

Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch's Mouth
Review of First Edition (written 1969-1971, published 1972)

Biography of reviewer. Marcello Truzzi (1935-2003) was the famous skeptic and much-published sociologist who studied the paranormal and the supernatural. He was associated with the beginnings of the intellectual understanding of skepticism in American culture.

As a pioneer of diversity in American studies, he edited, contributed, and co-authored many popular books on witchcraft, sexism, revolution, and crime, including *The Occult: Studies and Evaluations*, Bowling Green Popular Press, 1972, at which time he wrote this review. His prestigious career was as professor of sociology, Eastern Michigan University, Ann Arbor.

Witchcraft for Your Inner Angel

Review of Jack Fritscher's
Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch's Mouth
***Fate Magazine*, January 1973**
by Marcello Truzzi

***Popular Witchcraft*, Bowling Green University Popular Press, Bowling Green, Ohio, 1972, 123 pages, \$5.00.**

Popular Witchcraft is certainly among the best academic works currently dealing with contemporary witchcraft. Its focus is on witchcraft as a form of popular culture, an aspect of our commercial society.

Of the four chapters, the first is an **excellent review of the legal status of witchcraft** and the occult practitioner under various laws and statutes throughout the United States.

The second constitutes a brief, but **remarkably thorough review of witchcraft** as pictured by the record industry, the movies, television, advertising, stage conjurors, and others who view the Craft as a marketable commodity in one form or another.

The third chapter, **"Sex and Witchcraft" is a very "suggestive" discussion** of the interrelationships between commercialized witchcraft and the public and private sexual marketplaces.

The final chapter, "Straight from the Witch's Mouth," consists of more or less verbatim transcripts of interviews Fritscher held with numerous persons who describe themselves as practicing witchcraft in some form or another.

One cavil is that the book expresses no criteria for determining which witch is which. However, because the author deals with the commercial image of witchcraft, this fusion does not matter, for the mass media do in fact equate all witchcraft forms. Some witchcraft groups are sexually oriented whereas others are almost Puritanical in their practices.

Fritscher's book is an excellent source of information and contains the most candid and informative interview that Anton LaVey, the founding High Priest of the Church of

Satan, has given anyone for publication to date.

In terms of its goal of presenting the commercialized images of witchcraft, *Popular Witchcraft* is a **major contribution to the study of mass culture in the United States.**

–Marcello Truzzi