

The European Witch Craze
History 640 (3 units)
Spring 2010
MW 12:10 – 1:25
SCI 268



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This proseminar will examine witchcraft and the occult in the early modern world. The readings will focus on early modern Europe, but students may write their research papers on supernatural topics in other eras in Europe or in other world areas in the early modern period. We will be interested not only in the European witch hunts, but also other topics relating to ideas about the supernatural in this time period. Among our readings topics will be the origins and consequences of the sixteenth-century witch craze, vampires and attitudes toward the dead, religious mysticism, and the pseudo-sciences like alchemy and astrology.

This proseminar is intended for seniors or juniors who are History majors, to complete their major requirements, though graduate students are also welcome. Undergraduate students must already have completed History 300 and have upper-class standing to qualify for this course. History 300 may not be taken concurrently with this course.

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with documented disabilities must register with the DPRC to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The Disability Programs and Resource Center is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC, located in SSB 110, can be reached by telephone at 338-2724 (voice/TTY) or by e-mail at dprc@sfsu.edu.

Academic integrity is a fundamental principle of the university. Academic dishonesty, in the form of cheating or plagiarism, represents an attempt to gain an unfair advantage and it is expressly prohibited by the San Francisco State University Student Code of Conduct. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, gaining unfair access to answers to exams, fabrication of work, helping other students to cheat, etc. Plagiarism can be defined as

using another person's words or work without proper acknowledgment (see also <http://online.sfsu.edu/~rone/StudentHelp/Plagiarism.html#what> for more information on avoiding plagiarism). Students who are found to have cheated or plagiarized will be subject to discipline ranging from receiving a failing grade for the specific assignment to referral to the Office of Judicial Affairs and Student Discipline to possible suspension or expulsion. All instances of academic dishonesty are reported to the Department Chair and College Dean. Students are responsible for knowing the SFSU regulations concerning cheating and plagiarism, found in the University Bulletin and online at: <http://www.sfsu.edu/%7Ehelpdesk/docs/rules/conduct.htm>.

Goals and Objectives for the course –

In this course, we will strive to:

- Begin to analyze the primary source base and the historiography about the occult in the early modern period,
- Work together to learn how to read and interpret historical documents,
- Conduct enthusiastic and respectful discussions in the classroom,
- Produce a major research paper.

Attendance Policy –

Attendance and participation will make up 10% of your final grade for the course. You are encouraged to ask questions at any time and expected to participate in any class activity, discussion, or exercise. An attendance sheet will be passed around at the beginning of every class. You must sign the sheet in order to be counted as present. If you need to arrive late, please make sure you sign in before you leave the room at the end of class. If you need to leave early, please tell the instructor at the beginning of class. Because this is a course that relies on participation, it is crucial that you be **present and prepared** at every meeting.

The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process.

Readings –

There are four required books that will be available at the SFSU bookstore. There will also be readings that will be available on-line, through the course website. **Please bring the relevant book(s) to class when we discuss them.** On-line readings will be available in .pdf format. These can be read with Adobe Acrobat reader, which can be downloaded for free. When the readings are on-line, **please either print out the on-line excerpt or take detailed notes on the text.**

Available in the bookstore:

Barber, Paul, *Vampires, Burial, and Death: Folklore and Reality*, ISBN 978-0300048599

Ginzburg, Carlo, *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, ISBN 978-0801843860

Morton, Peter, *The Trial of Tempel Anneke: Records of a Witchcraft Trial in Brunswick, Germany, 1663*, ISBN 978-1551117065

Wiesner-Hanks, Merry, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, ISBN 978-0618474806

Course Requirements –

The focus of this course is to prepare a formal paper, based on primary source research. This paper will be due at the end of the course, during finals week. We will meet at that time to discuss the process of writing and to celebrate your achievements. Because it is the center of the course, the paper will comprise a major part of the course grade. The other half will consist of participation in class activities, discussions, and exercises, and a series of assignments designed to lead up to the final paper. Any late assignments will immediately lose points, and they will continue to drop in score the longer they are late.

If you are a graduate student, please contact me to discuss which milestone assignments you will need to complete. Your final paper should also be 20+ pp. in length.

The course grade will be determined as follows:

- Participation and attendance: 10%
- Response paper (1 – 2 pp., due weeks 2 – 4): 5%
- Worksheets (due weeks 3 – 8): 5%
- Tempel Anneke Paper (5 pp., due week 7): 10%
- Research abstract and bibliography (3 – 5 pp., due week 10): 10%
- Opening sections and outline (due week 11): 5%
- First draft (15 – 20 pp., due week 12): 10%
- Research presentation (weeks 14 – 15): 10%
- Final paper (due May 21): 35%



Syllabus –

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. **If you are absent from class**, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were absent.

