

Annotated Bibliography

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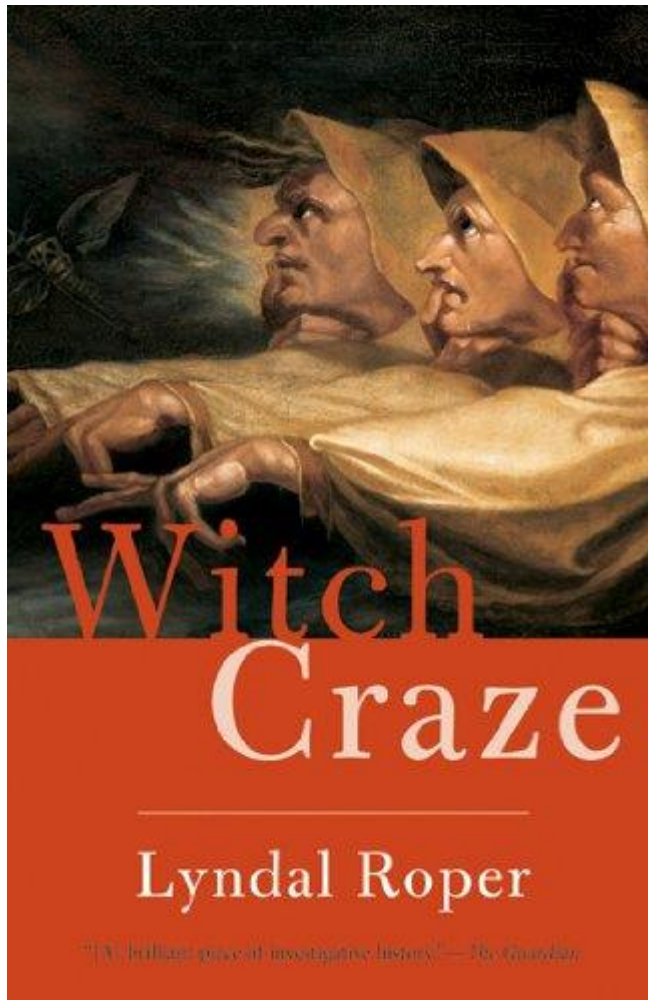
Introduction

My annotated bibliography explored my ongoing research into the existent of gender inequality, religious beliefs and social power and how all these factors contributed to the perception of women accused of witchcraft in medieval and early Europe. I have engaged with many archival works during my university career this inspired me to continue looking through the lens of feminism while also bringing in my personal archival interests. The texts I have selected have been written throughout different times all the sources share a similarity in the reports on gender and how it impacted peoples view of witches.

Collectively each source lends itself to the conceptual framework of my question, while also lending themselves to inform my professional practice by allowing me to create a space to engage with my work in a theoretical stance as well as practical.

Each source allows me to focus on the ideology of women through medieval times focusing on: Gender Inequality, Religion and Social Power

