

OCCULTSPIRITUALITY

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"Left-hand path philosophy finally receives an objective and extremely informative reading from Stephen Flowers, Ph.D. Highly recommended."

ADAM PARFREY, coauthor of *Ritual America: Secret Brotherhoods and Their Influence on American Society*

"This book will surely be hailed as a classic in its field."

NEVILL DRURY, Ph.D., author of *Stealing Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Modern Western Magic*

From black magic and Satanism to Gnostic sects and Gurdjieff's Fourth Way, the left-hand path has been linked to many practices, cults, and individuals across the ages. Stephen Flowers, Ph.D., examines the methods, teachings, and historical role of the left-hand path—from its origins in Indian tantric philosophy to its underlying influence in current world affairs—and reveals which philosophers, magicians, and occult figures throughout history can truly be called "Lords of the Left-Hand Path."

Flowers explains that while the right-hand path seeks union with and thus dependence on God, the left-hand path seeks a "higher law" based on knowledge and power. It is the way of self-empowerment and true freedom. Beginning with ancient Hindu and Buddhist sects and moving Westward, he examines many alleged left-hand path groups, including the Cult of Set, the Yeziidi Devil Worshipers, the Assassins, the Neoplatonists, the Hell-Fire Club, the Bolsheviks, the occult Nazis, and several heretical Sufi, Zoroastrian, Christian, and Muslim sects. Following a carefully crafted definition of a true adherent of the left-hand path based on two main principles—self-dedication and challenge to the conventions of "good" and "evil"—the author analyzes many famous and infamous personalities, including H. P. Blavatsky, Faust, the Marquis de Sade, Austin Osman Spare, Aleister Crowley, Gerald Gardner, Anton LaVey, and Michael Aquino, and reveals which occult masters were Lords of the Left-Hand Path.

Flowers shows that the left-hand path is not inherently evil but part of our heritage and our deep-seated desire to be free, independent, and in control of our destinies.



STEPHEN E. FLOWERS, Ph.D., received his doctorate in Germanic languages and medieval studies from the University of Texas at Austin and studied the history of occultism at the University of Göttingen, Germany. The author of more than 24 books, including *Hermetic Magic*, he is the director of the Woodharrow Institute for Germanic and Runic Studies and lives near Austin, Texas.



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## Lords of the Left-Hand Path: Forbidden Practices and Spiritual Heresies



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## Lords of the Left-Hand Path: Forbidden Practices and Spiritual Heresies

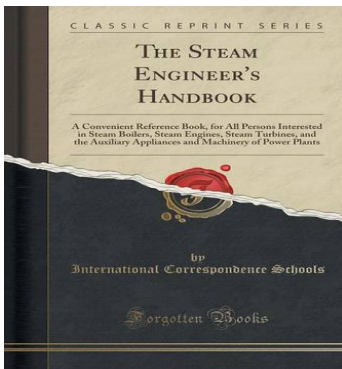
Examines the left-hand path and reveals the masters of the tradition • Explores the practices and beliefs of many left-hand path groups, including the Cult of Set, the Hell-Fire Club, and heretical Sufi, Zoroastrian, Christian, and Muslim sects • Investigates many infamous occult personalities, including Helena Blavatsky, Aleister Crowley, the Marquis de Sade, and Anton LaVey • Explains the true difference between the right-hand path and the left-hand path--union with and dependence on God versus individual freedom and self-empowerment From black magic and Satanism to Gnostic sects and Gurdjieff's Fourth Way, the left-hand path has be

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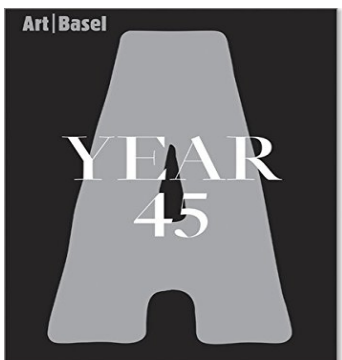
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What others say about this ebook:

**Review 1:**

I've been let down in the past by more than a few books dedicated to the topic of the Left-Hand Path, so I went into this one not knowing what to expect. Instead of pretentious double-talk and unholier-than-thou sensationalism, Stephen Flowers provides facts and historical context regarding some of the big names we're used to hearing about.

