader (2017). *Theology and New Materialism: Spaces of Faithful Dissent*'. *Postdigital Science and Education* 3, no. 2 (1 April 2021): 614–19. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42438-020-00159-8>.

Waters, Colin N., Jan Zalasiewicz, Colin Summerhayes, Anthony D. Barnosky, Clément Poirier, Agnieszka Gałuszka, Alejandro Cearreta, et al. 'The Anthropocene Is Functionally and Stratigraphically Distinct from the Holocene'. *Science* 351, no. 6269 (8 January 2016): aad2622. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aad2622>.

Wood, Gail. 'The Old Religion: Websites on Wicca: A Quarterly of Women's Studies Resources'. *Feminist Collections* 20, no. 2 (31 January 1999): 15.

X. Peng, M. Chen, S. Chen, S. Dasgupta, H. Xu, K. Ta, M. Du, J. Li, Z. Guo, and S. Bai. 'Microplastics Contaminate the Deepest Part of the World's Ocean'. *Geochemical Perspectives Letters* 9 (2018): 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.7185/geochemlet.1829>.

Zalasiewicz, Jan, Colin Waters, Mark Williams, David C. Aldridge, and Ian P. Wilkinson. 'The Stratigraphical Signature of the Anthropocene in England and Its Wider Context'. *The Geology of England* 129, no. 3 (1 June 2018): 482–91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pgeola.2017.06.004>.