



# Ritual America: Secret Brotherhoods and Their Influence on American Society: A Visual Guide

*Craig Heimbichner, Adam Parfrey*

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"Adam Parfrey is one of the nation's most provocative publishers."—*Seattle Weekly*

"Secret society historian Craig Heimbichner follows the Middle Path to wisdom. He works the graveyard shift in the secret lodge."—Joan d'Arc, *Paranoia* magazine

Secret societies—now a staple of bestseller novels—are pictured as sinister cults that use hooded albinos to menace truth-seekers. Some conspiracy books claim that fraternal orders are the work of serpentine aliens and interbred humans who wish to supplant earth of its energy, and later, its very existence.

On the other side of the aisle, books by high-ranked Freemasons—skeptical in tone but no less partisan in approach—protect their organization's public image by denying the existence of its most contentious ideas.

*Ritual America* reveals the biggest secret of them all: that the influence of fraternal brotherhoods on this country is vast, fundamental, and hidden in plain view. In the early twentieth century, as many as one-third of America belonged to a secret society. And though fezzes and tiny car parades are almost a thing of the past, the Gnostic beliefs of Masonic orders are now so much a part of the American mind that the surrounding pomp and circumstance has become faintly unnecessary.

The authors of *Ritual America* contextualize hundreds of rare and many never-before printed images with entertaining and far-reaching commentary, making an esoteric subject provocative, exciting, and approachable.

**Adam Parfrey** is the author of *Cult Rapture: Revelations of the Apocalyptic Mind* and *It's a Man's World: Men's Adventure Magazines, the Postwar Pulps*. He is editor of the influential Apocalypse Culture series *Love, Sex, Fear Death: The Inside Story of the Process Church of the Final Judgment*.

**Craig Heimbichner** has recently appeared on a National Geographic documentary about the Bohemian Grove, contributed to the Feral House compilation *Secret and Suppressed II*, and wrote about the famous occult order the O.T.O. in *Blood and Altar*.



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