

**2011-present**

**Alternative Paths & Journeys**

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**Annotated by Carlos R. Fernandez, annotations adopted from Amazon.com**

Banis, Victor J. *The C.A.M.P. Guide to Astrology*. Borgo, 2012. Print.

Jackie Holmes, writes: "If there's one subject almost certain to break the ice, and sometimes even bring things to a boiling point, it's the subject of Astrology. I touched upon it ever so briefly in *Sex and the Single Gay*, and was nearly deluged by remarks about my remarks. At this point I'm probably expected to make a ringing defense of the star system, or admit that it's all a put-on. Sorry, but I'm just not going to do either. The fact is, Astrology can be useful and awesomely accurate, but if taken in the wrong light, it can be a sheer farce. The stars impel, they don't compel. In other words, they nudge you into certain channels, but they don't force you." This witty guide to gay astrology, a book that had become a high-priced and highly-prized collector's edition, is now available for the first time in over four decades!

Bhava, Sakhi. *Transgender Spirituality: Man into Goddess*. CreateSpace, 2012.

This book presents a historical survey of male transgenderism in spiritual life – including biographies of well-known figures who used their crossed-sex identification as vehicles for worship and self-discovery. It also discusses ways for the transgender male to turn his yearning for sexual transformation into a powerful tool for spiritual transformation - to turn what is seen as a curse by some into a blessing.

Bornstein, Kate. *Queer and Pleasant Danger The True Story of a Nice Jewish Boy Who Joins the Church of Scientology, and Leaves Twelve Years Later to Become the Lovely Lady She Is Today*. Beacon, 2012.

A stunningly original memoir of a nice Jewish boy who joined the Church of Scientology and left twelve years later, ultimately transitioning to a woman. A few years later, she stopped calling herself a woman and became famous as a gender outlaw. Kate Bornstein—gender theorist, performance artist, and author—is set to change lives with her compelling memoir. Wickedly funny and disarmingly honest, this is Bornstein's most intimate book yet, encompassing her early childhood and adolescence, college at Brown, a life in the theater, three marriages and fatherhood, the Scientology hierarchy, transsexual life, LGBTQ politics, and life on the road as a sought-after speaker.

Coakley, Sarah. *The New Asceticism*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2013.

Each chapter of *The New Asceticism* concentrates on a contentious issue in contemporary theology - the role of women in the churches, homosexuality and the priesthood, celibacy

and the future of Christian asceticism - in an original thesis about the nature of desire, which may start to heal many contemporary wounds. Professor Coakley is as familiar with the Bible and the Early Fathers as she is with the writings of Freud and Jung, and she draws heavily on Gregory of Nyssa's theology of desire in what she proposes. She points the way through the false modern alternatives of repression and libertinism, agape and eros, recovering a way in which desire can be freed from associations with promiscuity and disorder, and forging a new ascetical vision founded in the disciplines of prayer and attention.

Fitzgerald, Troy. *Cults and Closets: Coming Out of Chaos*. CreateSpace, 2013.

This is not just a story about coming out of a religion, cult or as gay from a religious environment -- it is a story about escaping the bonds the world can place upon us, how to listen to our inner voice, and find and embrace our true passion and happiness. This is the story of how one man was raised in a fundamentalist Christian cult -- the Worldwide Church of God -- as the son of a pastor, later leaving organized religion, and then came out of the closet as gay after marrying a woman and having three sons (and remaining close friends with his ex-wife). He learned along the way that cults and closets come in many forms. He shares his story in hopes others will find the courage to liberate themselves and support others in the process, and ultimately find true peace. One reader wrote: "...captivating and hard to put down...his book has a wide appeal to a variety of audiences, including clergy, lay leaders and youth pastors, as well as therapists, social workers and clinicians. Those who are interested in cults, extreme religious fundamentalism, spiritual abuse and abusive institutions or systems will find the book useful. Finally, anyone -individuals, parents, spouses-- struggling with issues of sexual orientation will find the author's story not only helpful, but inspiring and life-changing."

