



Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief

By Walter Stephens

Download now

Read Online 

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens

On September 20, 1587, Walpurga Hausmännin of Dillingen in southern Germany was burned at the stake as a witch. Although she had confessed to committing a long list of *maleficia* (deeds of harmful magic), including killing forty—one infants and two mothers in labor, her evil career allegedly began with just one heinous act—sex with a demon. Fornication with demons was a major theme of her trial record, which detailed an almost continuous orgy of sexual excess with her diabolical paramour Federlin "in many divers places, . . . even in the street by night."

As Walter Stephens demonstrates in *Demon Lovers*, it was not Hausmännin or other so-called witches who were obsessive about sex with demons—instead, a number of devout Christians, including trained theologians, displayed an uncanny preoccupation with the topic during the centuries of the "witch craze." Why? To find out, Stephens conducts a detailed investigation of the first and most influential treatises on witchcraft (written between 1430 and 1530), including the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (*Hammer of Witches*).

Far from being credulous fools or mindless misogynists, early writers on witchcraft emerge in Stephens's account as rational but reluctant skeptics, trying desperately to resolve contradictions in Christian thought on God, spirits, and sacraments that had bedeviled theologians for centuries. Proof of the physical existence of demons—for instance, through evidence of their intercourse with mortal witches—would provide strong evidence for the reality of the supernatural, the truth of the Bible, and the existence of God. Early modern witchcraft theory reflected a crisis of belief—a crisis that continues to be expressed today in popular debates over angels, Satanic ritual child abuse, and alien abduction.

 [Download Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of B ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of ...pdf](#)

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief

By Walter Stephens

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens

On September 20, 1587, Walpurga Hausmännin of Dillingen in southern Germany was burned at the stake as a witch. Although she had confessed to committing a long list of *maleficia* (deeds of harmful magic), including killing forty—one infants and two mothers in labor, her evil career allegedly began with just one heinous act—sex with a demon. Fornication with demons was a major theme of her trial record, which detailed an almost continuous orgy of sexual excess with her diabolical paramour Federlin "in many divers places, . . . even in the street by night."

As Walter Stephens demonstrates in *Demon Lovers*, it was not Hausmännin or other so-called witches who were obsessive about sex with demons—instead, a number of devout Christians, including trained theologians, displayed an uncanny preoccupation with the topic during the centuries of the "witch craze." Why? To find out, Stephens conducts a detailed investigation of the first and most influential treatises on witchcraft (written between 1430 and 1530), including the infamous *Malleus Maleficarum* (*Hammer of Witches*).

Far from being credulous fools or mindless misogynists, early writers on witchcraft emerge in Stephens's account as rational but reluctant skeptics, trying desperately to resolve contradictions in Christian thought on God, spirits, and sacraments that had bedeviled theologians for centuries. Proof of the physical existence of demons—for instance, through evidence of their intercourse with mortal witches—would provide strong evidence for the reality of the supernatural, the truth of the Bible, and the existence of God. Early modern witchcraft theory reflected a crisis of belief—a crisis that continues to be expressed today in popular debates over angels, Satanic ritual child abuse, and alien abduction.

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #501190 in Books
- Published on: 2003-08-15
- Released on: 2002-02-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.10" w x 6.00" l, 1.39 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 478 pages

 [Download Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of B ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens

Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Throughout the centuries of witch trials in Europe, many Christian thinkers were interested (perhaps a little too interested) in a certain recurring theme of the witches' testimonies: their stories of sex with demons. A Johns Hopkins Italian studies professor, Walter Stephens, looks at this preoccupation in his scholarly but accessible work, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief*. Perusing 15th- and 16th-century writings on witchcraft from various European countries, Stephens argues that theories of demon copulation are more than just misogynistic expressions of ambivalence toward female sexuality: they were vital to Christian thought, a way for theologians to resolve perennial questions about the existence of God and the supernatural.

Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

Rosemary's Baby fans be forewarned: there is little entertainment but much ponderous discussion about theological history in this book on the Christian obsession with sex and demons during the 15th and 16th centuries. To explain this phenomenon, Stephens (Italian, Johns Hopkins; *Giants in Those Days: Folklore, Ancient History and Nationalism*) turns his attention to the witchcraft treatises written during that time rather than to accounts of the trials themselves. A conscientious historian and writer, he places his work in the context of what has already been done and is careful to point out the dangers of foisting the concerns of one's own era on the goings-on of another. Instead, Stephens attempts to show at great length and with considerable scholarship that this preoccupation had to do with nothing less than theologians' uncertainty about the realness of demons, without whose existence the very precepts of Christianity could be called into question. Recommended for academic libraries. Ellen D. Gilbert, Princeton, NJ

Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

From [Booklist](#)

The common view of witch hunters as wildly otherworldly zealots disintegrates in Stephens' stunning investigation into the motives and methods of these much-misunderstood inquisitors. Through careful scrutiny of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century witch trials, Stephens lays bare a peculiar inversion of judicial dynamics that made the accusers in these proceedings strangely dependent upon the accused for proof of their own imperiled beliefs. Desperately craving empirical evidence to buttress their metaphysical doctrines, the witch hunters struggled to secure tangible proof of human dealings with demons--most sensationally, of women's liaisons with devils. As fascinating as the primitive empiricism of the witch hunters is the tangled psychology of those (mostly women) who genuinely believed they had trafficked with devils--and were defying the Church in so doing. In their voluntary confessions, the reader glimpses a profound social alienation. Stephens finds that the story of the witch doctors has continued relevance today, in a world in which covens of self-proclaimed witches clamor for headlines, frantic parents accuse day-care providers of Satanic child abuse, and reports of alien abduction stir popular fascination. Unsettling and compelling. *Bryce Christensen*

Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Philip Raber:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in every way. By being competitive at this point, people have to do something to make these individuals survive, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that oftentimes many people have underestimated the item for a while is reading. Yeah, by reading a publication your ability to survive improves then having a chance to remain than other is high. For yourself who want to start reading a book, we give you that *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* book as a beginner and daily reading reserve. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Myrtle Hamer:

Typically the book *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* will bring you to definitely the new experience of reading some sort of book. The author's style to clarify the idea is very unique. Should you try to find a new book to read, this book is very suited to you. The book *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* is much recommended to you to read. You can also get the e-book through the official website, so you can quicker to read the book.

Ruth Goodrich:

In this era which is the greater man or who has ability in doing something more are more special than others. Do you want to become considered one of them? It is just a simple solution to have that. What you should do is just spending your time a little but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. Among the books in the top record in your reading list is actually *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief*. This book and that is qualified as *The Hungry Hills* can get you closer in getting a precious person. By looking way up and reviewing this reserve you can get many advantages.

Donald Noble:

Publication is one of the sources of understanding. We can add our expertise from it. Not only for students but additionally native or citizens need books to know the change in information of year to year. As we know those books have many advantages. Besides we all add our knowledge, may also bring us to around the world. From the book *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* we can get more advantage. Don't you want to be a creative person? To become a creative person must choose to read a book. Simply choose the best book that is ideal with your aim. Don't always be doubtful to change your life at this time book *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief*. You can be more pleasing than now.

Download and Read Online *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* By Walter Stephens #1W802Q7M9E3

Read Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens for online ebook

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens books to read online.

Online Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens ebook PDF download

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens Doc

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens Mobipocket

Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens EPub

1W802Q7M9E3: Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief By Walter Stephens