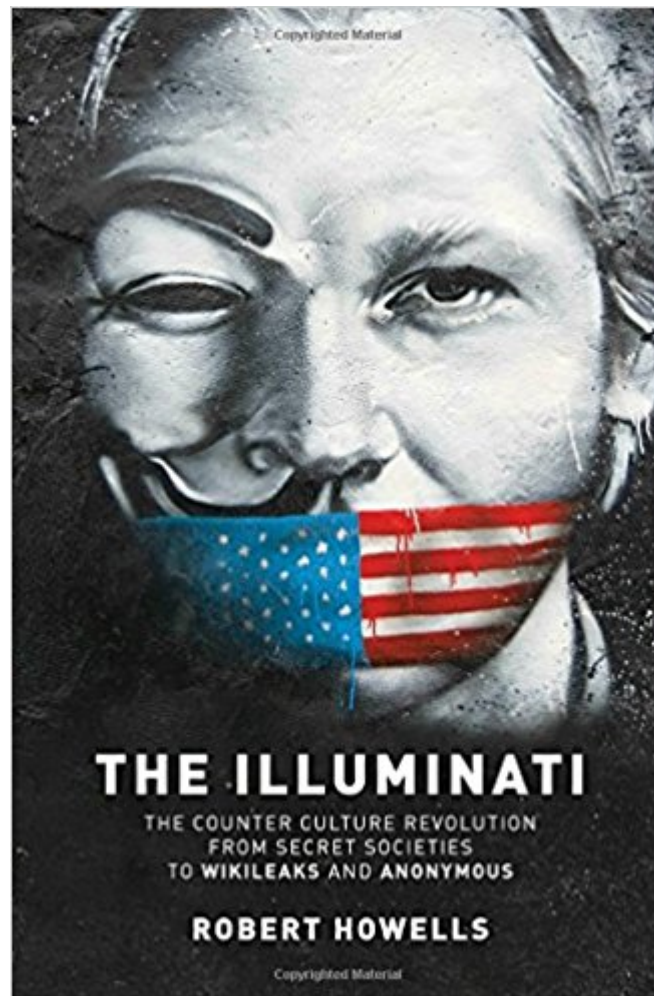


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The Illuminati: The Counter Culture Revolution-From Secret Societies To Wikileaks And Anonymous



Synopsis

This book demonstrates that the old secret societies were driven by the same impulse as Anonymous and WikiLeaks are today. These marginalized groups have always rebelled against the establishments; some subversively by spreading progressive ideas through art and literature, while others are far more proactive, driving revolution and exposing government secrets. The Illuminati, founded in 1776, aimed to rid Europe of the ruling aristocracy and religious control of education, politics and science. They supported the Age of Enlightenment and were accused of fueling the dissent that culminated in the French Revolution. Since that time the term Illuminati has become a meme, giving a name to a secret network believed by conspiracy theorists to control the world. These were depicted as pranksters, working in the shadows to manipulate society. It was in this climate of pranks, memes and conspiracy theories that the hacktivist collective Anonymous were born. Their ideals of freedom from censorship and the empowering of societies against their rulers make them the spiritual successors of the Illuminati. The kindling of the French Revolution by the Illuminati has found a modern counterpart in how Anonymous and WikiLeaks played a key role in the Arab Spring uprisings using the internet as a new weapon against dictatorships. It is the same battle fought by secret societies for a millennium but the new inquisition has shifted its focus from secret societies to wage a war on the connected communities of the internet age. This is the story of that war and how you need to be a part of it.

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Customer Reviews

"Surely one of the most fascinating - and important books - we've read in a while, *The Illuminati* traces the story of secret societies down the ages: from the titular Illuminati to Wikileaks and Anonymous today. Such marginalized groups have always rebelled against the establishment; some by spreading progressive ideas through art and literature, others by driving revolution and exposing government secrets. Robert Howells creates a dizzying narrative that will change the way you think about the world." -from reviewer Gregory Daines

Rob Howells has spent the last twenty years investigating the mysteries of Rennes-le-Chateau, the Priory of Sion and the history of conspiracy theories. During this time he has built up an extensive knowledge and experience of secret societies, symbolism and esoteric thought. As a manager for five years of Watkins Books in London, one of the oldest esoteric bookshops in Europe, he extended his research into transpersonal psychology, sacred geometry, Gnosticism and alchemy. He also came into contact with a number of secret societies during this time including the Priory of Sion, the Freemasons, the Order of Lazarus, various neo-Templar orders plus Sufis and other religious groups. His first book, *Inside the Priory of Sion* was released in 2011 and his second book, *The Last Pope*, was released in June 2013. He can currently be seen in a documentary series called *Forbidden History* on the BBC Yesterday channel.

