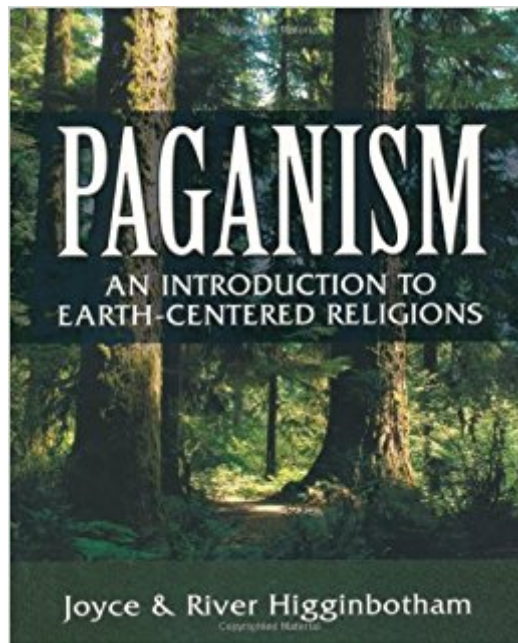




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Paganism: An Introduction To Earth-Centered Religions



Synopsis

A comprehensive guide to a growing religious movement If you want to study Paganism in more detail, this book is the place to start. Based on a course in Paganism that the authors have taught for more than a decade, it is full of exercises, meditations, and discussion questions for group or individual study. This book presents the basic fundamentals of Paganism. It explores what Pagans are like; how the Pagan sacred year is arranged; what Pagans do in ritual; what magick is; and what Pagans believe about God, worship, human nature, and ethics. For those who are exploring their own spirituality, or who want a good book to give to non-Pagan family and friends A hands-on learning tool with magickal workings, meditations, discussion questions, and journal exercises Offers in-depth discussion of ethics and magick

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Customer Reviews

Most pagan primers jump right into the seasonal calendar, Celtic strands, pentagrams, spell casting and the like. True to form, this offers a judicious overview of the calendar and the general characteristics and essentials of Paganism as the Higginbothams see it interconnectedness and blessedness. To their credit, though, the authors have crafted a very different kind of book, one of great spiritual depth that could be of genuine and lasting service to anyone who is interested in sorting out the whats and whys of belief. Early on, they outline the "big tent" of Paganism that shelters a dozen or more passageways (Wicca, Druidism, Shamanism, SanterÃÂa, etc.), comparing it to Christianity and its popular denominations (Methodist, Roman Catholic, etc.).

Throughout, they employ calm and rational prose that seeks not to proselytize as much as to aid discernment, making good on the authors' claim that, "Whether or not you decide to be a Pagan once you finish [the book] is not as important as providing you with tools to help you identify your values and goals." The seven chapters are nicely paced with illustrations, diagrams, visualization exercises, discussion points and journal prompts, all of which can be used by individuals or groups. The authors tackle the charge of Satanism head-on with success, but even more progressively (and clearly) they weave new discoveries in physics into the life fabric of belief and action. The final chapter explores ethics, and similar to the others, serves the broadest common good. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

The founders of both a pagan church and the Council for Alternative Spiritual Traditions, the Higginbothams here offer an overview of the belief systems comprising neopaganism. Included in the discussion are Wicca, Shamanism, Asatru, Celtic traditionalism, Druidism, Santeria, Voodoo, and other forms prevalent in paganism today. The authors proceed from central concepts of interconnectedness and blessedness, to a definition of neopaganism and a discussion of personal responsibility for one's beliefs, to concepts of Deity, Satan, the living universe, "magick," and ethics. The format is similar to that of many self-help books, with text, diagrams, discussion questions, and meditation exercises. This clear, rational, and sympathetic introduction to neopaganism for nonpagans will be helpful to all readers interested in exploring their spirituality. This first book by the Higginbothams complements existing introductions, such as Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon* and Graham Harvey's *Contemporary Paganism: Listening People, Speaking Earth*, at least one of which libraries should already have. Recommended for public and undergraduate libraries and for religion collections. William P. Collins, Library of Congress Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

This is a nice simple little book for Pagan beginners. It is in a textbook style, at about high school or community college level of study. There are little exercises and quizzes, which are very simplistic for a person already familiar with Pagan concepts. However, beginners may benefit from completing these items. The viewpoint is religious theory and practice, rather than a guidebook for how to celebrate the wheel of the year. This makes it a little different from many other Pagan manuals, and more of a primer for interaction with people of other faiths, or for outreach by Pagan clergy. Some of the graphs are laughably simplistic, as are some of the graphics. My suggestion is to read the words, and take the pictures with a dash of salt.

