

Witchcraze A New History Of The European Witch

This comprehensive resource explores the evolution of western attitudes towards religion, politics, and the supernatural, which intersected to spawn the notorious witch hunts in Europe and the New World.

Witchcraft in Early North America investigates European, African, and Indian witchcraft beliefs and their expression in colonial America. Alison Games's engaging book takes us beyond the infamous outbreak at Salem, Massachusetts, to look at how witchcraft was a central feature of colonial societies in North America. Her substantial and lively introduction orients readers to the subject and to the rich selection of documents that follows. The documents—some of which have never been published previously—include excerpts from trials in Virginia, New Mexico, and Massachusetts; accounts of outbreaks in Salem, Abiquiu (New Mexico), and among the Delaware Indians. This fascinating topic and the book's broad geographic and chronological coverage make this book ideally suited for readers interested in new approaches to colonial history and the history of witchcraft.

One of the most intriguing, and disturbing, aspects of history is that most people in early modern Europe believed in the reality and dangers of witchcraft. Most historians have described the witchcraft phenomenon as one of tremendous violence. In France, dozens of books, pamphlets and tracts, depicting witchcraft as the

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most horrible of crimes, were published and widely distributed. Yet, in his new book, *The Crime of Crimes: Demonology and Politics in France, 1560-1620*, Jonathan Pearl shows that France carried out relatively few executions for witchcraft. Through careful research he shows that a zealous Catholic faction identified the Protestant rebels as traitors and heretics in league with the devil and clamoured for the political and legal establishment to exterminate these enemies of humanity. But the courts were dominated by moderate Catholics whose political views were in sharp contrast to those of the zealots and, as a result, the demonologists failed to ignite a major witch-craze in France. Very few studies have taken such a careful and penetrating look at demonology in France. *The Crime of Crimes: Demonology and Politics in France, 1560-1620* sheds new light on an important period in the history of witchcraft and will be welcomed by scholars and laypersons alike.

In an exciting new approach to witchcraft studies, *The Witch in the Western Imagination* examines the visual representation of witches in early modern Europe. With vibrant and lucid prose, Lyndal Roper moves away from the typical witchcraft studies on trials, beliefs, and communal dynamics and instead considers the witch as a symbolic and malleable figure through a broad sweep of topics and time periods. Employing a wide selection of archival, literary, and visual materials, Roper presents a series of thematic studies that range from the role of emotions in Renaissance culture to demonology as entertainment, and from witchcraft as

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female embodiment to the clash of cultures on the brink of the Enlightenment. Rather than providing a vast synthesis or survey, this book is questioning and exploratory in nature and illuminates our understanding of the mental and psychic worlds of people in premodern Europe. Roper's spectrum of theoretical interests will engage readers interested in cultural history, psychoanalytic theory, feminist theory, art history, and early modern European studies. These essays, three of which appear here for the first time in print, are complemented by more than forty images, from iconic paintings to marginal drawings on murals or picture frames. In her unique focus on the imagery of witchcraft, Lyndal Roper has succeeded in adding a compelling new dimension to the study of witchcraft in early modern Europe.

Persecution and Punishment from the Inquisition
Through the Salem Trials

The European Witch-craze of the 16th and 17th
Centuries

The Decline of Magic

A Seventeenth-Century English Tragedy

Witchfinders

The Witchcraft Sourcebook

A History of Fear, from Ancient Times to the Present

Witchcraft has recently been undergoing a huge popular revival, but does modern pagan witchcraft really bear any resemblance to its historical antecedents? The witch in history was a

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very different creature from her modern counterpart, and this book sets out to explore the historical background to the European witchcraft phenomenon. It examines in detail the growth of the ideological, cultural and legal concepts that eventually led to the carnage of the Witch Craze in the 16th and 17th centuries, which, it is estimated, may have claimed the lives of around 40,000 people. For both Medieval and Reformation scholars alike the Devil and all his works were a very real threat. Their conviction that witches were the servants of Satan led to the formation of perhaps one of the greatest conspiracy theories of all time: a belief that witches were working in league with the Devil in a diabolical plot against all Christendom. Witches were transformed from poor deluded old women who rode out at night with the pagan goddess Diana into devil-worshipping heretics who became the focus of a centuries-long, Europe-wide campaign determined to seek out and destroy this evil wherever it was to be found, regardless of whether any of its victims were

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actually guilty or not.