Secret societies and conspiracy theories tend to be fascinating subjects and can spark many heated debates. Robert Howells's *The Illuminati: The Counter Culture Revolution from Secret Societies to Wikileaks and Anonymous* explores the growth of communities invested in forming a better future. The status quo isn't always ideal, particularly for the learned portion of the society who can see that there might be something better, but the best manner of bringing about change could easily be a topic of debate. As the historical, and moderately mythic, Illuminati were a building block to much of society, conspiracy theories have clung to the group as a force that was secretly ruling the world. Awareness of the state of the world is pivotal in the aim to bring about change. Making information pertinent to the public's lives and best interests available to them is a major way to make them aware of what is actually at stake yet being hidden from them, a key idea behind the contemporary Illuminati successors of Wikileaks and Anonymous. This reads like an academic thesis, which while informative, is not as entertaining or enlightening as I had hoped that it would be. It's really not much more than an overview of the Illuminati, Wikileaks, and Anonymous with a history lesson of how the various counter cultures and secret societies came into existence. I guess that based on the description (and the incredible cover art) I was expecting more than what was

contained within the pages than that which I could easily find online, although this saved me from conducting and compiling the research myself. Overall, I'd give it a 2.5 out of 5 stars.

I struggled with this, and my interest ebbed and flowed, with the general trend being the ebb. The author was manager of Watkins, the generally esoteric/New Age bookshop, for 5 years, so I am assuming that the ground of the first half of this book, a kind of exploration of secret mystical societies, of spiritual bent, devoted to the betterment of human development, is perhaps part of the author's own journey, a conscious journey of the soul. However, what puts me off is a kind of wide eyed assumption that everyone within these societies is always there for good purpose, and that the checks and balanced Howells talks about within the Illuminati always DO ensure that only the pure in heart rise. We have a remarkable ability to self-deceive, and a remarkable ability to deceive others. And also, there is a marvellous lure about feeling party to a secret elite! Who has NOT been part of a secret brotherhood or secret sisterhood as a small child? Cults, cultishness, feeling special and privileged by one's membership of cults can be seen everywhere from feeling special because you are part of a small group who discover an unknown band to that feeling of disappointment when your band becomes mainstream and loved by all so you have lost your own special. And how Howells venerates The Illuminati. There are a lot of claims made about its history and membership, and a lot of assumptions that as we get to the second half of the book, which looks more generally at the counterculture that all involved in this are some kind of brave and noble warrior for truth and freedom. That resistance, of its nature, or being against the system is to be on the side of the angels. Actually, fascism too (till it gets into power in place and time) might also see itself as counter culture to a society with more liberal values. "The defining characteristics of counterculture could be described as an anti-establishment ethos and an emphasis on the self-directed individual. To be a counterculture is to exist in opposition to society which requires the rejection of existing value. The implication which runs through this book is that society itself, and its values are always inhibiting that which is to be desired so a kind of mystical flowering of each individual which can only be achieved by each of us gaining our self-directed pinnacle. Well, actually the self-directed individual

might equally well turn out to be Donald Trump, (and, sadly, has) rather than a Nelson Mandela. Resistance of itself has no more virtue than Æffing along with the mainstream flow. The second part of the book looks at where counterculture is now, and at who really controls society now, and its various cabals, financiers and the like. I found myself pretty constantly wanting evidence, referencing. All we get is a bibliography. And, as for technology offering the enlightened counterculturist a marvellous tool it also offers, as we are seeing, the opportunity to create fake news, which we swallow Team Trump, Brexit battlebus claims on money for the NHS, and focus on which celebrity is bonking which other celebrity and all. Verdict : Lacks precision, waffles a lot and cherry picks. Which some might say is also a verdict on this review!

Conspiracy Theories and Secret Societies have been around as long as man. Mr. Howells takes us on a history lesson through the ages and shows us how The Illuminati helped to shape the course of said history. And how the same techniques they used then are today the Wikileaks and Anonymous in our time. There is a lot of information on how these secret societies have affected change from behind a curtain of secrecy. What is the most effective way to bring about change? What has worked in the past and what seems to be working now? This is a NF book, so it could have been very dry and boring. It was not. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it. It is one of those books that you came away with more knowledge on a subject than when you went in. Thanks to Netgalley and Watkins Publishing for this one!

Howells' latest is more than simply a history lesson, although if that's what you are looking for you will surely find it here. The author, well known in all matters esoteric, covers the Illuminati's origins and subsequent subversion into the ranks of Freemasonry and traces the ever-present counter culture's desire for freedom against tyranny, as well as self-illumination, through the centuries to modern day, where it now rises up with the help of technology and digital vigilantes Julian Assange and Edward Snowden. (God bless them.) I particularly enjoyed the chapters devoted to the varying degrees of Masonry, their symbolic nature of their practices, and the purpose of the hierarchical structure of the organization. A word of warning, this material is not for the vanilla among you. It does contrive to believe in conspiracy and if one rejects that wholeheartedly then perhaps this isn't the book for you. I'd say open your mind a bit and learn something. It was a relatively fast and enjoyable read. Would highly recommend.

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