I am fairly new to Paganism, and I found this book a great help. A lot of the information is basic, sure, but they go into it with a lot of detail. They cover some scientific theory, for those who need reassurance in that department. Of course we need to have a degree of faith, but the sections on quantum physics will give you confidence in speaking about religion with others. Another favorite section of mine is on Satan. Even if you don't believe in him, the name can make formerly Christian pagans shudder. After all, it's been pounded in our brains to associate him with bad stuff. River and Joyce do an amazing job of looking at Satan objectively. Your fears of this make-believe entity will melt away into nothingness! Joyce and River really focus on journal exercises. After all, this is about your spiritual growth. They make you get deep down into the crevices in your mind and figure out just who you are. You need to be very open to analyzing yourself. I do admit, this can be scary for some at first. They will do these things largely with the use of meditative visualization exercises. It would be helpful to have a recorder handy so you don't have to stop and read during all the steps, which can break your meditative state. They talk about Christian-based faith a lot. Do not confuse this for Christian bashing. A lot of newer Pagans, such as myself, come from Christian related backgrounds and need help pulling through past fears. I knew when I started my journey I had a lot of things brainwashed into me, and I have to even still work on moving forward. So, this book is fantastic. Even if you think you're beyond basic books, get this for the journal work!

I purchased the online version first, then got the hard copy. Love this book and one of the few I can find on Paganism that seems to know what it's talking about.

I skipped the whole section on Satan, it was not anything I needed or wanted to know about. The only good thing about this book so far is some of the meditations are interesting. If I ever get a free moment I'll be recording the meditations to try later. Does anyone know if the meditations are on the kindle version?

My daughter and I had rented this book from the library and had to extend our rental three times. Knowing the amount of information in this book, we couldn't just send it back. We ordered this book and proceeded to transfer all of our notes into it before returning the library one. Being raised Catholic, I've struggled for years without answers. I've always felt like there was something else....something that could be explained, without lies or cover ups. My daughter had so many questions as well, regarding religion. When we took an online religion test, we both found that we

were closely matched with Paganism and Buddhism. This book offers explanations without lies. It has made it extremely easy for us to transition to another view of life. Additionally, it aides you in explaining your new path to others. So many people reference Paganism as being witch craft or devil worshipers, and this book allows you to explain what you believe. It has been extremely helpful to us. If you are trying to find a spiritual path that feels right to you, this book will help with that. There is no pressure in reading this book. You don't feel like you "have" to change. The Authors do a wonderful job explaining all aspects without it being overwhelming. It, to us, was a comforting read.

I was expecting a look at Paganism that was more in depth than what I had researched online, and what I found was that with just the research that I had previously done, I already knew most of this book's contents. I was quite satisfied with the little magick tutorial, I definitely want to put that into practice, and I found a few other nice tips and pointers. I was also hoping for information on spirit guides and how to find yours, but since they where going over general Paganism and not much into specifics, I guess that topic was brushed over. This book is filled with a lot of exercises and activities that some may find useful, but I personally found it to be fluff, just because my whole purpose of buying the book was to explore my religious beliefs and ideas, I didn't really need guidance through it, but I can definitely see how it would be useful to someone else and it is nice to have available for those who want a more interactive experience. In general, the book is okay to me, but someone else may enjoy it more. I didn't really get what I was looking for.

This book has lots of great information. I held back two stars only because of an irritating unbalance. When describing the varieties of pagan traditions they state that the task is too large and they give only a brief paragraph to a few leading traditions. Then, they dedicate an entire chapter to the off topic controversy of satanism, while all along admitting that it's not actually pagan. I really felt that they should have mentioned this controversy, if at all, in a brief paragraph and dedicated that entire chapter to a fuller discussion of the actual subject at hand, pagan traditions.

I loved this book. It's for the serious seeker who isn't afraid to explore and view concepts from different perspectives. It led me to many answers for which I had been searching. It is a pleasant read and doesn't attempt to persuade the reader to accept a particular point of view. The material is presented and the reader finds her own path.

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