

"Witch-Hunts: Inquiry into Medieval and Modern Paranoia"

This course will examine the paranoia that arises from perceived difference--difference in gender, religion, ethnicity, ideology--that has led to "witch-hunts" throughout history. We will examine the fear of Other that has manifested itself in centuries of persecution for being un-male, un-Christian, un-American. The course will move chronologically, beginning with medieval witch-hunts and ending with contemporary ones. We'll start with Wolfgang Behringer's "Witches and Witch-Hunts" and selected readings from "The Malleus Maleficarum" of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, for an even more frightening look at medieval fear of difference. We'll finish with Haynes Johnson's "The Age of Anxiety: McCarthysim to Terrorism" and selected readings and film clips to put a modern face on paranoia. Your papers will come from our readings with a final project based on your own awareness of Difference.