

**ELCS4008:
Witches in History, Fiction and Scholarship**

Professor Susanne Kord

Tel.: 33103; Room 102, 17 Gordon Sq.;
susanne.kord@ucl.ac.uk



I. Course Description: This course focuses on three aspects of witches and the witch persecutions:

- **historical:** the "Burning Times" in early modern Europe and witch-hunting in Colonial America;
- **literary:** the depiction of the witch in fairy tales (the Grimm-tradition) and in 'serious' literature, particularly literature that purports to rely on historical sources (from Hans Sachs to Arthur Miller);
- and **scholarly:** the explanations that scholars have sought for one of the most horrific instances of mass destruction in world history.

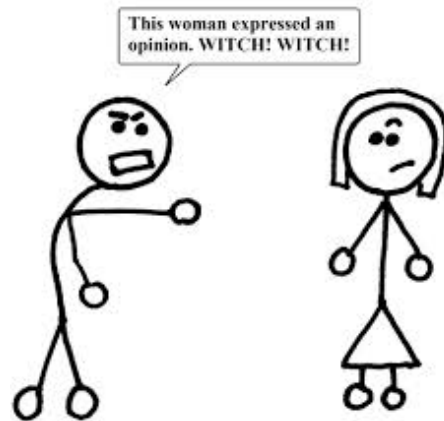
II. Course Goals: Unlike the Holocaust, to which the witch-hunts are frequently compared, the persecution of witches cannot be viewed as a relatively brief and unusually violent historical anomaly, since it continued over several hundred years; they cannot be explained in the context of national specificity since they spanned almost the entire European continent and migrated to early America; nor can these events be blamed on any single "madman" (Hitler). As a historical phenomenon, the witch persecution defies simplistic explanations and thus lends itself particularly well to the kinds of investigation this course intends.



Students will be exposed to a variety of text types (historical, theological/ philosophical, fictional, cinematic and scholarly) spanning several hundreds of years, with the goal of gaining a broad historical background of the witch-hunts and the historical representation of witches. The variety of the readings, from trial records to religious tracts to representations in literature, pop culture and scholarship, will expose students to historical sources as well as scholarly criticism and, more importantly, a variety of argumentation styles and authorial 'positionalities' with regard to the representation of witches. Reading for representation as well as information, students will be encouraged to critique historical as well as fictional sources and investigate the truth-claims of both (what are the underlying assumptions of historical accounts; which historical accounts are more credible, which less, and why; to what extent can fiction claim to represent any empirical 'truth'; what purposes does each kind of narrative serve?).

Knowledge of original/contemporary writings on the witch-hunts, by both hunters and defenders is designed not only to expose students to unmediated historical source material, but also to encourage them to think of themselves as scholars and to

enable them to critique secondary sources. Central to the discussion will be questions of perception and reception of witches, as a literary topos as well as a historical reality interpreted by the author: the question how and why the witch and the witch-hunt became 'art,' which historical aspects may have inspired writers to take up this theme, how history shaped imagination in some instances (and how history, in turn, was re-imagined in other instances) and what symbolic value was (and is) attached to witches in literature throughout the ages.



The course thus aims to

- hone students' critical and interpretive skills by exposing them to a variety of materials (historical, theological/philosophical, literary, cinematic, documentary and scholarly sources)
- encourage students to work in an interdisciplinary fashion by engaging both history and aesthetics. The benefit for students will be to examine the underlying assumptions and methodologies of a discipline in comparison with those of another. The course attempts to branch out, to some degree, beyond history into historiography and beyond literature into literary criticism, in an effort to raise students' awareness of the assumptions behind the writing of others and thus to become as conscious of their own assumptions while writing as possible.

III. Course Assessment: Undergraduate students only: There will be one 3 hr. desk examination (100% of final mark, to be scheduled during Term III). You must address all three subject areas listed below in the exam, and you may not write in any area more than once:

- Assessment of original historical sources and trial records; critical evaluation of contemporary arguments both in favour of and opposed to the witch-hunts.
- Critical assessment of literary or cinematic sources, or of how historical material relating to the witch-hunts, including trial records, was adapted in literary or cinematic texts (1-2 of students' choice).
- Critical analysis of an argument presented in one secondary source, focusing on scholarly attempts to 'explain' the witch-hunts as a historical occurrence. Assessment of usage of historical sources (which are used and how, which are ignored and why, how scholarly argumentation adapts, represents, deviates from, or contradicts its source materials).

MA students write a 5,000-word essay on a subject to be determined in consultation with the tutor, and do not sit the examination.