In this study, Professor Trevor-Roper reveals the social and intellectual background to the witch-craze of the 16th and 17th centuries. Orthodoxy and heresy had become deeply entrenched notions in religion and ethics as an evangelical church exaggerated the heretical theology and loose morality of its opponents. Gradually, non-conformists as well as whole societies began to be seen in terms of stereotypes and witches became the scapegoats for all the ills of society. A new history that overturns the received wisdom that science displaced magic in Enlightenment Britain--named a Best Book of 2020 by the Financial Times In early modern Britain, belief in prophecies, omens, ghosts, apparitions and fairies was commonplace. Among both educated and ordinary people the absolute existence of a spiritual world was taken for granted. Yet in the eighteenth century such certainties were swept away. Credit for this great change is usually given to science - and in particular to the scientists of the Royal Society.

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But is this justified? Michael Hunter argues that those pioneering the change in attitude were not scientists but freethinkers. While some scientists defended the reality of supernatural phenomena, these sceptical humanists drew on ancient authors to mount a critique both of orthodox religion and, by extension, of magic and other forms of superstition. Even if the religious heterodoxy of such men tarnished their reputation and postponed the general acceptance of anti-magical views, slowly change did come about. When it did, this owed less to the testing of magic than to the growth of confidence in a stable world in which magic no longer had a place.

Examines the history and origins of witchcraft, from pre-history to the present day, considering why it still features so heavily in our culture

The Night Battles

Sorcerers, Heretics, and Pagans

The Legacy of the Witch Hunts and Why Women Are Still on Trial

Witchcraft in Early Modern England

A History of the Witch Persecutions in Europe and North America

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Witches and Witch-hunts

Witches and Neighbours

Studies the historical, anthropological, and religious manifestations of witchcraft, arguing that modern witchcraft in the West is in fact a serious religion that offers valuable insights

Traces the origins and progression of hysteria, fear, and persecution associated with witches and witchcraft in western societies.

Between 1450 and 1750 thousands of people – most of them women – were accused, prosecuted and executed for the crime of witchcraft. The witch-hunt was not a single event; it comprised thousands of individual prosecutions, each shaped by the religious and social dimensions of the particular area as well as political and legal factors. Brian Levack sorts through the proliferation of theories to provide a coherent introduction to the subject, as well as contributing to the scholarly debate. The book: Examines why witchcraft prosecutions took place, how many trials and victims there were, and why witch-hunting eventually came to an end. Explores the beliefs of both educated and illiterate people regarding witchcraft. Uses regional and local studies to give a more detailed analysis of the chronological and geographical distribution of witch-trials. Emphasises the legal context of witchcraft prosecutions. Illuminates the social, economic and political history of early modern Europe, and in particular the position of women

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within it. In this fully updated third edition of his exceptional study, Levack incorporates the vast amount of literature that has emerged since the last edition. He substantially extends his consideration of the decline of the witch-hunt and goes further in his exploration of witch-hunting after the trials, especially in contemporary Africa. New illustrations vividly depict beliefs about witchcraft in early modern Europe.

In his new preface, Ginzburg reflects on the interplay of chance and discovery, as well as on the relationship between anomalous cases and historical generalizations.

Servants of Satan

Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century England

Witchcraft: A Ladybird Expert Book

Male witches in early modern Europe

In Defense of Witches

Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

The Witch

There is something about a shapeshifter—a person who can transform into an animal—that captures our imagination; that causes us to want to howl at the moon, or flit through the night like a bat. Werewolves, vampires, demons, and other weird creatures appeal to our animal nature, our “dark side,” our desire to break free of the bonds of society and proper behavior. Real or imaginary, shapeshifters lurk deep in our psyches

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and remain formidable cultural icons. The myths, magic, and meaning surrounding shapeshifters are brought vividly to life in John B. Kachuba ' s compelling and original cultural history. Rituals in early cultures worldwide seemingly allowed shamans, sorcerers, witches, and wizards to transform at will into animals and back again. Today, there are millions of people who believe that shapeshifters walk among us and may even be world leaders. Featuring a fantastic and ghoulish array of examples from history, literature, film, TV, and computer games, Shapeshifters explores our secret desire to become something other than human.

