

Startling Stats Show Witches, Pagans Outnumber PSUSA Members

You might think it's just of "hocus pocus," but to some, these belief systems are as genuine as day and night. With Halloween mere weeks away, it's an appropriate time to draw attention to the real-life growing number of people claiming to be witches and things of the like. New statistics show that people self-identifying as witches, Wiccans and pagans are drastically climbing.

Before we delve into the growing numbers, let's unpack each system of belief.

Witchcraft: Communication with the devil or the use of sorcery or magic

*Galatians warns that witchcraft is "an act of the flesh" (see Gal. 5:19-20). Isaiah notes that there's an emptiness in witchcraft practices, stating, "they have no light of dawn" (Isa. 8:20, NIV).

Wicca: According to , Wicca is a belief system informed by "pre-Christian traditions originating in Ireland, Scotland and Wales," that promotes "free thought and will of the individual, and encourages learning and an understanding of the earth and nature."

Some witches reject Wicca practices because they consider them "a new age less-than-perfect reinvention of witchcraft."

Paganism: Eclectic, "anything goes" worship of whatever gods or non-traditional belief system anyone so desires to worship, usually without Christian or biblical values.

Occultism: is "the belief in occult powers and bringing them

under human control, usual through occult means (e.g., occult rituals or witchcraft)."

Some Wiccan pagans are New Age *and* adopt some form of occultism.

These new numbers give insight into the American belief landscape. According to Quartz, "From 1990 to 2008, Trinity College in Connecticut ran three large, detailed religion surveys. Those have shown that Wicca grew tremendously over this period. From an estimated 8,000 Wiccans in 1990, they found there were about 340,000 practitioners in 2008. They also estimated there were around 340,000 pagans in 2008."
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