Weekly Syllabus:

1 Introduction (Lecture): Witches in History and Art

2 Trial and Interrogation Records of Witch Trials:

The Confessions of the Chelmsford Witches (Essex, 1566)

The Prosecutions at Trier (Germany, 1581-93)

The Prosecutions at Bamberg (Germany, 1628)

The Prosecutions at Würzburg (Germany, 1629)

The Trial of Suzanne Gaudry (France, 1652)

Trial Records of Tituba the Indian (Salem, Massachusetts, 1691-92)

The Recantation of the Salem Village Jurors (Salem, Massachusetts, 1693)

3 Texts by Witchhunters:

Pope Innocent VIII, 'Summis desiderantis affectibus' (1484)

Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger, *The Malleus Maleficarum* (*The Hammer of Witches*, 1487, excerpts)

Cotton Mather, 'A Discourse on Witches' (1689, excerpts)

4 Texts by Doubters and Sceptics:

Reginald Scot, 'Discoverie of Witchcraft' (1584, excerpts)

Alonso de Salazar Frias, 'Dissenting Verdict in a Witch Trial' (1610)

Friedrich Spee von Lengenfeld, *Cautio Criminalis* (1631, excerpts)

Balthasar Bekker, *The Enchanted World* (1690, excerpts)

Robert Calef, *More Wonders of the Invisible World* (1700, excerpts)

5 Witches in Early Literature:

Hans Sachs, 'Witchfinding' (1556)

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (1607, excerpt)

Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm: 'Hansel and Gretel' (1st and 3rd ed.); 'Brier Rose'; 'Snow White'

Reading Week

6 Witches in Twentieth-Century Drama and Film:

Arthur Miller, *The Crucible* (1953)

Julia Klein, 'Pale Fire of a New Crucible' (review, 2002)

Arthur Miller, 'Looking for the Conscience' (commentary, 2003)

7 Witches in Twentieth-Century Drama and Film:

Caryl Churchill, *Vinegar Tom* (1976)

Film: *The Blair Witch Project* (1999)

Film: *Black Death* (2010)

8 Witches in Scholarly Debate:

Cohn, 'The Myth of Satan and His Human Servants' (1970)

Karlsen, 'Handmaidens of the Devil' (1989)

Barstow, 'The Structure of a Witchhunt' (1994)

9 Witches in Scholarly Debate:

Starhawk, 'The Burning Times' (1982)

Purkiss, 'A Holocaust of One's Own' (1996)

Bovenschen, 'The Contemporary Witch, the Historical Witch, and the Witch Myth' (1978)

10 Conclusions

Witches in History, Myth and Fiction: Selected Bibliography



Please note that some of these sources are in German

- Ankarloo, Bengt, and Stuart Clark. "Introduction." Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, Brian P. Levack, and Roy Porter, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. London: Athlone P, 1999. vii-xii.
- Bader, Guido. *Die Hexenprozesse in der Schweiz*. Affoltern: Weiss, 1945.
- Barstow, Anne Llewellyn. *Witchcraze: a new history of the European witch hunts*. London: Pandora, 1994.
- Behringer, Wolfgang. "Der 'Bayerische Hexenkrieg.' Die Debatte am Ende der Hexenprozesse in Deutschland." *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung*. Ed. Sönke Lorenz and Dieter R. Bauer. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. 287-313.
- . *Hexenverfolgung in Bayern: Volksmagie, Glaubenseifer und Staatsräson in der Frühen Neuzeit*. München: Oldenbourg, 1988.
- . *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe*. Trans. J. C. Grayson and David Lederer. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- , ed. *Hexen und Hexenprozesse in Deutschland*. München: dtv, 1988.
- Bösken, Clemens-Peter. *Hexenprozeß Gerresheim 1737/38: Die letzte Hexenverbrennung im Rheinland*. Düsseldorf: Grupello, 1996.
- Bovenschen, Silvia, Jeannine Blackwell, Johanna Moore, and Beth Weckmueller. 'The Contemporary Witch, the Historical Witch and the Witch Myth: The Witch, Subject of the Appropriation of Nature and Object of the Domination of Nature.' *New German Critique*, No. 15 (Autumn, 1978), pp. 82-119.
- Brauner, Sigrid, *Fearless wives and frightened shrews : the construction of the witch in early modern Germany*. Amherst : University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.
- Brink, Jean, R., Allison Coudert, and Maryanne C. Horowitz, eds. *The Politics of gender in early modern Europe*. Kirksville, Mo.: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1989.
- Cawthorne, Nigel. *Witch Hunt: History of a Persecution*. Slough: Arcturus, 2003.
- Clifton, Chas. *Her hidden children: the rise of Wicca and paganism in America*.