Part of the new Ladybird Expert series, Witchcraft is an accessible, authoritative and captivating introduction to the magical myths that have coloured the popular imagination for centuries. Written by celebrated historian and broadcaster Dr Suzannah Lipscomb, Witchcraft explores the moment in history when witches were perceived to be especially dangerous: the famous witch hunts between 1450 and 1750. You'll learn how the figure of the witch remains culturally relevant. In horror films, TV shows and pop culture, the figure of the witch retains her potency to attract and repel. Witch hunts in one form or another have persisted for thousands of years. Understanding why people were and continue to be persecuted for witchcraft matters now, more than ever.

Witchcraft, astrology, divination and every kind of popular magic flourished in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from the belief that a blessed amulet could prevent the assaults of the Devil to the use of the same charms to recover stolen goods. At the same time the Protestant Reformation attempted to take the magic out of religion, and

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scientists were developing new explanations of the universe. Keith Thomas's classic analysis of beliefs held on every level of English society begins with the collapse of the medieval Church and ends with the changing intellectual atmosphere around 1700, when science and rationalism began to challenge the older systems of belief.

A fascinating account of man of letters John Aubrey 's investigation into the witch craze in 17th century England and the remarkable witch trials in Wiltshire. John Aubrey, the Royal Society and the Witches Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany Three Million Years of Peace, Six Thousand Years of War

A History of Witchcraft

The Last Witch Craze

Witchcraze

Witches of the Atlantic World

Argues that the witch hunts of the past were essentially a pogrom against women, in which independent women were blamed for the problems of the times

A revised and updated edition of the classic study on witchcraft examines the historical, anthropological, and religious manifestations of witchcraft, from ancient times to the present day, arguing that modern witchcraft in the West is in fact a serious religion that offers valuable insights.

Original.

A powerful account of witches, crones, and the societies that make them From the gruesome

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ogress in Hansel and Gretel to the hags at the sabbath in Faust, the witch has been a powerful figure of the Western imagination. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries thousands of women confessed to being witches--of making pacts with the Devil, causing babies to sicken, and killing animals and crops--and were put to death. This book is a gripping account of the pursuit, interrogation, torture, and burning of witches during this period and beyond. Drawing on hundreds of original trial transcripts and other rare sources in four areas of Southern Germany, where most of the witches were executed, Lyndal Roper paints a vivid picture of their lives, families, and tribulations. She also explores the psychology of witch-hunting, explaining why it was mostly older women that were the victims of witch crazes, why they confessed to crimes, and how the depiction of witches in art and literature has influenced the characterization of elderly women in our own culture.

"In the sixteenth century, a rise in sexual violence in European society was exacerbated by pressure from church and state to change basic sexual customs...As the centuries since have shown escalating levels both of violence, general and sexual, and of state control, the witchcraze can be considered a portent, even a model, of some aspects of what modern Europe would be like."

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Over three centuries, approximately one hundred thousand persons, most of whom were women, were put to death under the guise of "witch hunts", particularly in Reformation Europe. The shocking annihilation of women from all walks of life is explored in this brilliant, authoritative feminist history Anne Llewellyn Barstow. Barstow exposes an unrecognized holocaust -- the "ethnic cleansing" of independent women in Reformation Europe -- and examines the residual attitudes that continue to influence our culture. Barstow argues that it is only with eyes sensitive to gender issues that we can discern what really happened in the persecution and murder of these women. Her sweeping chronicle examines the scapegoating of women from the ills of society, investigates how their subjugation to sexual violence and death sent a message of control to all women, and compares this persecution of women with the enslavement and slaughter of African slaves and Native Americans. Ultimately Barstow traces the current backlash against women to its gynophobic torture-filled origins. In the process, she leaves an indelible mark on our growing understanding of the legacy of violence against women around the world.

Religion and the Decline of Magic

Everyone Knows Your Mother Is a Witch

The Witch Hunts

Shapeshifters

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Paganism, Spells, Wicca and more

The Crime of Crimes

The Hammer of Witches

This collection of trial records, laws, treatises, sermons, speeches, woodcuttings, paintings and literary texts illustrates how contemporaries from various periods have perceived alleged witches and their activities.

Argues that three million years of peace, a period when women's position in society was much higher than it is now, preceded the last six thousand years of war in which men have come to hold power.

This electronic version has been made available under a Creative Commons (BY-NC-ND) open access license. This is the first ever full book on the subject of male witches addressing incidents of witch-hunting in both Britain and Europe.

