

Witchcraft.03
Fall 2003

Anthropology 490C
Seminar: Witchcraft in Anthropological Perspective

Instructor: Dr. Magliocco
Office: 240G Sierra Hall
Office Hours: TR 11:00 - 12:00; Th 4:00 - 5:00

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I. Objectives

This course explores the study of witchcraft from an anthropological perspective. "Witchcraft" has fascinated historians, anthropologists and sociologists for at least two hundred years, but there is little agreement on what it is. The word "witch" can mean a range of different things, depending on cultural, historical and religious context. This class will explore some of these connotations, ranging from anthropological studies of witchcraft and sorcery in pre-industrial societies, to an examination of European and American witch hunts, to the reclamation of witchcraft by the feminist and Neo-Pagan movements of the late 20th century. In examining these different meanings, we seek to find both differences and similarities between them. The central question of this seminar is: does the term "witchcraft" refer to similar, cross-culturally documentable phenomena, or do these different cultural forms have little in common with one another? What factors contribute to a belief in and practice of witchcraft? What form do these beliefs and practices take in response to different social, historical and cultural factors? How useful is the term "witchcraft" in referring to a range of cultural, social and religious phenomena?

II. Format

This course is designed as a seminar. Each week's meeting will be structured around student presentations; the instructor will lecture only occasionally to provide background information. Students who are not presenting that week will turn in to the instructor a 1-2 page reading reaction to the week's readings. These may be turned in on email before the beginning of class, or in hard copy in class. Reading reactions are worth 10 points each.

Student attendance and participation are crucial to the success of this course. Attendance entails not missing more than 2 class meetings, notifying the instructor in cases of prolonged absence, arriving on time and staying for the duration of the class. Students are expected to come to class prepared, e.g. having read the day's assignment and taken notes on it. Participation means actively contributing to each discussion with questions and comments, and a clear, well-thought-out and well-presented class presentation.

This course requires a substantial amount of reading and writing. If you are not able or willing to do the work, you should drop the class. In addition to the reading reactions and class presentation, students will also complete a 20-page research paper on some aspect related to the study of witchcraft. Final papers may be an expansion of the class presentation, but must draw from sources not in the syllabus. More information on this assignment will be available separately.

III. Requirements

The following books are required reading for the course:

E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande*
Paul Stoller, *In Sorcery's Shadow: A Memoir of an Apprenticeship Among the Songhay of Niger*
Clyde Kluckhohn, *Navajo Witchcraft*
Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors: the Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft*
Carlo Ginzburg, *The Night Battles*
Paul Boyer and Steven Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed*
Debbie Nathan and Michael Snedeker, *Satan's Silence*
Sabina Magliocco, *Conjuring Culture: Folklore and the Making of American Neo-Paganism* (not yet published; available as a packet at ASAP Copies)

The following is *recommended* reading for the course. It will serve as a *vade mecum*, or guide, for the course structure. It is especially useful if this is the first time you have studied this topic.

Jeffrey B. Russell, *A History of Witchcraft*

A packet or readings, available at ASAP Copies, is also required. All books are available for purchase in the bookstore, and most readings are also available on reserve in the Oviatt Library.

IV. Evaluation

Final Grade Breakdown:

Attendance and participation.....	10%
Reading reactions.....	20%
Class presentation.....	30%
Final paper.....	30%

V. Grading Scale

93-100 = A	83-88 = B	73-77 = C	63-67 = D
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-
88-89 = B+	78-79 = C+	68-69 = D+	59 and below = F

VI. Week-by-Week Course Syllabus

Note: Readings are to be done by the date indicated at left.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Topic and Readings</u>
8/26	Introduction; explanation of key concepts; assignment of presentations. Recommended readings: Russell, Introduction; Dundes, “Projection in Folklore” and “Ritual Murder or the Blood Libel Legend,” in reader.
Part I: Witchcraft and Sorcery in Traditional Societies	
9/2	Witchcraft in Sub-Saharan Africa, Part I Evans-Pritchard, Chapters I - VII. Recommended: Russell, “Sorcery,” 18-36
9/9	Witchcraft in Sub-Saharan Africa, Part II Evans-Pritchard, Chapters VIII - XIII
9/6	Witchcraft in Sub-Saharan Africa, Part III Stoller, <i>in its entirety</i>
9/22	Native American Witchcraft Kluckhohn, Part I (Data), pp. 1 - 64
9/30	Native American Witchcraft, cont’d. Kluckhohn, Part II (Interpretation), pp. 65-130 + Appendices Paper Proposal Due!
Part II: European and North American Witchcraft, 1350-1750	
10/7	European Witchcraft, Part I Briggs, Chapters I - V Recommended: Russell, “Witchcraft, heresy and the inquisition,” 55-70
10/14	European Witchcraft, Part II Briggs, Chapters VI - X
10/21	But Could European Witchcraft Be Related to Ancient Pagan Beliefs? Ginzburg, <i>in its entirety</i> Recommended: Russell, “Roots of European Witchcraft,” 37-54
10/28	The Witch Craze in North America I Boyer & Nissenbaum, Part I

Recommended: Russell, "Witchcraft in Britain and America,"
90-121

11/4 The Witch Craze in North America, cont'd.
Boyer & Nissenbaum, Part II

11/11 Modern-Day Witch Hunts
Nathan & Snedeker, *in its entirety*
Paper Outline Due!

