TRENT UNIVERSITY – DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
HIST 3580Y/4580Y - Witchcraft and Magic in the Western World
Summer 2014 - Peterborough Campus

Instructor: Dr. Frances Timbers
Email: francestimbers@trentu.ca
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 12 - 1pm
Lecture: 1pm - 2:50pm, Mondays & Wednesdays, FPLH 117
Tutorial: 3pm - 3:50 pm, Mondays & Wednesdays FPLH 117

The objectives of this course are to dispel the myths surrounding the phenomenon of witchcraft while examining the social-anthropological role played by witchcraft accusations in early modern society. We will place the era of European witchcraft prosecutions (1450-1750) in its intellectual and religious contexts as well as examining the natural philosophies and gender ideologies that facilitated the belief in witchcraft. The exploration of witchcraft prosecutions sheds light on many aspects of the premodern period including family and community structures, the legal system, health care, and the dissemination of ideas. The construction of the figure of the witch informs the history student about the construction of the ‘other’, which is very pertinent to today’s ‘age of terror’. The majority of the course deals with the persecution era in early modern Europe and New England; however, we will also explore modern witchcraft in the form of North American Wicca and African witchcraft.

Students will develop their skills in historical research, analysis, interpretation, and problem solving. We will works with both primary and secondary sources, critically evaluating the ideas and arguments of major thinkers in the field. Students will be encouraged to make use of the tools of interdisciplinary theory and historiography to situate their own original arguments in the context of ongoing historical debates and assess evidence critically. In essays and class discussions, students will hone their ability to communicate their ideas effectively and logically. On completing the course successfully, students should understand the basic conventions of historical writing, the rules of academic integrity and professionalism, the importance of personal initiative and accountability, and the evolving nature of historical knowledge.

Textbooks

MyLearning System (Blackboard):
Any additional readings, announcements, Power Point presentations, and guidelines for assignments will be posted on Trent’s MyLearning System. Other helpful information will also be available there such as writing guidelines. It is your responsibility to make yourself familiar with the site. Check it regularly for updates.
**Academic Integrity:**
Academic dishonesty, which includes plagiarism and cheating, is an extremely serious academic offence and carries penalties varying from a zero grade on an assignment to expulsion from the University. Definitions, penalties, and procedures for dealing with plagiarism and cheating are set out in Trent University’s *Academic Integrity Policy*. You have a responsibility to educate yourself – unfamiliarity with the policy is not an excuse. You are strongly encouraged to visit Trent’s Academic Integrity website to learn more – [www.trentu.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.trentu.ca/academicintegrity).

**Access to Instruction:**
It is Trent University’s intent to create an inclusive learning environment. If a student has a disability and/or health consideration and feels that he/she may need accommodations to succeed in this course, the student should contact the Student Accessibility Services Office (SAS), (BH Suite 132, 705-748-1281 or email accessibilityservices@trentu.ca). Complete text can be found under Access to Instruction in the Academic Calendar.

**Evaluation Criteria**
- **Tutorial Participation** 15%
  - There are two one-hour tutorials each week following lectures. Prepared participation is mandatory. The onus is on the students to discuss the material. You are expected to read the assigned documents ahead of time and come prepared to discuss and question the readings. **JUST SHOWING UP IN THE ROOM WILL NOT GARNER A GOOD GRADE.** Readings cannot be effectively discussed while scrolling on a laptop. Print off the readings or make thorough notes and bring them to class. In fact, laptops are best left out of tutorials. We are there to discuss and exchange ideas not take notes on other students’ contributions!!

- **Movie Quiz #1** (in class, May 14) 5%
  - During the screening of the scheduled film, you will write responses to an assigned question in point form.

- **Primary Source Analysis #1** (due June 4) 10%
  - The object of this assignment is to analyse a short excerpt from a primary source assigned from *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*. 3-4 pages for 3rd year students; 4-5 pages for 4th year students. A detailed guideline will be provided.

