History 1V
Witches, Witchcraft, and Witchhunts
(A “W” course)

Why has belief in witches and witchcraft been found so widely throughout history? What were central doctrines about witchcraft and how did beliefs vary over time and space? Under what conditions were witches imagined as female? How was witchcraft linked to religion, magic, and demonic possession? What were the relations between elite and popular witch beliefs? Why did belief in witchcraft die out in some places and survive in others? Do earlier witch crazes help explain modern “witchhunts”?

This seminar will consider these and related issues by close attention to primary sources and recent historical studies. We will devote particular attention to conceptual and historiographical issues, to careful reading and informed discussion, to developing research skills, to analytical and expository writing, to revising, editing, and shaping explanations. Each student will develop expertise on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor and pursued through a number of research and writing steps culminating in a report delivered both in class and in a final paper. Each student will have and be a partner who will provide close critiques of the various written assignments and the culminating report. Critiques will engage with both the content and the form (mechanics, style, scholarly apparatus, etc.) of the paper being critiqued.

The requirements for the seminar include:
1) Regular, on-time attendance in class.*
2) Informed, consistent, and respectful participation in the weekly discussions.
3) A prospectus of at least 5 typed pages on the topic you have chosen to study during this semester, due at the beginning of class on 6 February. Your topic MUST be approved by me no later than 5 February. A full explanation of the assignment is posted on Blackboard.
4) A critique of at least 2 typed pages of your partner’s prospectus, due at the beginning of class on 13 February. A separate posting gives full details.
5) A bibliography and revised prospectus, totaling at least 7 typed pages, due at the beginning of class on 20 February. A separate posting gives full details.
6) A critique of at least 2 typed pages of your partner’s bibliography and revised prospectus, due at the beginning of class on 27 February.
7) In-class oral presentation, due in class on 6 March. Details are in the separate assignment.
8) An historiographical essay of at least 5 typed pages, due at the beginning of class on 20 March. A separate posting gives full details.

9) A critique of at least 2 typed pages of your partner’s historiographical essay, due at the beginning of class on 27 March.

10) A first draft of your entire paper, due at the beginning of class on 10 April.

11) A critique of at least 2 typed pages of your partner’s first draft, due at 1.15 pm on 17 April.

12) A report on your paper and a critique of at least 2 typed pages of your partner’s report. Your report will be delivered orally in class on either 24 April or 1 May. Your critique will be delivered orally in class on the other day. A separate posting gives full details.

13) The final draft of your paper, of at least 15 pages, due at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, 9 May.

There is no hour test and no final examination.

*The history department has implemented the following policy on attendance: Students are required to attend all classes for the successful completion of the course. Unexcused absences will result in a lower grade.

During our first meeting, we will discuss the paper assignments and the selection of the specialized topics on which we will each develop expertise during the semester, and organize the seminar. Thereafter, weekly discussions will be based on common reading and/or viewing, supplemented at times by readings of your choice from supplementary lists. To facilitate discussions, every student will be responsible for circulating at least two focused, informed questions to the entire class (and subsequently posting them on Blackboard) by 7 p.m. on Sunday.

Every student should buy the following paperbacks:

Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze* (Yale)

*The Witchcraft Sourcebook*, ed. Brian P. Levack (Routledge)

*Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Merry E. Wiesner (Houghton-Mifflin)

Suggested:


This course, like any other, is premised on mutual respect and honesty. Thus I expect that the work you submit is your own. Plagiarism will be severely penalized: any work containing plagiarized material will be granted the grade of no credit and may subject you to prosecution before the CJC. In order to clarify the issue of academic honesty, I will distribute copies of the History Department's guidelines. When in doubt, check with me.
SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. (23 January) What was Witchcraft? A First Discussion
   Reading:
   *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, docs. 1, 4
   *Dictionary of the History of Ideas* on-line, article “witchcraft”
   [http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv4-71](http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv4-71)

   Some topics for discussion:
   - How has witchcraft been defined? Who have been identified as witches? What was a witch craze or a witchhunt? How should we study these topics?

   During the final part of the seminar, we will meet with Anne Garrison, the Humanities Librarian, in the McCabe computer classroom, where she will give us a presentation on library research methods.

2. (30 January) Europe: Medieval Foundations and Early Modern Elaborations
   Reading:
   *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, docs. 8, 14-16, 18-19, 26

3. (6 February) Magic and (vs.?) Witchcraft
   Reading:
   - Roper, *Witch Craze*, Preface, Prologue
   - *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, docs. 3, 6, 9, 11-12
   - *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 34-41 (Williams)

   Prospectus DUE at beginning of class (see requirement #3 above)

4. (13 February)
   Reading: Demonology and Diabolism, Sabbats and Satan
   - Roper, *Witch Craze*, Part II (chaps. 3-5)
   - *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, docs. 7, 13, 17, 20-21, 44-48, 50
   - *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 10, 15-24, 41-49, 148 (woodcut, Clark, Stevens, woodcut)

   Critique of prospectus DUE at beginning of class (see requirement #4 above)
5. (20 February) Who Were Identified as Witches, and Why?
   Reading:
   - Roper, *Witch Craze*, Part III (chaps. 6-7)
   - *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, doc. 23
   - *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, Parts II and IV (pp. 50-97, 148-199)

   Bibliography and revised prospectus DUE at beginning of class (see requirement #5 above)

6. (27 February) Prosecutions, Confessions, Punishments
   Reading:
   - Roper, *Witch Craze*, Part I (chaps. 1-2)
   - *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, docs. 2, 10, 24-42
   - *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, Part III (pp. 98-147)

   Critique of bibliography and revised prospectus DUE at beginning of class (see requirement #6 above)

7. (6 March) Witches, Witchcraft, and Witch Hunting in Context
   Reading:
   - On-line sources (see supplementary assignment sheet)

   In-class oral presentation (see requirement #7 above)

   SPRING VACATION

8. (20 March) Visual and Dramatic Representations
   Viewing:
   - *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, docs. 4-5, 58-61
   - Films or literary works chosen from list distributed separately

   Historiographical essay DUE at beginning of class (see requirement #8 above)

9. (27 March) Skepticism, Decline, and Survival
   Reading:
   - Roper, *Witch Craze*, Part IV (chaps. 8-10, Epilogue)
   - *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, docs. 51-57
   - [http://www.religioustolerance.org/witchcra.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/witchcra.htm) [US: Wicca; information, also commercial products]
   - [http://www.witchvox.com/xbasics.html](http://www.witchvox.com/xbasics.html) [US; mainly information]
   - [http://www.witchcraft.org/](http://www.witchcraft.org/) [British; magazine plus information]

   Critique of historiographical essay DUE at beginning of class (see requirement #9 above)
10. (3 April) Witchcraft in the Americas
   Reading:
   *Witchcraft Sourcebook*, doc. 22, 43, 49
   Articles or chapters from the additional assignment sheet

11. (10 April) African and Asian Witchcraft
   Reading:
   Articles or chapters from the assignment sheet distributed separately
   **First Draft DUE at beginning of class (see requirement #10, above)**

12. (17 April) **NO CLASS**
   Student appointments to discuss progress on research paper
   **Critique of first draft (see requirement #111, above) to be mailed to your partner by 1.15 pm today.**

13. (24 April) Reports
   **See requirement #12, above**

14. (1 May) Reports
   **See requirement #12, above**

9 May, 5 p. m. **Final Drafts DUE (see requirement #13, above)**