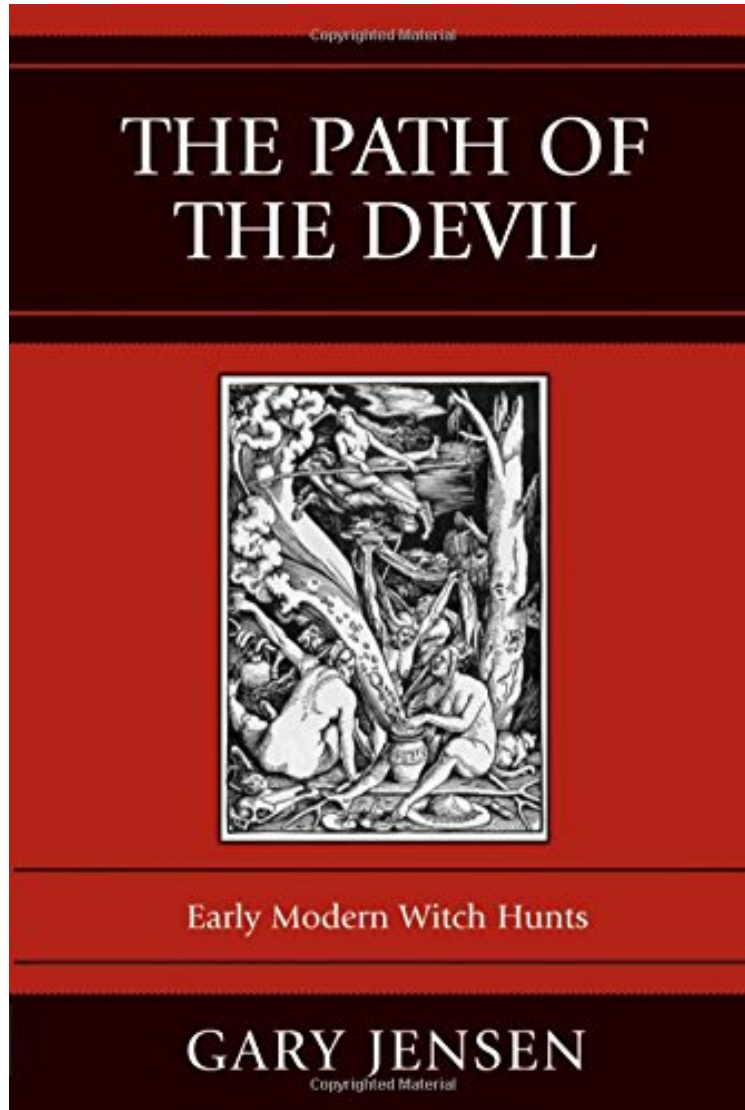


(Read ebook) The Path of the Devil: Early Modern Witch Hunts

The Path of the Devil: Early Modern Witch Hunts

Gary Jensen

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Gary Jensen : The Path of the Devil: Early Modern Witch Hunts before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Path of the Devil: Early Modern Witch Hunts:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. This is a masterpieceBy SocProfWhen I first read this book several years ago,I was very impressed, and now that I've gone back to it for a second read, I'm even more impressed. I've assigned a chapter in this book to my undergraduate gender and crime course this semester, and re-reading it now, I'm thinking about assigning the book in my 400-level sociological theory course. The combination of sophisticated theoretical analysis and rigorous methodology is what really sets this book apart, and I think it would also be great as a

supplemental text in a research methods course. For anyone interested in witch hunts, this is a must-read. I agree with Darryl Steffensmeier's review wholeheartedly, that this book "will come to be viewed as the best sociological analysis of the early modern witch hunt." It is an amazing piece of work about a fascinating subject.

