



Her Hidden Children: The Rise of Wicca And Paganism in America

By Chas S. Clifton

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The history of any religious movement can get murky. But the history of American Paganism?with so many invented lineages, so many solitary practitioners, so much resistance to staid definition, so much hiddenness?is especially hard to decipher. But here in *Her Hidden Children* Chas Clifton tells many never-before-told stories of the origins of Paganism and Wicca in the United States. The people, publications, and organizations that allowed Paganism and Wicca to set roots down in American soil and become "nature religion" are revealed in delicious detail. With a timeline, glossary, and photos of important figures,*Her Hidden Children* is compelling and important for any student of Paganism or American Religion.

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Editorial Review

Review

One of the essential books on paganism by the Huffington Post!

The history of any religious movement can get murky. But the history of American Paganism--with so many invented lineages, so many solitary practitioners, so much resistance to staid definition, so much hiddenness--is especially hard to decipher. But here in *Her Hidden Children* Chas Clifton tells many never-before-told stories of the origins of Paganism and Wicca in the United States. The people, publications, and organizations that allowed Paganism and Wicca to set roots down in American soil and become "nature religion" are revealed in delicious detail. With a timeline, glossary, and photos of important figures, *Her Hidden Children* is compelling and important for any student of Paganism or American Religion. (*The Huffington Post*)

Chas Clifton has provided a foundational step toward the history of a new religion that is still in the process of emergence. He has brought forth figures, movements, and a constructive historical periodization of which future scholars of Wicca and Paganism will take note. (*H-Net: Humanities and Social Science Reviews Online*)

Anyone interested in exploring the scaffolding from which feminist Wicca launched itself would do well to delve into this thorough and well-organized history. (Anne Hill *Gnosis Cafe Blog*)

He does an admirable job of providing for the first time a formal history of the movement. His book contains a timeline, glossary, and bibliography, all of which enhance the book's usefulness. This book is highly recommended for undergraduate as well as general readers. (W. Michael Ashcraft *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*)

Witchcraft is both scholarly interest and avocation for Clifton so he is well situated to trace its rise in the US...One only wishes this excellent study went deeper into the subject. Summing Up: Recommended. (*CHOICE*)

Her Hidden Children is a rare gem of contemporary Pagan history and ethnography. ...An important and welcome contribution to academic and non-scholar Pagans alike. (*The Pomegranate*)

Clifton does a masterful job in articulating how Wicca began as a tradition focused on fertility and mystery rites...Clifton includes a wealth of rich material throughout the book....*Her Hidden Children*, while possessing the precision and research expected of an academic work, maintains an approachable style that welcomes the lay reader. It is a work of critical significance to the community, and a must-have for any religious library. (*Pangaia*)

Simply the best single work yet written on the history of American Paganism. It is perceptive, intelligent, sympathetic and persuasive; tactful without sparing scholarly appraisal; personal without losing objectivity; and constantly engaging. It embodies a beautiful mixture of warmth and rigour, and deals strictly with aspects of the subject that can be appraised from precise data, revealing to me- at least- how much more of the latter there was than I had ever thought. (Ronald Hutton, Author of *The Triumph of the Moon*)

Chas S. Clifton's *Her Hidden Children* is a pioneering look at the history of Neopagan religions in the U.S. Written with the sensitivity and humor of an insider and the dispassion of an outsider, it traces the early development of one of the fastest-growing religious movements in America today, and its uniquely American use of the trope of "nature" to create its identity. This book should be invaluable to scholars of religion, American Studies, and the burgeoning field of Pagan Studies. (Sabina Magliocco, California State University-Northridge, and author of *Witching Culture: Folklore and Neo-Paganism in America*)

An excellent introduction to contemporary Paganism in North America, and required reading for those who wish to understand the growth and appeal of Wicca and Witchcraft in late modern society. Clifton writes from a wealth of experience as a modern Pagan, but with a critical and insightful eye that is so often missing. He has done stellar service to both the Pagan and scholarly communities. (Douglas E. Cowan, Author of *Cyberhenge: Modern Pagans on the Internet*)

*Finally a history of American Paganism from someone who knows the subject inside and out! Chas Clifton has chosen with this book to lay down some basic parameters for talking about modern Pagan history in America. He has done yeoman's work here and should be highly praised. An essential book for anyone interested in our history, and how that history is shaping the future of modern Paganism. The bar has just been raised. (Jason Pitzl-Waters, *The Wild Hunt: Religion, politics, music and culture. A modern Pagan perspective.*)*

About the Author

Chas Clifton is professor of English at Colorado State University-Pueblo. He is an editor for *The Pomegranate: The International Journal of Pagan Studies*, a peer-reviewed religious studies journal, as well as the *Pagan Studies Series* by AltaMira Press.

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