Uses feminist categories of gender analysis to critique the feminist agenda that mars many studies. Advances a more bal. Critiques historians' assumptions about witch-hunting, challenging the marginalisation of male witches by feminist and other historians. Shows that large numbers of men were accused of witchcraft in their own right, in some regions, more men were accused than women. It uses feminist categories of gender analysis to challenge recent arguments and current orthodoxies providing a more balanced and complex view of witch-hunting and ideas about witches in their

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gendered forms than has hitherto been available. This book sets the notorious European witch trials in the widest and deepest possible perspective and traces the major historiographical developments of witchcraft
A Complete Translation of the Malleus Maleficarum

A Novel

A History of Persecution

Heretic, Mystic, Shaman

An Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook

The Witchcraft Reader

New History of the European Witch Hunts, a

A TIMES, SUNDAY TIMES AND BBC HISTORY HISTORY BOOK OF THE YEAR 2021 'The best and most enjoyable kind of history writing' Hilary Mantel 'A bona fide historical classic' Sunday Times Simply one of the best history books I have ever read' BBC History In the frontier town of Springfield in 1651, peculiar things begin to happen. Precious food spoils, livestock ails and property vanishes. People suffer fits and are plagued by strange visions and dreams. Children sicken and die. As tensions rise, rumours spread of witches and heretics, and the community becomes tangled in a web of spite, distrust and denunciation. The finger of suspicion falls on a young couple struggling to make a home and feed their children: Hugh Parsons the irascible brickmaker and his troubled wife, Mary. It will be their downfall. The Ruin of All Witches tells the dark, real-life folktale of witch-hunting in a remote Massachusetts plantation. These were the turbulent beginnings of colonial America, when English settlers' dreams of love and liberty, of founding a 'city on a hill', gave way to paranoia and terror,

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enmity and rage. Drawing on uniquely rich, previously neglected source material, Malcolm Gaskill brings to life a New World existence steeped in the divine and the diabolic, in curses and enchantments, and precariously balanced between life and death. Through the gripping micro-history of a family tragedy, we glimpse an entire society caught in agonized transition between supernatural obsessions and the age of enlightenment. We see, in short, the birth of the modern world. 'A great story, exquisitely told. This book is history at its illuminative best' The Times 'As compelling as a campfire story ... Gaskill brings this sinister past vividly to life' Erica Wagner, Financial Times

Tens of thousands of people were persecuted and put to death as witches between 1400 and 1700 – the great age of witch hunts. Why did the witch hunts arise, flourish and decline during this period? What purpose did the persecutions serve? Who was accused, and what was the role of magic in the hunts? This important reassessment of witch panics and persecutions in Europe and colonial America both challenges and enhances existing interpretations of the phenomenon. Locating its origins 400 years earlier in the growing perception of threats to Western Christendom, Robert Thurston outlines the development of a 'persecuting society' in which campaigns against scapegoats such as heretics, Jews, lepers and homosexuals set the scene for the later witch hunts. He examines the creation of the witch stereotype and looks at how the early trials and hunts evolved, with the shift from accusatory to inquisitorial court procedures and reliance upon confessions leading to the increasing use of torture.

Witches and Neighbours is a highly original and unconventional analysis of a fascinating historical phenomenon. Unlike other studies of the subject which focus on the mechanisms of persecution, this book presents a rich

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picture of witchcraft as an all-pervasive aspect of life in early modern Europe. This book is not available from Blackwell in the United States and the Philippines. A fascinating and accessible account of the central role of witchcraft in early modern Europe. A standard work on the subject of witchcraft now available in a revised edition with an updated bibliography. Presents an unconventional interpretation of the role and influence of witchcraft Argues that witchcraft was as complex and changing as the society of which it formed a vital part. Draws on a range of original sources to vividly illustrate the arguments.

Witchcraft, Witch-hunting, and Politics in Early Modern England offers a wide-ranging and original overview of the subject of witchcraft and its place in English society, covering the period from the beginning of witch trials in the early years of the reign of Elizabeth I through to the repeal of the Witchcraft Statute in 1736. In contrast to other approaches to the subject, which have tended to focus on the origins of witchcraft in gender and/or socio-economic explanations, this volume situates belief in witchcraft and witch-hunting within the context of the political and religious debates of the period, shedding new light on the subject through a series of original case studies based on extensive archival research.

