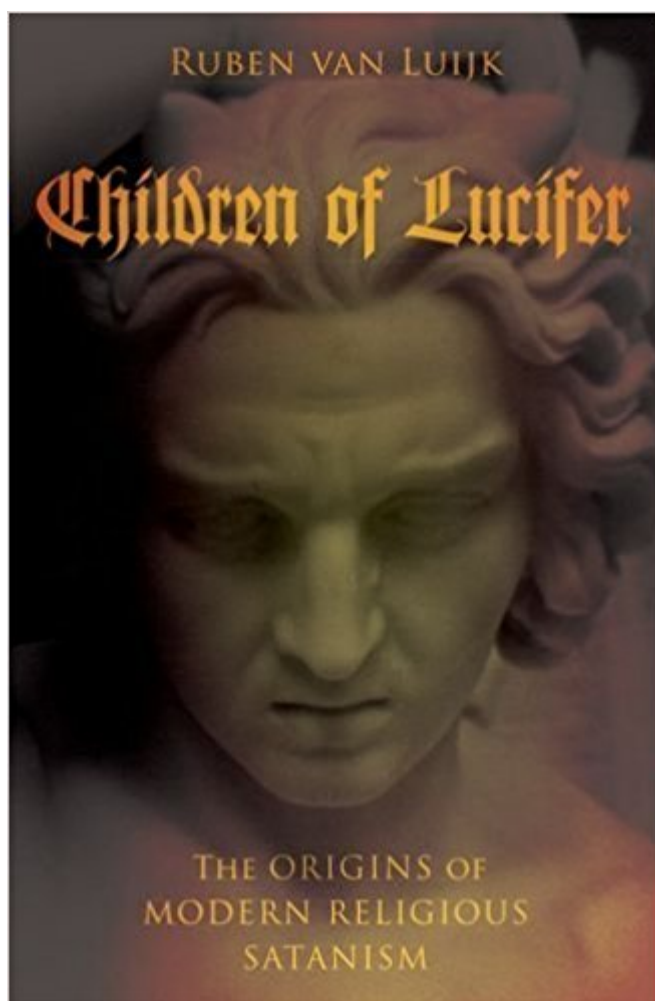


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# Children Of Lucifer: The Origins Of Modern Religious Satanism (Oxford Studies In Western Esotericism)



## Synopsis

If we are to believe sensationalist media coverage, Satanism is, at its most benign, the purview of people who dress in black, adorn themselves with skull and pentagram paraphernalia, and listen to heavy metal. At its most sinister, its adherents are worshippers of evil incarnate and engage in violent and perverse secret rituals, the details of which mainstream society imagines with a fascination verging on the obscene. *Children of Lucifer* debunks these facile characterizations by exploring the historical origins of modern Satanism. Ruben van Luijk traces the movement's development from a concept invented by a Christian church eager to demonize its internal and external competitors to a positive (anti-)religious identity embraced by various groups in the modern West. Van Luijk offers a comprehensive intellectual history of this long and unpredictable trajectory. This story involves Romantic poets, radical anarchists, eccentric esotericists, Decadent writers, and schismatic exorcists, among others, and culminates in the establishment of the Church of Satan by carnival entertainer Anton Szandor LaVey. Yet it is more than a collection of colorful characters and unlikely historical episodes. The emergence of new attitudes toward Satan proves to be intimately linked to the ideological struggle for emancipation that transformed the West and is epitomized by the American and French Revolutions. It is also closely connected to secularization, that other exceptional historical process which saw Western culture spontaneously renounce its traditional gods and enter into a self-imposed state of religious indecision. *Children of Lucifer* makes the case that the emergence of Satanism presents a shadow history of the evolution of modern civilization as we know it. Offering the most comprehensive account of this history yet written, van Luijk proves that, in the case of Satanism, the facts are much more interesting than the fiction.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"It is by far the most comprehensive history of Satanism available...Recommended."--CHOICE"Van Luijk's book is a welcome addition to the emerging field of studies of religious Satanism. Children of Lucifer successfully argues that rhetoric around the figure of Satan marginalizes political enemies and reflects social concerns-and modern religious Satanism is yet another example of this-as it promotes a radical marginality as an empowering identity."--Reading Religion"A tremendously important, meticulously researched and wittily written book, which will change the way we look on Satanism."-Per Faxneld, coauthor of *The Devil's Party: Satanism in Modernity* "Contrary to popular news, Satanism is not just statues and coloring books. Through the dual mechanisms of attribution and identification, Ruben van Luijk's monumental work examines the history of modern Satanism from early modern Christian inventions to the appropriation and reinterpretation of contemporary satanic groups. This is first-rate scholarship with an impressive attention to detail and breadth of insight, which never fails to captivate the reader. Children of Lucifer proves that to understand the present we must understand history."-Jesper Aagaard Petersen, co-author of *The Invention of Satanism* (2015) "If you want the real story of Satanism, then read this book. Extremely well documented and full of surprising twists and turns, it shows that history is much more exciting than the predictable standard products of the sensationalist imagination."-Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Professor of History of Hermetic Philosophy, University of Amsterdam

Ruben van Luijk was born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Children of Lucifer is based on his research as a PhD student at the Faculty of Catholic Theology, Tilburg University and as a research fellow at Radboud University, Nijmegen. Van Luijk is also active as a photographer, novelist and artist.

Well written and documented history of Satanism in all its varied and extreme forms. Not hysterical in its portrayal and examples.

Luijk has written a historical and philosophical tour de force, really first of its kind in the area of the academic study of Satanism. This book is immense, and covers everything from its inception within

Christianity, to its evolution and subsequent birth into modern Satanism. Much is covered on the Church of Satan and Anton Lavey, because love him or hate him, it cannot be avoided or denied that the COS and Lavey, were as significant to modern Satanism as the Reformation was in Luther's day. There is much that could be discussed about this book, but it covers its topic very well. Is it stimulating writing, yes and no, its very academic, and it reads as such. But I do have to say that even with it being academic Luijk is a good writer, and as things stand now, this is the best book you can buy if you want a broad, intelligent and thorough understanding of how Satanism came to evolve into what it is today.

This is an excellent book that details the historical thought that lead to modern religious Satanism. Highly recommended.

Exceptional survey of satanism in modernity.

This is a hardcover book. The photo cover is very impressive in person. This photo is my favorite of Lucifer. I look forward to reading this book as Lucifer is not the evil that the Church has said from all their LIES!

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