Kraemer, Christine Hoff. *Eros and Touch from a Pagan Perspective: Divided for Love's Sake*. Routledge, 2013.

Within the past twenty years, contemporary Pagan leaders, progressive Christian and Goddess theologians, advocates for queer and BDSM communities, and therapeutic bodyworkers have all begun to speak forcefully about the sacredness of the body and of touch. Many assert that the erotic is a divinely transformative force, both for personal development and for social change. Although "the erotic" includes sexuality, it is not limited to it; access to connected nonsexual touch is as profound a need as that for sexual freedom and health. In this book, Christine Hoff Kraemer brings together an academic background in religious studies and theology with lived experience as a professional bodyworker and contemporary Pagan practitioner. Arguing that the erotic is a powerful moral force that can ground a system of ethics, Kraemer integrates approaches from queer theology, therapeutic bodywork, and sexual minority advocacy into a contemporary Pagan religious framework. Addressing itself to liberal religious people of many faiths, *Eros and Touch from a Pagan Perspective* approaches the right to pleasure as a social justice issue and proposes a sacramental practice of mindful, consensual touch.

Roscoe, Will. *Jesus and the Shamanic Tradition of Same-sex Love*. San Francisco: Suspect Thoughts, 2013.

Recipient of the Lambda Literary Award for Religion/Spirituality, *Jesus and the Shamanic Tradition of Same-Sex Love* is a passionate exploration of the history of Western religion as seen through the queer eye of one of the most widely acclaimed authors in gay spirituality. Drawing on recently discovered ancient sources, Will Roscoe offers a striking new view of Jesus as a charismatic mystic, whose teachings on love and the kingdom of heaven were complemented by a secret rite that served to impart the experience of entering heaven. After meticulously reconstructing this rite, Roscoe seeks its ultimate origins an odyssey that eventually leads him to the margins of the inhabited world, where the ancient practices of shamanism survive to today.

Stedman, Chris. *Faithiest: How an Atheist Found Common Ground with the Religious*. Beacon, 2012.

The stunning popularity of the “New Atheist” movement—whose most famous spokesmen include Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the late Christopher Hitchens—speaks to both the growing ranks of atheists and the widespread, vehement disdain for religion among many of them. In *Faithiest*, Chris Stedman tells his own story to challenge the orthodoxies of this movement and make a passionate argument that atheists should engage religious diversity respectfully. Becoming aware of injustice, and craving community, Stedman became a “born-again” Christian in late childhood. The idea of a community bound by God’s love—a love that was undeserved, unending, and guaranteed—captivated him. It was, he writes, a place to belong and a framework for making sense of suffering. But, Stedman’s religious community did not embody this idea of God’s love: they were staunchly homophobic at a time when he was slowly coming to realize that he was gay. The great suffering this caused him might have turned Stedman into a life-long New Atheist. However, over time, he came to know open-minded Christians, and his interest in service work brought him into contact with people from a wide variety of religious backgrounds. His own religious beliefs might have fallen away, but his desire to change the world for the better remained. In *Faithiest*, Stedman draws on his work organizing interfaith and secular communities, his academic study of religion, and his own experiences to argue for the necessity of bridging the growing chasm between atheists and the religious. As someone who has stood on both sides of the divide, Stedman is uniquely positioned to present a way for atheists and the religious to find common ground and work together to make this world—the one world we can all agree on—a better place.

Thompson, Mark. *The Fire in Moonlight: Stories from the Radical Faeries: 1975-2010*. Maple Shade, NJ: White Crane, 2011.

This book offers a compendium of cultural wisdom, provocative wit, and challenging sensuality. *Dancing in the Moonlight* gives witness to a groundbreaking movement that painstakingly emerged from the Gay Liberation era. Rooted in the history of radical visionaries, this little known, essential community infuses the modern world with new

meaning, offering fresh definitions of faith, identity, purpose, and gender. *Fire in the Moonlight* is a series of personal reflections on who the Radical Faeries are, where they have been and where they are going: Radical Faeries in their own words. It is about how a movement has changed lives--and how Radical Faeries contribute to healing a fractured Earth.