WEEK 1 –	
1/25: Beginnings and Definitions	1/27: Possibilities for Paper Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, introductory lecture, sample trial record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What’s out there • How to choose a topic

Part I: The European Witch Craze

WEEK 2 –	
2/1: How do you know she’s a witch?	2/3: How did the panics start?
<p>Readings from Wiesner-Hanks, <i>Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark, Stuart. “Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe” • Zika, Charles, “The Devil’s Hoodwink: Seeing and Believing in the World of Sixteenth-Century Witchcraft” • Williams, Gerhold Scholz, “Defining Dominion: The Discourses of Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern France and Germany” • Stevens, Walter, “Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief” <p>Plus one on-line excerpt from a primary source:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger, <i>Malleus Maleficarum</i>, from Alan Kors and Edward Peters, <i>Witchcraft in Europe, 1100 – 1700: A Documentary History</i> 	<p>Readings from Wiesner-Hanks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levack, Brian, “State-building and Witch Hunting in Early Modern Europe” • Swain, J.T., “The Lancashire Witch Trials of 1612 and 1634 and the Economics of Witchcraft” • Klaniczay, Gábor, “Witch-hunting in Hungary: Social or Cultural Tensions?” • Briggs, Robin, “Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft” <p>Plus one on-line article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wolfgang Behringer, “Weather, Hunger and Fear: Origins of the European Witch-Hunts in Climate, Society, and Mentality”, from Darren Oldridge, ed., <i>The Witchcraft Reader</i>

RESPONSE PAPERS DUE (1 – 2 pp.) IN-CLASS WHEN TEXT IS DISCUSSED

WEEK 3 –	
<p>2/8: Gender and Witch Hunts</p> <p>Readings from Wiesner-Hanks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broedel, Hans Peter, “The <i>Malleus Maleficarum</i> and the Construction of Witchcraft: Theology and Popular Belief” • Roper, Lyndal, “Witchcraft and Fantasy in Early Modern Germany” • Purkiss, Diane, “Women’s Stories of Witchcraft in Early Modern England: The House, the Body, the Child” • Scully, Sally, “Marriage or a Career?: Witchcraft as an Alternative in Seventeenth-Century Venice” <p>Plus one on-line article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne Barstow, <i>Witch Craze: A New History of the European Witch Hunts</i>, ch. 1. 	<p>2/10: Research methods/How to write a paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing discussion • Topic Workshop • Topic Worksheet I due in class
WEEK 4 –	
<p>2/15: Witches as Folk Heroes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlo Ginzburg, <i>Night Battles</i>, excerpts TBA 	<p>2/17: Library class with Kendra Van Cleave</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet in Burk Hall 229
WEEK 5 –	
<p>2/22: State Budget Closure Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO CLASS 	<p>2/24: Tempel Anneke – how to read a primary source</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to read Peter Morton, <i>The Trial of Tempel Anneke</i> • Topic Worksheet II due in class

WEEK 6 –	
3/1: Tempel Anneke <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Morton, entire 	3/3: What happened in Salem? More uses for primary sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class exercise with selections from Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, <i>Salem-Village Witchcraft: A Documentary Record of Local Conflict in Colonial New England</i> • Tempel Anneke paper due in class
TEMPEL ANNEKE PAPER (5 PP.) DUE 3/3 IN CLASS	

Part II: Occult Practices in Early Modern Europe

WEEK 7 –	
3/8: Supernatural in the Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paracelsus, on-line readings • Astrology, on-line readings 	3/10: Primary Source Roundtables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Source Worksheet due in class
WEEK 8 –	
3/15: Black Magic, White Magic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tyson, Donald, <i>Three Books of Occult Philosophy, Written by Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim</i>, excerpts (on-line) 	3/17: How do we use secondary sources? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Source Worksheet due in class
WEEK 9 –	
3/22: Religious Mysticism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William James, “Mysticism”, excerpts (on-line) • St. Teresa of Avila, <i>Interior Castle</i>, excerpts (on-line) • Scholem, Gershom, ed., <i>Zohar, The Book of Splendor</i>, excerpts (on-line) • Hafez, selected poems (on-line) • Thesis Statement due in class 	3/24: Not a topic, but an argument! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thesis Statement Workshop • Discussion of how to write a research abstract and annotated bibliography

SPRING BREAK: 3/29 – 4/2	
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Part III: The (Un)Dead in Premodern Europe

WEEK 10 –	
4/5: State Budget Closure Day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO CLASS 	4/7: Vampires, Ghosts, and the (Un)Dead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings from Barber, excerpts TBA • Research Abstract and Annotated Bibliography due in class
WEEK 11 –	
4/12: Discussing the Dead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings from Barber, excerpts TBA • On-line readings from Medieval Ghost Stories 	4/14: The Occult in Popular Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class activity • Opening Sections and Outline due in class
WEEK 12 –	
4/19: The disenchantment of the world? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line readings TBA 	4/21: Revising the Draft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class revision exercise • DRAFTS DUE IN CLASS
FIRST DRAFT DUE 4/21 IN CLASS	

Part IV: Unfinished Business and Final Destinations

WEEK 13 –	
4/26: Paper Conferences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class, but individual meetings with instructor 	4/28: Paper Conferences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No class, but individual meetings with instructor
WEEK 14 –	
5/3: Research Presentations	5/5: Research Presentations
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS DUE, 5/3 – 5/12	
WEEK 15 –	
5/10: Research Presentations	5/12: Research Presentations
FINAL PAPER DUE – Friday, May 21, 10:45 – Come to class and celebrate!	

