



Lucifer Ascending: The Occult in Folklore and Popular Culture

By Bill Ellis

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Lucifer Ascending: The Occult in Folklore and Popular Culture By Bill Ellis

Despite their centuries-old history and traditions, witchcraft and magic are still very much a part of modern Anglo-American culture. In *Lucifer Ascending*, Bill Ellis looks at modern practices that are universally defined as "occult," from commonplace habits such as carrying a rabbit's foot for good luck or using a Ouija board, to more esoteric traditions, such as the use of spell books. In particular, Ellis shows how the occult has been a common element in youth culture for hundreds of years.

Using materials from little known publications and archives, *Lucifer Ascending* details the true social function of individuals' dabbling with the occult. In his survey of what Ellis terms "vernacular occultism," the author is poised on a middle ground between a skeptical point of view that defines belief in witchcraft and Satan as irrational and an interpretation of witchcraft as an underground religion opposing Christianity. *Lucifer Ascending* examines the occult not as an alternative to religion but rather as a means for ordinary people to participate directly in the mythic realm.

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