HISTORY

HOLY CONJURING: RELIGION AND THE CREATION OF THE

AMERICAN WITCH, 1647-1706

A CREATIVE PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF

ARTS

BY

LISA MARIE HENSELL

DR. DOUGLAS SEEFELDT-ADVISOR

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

MUNCIE, INDIANA

JULY 2016

This project is currently available at: http://lmhensell.iweb.bsu.edu/holyconjuring/

This project started initially in the Fall of 2014 when my interest in studying witchcraft was piqued. I began studying the topic by writing a historiography on European witchcraft. Through my research I saw Colonial British America as an extension of the European witchcraft trials. I noticed that so much attention was focused solely on Salem, Massachusetts. Upon further research, there was a noticeable gap between England and Salem's witch trials. The first witchcraft execution to occur in the colonies happened on May 26, 1647 with Alice Young of Windsor, Connecticut. Due to this research, this project is a continuation from the Fall of 2015 with Dr. Douglas Seefeldt's Digital History graduate seminar. My original project, "Under Connecticut's Spell: Witch Trials in Colonial Connecticut 1647-1697," started as a case study of Connecticut's witch trials. That project focused on filling in the gap between England and Salem and creating an image of colonial Connecticut. After that project, my interest grew and I wanted to further understand not just Connecticut and Massachusetts' witch trials, but the entire Colonial British American area. It comes to a surprise that many works do not see the whole area as important. Events in Salem from 1692 until 1693 overshadow the rest of the witchcraft cases. Some historians try to encompass the whole Colonial America, but without proper tools the data gets lost within the text. Because of this I chose to focus my research and work on Colonial British American witchcraft as a whole and the influence of religion and gender on the cases.

Until my final research questions became fully developed, my research took on various twists and turns. The first was understanding what religions were established in the colonies and the location of those particular religions. I searched through numerous secondary resources until I found a few leads through various historical journals. I then turned to the primary source material which included sermons. I researched each reverend's denomination and correlated

them to their home colony. From here I created an excel data sheet of all witchcraft cases with the colony, town, name, various case details, and the established religion of that colony. In order to fully develop an idea of each colonies religion, the charters for each colony was located. I felt that the primary sources allowed me to create a reflection of the influence religion held over the colonies. With every colony's charter in hand, finding complimentary sermons from more than one colony proved to be difficult. Most sermons used in this project were easy to find, but since this time frame is from America's early days it was difficult to find as many as I would have liked to have analyzed. Another primary source used in this project was the accused cases. A sample of Connecticut's cases were easy to find but primary documentation of cases from colonies other than Massachusetts were hard to obtain. Once I gathered the sources I needed to look at religion in the colonies, I turned my focus on gender within the colony. Since almost 75% of all witchcraft cases included women, the gender issue here could not be ignored. Using the religious documents and the cases, I examined how what effect gender plaid on the witchcraft trials.

Gathering a sufficient amount of sources, I began to work with them. First, I read through the available primary and secondary sources. I took all the sources I read and formed a dialogue script exploring ways to study witchcraft. I began a video in iMovie that included primary source material, images for public use, and music for public use. I grouped information in ways to study witchcraft: reasons of accusations, gender, time, and religion. This video, located on the "Overview" page of my project acts as an introduction to the entire project. It caters to viewers interested in popular history and scholars interested in studying Colonial British Americas witchcraft trials in depth.

Then, I created a timeline in TimelineJS for viewers to contextualize historical events in relation to events in the colonies. I set up each colony's timeline against England's timeline to ensure that events from the colony's mother country was taken into account. Using a timeline allows for viewers to correlate specific events such as political or economic changes that could potentially effect events around the same date. I also looked at when major monographs were written. The published year of the monograph was placed in another timeline using TimelineJS. This allows viewers to visualize a short historiography of witchcraft. This includes what kind of approach historians are taking, when these trends occurredd, and their main thesis. This assists viewers in seeing how these major monographs compare to each other in time and content.