- Lanham, MD; Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2006.
- Cohn, Norman. *Europe's inner demons: an enquiry inspired by the great witch-hunt*. London: Chatto, Heinemann, for Sussex UP, 1975.
- Coss, Richard G. "Reflections on the Evil Eye." *The Evil Eye*. Ed. Alan Dundes. New York, London: Garland, 1981. 181-91.
- Coudert, Allison P, "The Myth of the Improved Status of Protestant Women: The Case of the Witchcraze," in *Articles on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology*, ed. Brian P. Levack. New York: Garland Publishing, 1992. 61-89.
- Davies, Owen. "The decline in the popular belief in witchcraft & magic." Diss. University of Lancaster, 1995.
- . *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture, 1736-1951*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999.
- Douglas, Mary, ed., *Witchcraft: Confessions and Accusations*, London: Tavistock Publications, 1970.
- Dundes, Alan, ed. *The Evil Eye*. New York, London: Garland, 1981.
- Evidences of the Kingdom of Darkness: Being A Collection of authentic and entertaining Narratives of the real Existence and Appearance of Ghosts, Demons, and Spectres: Together with Several wonderful Instances of the EFFECTS of WITCHCRAFT. To which is prefixed, An Account of HAUNTED HOUSES, and subjoined a Treatise on teh Effects of Magic*. London: T. Evans, 1770.
- Friend, John Albert Newton. *Demonology, Sympathetic Magic and Witchcraft. A study of superstition as it persists in man and affects him in a scientific age*. London: Charles Griffin & Co.: 1961.
- Gestrich, Andreas. "Pietismus und Aberglaube: Zum Zusammenhang von popularem Pietismus und dem Ende der Hexenverfolgung im 18. Jahrhundert." *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung*. Ed. Sönke Lorenz and Dieter R. Bauer. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. 269-86.
- Geyer-Kordesch, Johanna. "Whose Enlightenment? Medicine, Witchcraft, Melancholia and Pathology." *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology* Vol. 6: *Witchcraft in the Modern World*. Ed. Brian P. Levack. New York, London: Routledge, 2001. 131-47.
- Gijswijt-Hofstra, Marijke. "Witchcraft after the Witch-Trials." Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, Brian P. Levack, and Roy Porter, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. London: Athlone P, 1999. 95-189.
- , Brian P. Levack, and Roy Porter, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. London: Athlone P, 1999.
- Godbeer, Richard. *Escaping Salem: The Other Witch Hunt of 1692*. New York, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005.
- Grießhammer, Birke, ed. *Drutenjagd in Franken, 16. – 18. Jahrhundert*. Eyrbaum: Wagner, 1999.
- Harmening, Dieter. *Zauberei im Abendland: Vom Anteil der Gelehrten am Wahn der Leute. Skizzen zur Geschichte des Aberglaubens*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1991.
- Harris, Anthony. *Witch-Hunt: The Great Essex Witch Scare of 1582*. Romford: Ian Henry, 2001.
- Hasler, Eveline. *Anna Göldin: Letzte Hexe*. 6th ed. Zürich: Benziger, 1991.
- Haustein, Jörg. "Bibelauslegung und Bibelkritik: Ansätze zur Überwindung der Hexenverfolgung." *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung*. Ed. Sönke Lorenz and Dieter R. Bauer. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. 249-67.

- Hexenwahn: Ängste der Neuzeit*, Berlin: Deutsches Historisches Museum, 2002
- Higley, Sarah L., and Jeffrey A. Weinstock, eds. *Nothing that is: millennial cinema and the Blair Witch controversies*. Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State UP; London : Eurospan, 2003.
- Jones, Louis C. "The Evil Eye Among European-Americans." *The Evil Eye*. Ed. Alan Dundes. New York, London: Garland, 1981. 150-68.
- Kamenetsky, Christa. *The brothers Grimm & their critics : folktales and the quest for meaning*. Athens: Ohio UP, 1992.
- Kapferer, Bruce, ed. *Beyond Rationalism: Rethinking Magic, Witchcraft, and Sorcery*. New York & Oxford: Berghahn, 2003.
- Karlsen, Carol F. *The devil in the shape of a woman: witchcraft in colonial New England*. New York; London: Norton, 1987.
- Klaniczay, Gábor. "The Decline of Witches and the Rise of Vampires under the Eighteenth-Century Habsburg Monarchy." *Witch-Hunting in Continental Europe: Local and Regional Studies*. Ed. Brian P. Levack. New York & London: Garland, 1992. 262-86.
- König, Emil B, *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse*, Köln: Komet, 2003.
- Kors, Alan Charles, and Edward Peters, eds. *Witchcraft in Europe, 400-1700: a documentary history*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
- . *Witchcraft in Europe, 1100-1700: a documentary history*. London: Dent, 1973.
- Labouvie, Eva. *Verbotene Künste: Volksmagie und ländlicher Aberglaube in den Dorfgemeinden des Saarraumes (16.-19. Jahrhundert)*. St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1992.
- Larner, Christina. *Witchcraft and religion: the politics of popular belief*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1984,1985.
- Lehmann, Heinrich Ludewig. *Freundschaftliche und vertrauliche Briefe, den so genannten sehr berühmten Hexenhandel zu Glarus betreffend, von Heinrich Ludewig Lehmann, Candidat der Gottesgelehrtheit*. 2 Hefte. Zürich: Johann Caspar Füeßly, 1783.
- Levack , Brian P. "The Decline and End of Witchcraft Prosecutions." Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, Brian P. Levack, and Roy Porter, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. London: Athlone P, 1999. 1-93.
- . *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*. London: Longman, 1987.
- , ed. *Witch-Hunting in Continental Europe: Local and Regional Studies*. New York & London: Garland, 1992.
- , ed. *Witchcraft, Women and Society*. New York & London: Garland, 1992.
- Lorenz, Sönke. "Die letzten Hexenprozesse in den Spruchakten der Juristenfakultäten: Versuch einer Beschreibung." *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung*. Ed. Sönke Lorenz and Dieter R. Bauer. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. 227-47.
- , and Dieter R. Bauer, eds. *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995.
- Mantzel, Ernst Johann Friedrich. *Ob wohl noch Hexenprozesse entstehen möchten*. Rostock: n. p., 1738.
- Meerlo, Joost A. M. *Intuition and the Evil Eye: The Natural History of a Superstition*. Wassenaar: Servire, 1971.

