

Course Schedule

Note: The Information-Literate Historian **is mostly used as a reference**; read this and any additional sources assigned. Please come prepared with questions, but you don't need to bring the book to class (unless otherwise notified).

*Please note that until all the readings are linked, they are subject to change.

Week 1: Introduction (17-19 January)

17 January

- Syllabus
- Research Skills

19 January: What is the supernatural/paranormal?

We will try to stake out definitions for the major issues that will concern us over the course of the semester: popular (vs. elite) culture, magic, witchcraft, and the supernatural. In interrogating the two assigned articles for the week, we will explore the problems surrounding the definitions of these key terms and collectively attempt to formulate working meanings for them that will guide our ensuing discussions.

To read in full:

[The Meanings of Magic](#)

[Toward a Definition of Popular Culture](#)

Introduction: What it Means to Be a Historian (Information-Literate)

Week 2 (24-26 January):

The concept of magic and the supernatural has encompassed many things: healing, divination, love spells, astrology, and the invocation of angels. During our discussions this week, we will try to understand the range of practices that magic encompassed as a way of thinking about how this capacious concept narrowed over time.

by 24 January: Thinking about Magic and the Supernatural

To read in full:

- Richard Kieckhefer, ?[The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic](#)? in American Historical Review 99 (1994)]
- Claude Levi-Strauss, ?[The Sorcerer And His Magic](#)? in Structural Anthropology (New York, 1963) 167-185]
- Levack, [The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe](#), chs. 1-2]
- M. Bailey, ?[From Sorcery to Magic](#)?]

26 January:

To read to prepare you for your library exercise. Read the following chapters from Information-Literate:

- How Scholarly Information Is Communicated
- What Historians Do and How They Do It
- Practicing History in the Electronic Age: Tips for the Information-Literate Historian
- Beginning Your Research

No Physical Class, but you need to narrow down your topic ideas. Feel free to contact me to discuss your ideas.

- Look over some of the resources to find potential research topics related to an aspect of the Supernatural.
- Using your usual research methods, gather some data and sources about a topic of your choice.
- Take notes along the way as you do your research. What are your search strategies? How successful are you at finding useful material? What are your criteria for judging what is reliable and useful and what is not?

Week 3 (31 January-2 February):

31 January: The Supernatural in the Late Classical World

To read in full:

- M.W. Dickie, [Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World](#) (New York: Routledge, 2001), 1-17 and 323-24]
- Augustine of Hippo, [City of God](#), bk. VI, ch. 10]

Plutarch, On Superstition

- Caesarius of Arles, Sermons and Admonitions on Variable Topics trans. Mary Magdalene Mueller, O.S.F. (Washington) #'s [50-54.](#)]

- Tikvah Frymer Kensky, [?In the Body of the Goddess?](#) (pages 45-57)]
[?Magical Gems?: Rethinking the Meaning of ?Magic? in Cornell's Dactyliothea](#)]

2 February: Screen Pan's Labyrinth and live tweet [discussion questions](#) in class

Week 4 (7-9 February):

7 February: Relics and Miracles

To read in full:

- Mary Douglas, [?Magic and Miracle? in Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo](#) (New York, 1966) 71-90]
- Peter Brown, [?The Rise of the Holy Man ?](#) in Journal of Roman Studies 61 (1972) 80 - 101]
- [?The Life of Saint Martin of Tours?](#) in The Internet Medieval Sourcebook]
- Ronald Finucane, [?The Use and Abuse of Medieval Miracles?](#) in History 60 (1975) 1- 10]
- Patrick Geary, [?Coercion of Saints in Medieval Religious Practice?](#) in his Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages (Ithaca, 1994) 116 ? 124]

Homework due on 7 February

A copy of your Research Proposal for your final project is due in class. (This accounts for 5% of your final project grade).

9 February: Popular Practices and Pagan Survivals

To read in full:

- Gregory, T. [The Survival of Paganism in Christian Greece: A Critical Essay](#)
- Ruth Mazo Karras, ["Pagan Survivals and Syncretism in the Conversion of Saxony"](#) in *The Catholic Historical Review* 553 ?