Part III: Modern Neo-Pagan Witchcraft

11/18 Anthropology and the Romance of Witchcraft and Magic
Magliocco, Introduction and Part I
Recommended: Russell, 131-148

11/25 Reclaiming Ecstatic Experiences and Traditional Ways of
Knowing
Magliocco, Parts II and III
Recommended: Russell, 148-176

12/2 Review and Wrap-Up
Oral Presentation of Final Paper Topics

12/9 **All final reserach papers due by 5:00 PM!**

Additional Resources by Topic

The following list is not intended to be exhaustive, but merely to give you a place to start research for your presentations and final papers. Please consult the instructor and the library for additional suggestions. Even more resources can be found in the bibliographies of the textbooks for this course.

Part I: Witchcraft and Sorcery in Traditional Societies

- Douglas, Mary, ed. 1970. *Witchcraft: Confessions and Accusations*. London: Routledge. *A reconsideration of key issues raised by Evans Pritchard, 30 years after the publication of his book.*
- Kilpatrick, Alan. 1997. *The Night Has a Naked Soul: Witchcraft and Sorcery among the Western Cherokee*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. *Exploration of Cherokee magic written by a native Cherokee anthropologist.*
- Middleton, John, ed. 1967. *Magic, Witchcraft and Curing*. Austin: University of Texas Press (Texas Press Sourcebooks in Anthropology). *This edited volume contains a number of seminal anthropological essays on witchcraft and sorcery. An important source!*
- Mair, Lucy. 1970. *Witchcraft*. New York and Toronto: McGraw Hill. *A classic anthropological overview.*
- Rush, John A. 1974. *Witchcraft and Sorcery: an Anthropological Perspective*. Springfield: University of Illinois Press.

Part IIA: European and North American Witchcraft, 1350-1750

- Ankarloo, Bengt and Stuart Clark, ed. *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: the Series*. Pennsylvania State University Press. *This series of edited volumes presents the latest thinking on European witchcraft, from Biblical times to the present. There are 6 volumes in the series, each covering a different time period. Highly recommended.*
- Barstow, Anne L. 1994. *Witchcraze: a New History of the European Witch Hunts*. San Francisco: Pandora. *Controversial feminist interpretation.*
- Caro Baroja, Julio. 1964. *The World of the Witches*. Translated by O.N.V. Glendinning. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. *A classic study of European witchcraft.*
- Cohn, Norman. 1975. *Europe's Inner Demons*. London and New York:
- Davies, Owen. 1999. *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press. *How and why Europeans quit "believing" in witches.*
- Ehrenreich, Barbara and Deirdre English. 1972. *Witches, Midwives and Nurses: a History of Women Healers*. New York: The Feminist Press. *Pamphlet that started the feminist re-interpretation of witchcraft; a classic.*
- Ginzburg, Carlo. 1990. *Ecstasies*. *The translation of Ginzburg's latest historical revisionist account of witch trials in medieval northern Italy; more along the lines of *The Night Battles*.*
- Hennigsen, Gustav and Bengt Ankarloo, eds. 1990. *European Witchcraft: Centers and Peripheries*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. *Outstanding collection of essays.*
- Summers, Montague, ed. 1971 (1928). *The Malleus Maleficarum of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger*. New York: Dover. *Translation of the 15th century best-seller that started the worst of the witch persecutions.*

Trevor-Roper, Hugh. 1956. *The European Witch Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries and Other Essays*. London and New York. *A classic historical interpretation.*

Part IIB: Modern Witch Hunts

Ellis, Bill. 2000. *Raising the Devil: Satanism, New Religions and the Media*. University Press of Kentucky. *Ambitious look at how folklore contributed to the spread of Satanic panics during the 1980's.

Miller, Arthur. 1954. *The Crucible*. *This is a work of fiction, a play -- but it implicitly compared the McCarthyism and communist witch hunts of the 1950's with the Salem witch trials in U.S. history.*

Victor, Jeffrey. 1993. *Satanic Panic*. Chicago: Open Court. *Now-classic investigation documenting the creation of modern legends about Satanic ritual abuse and murder.*

Part III: Modern Neo-Pagan Witchcraft

Adler, Margot. 1979, 1986. *Drawing Down the Moon*. Boston: Beacon Press. *Now-classic study by the NPR journalist.*

Berger, Helen. 1999. *A Community of Witches*. University of South Carolina Press. *Sociological study of East coast Neo-Pagans and Witches.*

Gardner, Gerald B. 1954. *Witchcraft Today*. London: Rider. *The book that started the modern popular witchcraft revival movement.*

Hutton, Ronald. 1999. *Triumph of the Moon: A History of Modern Pagan Witchcraft*. Oxford University Press. *The most scholarly study of the history of the Pagan and Wiccan revival.*

Luhrmann, T.M. 1989. *Persuasions of the Witches' Craft: Ritual Magic in Contemporary England*. Harvard University Press. *English revival Witches in the 1980's from an anthropological perspective: why would educated people choose to believe in magic?*

Pike, Sarah. 2001. *Earthly Bodies, Magical Selves*. Berkeley: University of California Press. *Neo-Pagans festivals and the search for community.*

Orion, Loretta. 1995. *Never Again the Burning Times: Paganism Revived*. Waveland Press. *Anthropological study of Neo-Pagans including quantitative and qualitative aspects.*

Salomonsen, Jone. 2002. *Enchanted Feminism: the Reclaiming Witches of San Francisco*. New York: Routledge. *Feminist, ethnographic study of one of the most influential sects of modern Witchcraft.*