- Memminger, Anton. *Das verhexte Kloster. Nach den Akten dargestellt*. Würzburg: Memminger, 1904.
- Moeller, Katrin, and Burghart Schmidt, eds., *Realität und Mythos: Hexenverfolgung und Rezeptionsgeschichte*. Hamburg: DOBU, 2003.
- Nathan, Debbie. *Satan's Silence: Ritual Abuse and the Making of a Modern American Witch Hunt*. New York: Basic Books, 1995.
- Porter, Roy. "Witchcraft and Magic in Enlightenment, Romantic and Liberal Thought." Marijke Gijswijt-Hofstra, Brian P. Levack, and Roy Porter, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. London: Athlone P, 1999. 191-274.
- Pott, Martin. *Aufklärung und Aberglaube: Die deutsche Frühaufklärung im Spiegel ihrer Aberglaubenskritik*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992.
- . "Aufklärung und Hexenaberglaube: Philosophische Ansätze zur Überwindung der Teufelspakttheorie in der deutschen Frühaufklärung." *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung*. Ed. Sönke Lorenz and Dieter R. Bauer. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. 183-202.
- Priestley, Chris. *Witch Hunt*. London: Hodder Children's, 2003.
- Purkiss, Diane. *The witch in history: early modern and twentieth-century representations*. London: Routledge, 1996.
- Quaife, G. R. (Geoffrey Robert). *Godly zeal and furious rage: the witch in early modern Europe*. London: Croom Helm, 1987.
- Robbins, Barney R. *A Dissertation on the Evil Eye*. New York: privately printed, 1934.
- Roper, Lyndal. *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2004.
- Scholz Williams, Gerhild. *Defining dominion: the discourses of magic and witchcraft in early modern France and Germany*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 1995.
- Seligmann, S., *Der böse Blick und Verwandtes. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Aberglaubens aller Zeiten und Völker*. 2 vols. Berlin: Hermann Barsdorf, 1910.
- Starhawk. *Dreaming the dark: magic, sex & politics*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1982.
- Stolz, Alban. *The Witch-Mania of the Learned World*. London: Derby, 1872.
- Thomasius, Christian. *De Crimine Magiae*. Halle: 1701.
- . *Kurtze Lehr-Sätze von dem Laster der Zauberey*. Halle: 1705.
- . *De origine ac progressu processus inquisitorii contra sagas*. Halle: 1712.
- . *Über die Folter: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Folter*. Ed. and trans. Rolf Lieberwirth. Weimar: Böhlau, 1960.
- . *Über die Hexenprozesse*. Ed. Rolf Lieberwirth. Weimar: Böhlau, 1986.
- Trusen, Winfried. "Rechtliche Grundlagen der Hexenprozesse und ihrer Beendigung." *Das Ende der Hexenverfolgung*. Ed. Sönke Lorenz and Dieter R. Bauer. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. 203-26.
- Weisman, Richard. *Witchcraft, magic, and religion in 17th-century Massachusetts*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984.
- Wolf, Hans-Jürgen. *Geschichte der Hexenprozesse: Holocaust und Massenpsychose vom 16. – 18. Jahrhundert*. Erlensee: EFB, 1995.
- Zagolla, Robert. "Die Folter: Mythos und Realität eines rechtsgeschichtlichen Phänomens." *Realität und Mythos: Hexenverfolgung und Rezeptionsgeschichte*. Ed. Katrin Moeller and Burghart Schmidt. Hamburg: DOBU, 2003. 122-49.