

ogy, however, saying Wiccans are largely an urban cult, only about 30 years old and originating in the fertile imagination of Gerald Gardner, an Englishman who wrote books on witchcraft in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Whatever Wicca is, you won't find Lady Sinstana slaving over a hot cauldron of hat-wing soup, singing, "Nothin' says lovin' like something from the coven."

Nor will you find her seminarians studying things like arithmetrick and hex education. Witchcraft 101 at Ravenwood is nothing more sinister than a course in comparative religion.

"We teach the law of Karma," Lady S. said, "and we believe in the Law of Three-Fold Returns: What you give out, you will get back three-fold. And our one rule of personal conduct is this: And if it harms no one, do what ye will."

It's true that Wiccans are pagan nature worshippers. When in a merry mood, they are apt to sing such things as (I'm not making this up, folks): "Yes, Isis Loves Me" (my scarab tells me so)."

But underneath all that generalized flora and fauna, it's pure and simple woman worship, a hymn to Her, with the male playing foudr fiddle.

What Lady Sinstana is is an urban Earth Mother, a sort of Statuesque of Liberty who attracts lost souls yearning to breathe incense.

Wiccans are too esoteric a cult to win wide public acceptance, and Lady Sinstana knows it. "We are not out converting," she said. "Mainly we'd like to be left alone."

Unfortunately, a witch's cult excites curiosity and, in some cases, hostility. If the Wiccans want their critics to disappear, clearly the burden of proof is on them.