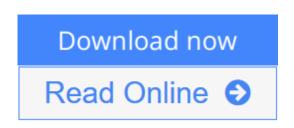


# Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany

By Lyndal Roper



Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany By Lyndal Roper

From the gruesome ogress in *Hansel and Gretel* to the hags at the sabbath in *Faust*, the witch has been a powerful figure of the Western imagination. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries thousands of women confessed to being witches—of making pacts with the Devil, causing babies to sicken, and killing animals and crops—and were put to death. This book is a gripping account of the pursuit, interrogation, torture, and burning of witches during this period and beyond.

Drawing on hundreds of original trial transcripts and other rare sources in four areas of Southern Germany, where most of the witches were executed, Lyndal Roper paints a vivid picture of their lives, families, and tribulations. She also explores the psychology of witch-hunting, explaining why it was mostly older women that were the victims of witch crazes, why they confessed to crimes, and how the depiction of witches in art and literature has influenced the characterization of elderly women in our own culture.

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

"This is a major work that pushes the history of witchcraft in new directions and offers remarkable and sometimes startling new insights. Lyndal Roper breaks new ground in her remarkable, subtle analysis of the interpersonal relations among those caught up in fantasies of witchcraft.' H. C. Erik Midelfort, author of A History of Madness in Sixteenth-Century Germany"

#### From the Inside Flap

"The importance of Akhmatova's works in the Russian poetic tradition can scarcely be exaggerated. These works also hold a place of honor in the history of artistic engagement of moral responsibility."--Olga P. Hasty, Princeton University

About the Author

Lyndal Roper is lecturer in history at the University of Oxford and a fellow of Balliol College.

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