572]
"[Idolatry, Gods, and Supernatural Beings](#)" in *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures in Early Medieval*,
Chapter 2

- Watkins, C. ["Folklore" and "Popular Religion" in Britain during the Middle Ages](#)

[The classic formulation made by Durkheim and Mauss](#). (primer)]

Week 5: (14-16 February)

14 February: CLASS IS CANCELLED FOR TODAY. PRESENTATIONS FOR FAIRYLORE, ENCOUNTERS with FAIRIES, and CHARMS HAVE BEEN PUSHED BACK A CLASS

16 February: Fairylore & Saints Cults

To read in full:

Leonard Norman Primiano, ["Vernacular Religion and the Search for Methodin Religious Folklife."](#) *Western Folklore* , 54
(1995):37?56

Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, ["The Fairy Belief and Official Religion in Ireland,"](#) in
The Good People, 199 ? 214

David D. Hall, ["A World of Wonders: The Mentality of the Supernatural in Seventeenth-Century New England,"](#) in *Religion and American Culture: A Reader* , ed. David Hackett

Erika Brady, ["Bad Scares and Joyful Hauntings: "Priesting" the Supernatural Predicament,"](#) *OO*, ch. 8

- ["Introduction,"](#) *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*, Fifth Edition Revised]

Week 6: (21-23 February)

21 February: Encounters with Fairies

To read in full:

- Janet Bord, ["Twas Only a Pack of Fairies,"](#) in *Fairies: Real Encounters with Little People*, Chapter 1 (please ignore the fact

that this does not have the most academic tone; it gives an overview of different encounters)]

- Andy Letcher, [?The Scouring of the Shire: Fairies, Trolls and Pixies in Eco-Protest Culture,? Folklore 112 \(2001\): 147?161\]](#)
- Mary Ellen Lamb, "[Taken by the Fairies: Fairy Practices and the Production of Popular Culture in A Midsummer Night's Dream](#)"]
- Susan Schoon Eberly, "[Fairies and Folklore of Disability](#)," in the Good People, 227-250]
- Juliette Wood, [Filming Fairies: Popular Film, Audience Response and Meaning in Contemporary Fairy Lore](#)]

Take a look at [resources](#) (not required for class discussion on bibliography that includes primary sources)

23 February: THE CLASS COLLECTIVELY DECIDED TO ENJOY 75 degrees and sunshine

Week 7: (28 February-2 March)

28 February: Charms, Divination, & Fetishes

To read in full:

- Alan Dundes, [?Wet and Dry, the Evil Eye: An Essay in Indo-European and Semitic Worldview?](#)]
 - Erika Bourguignon, [?Suffering and Healing, Subordination and Power: Women and Possession Trance,? Ethos 32 \(2004\):557?574\]](#)
 - Leland, [Gypsy Sorcery and Fortune Telling](#), Chapter 2 "Charms and Conjurations to Cure the Disorders of Grown People" (SKIM)]
- [The supernatural characters and powers of sacred trees in the Holy Land](#)
- Yvonne Chireau, [Conjure and Christianity in the Nineteenth Century: Religious Elements in African American Magic](#)]

Take a look at [resources](#) (not required for class discussion on bibliography that includes primary sources)

2 March: Ghosts

Readings by 28 February

David Hufford, "[Beings Without Bodies: An Experience-Centered Theory of the Belief in Spirits](#)" in Out of the Ordinary, Chapter 1

Gillian Bennett, Alas, Poor Ghost!: Traditions of Belief in Story and Discourse, [Chapter 2](#) and [Chapter 5](#)

- Pounds, [Enchi Fumiko and the Hidden Energy of the Supernatural](#)]
- [?"Death Customs in Contemporary Japan" in Ghost and the Japanese- Cultural Experience in Japanese Death Legends? pages 13-38\]](#)

Annotated Bibliography and Historiographic State of the Field due in class

Week 8: Spring Break!!!! (6-10 March)

Week 9: (14-16 March)

14 March: SNOW DAY

16 March: The (Un)Dead

Readings by 14 March

- Nancy Caciola, "[Wraiths, Revenants and Ritual in Medieval Culture?](#)" in *Past and Present* 152 (1996) 3 ? 45]
 - Patrick Geary, "[Exchange and Interaction between the Living and the Dead in Early Medieval Society?](#)" in his *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1994) 77 ? 94]
 - Megan McLaughlin, "[On Communion with the Dead?](#)" in *Journal of Medieval History* 17 (1991) 23 ? 34]
- Gregory Waller, "[Stories of the Living and Undead](#)" in *The Living and the Undead: Slaying Vampires, Exterminating Zombies* edited by Eric G. Anderson, Taylor Hagood, Daniel Cross Turner, "[Melville's Zombies, North and South](#)" in *Undead Souths: The Gothic and Beyond in Southern Literature and Cultu*

Week 10: (21-23 March)

21 March: Witches, Vampires, & Other Dangerous Beings

Readings by 16 March

- Matthew Kratter, "[Twilight of the Vampires: History & the Myth of the Undead](#)"
- Owen Davies, "[The Nightmare Experience, Sleep Paralysis, and Witchcraft Accusations?](#)" *Folklore* 114 (2003): 181? 203
- Elizabeth Lawrence, "[Werewolves in psyche and cinema: Man-beast transformation and paradox](#)"
- E. E. Evans-Pritchard, excerpt, [Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande](#)
- Charles Zika, "[Cannibalism and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Reading the Visual Images?](#)" *History Workshop Journal*, 77 ? 105

23 March: No Class

Week 11: (28-30 March)

28 March: Witchcraft

Primary Source Analysis Paper DUE IN CLASS (28 March)

Even as demonologists were creating a more coherent account of the extent of diabolical influence in the world, jurists and Church leaders were working to establish institutional frameworks for prosecuting the human agents of that influence. Four our discussions this week, then, we will look at the networks of people and ideas that enabled this persecution to take place.

