



The Witchcraft Sourcebook

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The Witchcraft Sourcebook, now in its second edition, is a fascinating collection of documents that illustrates the development of ideas about witchcraft from ancient times to the eighteenth century. Many of the sources come from the period between 1400 and 1750, when more than 100,000 people - most of them women - were prosecuted for witchcraft in Europe and colonial America. During these years the prominent stereotype of the witch as an evil magician and servant of Satan emerged. Catholics and Protestants alike feared that the Devil and his human confederates were destroying Christian society.

Including trial records, demonological treatises and sermons, literary texts, narratives of demonic possession, and artistic depiction of witches, the documents reveal how contemporaries from various periods have perceived alleged witches and their activities. Brian P. Levack shows how notions of witchcraft have changed over time and considers the connection between gender and witchcraft and the nature of the witch's perceived power. This second edition includes an extended section on the witch trials in England, Scotland and New England, fully revised and updated introductions to the sources to include the latest scholarship and a short bibliography at the end of each introduction to guide students in their further reading.

The *Sourcebook* provides students of the history of witchcraft with a broad range of sources, many of which have been translated into English for the first time, with commentary and background by one of the leading scholars in the field.

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Review

"To understand the history of witchcraft properly one has to read the original sources, and for this pursuit Brian Levack has produced the very best collection on the market. Wide-ranging and judiciously chosen, this is a volume that seasoned scholars and novice students alike will find fascinating and enlightening."

Malcolm Gaskill, *University of East Anglia, UK*

"This is a balanced and highly readable compilation of sources on witchcraft and the witch-hunts. The book is balanced in its inclusion of some classical and medieval antecedents, balanced in the use of various forms of source material (from demonological treatises, to sermons, to legal documents, to trial excerpts), and balanced in the geographical coverage of the topic. Readers also will appreciate the extensive descriptions and introductory notes that Levack provides to contextualize and nuance the material."

Edwin Bezzina, *Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada*

"The Witchcraft Sourcebook is an exceptional resource for understanding and teaching the history of the European witch-hunts, and a superb introduction for anyone who wants to encounter this topic directly through the voices of early modern people. New continental European and anglophone trial records enhance this edition, and Brian Levack's introductory texts continue to provide a lucid explanatory framework by one of the world's leading scholars of the witch-hunts."

Jennifer Spinks, *University of Manchester, UK*

About the Author

Brian P. Levack is the John E. Green Regents Professor in History at the University of Texas at Austin. His publications on witchcraft and demonology include *The Witch-hunt in Early Modern Europe* (3rd edition, 2006); *Witch-hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics, and Religion* (2008); and *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (2013). He has also edited *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (2013).

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