Note that the book's title is not "History of the Left-Hand Path" or "Left-Hand Path Practitioners Throughout History." The book is specifically about finally defining for ourselves what we mean when we say "the Left-Hand Path" and evaluating those figures throughout history who have either been "accused" of following this path or who have claimed it for themselves. In this, Dr. Flowers aims to provide focus and facts and to stop allowing tabloids to define our path for us in the public eye. After providing a good working definition of the Path, Flowers also seeks to help us evaluate just who might qualify as a Lord of Lady of this Path.

The historical facts and interpretations are interesting and helped to put it all in context and to ground us in the past, but weren't my favorite part of the book. The meatiest parts of the book were the parts discussing Anton LaVey/The Church of Satan & Michael Aquino/The Temple of Set. For me, this book was also very much a fascinating introduction to the Temple of Set.

I'm impressed with Dr. Flowers's writing and his reasoning. I'm also glad to find a Left-Hand Path book which lives up to its hype.

**Review 2:**

**GIFT**

**Review 3:**

Lords of the Left-Hand Path is often considered a classic on its subject matter, and with good reason. It provides a comprehensive historical analysis that's worth a serious look even to those already well acquainted with topics it covers. However, what keeps me from giving it a five star rating is the fact that LoLHP is first-and-foremost a recruitment tool and propaganda for the Temple of Set while implicitly trying to pass itself off as an impartial study. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not anti-Setian (though neither would I consider myself to be a Setian) so while I have certain criticisms regarding the ToS I also have a lot of respect for them and their accomplishments. But the bias is prevalent and conspicuous to those aware of what to look for. The thesis of the book is structured in such a way as to feed into the notion that the ToS is the indisputable pinnacle/ultimate evolution of the Left-Hand Path. To accomplish this Flowers uses only the Setian definition of the terms LHP and Black Magic without examining other definitions. Since there is no universally accepted definition for the modern, occidental use of either term this is a mite intellectually dishonest, leaving inexperienced readers with a skewed view on the subject. The bias is mostly mild throughout a majority of the book's chapters but the section on the Church of Satan paints Anton LaVey having been unequivocally wrong and Michael Aquino having been indisputably right in the split between CoS and the Temple. And the chapter on the Temple of Set itself is insufferable, reading like a love note from the ToS to the ToS. Because of this, I actually don't recommend Lords of the LHP to those who are only interested in it to learn about Setianism specifically and would instead point such readers to either Apophis by Michael Kelly or Images of Set by Joan Ann Lansberry. Though it's just in one sentence, Flowers actually has the audacity to equate the fiction written by his student and former ToS High Priest, Don Webb, to that of H.P. Lovecraft. Apart from these issues, the book also suffers from occasional inaccuracies. For example, it repeats the notion from a right-wing conspiracy theory that the term "politically correct" originates in Marxist discourse. While I do believe this error was made in all innocence, given the Temple's unfortunate history in the 80's and early 90's of having Nicholas

and Zeena Schreck as high-ranking members while the pair were open Neo-Nazis, this mistake in particular leaves a bad taste in my mouth (especially considering the book's first edition came out in the '90s). However, all that being said, I do recommend this book to anyone interested in the subject matter. It may be flawed but it's a flawed masterpiece, containing a wealth of information on taboo religious philosophies and movements throughout the ages. Ultimately, *Lords of the Left-Hand Path* is a true microcosm of the Temple of Set itself: fascinating, insightful, academically rigorous and well organized but prone to arrogance and pretension.

**Review 4:**

Flowers' book is a solid introduction to "the left-hand path" and those who practice it. Here Flowers investigates many occult movements and figures, such as Helena Blavatsky, Aleister Crowley, the Marquis de Sade, and Anton LaVey. The chapter on LaVey was of special interest to me, since some of LaVey's writings can be hard to find but from which Flowers quotes extensively. This book is great for college students taking philosophy, religion, and anthropology courses as well as for laypersons who'd like a primer to an often misunderstood subject.

Readers would also like "Jenna's Flaw," a novel about magic and witchcraft on a college campus in the Midwest.

**Review 5:**

Very interesting book

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