The Lancashire Witch Craze

Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans

The Witch in the Western Imagination

The History Of Witchcraft

Demonology and Politics in France, 1560-1620

A History

Instruments of Darkness

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel; OCR Level: AS/A-level Subject: History First teaching:

September 2015 First exams: Summer 2016 (AS);

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Mona Chollet's In Defense of Witches is a "brilliant, well-documented" celebration (Le Monde) by an acclaimed French feminist of the

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witch as a symbol of female rebellion and independence in the face of misogyny and persecution. Centuries after the infamous witch hunts that swept through Europe and America, witches continue to hold a unique fascination for many: as fairy tale villains, practitioners of pagan religion, as well as feminist icons. Witches are both the ultimate victim and the stubborn, elusive rebel. But who were the women who were accused and often killed for witchcraft? What types of women have centuries of terror censored, eliminated, and repressed? Celebrated feminist writer Mona Chollet explores three types of women who were accused of witchcraft and persecuted: the independent woman, since widows and celibates were particularly targeted; the childless woman, since the time of the hunts marked the end of tolerance for those who claimed to control their fertility; and the elderly woman, who has always been an object of at best, pity, and at worst, horror. Examining modern society, Chollet concludes that these women continue to be harrassed and oppressed. Rather than being a brief moment in history, the persecution of witches is an example of society's seemingly eternal misogyny, while women today are direct heirs to those who were hunted down and killed for their thoughts and actions. With fiery prose and arguments that range from the scholarly to the cultural, *In Defense of Witches* seeks to unite the mythic image of the witch with modern women who seek

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to live their lives on their own terms. *The Malleus Maleficarum*, first published in 1486–7, is the standard medieval text on witchcraft and it remained in print throughout the early modern period. Its descriptions of the evil acts of witches and the ways to exterminate them continue to contribute to our knowledge of early modern law, religion and society. Mackay's highly acclaimed translation, based on his extensive research and detailed analysis of the Latin text, is the only complete English version available, and the most reliable. Now available in a single volume, this key text is at last accessible to students and scholars of medieval history and literature. With detailed explanatory notes and a guide to further reading, this volume offers a unique insight into the fifteenth-century mind and its sense of sin, punishment and retribution.

They flew through the air, consorted with animals, and made pacts with the devil. Witches were as unquestioned as alchemy or astrology in medieval England; yet it wasn't until the sixteenth century that laws were passed against them. Now a leading historian of crime and society in early modern England offers the first scholarly overview of witchcraft in that country in over eighty years, examining how tensions between church, state, and society produced widespread distrust among fearful people. *Instruments of Darkness* takes readers back to a time when

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witchcraft was accepted as reality at all levels of society. James Sharpe draws on legal records and other sources to reveal the interplay between witchcraft beliefs in different parts in the social hierarchy. Along the way, he offers disturbing accounts of witch-hunts, such as the East Anglian trials of 1645-47 that sent more than 100 people to the gallows. He tells how poor, elderly women were most often accused of witchcraft and challenges feminist claims that witch-hunts represented male persecution by showing that many accusers were themselves women. Prosecution of witches gradually declined with increasing skepticism among jurists, new religious attitudes, and scientific advances that explained away magic. But for two hundred years, thousands participated in one of history's most notorious persecutions. Instruments of Darkness is a fascinating case study that deepens our understanding of this age-old cultural phenomenon and sheds new light on one society in which it occurred.

A New History of the European Witch Hunts

Life and Death in the New World

Witch Hunts in the Western World

Invisible Women of Prehistory

Witchcraft, Witch-Hunting, and Politics in Early Modern England

Witchcraft: A Very Short Introduction

The Age of the Witch Hunts

The Witchcraft Reader offers a wide range

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of historical perspectives on the subject of witchcraft in a single, accessible volume, exploring the enduring hold that it has on human imagination. The witch trials of the late Middle Ages and the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have inspired a huge and expanding scholarly literature, as well as an outpouring of popular representations. This fully revised and enlarged third edition brings together many of the best and most important works in the field. It explores the origins of witchcraft prosecutions in learned and popular culture, fears of an imaginary witch cult, the role of religious division and ideas about the Devil, the gendering of suspects, the making of confessions and the decline of witch beliefs. An expanded final section explores the various "revivals" and images of witchcraft that continue to flourish in contemporary Western culture. Equipped with an extensive introduction that foregrounds significant debates and themes in the study of witchcraft, providing the extracts with a critical context, The Witchcraft Reader is essential reading for anyone with an interest in this fascinating subject.

This bestseller presents a remarkable series of new insights into the Lancashire Witch Craze. By placing the events in their wider European context, it explains far more

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satisfactorily than ever before exactly why these disturbing events occurred.

