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Voices From The Pagan Census: A National Survey of Witches and Neo-Pagans in the United States provides data and analysis from a U.S. survey conducted from 1993 to 1995 with more than 2,000 participants. This represents an important source of information about the growing and changing contemporary Pagan movement. The authors describe the contribution as follows:

Our analysis of the Pagan Census provides insight into the Neo-Pagan community, contributes to growing literature in the field, corrects some misconceptions from survey research conducted solely at festivals, and compares Neo-Pagans with what they refer to as their “cowan” (non-Pagan) neighbors. (236)

The survey is limited by its necessary reliance on snowballing rather than probability sampling, but made particularly valuable by a design allowing comparison with results from the National Opinion Research Center’s (NORC’s) General Social Survey. For example, the survey found that Pagans tend to be more highly educated than the general public, more politically active, and have more non-traditional lifestyles.

The survey questions are rooted in sociological and New Religious Movements literature, addressing issues of social structure and routinization and change, more than such topics as liturgy or even life experience. The four major sections of the survey cover demographics, politics, religious beliefs, and Pagan-related info. Although respondents reported more than twenty different spiritual paths, the book focuses on comparing six sects chosen based
on number of adherents and distinctiveness of sect. The three most populous sects are Wiccans, Pagans, and Goddess Worshippers, and the three other distinctive ones are Druids, Shamans, and Unitarian Universalist Pagans.

Because this book is primarily an analysis of statistical data, generously featuring data tables, it is unlikely to function as well as an introduction to Paganism in a university course as would co-author Helen Berger’s earlier work, *A Community of Witches* (1999). However, the book should be available as a reference work offering data in which to contextualize other studies for anybody conducting research on contemporary Paganism. *Voices From The Pagan Census* does also include a significant section analyzing the free response portion of the survey.

The authors explicate the survey’s relevance to research programs, especially with reference to research design because their data suggest that festivals which had been used as sites for ethnographic research can provide “a quick immersion course” but “festivals are not an accurate microcosm of the Neo-Pagan community, the majority of whose participants work as solitaries (sic) and do not attend festivals” (223). Berger conducted a follow-up survey in 2009–2010. *Voices From The Pagan Census* should really be read alongside “Contemporary Paganism: Fifteen Years Later,” 2012, *Alternative Spirituality and Religion Review* 3 (1): 3–16, (as well as the book-length treatment of the second survey when it is completed).

The Pagan Census Revisted was an updated survey conducted online, with the core of the questions remaining the same to permit comparison with the first survey. The most dramatic change that has been observed from one survey to the next is an increase in proportion of Pagans who say they work as solitary practitioners, from 50.9% to 78.2%. This change has implications for the development of the movement as a whole, and Berger suggests that it may even indicate that Paganism is maturing along a different course than is the norm for NRMs, making this research important not only for Pagan Studies, but also for the study of NRMs generally.

The raw data from the original Pagan Census are available online at the Henry A. Murray Research Archive at Harvard University for anyone wanting to work with them further.