

For those Elders who slept through the 13th century, and for younger Kindred who may have skipped secondary education, this may come as a revelation. Amongst the kine of the UK, they have a reliable and consistent process for dealing with crime and punishment, which stays the same, no matter who rules. Why not find out more?

Clause 39 & 40– the rule of law. Discovered by the kine in 1215

Do you remember that time the Prince totally arbitrarily had some poor lick dragged out back and executed because he thought that the dumb fuck might be plotting to seize his Praxis. Yeah, me too. New Jersey sucks.

What do you mean you’re talking about Detroit?

Clause 39

No free man is to be arrested, or imprisoned, or disseised, or outlawed, or exiled, or in any other way ruined, nor will we go against him or send against him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.

Clause 40

We will not sell, or deny, or delay right or justice to anyone.

But either way, we’re talking about the same thing. And it’s something that was rejected, on a fundamental level, in the 13th century by the mortal population, who rejected the destabilizing and destructive power of monarchical whim to replace it with something else.

The rule of law.

This is a pretty simple concept. Basically, it takes absolute power away from a single and fallible person who can be corrupt, or stupid, or mad, and gives absolute power to a more detached entity. The law. Weirdly, Cainites sort of get this. We



have the Traditions, right? But Magna Carta went a bit further and said that it isn’t just about what the law is. The rule of law also gives human society a fair and consistent way of administering the law.

This procedure means that the kine know that the law itself remains uncorrupted, and are able to see the process by which it is administered which gives them greater faith in the law, as opposed to everyone suspecting that the Tradition of Destruction if up for grabs if you remember that time Cromwell called off Christmas.

Where does Magna Carta begin...?

Clause 1 – freedom of the church...

We have first of all granted to God, and by this our present charter confirmed, for ourselves and our heirs in perpetuity, that the English Church is to be free, and to have its full rights and its liberties intact, and we wish this to be observed accordingly, as may appear from our having of our true and unconstrained volition, before discord arose between us and our barons, granted, and by our charter confirmed, the freedom of elections which is deemed to be the English Church’s very greatest want, and obtained its confirmation by the lord pope Innocent III; which we will ourselves observe and wish to be observed by our heirs in good faith in perpetuity. And we have also granted to all the free men of our kingdom, for ourselves and our heirs in perpetuity, all the following liberties, for them and their heirs to have and to hold of us and our heirs.

Now, first of all, this is the first of the four clauses that were brought into English law in Magna Carta and have survived ever since. Second of all, isn’t this a nice clause? The barons started off protecting the Church and establishing that it cannot be subordinate to man or king.



But there’s another part of this clause that is more important, and deeply revolutionary at the time. A part that kine society across the world now accepts but Cainites still seem to struggle with. This clause states that this the laws laid down in this document will last for perpetuity. This is a deal not made by a king and ignored by his successors. This establishes the concept of the law as an entity independent of its originator. Kings may change. The law endures.

Magna Carta – with kittens! Political theory for Camarilla Elders with limited literacy!

Recently, this newsletter expressed some slightly controversial views. We suggested that one of the primary issues facing the Camarilla, and perhaps a root cause to its lack of political sophistication was low literacy levels amongst vampire Elders, which makes it hard for them to understand complex ideas. Feedback from our readers has been that this seemed a bit negative. Well, never let it be said that the Anarch Movement is not essentially positive in nature. If we see a problem, we want to fix it.

We are, therefore delighted to present our new reader – Magna Carta. With kittens. For the Elder who struggles with long words. Do get a copy for your Sire today!



But before you plough in, let’s talk a bit about how to approach your Sire carefully. Remember, for many Elders, this kind of complex political theory may be scary and confusing, which can cause an Elder to lash our in fear. You have to remember that it’s not their fault that they haven’t had the opportunity to learn about these things before. They may even not be very good at reading, especially if long worlds are involved, so be gentle with them.

We suggest that you start off by making sure that your Elder is in a safe and secure place when you first approach them to talk about Magna Carta. Perhaps sit them down in their favorite chair and bring them their favorite snuggly blanket. Avoid open fire, including candles. Some Elders respond well to gentle music, such as Mozart. Others become agitated at the invisible musicians and you’ll get bogged down trying to explain recording equipment. You know your Elder best, so play it by ear.

Then start off your introduction. Avoid complex language and keep it simple. For example, begin



with ‘once upon a time, there was a bad King who had no friends’ rather than ‘the constitutional political settlement of Great Britain arose as a result of the Baronial Uprising of 1215’. Your Elder will find it easier.

Then start to work through the core clauses of Magna Carta, as summarized in this newsletter. Some sections will be easier than others – my Sire, the Prince of Glasgow, started pacing up and down and singing something in Gaelic when I started to read Clause 1 aloud to him, so I had to break off and show him a number of adorable pictures of kittens and sing the Internationale in a soothing tone for some time until he was ready to continue. I do recommend using the adorable kitten pictures featured in this article – Elders often like kittens. I don’t know why. Puppies are far less impactful.

Remember, concepts such as ‘habeas corpus’ or ‘rule of law’ are big and difficult concepts for a lot of people to grasp, so don’t be too upset if your Elder can’t get their head around it all at once. If they seem to be getting tired and grumpy, then pause for a bit and get them a nice mug of warmed up A Positive with some oats sprinkled in it and they will soon settle right down. Good luck!

Why is this relevant?

I can guarantee that you will be asked this question at least once when trying to promote a basic understanding of political theory and constitutional structure in a British context. Someone will want to know how this is relevant to Undead monsters of the night who run their society based on unstable power structures and constant violent conflict.

Personally, I would say that it really depends on whether or not you like to think you’re smarter than your dinner. Do you?

Clauses 12 & 14 – representation (talk to Americans about taxation)

You should talk to Americans about this, because this is the clause that got cited in the American Revolution and sparked the idea of ‘no taxation without representation’.

In the original, these clauses pretty much say that the King can’t just randomly demand taxes. He needs to go and talk to his barons, and maybe some earls and a chunk of churchmen, and discuss his plans with them.

Now, taking aside the issue of taxation, which isn’t such a big deal if your primary currency is ‘the favour’ (there’s an issue on Kindred economics coming soon...) this clause does establish a really important principle, which is that a ruler needs the support of those he rules. That they should be able to speak to him. That representation matters. And doesn’t that hold true today?



Clause 61. The Security Clause!

See those sapphire blue eyes? Cold as a Ventrue’s frozen heart, sharp as a Gangrel’s claws. See who they are looking at? Those eyes are on you. Just like the eyes of the barons who forced Magna Carta on King John were on him. They added Clause 61 right at the end and let him know that they would keep watching and if he screwed them over, they’d be there.

Contrary to a lot of modern tossers on the internet, this Clause says jack and shit about letting you duck out of your council tax. But what it does establish is a principle which every civilized and advanced human society has incorporated since then; the concept of checks and balances; the notion that someone watches to make sure the law maker follows the law.