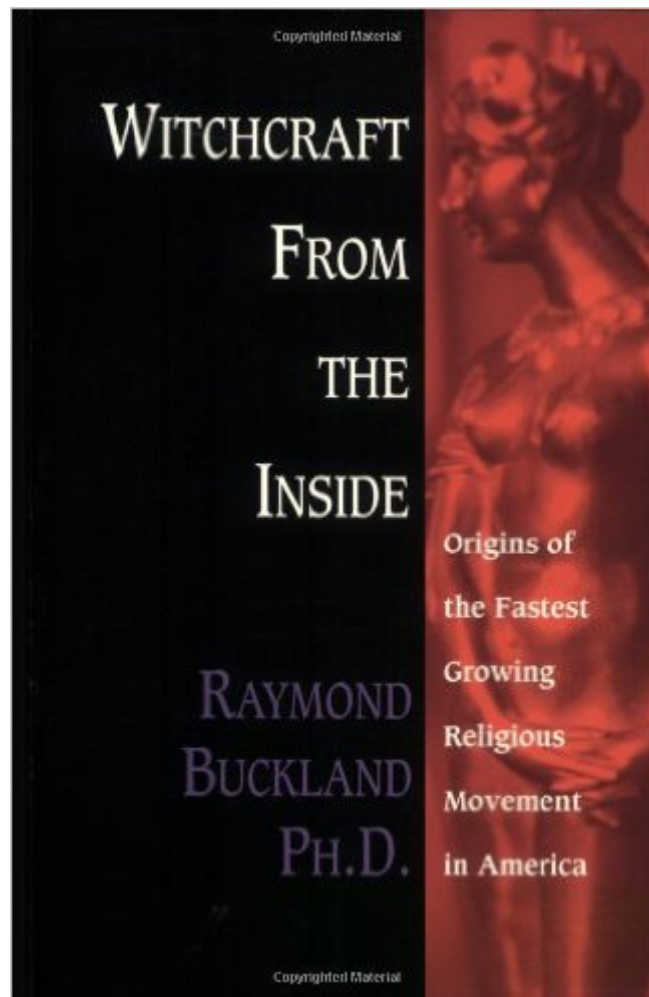


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# Witchcraft From The Inside: Origins Of The Fastest Growing Religious Movement In America



## Synopsis

The word Witchcraft has been misunderstood for centuries. In the past 500 years, millions of people have faced persecution, torture, and even death after being accused of practicing Witchcraft. For many people the word "Witch" still conjures up images of secret spells and diabolical midnight rituals. So what exactly is Witchcraft (also called Wica or Wicca), and how did it evolve into one of today's fastest-growing religions? *Witchcraft From the Inside* presents the history of Witchcraft—from its roots in ancient fertility religions, to the madness of the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the European Witch trials, to the growth of modern Wicca in Britain and the United States. Essays contributed by leading Wiccan authorities explore the present state of Wicca and provide a glimpse into the future of this peaceful nature religion. Author Ray Buckland studied Witchcraft under Gerald Gardner, the man largely credited for the revival of Witchcraft and the establishment of Wicca as a modern religion. Mr. Buckland was instrumental in bringing Gardnerian Witchcraft from England to the United States and is considered to be one of the leading American authorities on Witchcraft. In the following excerpt, Mr. Buckland explains the mundane truths behind the seemingly horrific ingredients of the legendary "witches' brews". We know, from Shakespeare and other sources, that the Witches threw into their pots the most gruesome ingredients, right? There were things like the tongue of a snake, bloody fingers, catgut, donkey's eyes, frog's foot, goat's beard, a Jew's ear, mouse tail, snake head, swine snout, wolf's foot, and so on. Pretty disgusting by the sound of it—if you take them at face value! In fact these were all the most innocuous of ingredients: normal plants and herbs. Today all plants have a Latin name, so that they may be distinct and positively identified. Yet years ago they were known only by common, local names. A plant or herb might be known by one name in one part of the country and a quite different name in another part of the country. And these names were colorful ones, frequently given to the plant because of its looks, color, or other attributes. In the above list, adder's tongue was a name given to the dogtooth violet (*Erythronium americanum*); bloody fingers was the foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*); catgut was the hoary pea (*Tephrosia virginiana*); donkey's eyes were the seeds of the cowage plant (*Mucuna pruriens*); frog's foot was the bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*); goat's beard was the vegetable oyster (*Tragopogon porrofolius*); Jew's ear was a fungus that grew on elder trees and elm trees (*Peziza auricula*); mouse tail was common stonecrop (*Sedum acre*); snake head was balmony (*Chelone glabra*); swine snout was the dandelion (*Taraxacum dens leonis*); and wolf's foot was bugle weed (*Lycopus virginicus*). So the seemingly fearsome concoctions that the Witches mixed up in their cauldrons were nothing more than simple herbs going into a cookpot!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book was given to me by Raymond Buckland many years ago in one of the prior editions. The book's title seems quite clear that it has been written from the writer's view of his own experience over the years. I found it an interesting life experience to read about and also useful as a reference guide in a Sociology Thesis I wrote a few years back (in college). Incidentally I did get 100% on that thesis! It was the only 100% I ever got. My Sociology Professor then read the book and she commented that she also thoroughly enjoyed it. I have shared and loaned it to countless people who have all had only positive words. In other words, I thought the book was a great read.

The title says it all... the book covers the history, transitions, traditions, and covers all the basic information someone would ask. I think if you change title of the book and gave it to a Christian, they would appreciate the information and not be so quick to judge. I started reading this book as part of the homework in Buckland's Complete Book of Witchcraft. Hits the nail right on the head. I gave the book to my wife to read. :)

There is not a lot in this book that hasn't been rehashed over by other authors. This book was probably more impressive when it first came out; but I didn't find any major revelations about the Craft. One can get the same info from Gardner, the Farrars, Valiente, or Patricia Crowther. If this is

one of the first books on Wicca you pick up, then it could serve as a good starting point. Including essays from other famous Pagans was a nice touch. I thought the ending chapter on trying to prove fairies existed was a bit much, though.

I absolutely loved this book and am suggesting that the visitors to my online bookstore (an Affiliate) buy this book. It discusses various aspects of Wicca, along with stressing the fact that you should practice it however you see fit, which is something people of Gardnerian background often do not speak about.

This book is an acceptable book for the newcomers to the craft. One of the disturbing things is that much of the information on the first six chapters actually is well summarized in his book Wicca for One....as many already pointed out there is no way to produce really tangible evidence that all the ancient origins are really true...but remember there are two things in which we, humans, are never going to be peaceful one history and the other love

Ray Buckland studied Witchcraft under Gerald Gardner, and he lets you know all you need to understand, about ancient times till now..! I recommend this book

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