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Edited by Aine Norris, Mariaelena DiBenigno

Recasting the Bygone Witch

Representations of Lesser-Known Witches in Popular Culture

SERIES IN CRITICAL MEDIA STUDIES

About the editors

Aíne Murphy Norris is a Ph.D. candidate at Old Dominion University and holds a B.A. (2004) and M.A. (2016) from Virginia Commonwealth University. Her culturally-based research includes circus and sideshow, oddities in popular culture, and the archival examination of lore and the occult using mixed-method technologies. Her research uncovering new details about circus aerialist Eva Clark was featured in the 'Cincinnati Enquirer,' 'The News Virginian,' and as a television feature. Norris was awarded the 2025 Popular Culture Association William M. Jones Award for her stylometric work un-masking a 19th century Appalachian witchcraft accuser. Read more at ainenorris.info

Mariaelena DiBenigno received her Ph.D. from William & Mary (2020) after completing her M.A. at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (2011). Her research encompasses folklore, geography, and literature, exploring the relationship between popular culture, public history, and the haunting power of place. She has worked with several historic sites, including the Mariners' Museum Library and the Menokin Foundation, and instructed courses for W&M and the National Institute of American History and Democracy. Most recently, Mariaelena was the Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at James Monroe's Highland in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Summary

'Recasting the Bygone Witch: Representations of Lesser-Known Witches in Popular Culture' is an interdisciplinary collection that explores witches across time, culture, and scholarly space. It brings together voices and perspectives from literature, game studies, political science, history, and more to examine the overlooked or misrepresented. Timely and profoundly relevant, the collection asks readers to participate in conversations about the bygone witch as a historical, cultural, and political figure while examining who gets remembered or labeled as a witch, and why. 'Recasting the Bygone Witch' features scholarship from an interdisciplinary, international cohort of scholars using a variety of methods to analyze and contextualize bygone witches in discussions of power, identity, and resistance. From biographical examinations of Pamela Colman Smith, Marjorie Cameron, Sybil Leek, and Urška Klakočar Zupančič, to art and literary analyses of *The Fires of Bride*, Thomas Middleton, and William Hogarth, and reimagining the witch's presence in college classrooms, scholars place the bygone witch in conversation across disciplines. The collection also examines how witches manifest in popular culture, specifically the depiction of witches in (and on) social media, video games, and film. With a blend of rigorous research and accessible examples of bygone witches across socio-cultural spaces, 'Recasting the Bygone Witch: Representations of Lesser-Known Witches in Popular Culture' is an act of reclamation and preservation.

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