A collection of essays from leading scholars in the field that collectively study the rise and fall of witchcraft prosecutions in the various kingdoms and territories of Europe and in English, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies in the Americas.

How the persecution of witches reflected the darker side of the central social, political, and cultural developments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is the first book to consider the general course and significance of the European witch craze of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries since H.R. Trevor-Roper's classic and pioneering study appeared some fifteen years ago. Drawing upon the advances in historical and social-science scholarship of the past decade and a half, Joseph Klaits integrates the recent appreciations of witchcraft in regional studies, the history of popular culture, anthropology, sociology, and psychology to better illuminate the place of witch hunting in the context of social, political, economic and religious change. "In all, Klaits has done a good job. Avoiding the scandalous and sensational, he has maintained throughout, with sensitivity and economy, an awareness of the uniqueness of the theories and persecutions

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that have fascinated scholars now for two decades and are unlikely to lose their appeal in the foreseeable future.” —American Historical Review “This is a commendable synthesis whose time has come . . . fascinating.” —The Sixteenth Century Journal “Comprehensive and clearly written . . . An excellent book.” —Choice “Impeccable research and interpretation stand behind this scholarly but not stultifying account.” —Booklist “A good, solid, general treatment.” —Erik Midelfort, C. Julian Bishko Professor Emeritus of History and Religious Studies, University of Virginia “A well written, easy to read book, and the bibliography is a good source of secondary materials for further reading.” —Journal of American Folklore

**The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe
The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America
Witch Craze**

Joan of Arc

**Access to History: The Witchcraze of the 16th and 17th Centuries Second Edition
The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft**

Witchcraft in Early North America

This unique anthology is the first to provide a multicultural perspective on witchcraft from the 15th to 18th century. Featuring primary documents as well as

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scholarly interpretations, *Witches of the Atlantic World* builds upon information regarding both Christian and non-Christian beliefs about possession and the demonic.

Elaine G. Breslaw draws on Native American, African, South American, and African-American sources, as well as the European and New England heritage, to illuminate the ways in which witchcraft in early America was an attempt to understand and control evil and misfortune in the New World. Organized into sections on folklore and magic, diabolical possession, Christian perspectives, and the question of gender, the volume includes selections by Cotton Mather, Matthew Hopkins, and Samuel Willard, among others; Salem trial testimonies; and commentary by a host of distinguished scholars.

Together the materials demonstrate how the Protestant and Catholic traditions shaped American concepts, and how multicultural aspects played a key role in the Salem experience. *Witches of the Atlantic World* sheds new light on one of the most perplexing aspects of American history and provides important background for the continued scholarly and popular interest in witches and witchcraft today.

In 1645, Matthew Hopkins and John Stearne exploited the anxiety and lawlessness of the time and initiated a brutal campaign to drive out the presumed evil in their midst. Gaskill recounts the most savage witch-hunt in English history. By the fall of 1647 at least 250 people had been captured, interrogated, and tried, with more than 100 hanged.

Drawing on real historical documents but infused with the intensity of imagination, sly humor, and intellectual fire

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for which award-winning author Rivka Galchen's writing is known, *Everyone Knows Your Mother Is a Witch* is a tale for our time—the story of how a community becomes implicated in collective aggression and hysterical fear. The year is 1619, in the German duchy of Württemberg. Plague is spreading. The Thirty Years War has begun, and fear and suspicion are in the air throughout the Holy Roman Empire. In the small town of Leonberg, Katherina Kepler is accused of being a witch. An illiterate widow, Katherina is known by her neighbors for her herbal remedies and the success of her children, including her eldest, Johannes, who is the Imperial Mathematician and renowned author of the laws of planetary motion. It's enough to make anyone jealous, and Katherina has done herself no favors by being out and about and in everyone's business. So when the deranged and insipid Ursula Reinbold (or as Katherina calls her, the Werewolf) accuses Katherina of offering her a bitter, witchy drink that has made her ill, Katherina is in trouble. Her scientist son must turn his attention from the music of the spheres to the job of defending his mother. Facing the threat of financial ruin, torture, and even execution, Katherina tells her side of the story to her friend and next-door neighbor Simon, a reclusive widower imperiled by his own secrets. Provocative and entertaining, Galchen's bold new novel touchingly illuminates a society, and a family, undone by superstition, the state, and the mortal convulsions of history.

Jennet Preston and the Lancashire Witches, 1612
The Ruin of All Witches