



## Daughters of the Goddess: Studies of Identity, Healing, and Empowerment

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A collection of original essays examining the Goddess Movement in its many facets, *Daughters of the Goddess* explores the ways women have abandoned Western patriarchal religions and have embraced a spirituality based in a celebration of the Goddess and the female body as sacred text. Among the first scholars to publish in this area, editor Wendy Griffin brings together a group of academics and practitioners who offer a wide-ranging study of this movement, from a critique of the patriarchal cult of Princess Diana to a celebration of bellydance as a form of spiritual expression. Other essays not only trace women's myriad spiritual journeys but also examine the creation of personal rituals that have led to healing and a new sense of identity for many women. An innovative volume, *Daughters of the Goddess* serves as an invaluable guide for anyone wishing to gain a thorough introduction to this rapidly growing religious and cultural movement.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

This volume is a readable, useful, and methodologically varied collection of thirteen original essays on Western 'daughters of the goddess'?Witches, neo-pagans, pagans, Goddesses, Goddess women, spiritual feminists, Gaians, members of the Fellowship of Isis, Druids, and none of these.' The first ten chapters present current research on feminist spiritualities; the last three describe some of their teachings. This collection is strong through the caliber of the individual essays?on the roots of feminist spirituality, the painful discord between radical feminism and paganism, the social composition of women spirit communities, the lives of Wiccan High Priestesses, and hands-on ritual directives; the authors also complement and even contradict one another, with some describing goddesses as patriarchally constructed and others finding them healing. A mix of academic and practical approaches, elite and popular sources, textual study and fieldwork, and British and American contexts, this book will be useful in women and religion classes, and should be owned by every college library. (Rachel Fall, (McDermott Barnard College) *Religious Studies Review*)

I have used several of these contributions successfully in an undergraduate course on American Neopaganism and Witchcraft. This volume will be especially valuable for advanced undergraduate and graduate level courses dealing with women's issues, feminism and goddess spirituality. Specialists will find some of the essays to be invaluable for particular research problems, either because they report information not available elsewhere and/or because they present novel issues or perspectives. Altogether, then, this volume makes important contributions to the emergent literature on goddess spirituality and religion. (Danny L. Jorgensen, (University of South Florida) *Sociology of Religion: A Quarterly Review*)

Offers a diverse view of the chaotically celebratory goddess spirituality movement. While healing and empowerment remain at the heart of each chapter, authors arrive at ways of gaining women's strength through a number of creative avenues. (Georgie Ann Weatherby, (Gonzaga University) *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*)

The book is a delight to read. It is thoroughly accessible, well organised and engaging, and will serve its intended readership well?classes in women's studies, religious studies, and the sociology of religion. It will undoubtedly be read with pleasure and interest by the many participants in the movement at large, and of course by scholars working in this area. The inclusions are varied, yet well-integrated in line with the book's theme, and the blend of academic and practitioners' voices works well. Theoretical discussion is anchored firmly in the research finding of the authors and is often movingly illustrated. (Kathryn Rountree, (Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand) *Journal Of Contemporary Religion*)

#### From the Back Cover

A collection of original research and essays examining the Goddess Movement in its many facets, *Daughters of the Goddess* explores the ways women in the United States and Britain have abandoned the Western patriarchal religions and have embraced a spirituality based in a celebration of the Goddess and the female body as sacred text. Among the first scholars to publish research in this area, editor Wendy Griffin brings together a group of academics and practitioners who offer a wide-ranging study of the movement, from a critique of the patriarchal cult of princess Diana to a celebration of bellydance as a form of spiritual expression. Other essays not only trace women's myriad spiritual journeys but also examine the creation of personal rituals that have led to healing and a new sense of identity for many women. An innovative volume ideal for classes in women's studies, religious studies and the sociology of religion, *Daughters of the Goddess* also serves as an invaluable guide for anyone wishing to gain a thorough introduction to this rapidly

growing religious and cultural movement.

#### About the Author

Wendy Griffin's Ph.D. is in the interdisciplinary social sciences, with an emphasis in the sociology of sex and gender. She is an Associate Professor of Women's Studies at California State University, in Long Beach, California. In 1988, she and Tanice Foltz began to do team research in Goddess Spirituality and were among the first to publish scholarly field research in this area. In addition to her traditional academic work, she is also a published novelist, a long time community activist, a drummer, koi keeper, and founding member of a women's performance group.