- **Midterm test** (1 hour in lecture, multiple choice, June 23rd) 20%

- **Primary Source Analysis #2** (due July 7) 15%
  - This assignment is a more in-depth analysis of a longer primary source from outside the textbook. 6-7 pages for 3rd year students; 7-8 pages for 4th year students. A list of appropriate sources will be provided.

- **Movie Quiz #2** (in class, July 9) 5%
  - During the screening of the film, you will list responses to an assigned question in point form.

- **Analysis of Image** (in class, July 21) 5%
  - In response to an image shown in class, you will offer an analysis in point form.
Research Paper (due July 30) 25%
(minimum 15 pages for 3rd year students, minimum 20 pages for 4th year students)
The purpose of this assignment is to research a topic from a list provided. You will draw on at least 8 monographs, journal articles, and primary sources (at least 12 for 4th year students). 4th year students must use extensive primary source evidence.

Deadline Policy
Assignments are due in lecture. Electronic submissions are NOT accepted. Given the time constraints of a summer course, late assignments will not be accepted. A doctor’s note is required for medical excuses. If you have trouble meeting deadlines, give yourself an earlier deadline than mine!!

Lecture Schedule

May 12: Introduction, Review of Syllabus (No Tutorial)


May 19: No Class (Victoria Day)

May 21: Historiography

May 26: Classical Magic

May 28: Medieval Witchcraft

June 2: Demonology
June 4: The Witches’ Sabbath

June 9: Effects of the Reformation - Protestants and Catholics

June 11: Witch-hunting or Woman-hunting?

June 16: Popular Culture and ‘Superstition’

June 18: The Inquisition

June 23: Mid-Term Exam (No Tutorials)

June 25: Geographical Variations in England and Scotland

June 30: Geographical Variations outside of England
Read: C. Erik Midelfort, “Heartland of the Witchcraze” (pp. 99-106); Williams, “Pierre de Lancre and the Basque Witch-Hunt” (pp. 180-185); and Roper, “Oedipus and the Devil” (pp. 324-336) in *The Witchcraft Reader*.

July 2: Legal Aspects

July 7: Salem
July 9: Movie: *The Crucible* (1996), Movie Quiz #2

July 14: Demonic Possession

July 16: Ceremonial Magic

July 21: Theories of Decline

July 23: Anthropological Approaches to Witchcraft: Africa and the Caribbean

July 28: Wicca and Neopaganism

July 30: No Class - Research Essay Due.

**Tutorial Schedule** (Note: Tutorials do not start until May 21st)

May 21: Introductions

May 26: How to read primary sources.

May 28: Medieval Foundations
Read: #8, 9, 10, and 11 in Part II, “The medieval foundations of witch-hunting” in *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*, pp. 31-46.

June 2: Demonology

June 4: The Witches’ Sabbat
Read: #13 (pp.52-55), #17 (pp.82-87), and #21 (pp.104-109) in *The Witchcraft Sourcebook*.
June 9: How to read images.

June 11: Witch-hunting or Woman-hunting?
Read: #36 (pp. 179-184) in The Witchcraft Sourcebook.

June 16: Popular Culture
Read: #37, and 38 (pp. 175-197) in The Witchcraft Sourcebook.

June 18: Inquisition

June 23: No Tutorial (Mid-Term Exam)

June 25: Scotland & England
Read: Read: #28 (pp. 140-144), #41 (pp. 210-214) and #60 (pp.329-334) in The Witchcraft Sourcebook.

June 30: Continental Europe
Read: #35 (pp. 173-174),#39 (pp.198-202), and #40 (pp. 203-209) in The Witchcraft Sourcebook.

July 2: Legal
Read: #25, 26, and 27 (pp. 123-139) in The Witchcraft Sourcebook.

July 7: Salem
Read: #43 (pp. 220-230) in The Witchcraft Sourcebook.

July 9: How to Write a Research Paper

July 14: Possession
Read: #48 (pp. 252-260) in The Witchcraft Sourcebook.

July 16: Ceremonial Magic
We will examine rituals and images in class.


July 28: Wicca
We will watch and discuss a video of a modern Wiccan ceremony.