Readings by 28 March

- H.C. Erik Midelfort, "[Witch Craze?: Beyond the Legends of Panic](#)," *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 6/1 (summer 2011): 11-33]
- [Who Bears the Guilt for the Persecution of Witches](#)]
- Skim: *Medieval Sourcebook: [Witchcraft Documents](#)*: <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/witches1.asp>]
 - Levack, [The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe](#), ch. 7]
 - Skim: [Salem Witch Trials](#)]
- [Hunting Witches](#)]

30 March: Film

Week 12: (4-6 April)

4 April: The Devil & Demonology

For this week, we will explore another key component to the concept of witchcraft that dominated early modern Europe: learned ideas about the power and intentions of demons. Our goal for this week will be to analyze how demonology combined with ideas about magic to create a volatile compound that set the stage for widespread persecution.

Readings by 4 April

- Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages*, [Chapter 1](#) (Ithaca, 1984)]
[Demonology and the rise of science: An example of the misperception of historical data](#)
[The Rhetoric of Exorcism](#)
- Strickland, Debra Higgs [MONSTERS AND CHRISTIAN ENEMIES](#). History today. (02/01/2000)
- Optional: Summers, *The History of Witchcraft and Demonology*, "[Demons and Familiars](#)" (Chapter 3)]

6 April: Victorian Magic: Mysticism, Occultism, Spiritualism

Readings by 6 April

- [The Periodical Culture of the Occult Revival: Esoteric Wisdom, Modernity and Counter Public Spheres](#)
- Kenneth Pimble, "[Ghosts, Spirits, and Scholars: The Origins of Modern Spiritualism](#) (pp. 75-89)" in *Out of the Ordinary*
- Maxine Miska, "[Aftermath of a Failed Séance: The Functions of Skepticism in a Traditional Society](#)," *OO*, ch. 5
- John Monroe, "[Making the Seance "Serious": "Tables Tournantes" and Second Empire Bourgeois Culture](#), 1853-1861. *History of religions*. (02/1999) , 38 (3), p. 219 - 246

Week 13: (11-13 April)

11 April: Ghosthunters

13 April: Chasing Down Ghosts

Readings by 13 April

- S. Elizabeth Bird, "[Playing with Fear: Interpreting the Adolescent Legend Trip](#)" *Western Folklore* 53(1994):191- 209.
- OPTIONAL: Carl Lindahl, "[Ostensive Healing: Pilgrimage to the San Antonio Ghost Tracks](#)," *Journal of American Folklore* 118(2005):164 ? 185
- J Timms, "[Ghost-Hunters and Psychical Research in Interwar England](#)"

Jeffrey S. Victor, [?Satanic Cult Rumors as Contemporary Legend.?](#) Western Folklore 49 (1990): 51? 81.

J Holloway, J Kneale, "[Locating haunting: a ghost-hunter's guide](#)"

Week 14: (18-20 April)

18 April: Voodoo

Wiener, Margaret J. "[Dangerous Liaisons and other Tales from the Twilight Zone: Sex, Race, and Sorcery in Colonial Java. Comparative studies in society and history](#)". (07/2007) , 49 (03), p. 495 - 526.

20 April: Voodoo

Film

Week 15: From Dracula to Disney: Witchcraft and Magic in Modern Pop Culture (25-27 April)

- No readings for 25 April. Just a lecture...

Readings by 27 April

Joyce D. Hammond, [?The Tourist Folklore of Pele: Encounters with the Other,?](#) OO , ch 9.

Milly Williamson, [?Vampire Transformations: Gothic Melodrama, Sympathy, and the Self,?](#) The Lure of the Vampire: Gender, Fiction and Fandom from Bram Stoker to Buffy, 29? 50

- SKIM: Diane Purkiss, [?At Play in the Fields of the Past?](#)]

- Louis S. Warren, [?Buffalo Bill Meets Dracula: William F. Cody, Bram Stoker and the Frontiers of Racial Decay?](#) in American Historical Review 107 (2002) 1124-1157]

Final project outline DRAFT due in class (27 April)

Final Exam: Final project podcast with final outline in class 2 May