

The Da Vinci Code: The Wiccan Way?

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The blockbuster film, *The Da Vinci Code*, produced by Ron Howard, starring Tom Hanks, may hit the Christian community like a tidal wave. The novel, frequently quoted *as fact*, has already sold 29 million copies. The film, due to be released on May 19th of this year, may prove to be even more influential. It is being marketed aggressively. The trailers have been available on the Internet for months, and the company promoting the film served as one of the official sponsors of the Winter Olympics.

If readers are able to perceive the agenda behind *The Da Vinci Code*, it might help them better understand both the book and the movie, and to cope with the combined impact.

While serving as a practicing psychologist in a far northern state, I had a few clients who embraced Wicca as a way of life. These were young women in their twenties, training in different local covens, to become witches. I was surprised they wanted to see me as a psychologist, since I was open about my Christian beliefs and value system. The agency I worked for was also openly Christian.

Typically, these young women were struggling with depression or anxiety disorders. Usually, they would stay for only a few sessions, gain some immediate relief from their symptoms, and then suddenly stop coming – before the obvious difference in values began to more directly challenge their thinking and lifestyles.

While I admittedly had limited exposure to these young followers of Wicca, I learned quite a lot about “the Wiccan way” from them. I learned how they viewed themselves and the world, how they valued and used the pentacle/pentagram, how they viewed Jesus Christ, and how they viewed sexual relations. They made clear from the outset that they did not believe in Jesus Christ as a divine being, or in the Christian concept of redemption. None of them (and no one in their covens) believed that sexual intercourse should be confined to marriage, since it was part of the “creative force” they wanted to learn to harness and “channel.”

Since the book was first published three years ago, three of my grown sons and several of their college-aged friends have read Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code*, as have millions of other readers. When some of them started to quote this cleverly written but bizarre, Catholic-bashing conspiracy novel *as fact*, I knew I needed to read it. As I did, the similarities between the underlying thought-stream in the novel and the Wiccan beliefs that I had encountered years before began to leap out at me. It quickly became clear to me that this work of fiction is essentially an apologetic and promo piece for Wicca — complete with a Wiccan re-interpretation of the New Testament and early Christian history.

Most people think *The Da Vinci Code* is a "theological/religious thriller" that highlights interesting twists in history and important source documents. What it actually serves up is an intensely seductive introduction to contemporary witchcraft. If the author(s) believed in "truth in advertising," they could/should have called it "Witchcraft for the New Millennium." The book lays out the essential elements of Wiccan belief and practice. It also points unsuspecting readers toward alternate, preferred "gospels" – more Wicca-friendly, Gnostic "gospels" – the Gospel of Philip and the Gospel of Mary (Magdalene). These alternate, Gnostic "gospels," written long after Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are portrayed in *The Da Vinci Code* as fundamentally more accurate and reliable than the writings of the New Testament.

I do not expect readers to simply take my word for the straight-line connection between Wicca and the content of *The Da Vinci Code*. I have prepared a chart detailing Wiccan beliefs (from their official sources), and extended quotations from *The Da Vinci Code*. The similarities in concepts and vocabulary are striking and direct. Of course, Wicca is just one form of neo-paganism. But, it is thoroughly and specifically oriented toward "the sacred feminine," and followers of Wicca claim all of ancient/medieval paganism that orients toward the feminine as their own. Besides briefly outlining the content of the chart, I will share a few thoughts about what I think may have motivated Dan Brown (and his wife, Blythe) to write this novel this way. According to the ABC Writers Network: "Dan's wife Blythe — an art historian and painter — collaborates on his research and accompanies him on his frequent research trips, their latest to Paris, where they spent time in the Louvre for his thriller, *The Da Vinci Code*." Dan supplied the engaging frame of the story. By Dan's own descriptions, Blythe supplied much of the content.

Some interesting information about *The Da Vinci Code* recently emerged from the copyright infringement lawsuit in England, brought by the authors of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, published in 1982. Below are excerpts from the Associated Press news article released on 03/13/2006. Besides the allegations of plagiarism, note Dan Brown's description of Blythe's involvement:

'Da Vinci Code' Author Brown Takes Stand

By JILL LAWLESS, Associated Press, 03/13/2006

Almost three years to the day that "The Da Vinci Code" was first published, American author Dan Brown found himself on a witness stand in courtroom 61 of London's High Court on Monday, denying accusations he copied from others to produce his huge best-seller.

Authors Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh are suing "Da Vinci Code" publisher Random House for copyright infringement, claiming Brown "appropriated the architecture" of their 1982 nonfiction book "The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail."

Both books explore theories — dismissed by theologians but embraced by millions of readers — that Jesus married Mary Magdalene, the couple had a child and the bloodline survives.