1. Lyndal Roper — *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (2004)



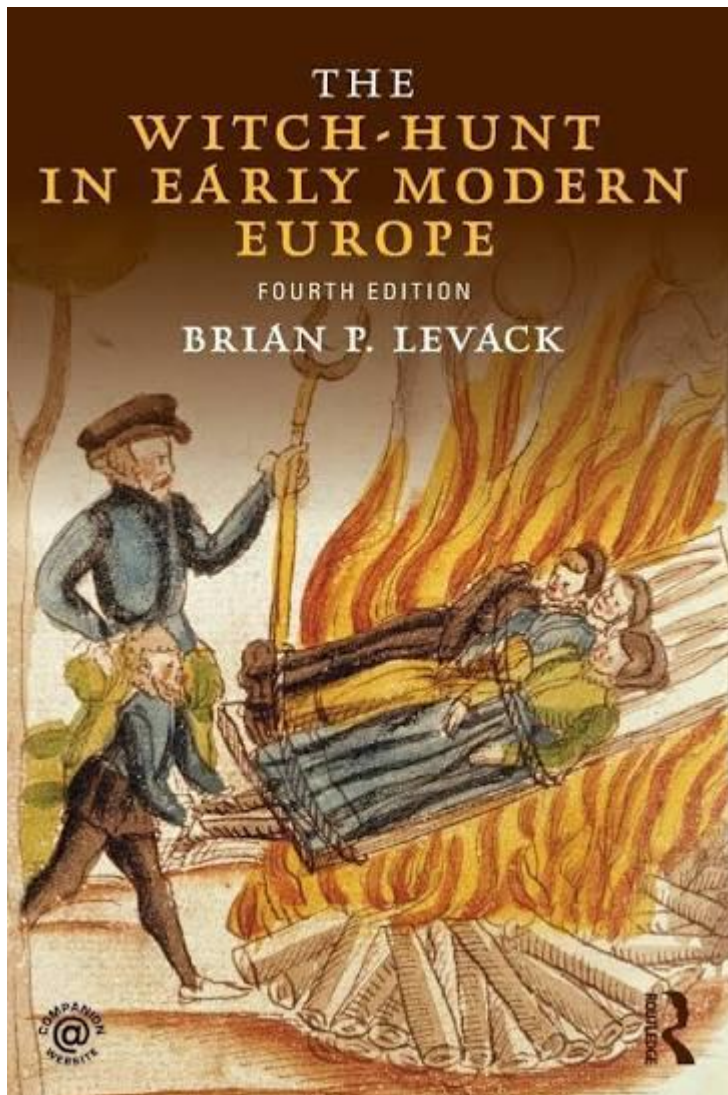
Lyndal Roper's *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* examines the persecution of women accused of witchcraft during the sixteenth- seventeenth century in southern Germany. This source draws on hundreds of original trial transcripts while also drawing on other historical records. Throughout Roper investigates the social, psychological and cultural factors that contributed to "witch-hunting", paying close attention to the disproportionate targeting of women during this time, especially older women plus the relationship with elderly women and accusations of witchcraft while also looking at beliefs about femininity, fertility and sexuality. Roper also explores the influence on confessions of the accused individuals through the circumstances for example Roper looks through the lens of the

interrogation and torture of the accused, looking at how the contemporary ideas about the devil influenced the accused confessions.

This source is intensely valuable to my research as it provides the reader with a feminist historical perception on the relationship between gender and the persecution of witchcraft. Ropers analysis allows me to create my own investigation on whether women were accused because of factual evidence of supernatural practices or because the accused were seen to be threatening established social expectations.

The only limitation to the source is the geographical focus on Germany and the emphasis throughout on the modern period leaving the conclusion that not all of the findings can be applied to all medieval societies specifically.

Brian P. Levack — *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (4th ed., 2016)

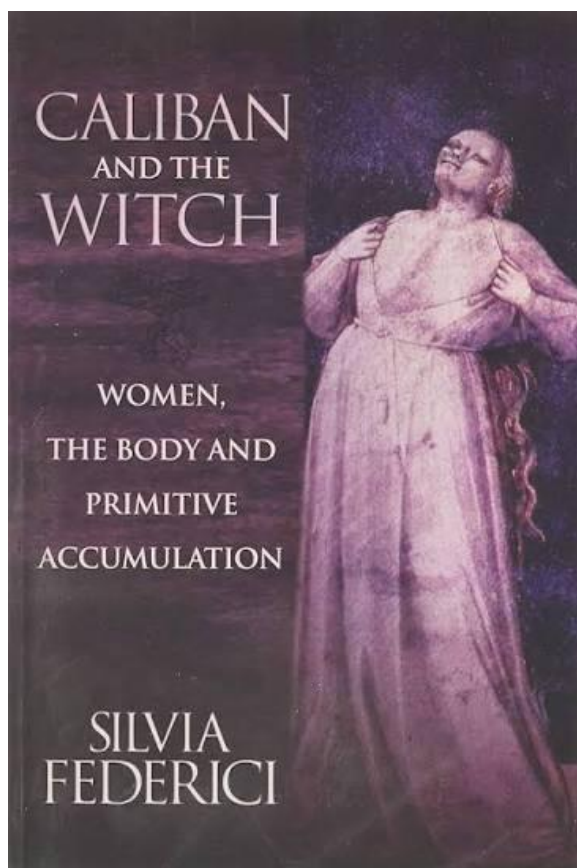


Brian P Levack's *The Witch Hunt in Early Modern Europe* provides an overview of the cause, development and decline within European witch-hunting ranging from 1250-1750. Levack focuses on the intellectual, religious, legal and social conditions that authorized the prosecution of women through the eye of witchcraft. Levack considers the impact of legal institutions, the geographical differences and the role of community tensions in the force of witch hunting. This specific edition also incorporates the research on gender, children while also providing an Insite on male witches and demonic possession allowing me to create an understanding of the people affected by the accusations.

