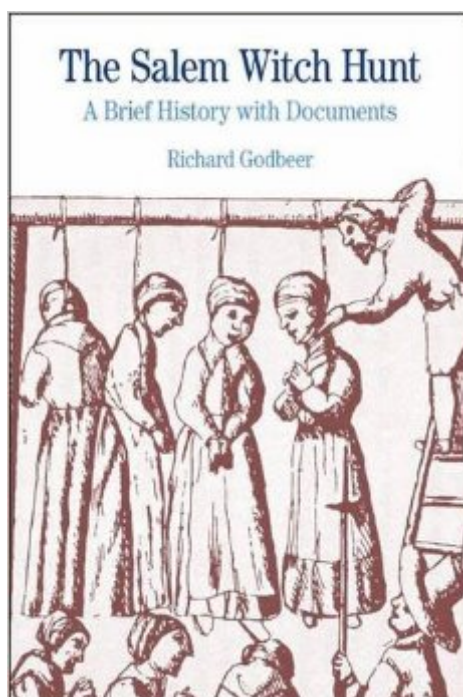


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The Salem Witch Hunt: A Brief History With Documents



Synopsis

The Salem witch trials stand as one of the infamous moments in colonial American history. More than 150 people -- primarily women -- from 24 communities were charged with witchcraft; 19 were hanged and others died in prison. In his introduction to this compact yet comprehensive volume, Richard Godbeer explores the beliefs, fears, and historical context that fueled the witch panic of 1692. The documents in this collection illuminate how the Puritans' worldview led them to seek a supernatural explanation for the problems vexing their community. Presented as case studies, the carefully chosen records from several specific trials offer a clear picture of the gender norms and social tensions that underlie the witchcraft accusations. The final documents cover recantations of confessions, the aftermath of the witch hunt, and statements of regret. A chronology of the witchcraft crisis, questions for consideration, and a selected bibliography round out the book's pedagogical support.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book was required reading for a undergraduate course I took but I ended up loving it. In the US, we've all hear about the Salem witch trials, but most of what the public knows comes not from their own interpretation of the events but rather from what we've been told by others. Oftentimes that information is severely diluted and even erroneous. This book gives lay people, and by that I mean non-historians, the opportunity to read the documents and make up their own mind. The most valuable aspect of this book is that it contains documents not only from the famous Salem trials but

also from the lesser known trials at Stamford, which took place within the same period of time. The documents from both town trials show an extraordinary difference in how the trials were handled and in the outcome. The Stamford trials, combined with the circumstances in which Salem found itself at the time, makes it possible to truly get to the heart of the Salem trials. This book breaks it all down without necessarily dumbing it down, so to speak.

Richard Godbeer does an excellent job at compiling primary resources on the Salem Witch trials. This book is a must read for any scholar looking to understand the current historiography on this historical topic. He compiles the documents in a chronological order and groups the sections into the individual trials. The introduction is a must read, he lays the foundation of his study and gives a background that addresses the historiography. This book is a leader in Salem studies, and I would recommend this book to anyone wanting to understand the culture of early New England Puritanical/Colonial America.

We have all heard of the Salem witch trials, but never in this detail. Godbeer really delves into several cases. Though documents still survive, Godbeer takes the information and makes it readable. He makes things understandable and digestible. Accusations, confessions, accounts, and other information make this title a pretty good buy for the aficionado of this period. Teachers, did you see what I wrote?

Bought for my history class.

Great condition

Good info

Excellent for a class text in a study of Colonial America.

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