

University of Indianapolis
School for Adult Learning
History 299-AU4 "History of Witchcraft and Magic"
Summer 2008, Session 3
3 credit hours
Monday, 6:00-9:45 p.m. Good Hall, 212

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Welcome to the "History of Witchcraft and Magic," a course which explores the origins and transformations of ideas concerning magical thinking, particularly focusing on medieval and early modern Europe. In this course you will explore elements of social, intellectual, and legal history as a means of understanding the ways in which European society viewed witchcraft and magic.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course begins by examining the background of magic and sorcery in the ancient world, continues through the expansion of heresy laws in the Middle Ages, the heyday of the Witch Trials during the early modern period, and then concludes with discussion concerning the end of the witch trials and the rise of magical spiritualism and neo-paganism in the modern era. Students are encouraged to explore their own particular areas of interest through individual research projects.

CLASS FORMAT: This class is taught in a combination lecture/discussion format with students having the opportunity to create their own individualized research project focussing on an area of particular interest. As with most history classes, this one will likely require about twice the time out of class to prepare the readings, do other assignments, and conduct research on your final project.

TEXTBOOK:

Russell, Geoffrey and Brooks Alexander. A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics and Pagans, second edition. Thames and Hudson, 2007. ISBN 0-500-28634-5 (available in the bookstore).

Additional materials may be available in xeroxed form or on reserve in the library. Please plan ahead for your individual projects as interlibrary loan material may take as long as two to three weeks to obtain.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

1. Attend class.
2. Do the assigned reading.
3. Be curious about the past.

4. Leave behind any modern preconceptions and try to enter into the context of the past.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- to explore political, religious, social, and cultural issues in a specific historical context.
- to identify and examine interrelated issues of gender, class, ethnicity, and belief.
- to highlight methodologies that can be used with both documentary and non-text sources.
- to examine critically how both perception and reality color historical experience and interpretation.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Learn about the methods of history.
- See the past connecting with the present through examining ongoing social issues.
- Develop an understanding of historical context.
- Critically analyze historical materials and interpretations.
- Enhance written and oral communication skills.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

For this course, you will be required to complete the following assignments:

- 4 reflection essays on each week's reading (worth 5% each for a total of 20%)
- 1 in-class presentation on the topic of your book review (worth 20% of your final grade)
- 1 individual research project (worth 40% of your final grade)
- the remaining 20% is based on your participation in class discussions and activities

GRADING SCALE

95-100	A
90-94	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
Below 60	F

POLICIES

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: As noted in the University Catalogue, "Plagiarism and cheating are contrary to the idea of academic integrity and are not tolerated...Students guilty of plagiarism or cheating are subject to disciplinary action that may include failure in the course involved or expulsion from the university..." Please see the academic catalogue and the Student handbook

for further details.

CITATIONS: The School for Adult Learning requires citations to be in APA style. If you have any questions about this, please see the instructor.

ABSENCES AND MISSING WORK: Attendance is required at all sessions. Because much of the course is covered in class lecture/discussion, it would be very difficult for you to make up any work missed. Missing two classes without approval from the instructor will result in you being administratively withdrawn from the course.

ADA STATEMENT: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please inform me immediately so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. Students with disability must register with the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD) in Schwitzer Center 206 (317-788-6153/www.uindy.edu/ssd) for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations. You are responsible for initiating arrangements for accommodations for tests and other assignments in collaboration with the SSD and the faculty.

OTHER COMMENTS:

In teaching this class I do not assume that you already have a strong background in European history. With the topical focus, you will gain the knowledge you need through class readings, lectures, and discussion. You will be successful if you come to the material with curiosity and an open mind about the past, and if you enjoy exploring how both perceptions and realities have changed over time—and how they have remained the same. Please let me know if there is any way I can help with your learning goals or with your experience of this class. I will be happy to set up appointment times to help you construct your research project and identify appropriate sources.

SAL Summer 2008, Session 3

HISTORY OF WITCHCRAFT AND MAGIC

COURSE SYLLABUS

- July 14** Introduction to the Course: What is Witchcraft? What is Magic?
READ: Russell and Alexander, introduction and chapter 1
In-class hand-outs
- July 21** European Witchcraft: The Middle Ages
READ: Russell and Alexander, chapters 2 and 3
*Reflection 1 due
- July 28** The Age of the Witch Trials
READ: Russell and Alexander, chapters 4, 5, and 6
*Reflection 2 due
- August 4** The Decline of Witchcraft
READ: Russell and Alexander, chapter 7
*Reflection 3 due
- August 11** Modern Sorcery and the Rise of Neo-Paganism
READ: Russell and Alexander, chapters 8, 9, and 10
*Reflection 4 due
**Presentations
***Final project due

Possible Presentation/project topics: (Others may be substituted with instructor's permission)

Ancient Egyptian Amulets

Grimoires

Roman Curses

Possessed Nuns

Early Christian Magic

Vampires

Anglo-Saxon Charms

Werewolves

Magic in the Early Medieval Penitentials

Poltergeists

Witch Trials in England

Demonologies

Witch Trials in Scotland

Golden Dawn

Witch Trials in France

Margaret Murray

Witch Trials in Scandinavia
Witch Trails in the Holy Roman Empire

Gerald Gardner
Montague Summers

Research Project/Portfolio Guidelines:

Section 1. Introduction to your topic. This is a “mini term paper” (roughly 3-5 pages long) in which you present a short summary of the content of your topic, as you have interpreted it and synthesized it from your reading and research.

Section 2. This section comprises extracts of documentary source material that pertain to your topic. These might include published trial records, statistical material, statutes, and so forth. These sources must be primary sources (i.e. from the historical time in which your research is located.)

Section 3. This section is a compilation of non-text sources which pertain to your topic. These can include pictorial representations that either are from the time represented or about the time you are researching.

Section 4. This section is analytical and interpretative. In this section you will discuss why your topic is historically significant, as well as present your analysis based on both primary and secondary reading. I would expect this section to be approximately 5-8 pages long. It should be written in an academic style, with proper citations.

Section 5. This section is a brief (around 2 pages) creative expression. This section can take many different forms, but it should focus on some type of presentation (this could be a first-person diary, letters, pictorial representation, etc.) in which you try to put yourself into the historical context of the subject you have been researching.

Section 6. Bibliography/Works cited. This may include items you have consulted as well as those from which you have quoted material. Any items in sections 3 and 4 should also be included here.