This source is valuable to my research as it provides me with a historical starting point for investigating whether women were persecuted because of their alleged involvement in the practice of witchcraft or because of their position within society. Levack's discussion of gender and social context of witch hunting will prove useful to me and help me assess how the expectation of women to act, their religious beliefs and legal authority during this time influenced accusations and then as a result execution.

A limitation of this Levack's book is the fact the book does not focus singularly on the female view/experience during this time. I will use this source alongside a more gender focused piece like Lyndal Roper's *Witch Craze*. Overall, this book will provide me with essential historical context allowing me to have a balanced framework while analysing the existent of gender impact during witch trails.

Silvia Federici — *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (2004)



Silvia Federici *Caliban and the witch* investigates the relationship between the persecution of women who were accused of witchcraft and the change from feudalism to capitalism in Europe. Federici argues that the hunting of witches during the early modern period were connected to a much larger attempt to regulate women's bodies, reproductive capacities and roles in society. Federici explores the idea on enclosure of common land, and the ever-rising control of reproduction lends itself to women's social and economic subordination. Federici also considers the religious authorities, and how the political standpoints helped the ideology by associating certain forms of women's independence, knowledge and behaviours with witchcraft.

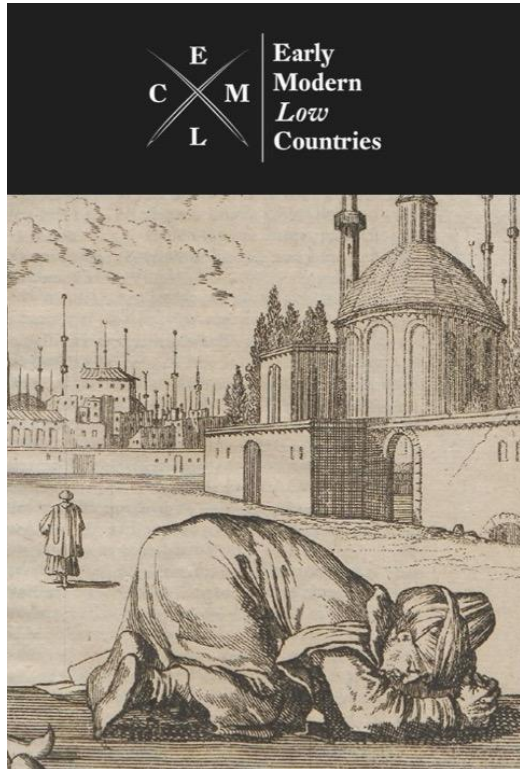
This source is especially relevant towards my research as it provides me with a feminist interpretation of witchcraft and the women who were persecuted during this period. This source also supports my investigation into whether women were punished for challenging certain societal norms rather than simply for practicing witchcraft.

However, Federici provides a political and theoretical view however the work focuses mainly on modern witch hunting instead of specifically medieval. Overall, Federici's

work will be valuable to my work as it focuses on my main topics gender inequality and the control over women's bodies to a wider political standpoint.

Jonas Roelens — “Rational Witches? The Agency of Women on Trial for Supernatural Crimes in Early Modern Ghent”

Roelens work examines the experiences and strategies of defence of the women



accused of witchcraft in early Ghent, drawing into the response to accusations within the restricted social and gender expectations. Focusing on historical trial records, Roelens discusses a specific case, the case of Adriaene Schepens. Adriaene was a women accused of witchcraft in 1601 however, she challenged the allegations made against her by creating a rational explanation for her behaviours. Instead of focusing on the women as victims Roelen explores how women challenged the accusations by using logical arguments and carefully constructed accounts of their actions. Roelens article demonstrates the idea that gender stereotypes could shape the accusations and the strategies used by said women in their defence.

Roelen’s work is especially valuable to my research as it provides me with a much more recent perspective on the relationship between gender, power and witchcraft compared to other sources. Roelens work helps me to develop my argument as it demonstrates to the reader how accused women navigated the assumptions of their gender into a defence. This article also provides the reader with a more in-depth understanding of women's experiences by taking into account their agency and resistance within the legal system of this time, instead of representing the women as powerless victims.

One limitation of this source is the geographical aspect as this source focuses more on early modern Ghent and can't automatically be transferred over to Europe. However, this particular source does give me Insite to the specifics of the trials of women and the defences they would use. Overall, this article will strengthen my essay by giving me a contemporary historical view that recognises all of the oppressions behind women during this time.

