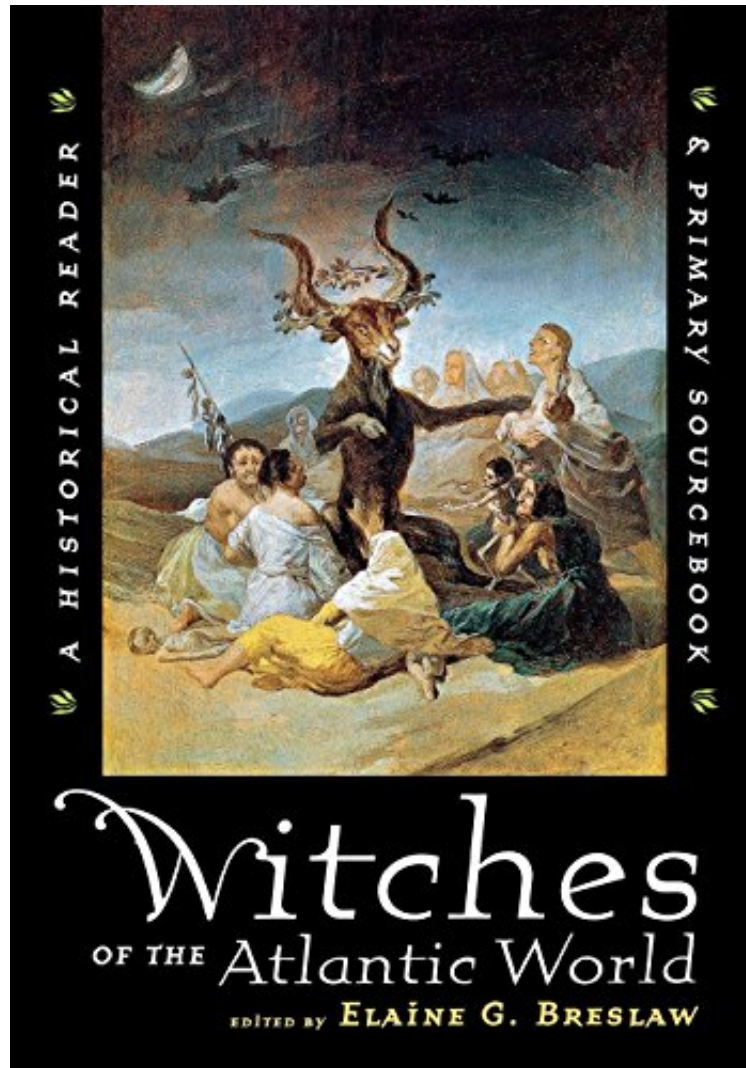


## Witches of the Atlantic World: An Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook

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**From Brand: NYU Press : Witches of the Atlantic World: An Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook**

before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Witches of the Atlantic World: An Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. WitchesBy Joyce M. NolanInteresting reading0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Witches of the Atlantic WorldBy funner thingsThis book contains lots about Salem, but also other instances of witchcraft. Apparently, there were relatively few instances when the populace strongly

suspected the presence of witches. There were enough instances over time that demonstrated that witchcraft was an ongoing concern. However, the outbreaks were isolated and few were executed--much better situation than fear of witches in Europe, especially Germany.

This unique anthology is the first to provide a multicultural perspective on witchcraft from the 15th to 18th century. Featuring primary documents as well as scholarly interpretations, *Witches of the Atlantic World* builds upon information regarding both Christian and non-Christian beliefs about possession and the demonic. Elaine G. Breslaw draws on Native American, African, South American, and African-American sources, as well as the European and New England heritage, to illuminate the ways in which witchcraft in early America was an attempt to understand and control evil and misfortune in the New World. Organized into sections on folklore and magic, diabolical possession, Christian perspectives, and the question of gender, the volume includes selections by Cotton Mather, Matthew Hopkins, and Samuel Willard, among others; Salem trial testimonies; and commentary by a host of distinguished scholars. Together the materials demonstrate how the Protestant and Catholic traditions shaped American concepts, and how multicultural aspects played a key role in the Salem experience. *Witches of the Atlantic World* sheds new light on one of the most perplexing aspects of American history and provides important background for the continued scholarly and popular interest in witches and witchcraft today.

Breslaw breathes new life into many debates about witchcraft. *Witches of the Atlantic World* takes us on a fascinating, occasionally chilling, tour of witchcraft in four continents. Breslaw provides opposing viewpoints and judiciously balances the writing of historians and anthropologists, participants and observers, victims of possession and some accused witches themselves. Breslaw's book will prove a welcome and long-overdue addition. -Alison Games, author of *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* This is undoubtedly one of the best reference works ever published on witchcraft. Breslaw, fresh from her well-received revisionist history *Tituba: Reluctant Witch of Salem*, brings together work by some of the best-known scholars of the field, including Elizabeth Reis, Carol Karlsen, John Demos, Paul Boyer, Stephen Nissenbaum and David Hall. She organizes primary sources (including the 1486 manifesto *Why Women Are Chiefly Addicted to Superstitions*) and insightful secondary essays around topics of European, Native American and African witchcraft. The anthology is to be applauded for its commitment to representing cultural variance showing how, for example, indigenous American magical traditions differed greatly from tribe to tribe. Breslaw's awareness of diverse cultural contexts highlights the multiple functions that witchcraft and anti-witchcraft served in individual communities. -Publishers Weekly A well-selected and admirably introduced collection of primary sources and secondary interpretations . . . By incorporating Africans and native Americans into a story that normally deals only with Europeans (at home and in the colonies), Breslaw opens new approaches to a familiar but always fascinating subject. -Francis Bremer, Millersville University Elaine Breslaw has performed a signal service for teachers of history, anthropology, religious studies, women's studies indeed, anyone who wishes to urge students beyond stereotypical views of witchcraft. The cross-cultural approach that informed her work on *Tituba* comes to fulfillment in this comprehensive collection. Confronted with evidence of witchcraft's significance for varied peoples across time and space, students cannot leer at Puritans as credulous, Africans as primitive, Amerindians as diabolical, or Europeans as superstitious because they practiced magic; rather, they must confront witchcraft's widespread importance as a historical and human phenomenon on its own terms. -Charles L. Cohen, University of Wisconsin This is a useful collection of material on witchcraft. -Journal of World History About the Author Elaine G. Breslaw retired as Professor of History from Morgan State University in Baltimore after 29 years and has taught on an adjunct basis at Johns Hopkins University, Goucher College, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She is the author of *Tituba, Reluctant Witch of Salem: Devilish Indians and Puritan Fantasies* (NYU Press, 1995), *Witches of the Atlantic World: An Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook* (NYU Press, 2000), and *Dr. Alexander Hamilton and Provincial America: Expanding the Orbit of Scottish Culture*.