If the writers succeed in securing an injunction to bar the use of their material, they could hold up the scheduled May 19 release of "The Da Vinci Code" film starring Tom Hanks and Ian McKellen.

With his book an international sensation, Brown has rarely spoken to the media over the past couple of years and has made few public appearances, spending much of his time in his rural New Hampshire home, working on a new novel ...

In a witness statement released Monday as Brown took the stand, the writer said it was "absurd to suggest that I have organized and presented my novel in accordance with the same general principles" as the earlier book.

Responding to questions from the plaintiffs' attorney, Brown said much of the research for the book was done by his wife, Blythe.

"She was deeply passionate about the sacred feminine," Brown said.

The Da Vinci Code is not just a novel. If that is all it was or is, there would be no need for the page boldly labeled "FACT" (all capital letters), *page 1* in the book, the last printed page before the beginning of the story. On the FACT page, the author(s) try to convince you that they have done a good job of researching and fairly representing both the Priory of Sion and Opus Dei, and then go on to boldly proclaim: "All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate." This "novel" is really a deconstructionist, post-modern attempt to re-write history, with a hidden agenda deeply embedded within the deconstructionist effort.

There obviously is not enough space to present the whole chart in this short article, but I can outline the contents. Blythe and Dan Brown offer a story that presents many of the same concepts as Wicca, often using the same words. They do this in all of the following areas:

1. Wicca and *The Da Vinci Code* (Chapter 28) agree that the practices of ancient, medieval, and current witchcraft are good and even necessary. According to this "factual" novel, once the Christian/Catholic Church becomes organized in the fourth century, these gentle witches, these practitioners of the *pagan arts*, are systematically oppressed and slaughtered by the jealous/threatened male-dominated Christian/Catholic leadership: "SO DARK the CON of MAN," write Blythe and Dan Brown.

2. *The Da Vinci Code* (Chapter 6) presents a positive view of the *pentacle / pentagram* (a five-point star with a ring around the perimeter). This symbol has for centuries been used in Wicca/witchcraft, and in Satanism. The *pentacle / pentagram*, write Blythe and Dan, is really a positive symbol of femininity and fertility.

3. *The Da Vinci Code* (Chapters 55 and 60), like Wicca, flat-out denies the divinity of Jesus Christ. But, the Jesus of the New Testament is said to live on through "Sarah," the daughter he produces with Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene is said to be the true *Holy Grail* – the *chalice* which contains the royal *bloodline* of Christ. These are among the secrets that the Priory of Sion tries to hide and protect from vicious Christians, who want only to suppress the truth. Some of the worst of these violent oppressors come from Opus Dei, a Catholic organization headquartered in New York City. As a Grand Master of the Priory of Sion, Leonardo Da Vinci supposedly knew these secrets (Chapter 58), and painted clues to them into his paintings – thus, the title of the book, *The Da Vinci Code*.

4. The practitioners of Wicca write in their documents: "We value sex as pleasure, as the symbol and embodiment of life, and as one of the sources of energies used in magical practice and religious worship..." This is exactly the view of sexuality presented in *The Da Vinci Code*. The main character, Robert Langdon, tells Sophie Neveu (and his classroom students back at Harvard) that the only way men can have direct communication with God is to have sex intercourse with women – preferably and most powerfully through pagan sex rites, as described by Robert Langdon in Chapter 74 of the book.

The Da Vinci Code ends in a manner consistent with the adoration of the Goddess taught in witchcraft/Wicca. After Princess Sophie Neveu (direct descendent of the bloodline of Christ through Mary Magdalene) offers herself sexually to Professor Langdon at the end of Chapter 105, the Epilogue tells us that Robert Langdon finally locates what he believes are the remains of Mary Magdalene, the true Holy Grail. He locates her remains in France, in the Louvre, right next to the area in Paris that was once devoted to nature/goddess worship and fertility festivals. Once he locates these remains, lovingly brought to the Louvre by Curator Jacques Sauniere, he (Langdon) falls to his knees and worships the Goddess.

Blythe and Dan Brown want us to join them in *the Wiccan Way*. One of our tasks as committed and informed Christians, I believe, is to uncover this agenda (the real “code”) hidden in *The Da Vinci Code*, and to help set the record straight. As Steve Baarendse, one of my English colleagues here at CIU is fond of saying, the best descriptor for the book might be: “SO DARK the CON of DAN.” </><

Other helpful resources:

Garlow and Jones, [Cracking Da Vinci’s Code](#), Victor Books, 2004.

Lutzer, Erwin, [The Da Vinci Deception](#), Tyndale House, 2004.

McDowell, Josh, [The Da Vinci Code: A Quest for Answers](#), Green Key Books, 2006.

[Secrets of the Da Vinci Code](#), US News and World Report, 2005.