Cynthia Eller is an Affiliate Fellow at the Center for the Study of American Religion at Princeton University. Trained in religious studies, she is the author of "Living in the Lap of the Goddess: the Feminist Spirituality Movement in America," and is currently writing a book titled "The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory."

Ann-Marie Gallagher heads Women's Studies Program at the University of Central Lancashire in Preston, U.K., where she researches and publishes in the areas of cultural history, feminist pedagogy and women and spirituality. In addition, she guests on national and regional radio, speaking on Witchcraft, paganism and women's issues, and provides free workshops for women on magic and spirituality at national events. A feminist Witch and mainly solo-worker, Ann-Marie currently lives in Lancashire with her three children and five cats.

Marilyn Gottschall received her Ph.D. in Social Ethics and is currently Assistant Professor in the Religion Department at Whittier College, in California. Her research interests include feminist ethics and postmodern culture, and New Religious Movements. She has been a participant and observer within the Goddess Movement for more than ten years.

Melissa Raphael is a thea/theologian. She is Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education, UK. Her research interests include thealogy and Jewish feminist theology. Her books "Thealogy and Embodiment: The Post-Patriarchal Reconstruction of Female Sacrality," "Rudolf Otto and the Concept of Holiness," and "Introducing Thealogy: Discourse on the Goddess." She is married and has a young daughter.

Helen A. Berger is an Associate Professor of Sociology at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. She is the author of "A Community of Witches: Contemporary Neo-Paganism and Witchcraft in the United States" in addition to several articles on Wicca. She became interested in this topic when preparing a series of talks on Witchcraft for the Boston Public Library and initially thought she would do six months of research. Eleven years later, she is still intrigued by the topic.

Tanice Foltz is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Indiana University Northwest, where she teaches Women's Studies and Deviance/Criminology. Her interest in alternative healing within new religious movements led to her book "Kahuna Healer," and then to a Dianic Witch's coven with co-researcher Wendy Griffin. She is currently working on a book on Goddess Spirituality and healing

Susan Greenwood is a Research Fellow at Goldsmiths College, University of London, and lectures in anthropology, shamanism and women's studies. She is completing a book on British paganism and does research on paganism and environmentalism.

Vivianne Crowley is a chartered psychologist, a UK registered spiritual healer, and a Lecturer in the psychology of religion at the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College, University of London. She is the author of seven books and various chapters in edited collections. She has been a Wiccan priestess for 25 years and, with her husband Chris, is the founder of the Wicca Study Group. Past Honorary Secretary of Europe's Pagan Federation, she has been active in promoting interfaith dialogue, setting up prison chaplaincy, and organizing annual gatherings for European Wicca.

Janice Crosby is an Assistant Professor of English at Southern University in Baton Rouge, LA. Association. She received her doctorate at LSU, where she held the Alumni Federation Fellowship. Her research publications focus on spirituality and on identity in the college classroom.

Ruth Rhiannon Barrett is a seasoned Dianic elder priestess, ritualist, educator, musician and award-winning recording artist of original Goddess-oriented songs. She has been teaching Feminist Craft internationally since her ordination by Z Budapest in 1980 and is religious director of Circle of Aradia in Los Angeles, a local chapter of Re-formed Congregation of the Goddess.

Vajra Ma has integrated Goddess knowledge, feminist consciousness and experiential body wisdom to forge a new women's mystery tradition. She holds ministerial credentials through the Reformed Congregation of the Goddess and Circle of Aradia. Her background includes Continuum, Tantric, Middle Eastern and Sufi dance; BA and graduate work in Theatre Arts; and professional work as an actor, bodyworker and teacher.

Layne Redmond studied the frame drum with master drummer Glen Velez, performing and recording with him for eight years and playing a primary role in his first five recordings. She has lectured, taught, and performed at universities, conferences and music festivals in the United States, Canada, Europe and Brazil. Her recordings include *Since the Beginning*, *Being in Rhythm* and two instructional videos. She is the author of "When the Drummers Were Women: A Spiritual History of Rhythm."

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