The Path of the Devil is organized around three fundamental theories: witch hunts as functional sacrificial ceremonies, realistic conflict and strategic persecution, and scapegoat phenomena. All conjectures point to the role of epidemic disease, war, and climactic and economic hardships as considerable factors. However, such crises have to be differentiated: when war is measured as a quantitative characteristic it is found to inhibit witch hunts, while epidemic disease and economic hardship encourages them. The book integrates the sociologies of collective behavior, contentious conflict, and deviance with cross-disciplinary theory and research. The final chapters examine the Salem witch trials as 'a perfect storm,' and illustrate the general patterns found for early modern witch hunts and 'modern witch hunts,' which exhibit similarities that are found to be more than metaphorical.

The Path of the Devil is an interdisciplinary marvel that bridges academic discourses across social history, sociology and women's studies. Systematically applying numerous sociological theories and testing those theories with available data, Professor Jensen demonstrates the complex set of conditions local, political, demographic, economic, and structural that foster witch hunts. Across time, continent and village, The Path of the Devil contextualizes a phenomena that has captured the popular imagination and historical treatises and provides sobering evidence that scapegoating and persecution of women are contemporary phenomena that are contained on a local scale because the conditions for widespread 'witch panics' have been lacking. (Patricia MacCorquodale, University of Arizona) The Path of the Devil is a highly interesting read that will come to be viewed as the best sociological analysis of the early modern witch-hunt... Jensen does a masterful job of telling an interesting story while articulating and applying the principles of scientific inquiry including the application of quantitative and multivariate analysis to a topic that heretofore has mainly been approached by relying on anecdotal observations. It offers one of the best pedagogical lessons on the meaning and application of scientific inquiry that I have seen in the social science literature. (Darrell J. Steffensmeier, Pennsylvania State University) One of the intellectual appeals of witchcraft as a subject of study is that, unlike virtually all other behaviors designated as deviant, the actions alleged did not could not have occurred. In The Path of the Devil, Gary Jensen valiantly tackles issues that have bedeviled a virtual battalion of scholars who have sought for hundreds of years to explain the outbreak of witch persecutions and prosecutions in Europe and in the American colonies. The Path of the Devil is a very important contribution to witchcraft scholarship and represents a tribute not only to the author, but also to the discipline of sociology and its empirical methods. (Gilbert Geis, University of California, Irvine Contemporary Sociology) Jensen's account is highly readable and thought-provoking, and could prove a valuable addition to nonreligious courses as well, such as political sociology or perhaps even classical theory, given the author's elaboration upon the meanings and applications of functionalism as applied to witch hunts. (Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, V. 47, No. 1) Jensen provides a rich analytical account of witch hunts in the West and expertly manages to combine various interdisciplinary approaches to the study of witch hunts all in a single book.... The use of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques make it appealing in terms of its holistic approach to the topic, rendering it perhaps one of the most complete accounts of witch craze and colonial witch hunts in the United States. (Soma Chaudhuri Feminist Teacher) Gary Jensen has produced a fascinating sociological account of early modern witch hunts, from the mid-15th through the early 18th centuries, that has been long in the making but well worth the wait. It is an important contribution that should be of interest to students of deviance, social control, and collective behavior within sociology, historians of witchcraft and witch hunts, and both scholars and non-academics interested in witch hunts of more recent times. (David A. Snow, University of California, Irvine) Jensen's book is a necessary corrective for overly facile explanations of one of history's most puzzling episodes. (Gary K. Waite, University of New Brunswick American Historical) The Path of the Devil would be ideal for graduate seminars in deviance and control or collective behavior. . . . a masterful tour de force that contributes to core concerns of sociology and speaks to a variety of other disciplines as well. The Path of the Devil manages to be interesting, interdisciplinary in its reach, and uncompromisingly empirical all at the same time. It is an exemplar of sociology at its best. (American Journal of Sociology, September 2009) About the Author Gary Jensen is a professor of sociology and religious studies at Vanderbilt University and has held faculty appointments at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and the University of Arizona. He has published over sixty articles and chapters and authored, coauthored, or edited eight books on criminology. Jensen was installed as a fellow of the American Society of Criminology in 2001. The Path of the Devil was completed with support from the National Science Foundation and Vanderbilt University.