Taking my spreadsheet of all the well-documented witchcraft cases to occur in the colonies, I placed the locations into a map using ArcGIS Online. I then added layers upon the trial location maps. The layer most useful was an overlay of each colony's established religion. I decided to put this map into an ArcGIS Journal Story Map. To show the evolution of cases from 1647 until 1706, the amount of cases in each colony, and the religion of each colony, I created a layered map for every decade. The Journal Map showcases particular cases while focusing on the amount of cases in each decade and the influence of religion. The Story Map includes a heat map created from CartoDB. This heat map shows where the most cases are located and is compared to a map that shows the established religions.

Finally, a good portion of my project revolves around text analysis. To conduct this text analysis, I used the digital tool Voyant. I began with my section on religion analysis throughout the colonies. To create an image of this, I first created a word cloud of all the colony's charters combined. I then divided the colony's charters by religion and textually analyzed them. From here I took specific colony's charters and chose a key word to explore that told me something

more about the colony. This answered a portion of my research question since the colony's with no established religion did not have the word God present within their charters. To complete the text analysis on religion, I researched sermons from various colonies and placed them into Voyant. First, I created a word cloud that represented all sermons combined. I then selected a few sermons to be analyzed and followed that with picking a key word to place focus on.

The second half of my analysis focused on gender within the colonies. First I combined all sermons into one word cloud. Then, I chose a few selected sermons and analyzed the words that surrounded various terms like Christ and God. Finally, I selected a key word to further contextualize the sermons in terms of gender. This answered the other half of my research question since the sermons created a social order in the colonies and many word like devil and sin were closely tied to women and witch. The last part of the gender analysis was to analyze the cases. All available cases were put into Voyant. This was followed by looking at a few selected cases to further investigate. Finally, a key word was chosen to see what passages come before and after that word. This showed the idea that witches were seen as women who were menacing threats to society.

With my research complete and my questions answered I need a way to efficiently display the work. I looked back at my previous digital history project on Colonial Connecticut. I liked the template because it was visually appealing and I am quite familiar with its CSS and HTML files. I decided to use the same template and rearrange a few tabs. I made sure to create Microsoft Word documents for each page on my website so that my work had multiple copies. I added my text, visualizations, and other digital tools on the designated web pages when each were completed. After the final coding stages, my project was complete. I have included the files of my project with this essay as part of my CRPRJ 698 submission.

Primary Sources

Burr, George Lincoln, ed. Narratives of the Witchcraft Cases (1648-1706). New York: Charles
        Scribner's Sons, 1914.

"Samuel Wyllys Papers." Connecticut State Library. 2011.
        http://ctstatelibrary.org/RG000_samuel_wyllys_papers.html.

Mather, Cotton. The Wonders of the Invisible Work. 1663.

"Matthew Grant Diary." Connecticut State Library. 2012.
        http://cslib.cdmhost.com/cdm/ref/collection/p15019coll14/id/414.

Secondary Sources

Adams, Gretchen A. *The Specter of Salem: Remembering the Witch Trials in Nineteenth-Century
        America*. University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Amussen, Susan Dwyer. *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England.* New
        York: Columbia University Press, 1988.

Barry, J., and O. Davies, eds. *Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography*.
        Basingstoke England; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Boyer, Paul and Stephen Nissenbaum. *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*. 1st
        edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974.

Briggs, Robin. *Witches & Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft*.
        New York: Viking Press, 1996.

Burr, George Lincoln. *New England's Place in the History of Witchcraft*. Worcester, Mass.: The
        Society, 1911. http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/100342004.

Byington, Ezra Hoyt. *The Puritan in England and New England*. New York: Lenox Hill, 1972.

Carlson, Marc. "Historical Witches and Witchtrials in North America." Accessed February 11,
        2016. http://www.personal.utulsa.edu/~marc-carlson/witchtrial/na.html.

Demos, John. *The Enemy Within: 2,000 Years of Witch-Hunting in the Western World*.
        Viking, 2008.

Demos, John Putnam. *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England*.
        (1983) Paperback. Oxford University Press, 1982.

Gregory, Jeremy. "Refashioning Puritan New England: The Church of England in British North America, c. 1680-c. 1770." Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 20 (2010): 85–112.
http://www.jstor.org.proxy.bsu.edu/stable/41432387.

Hall, David D. *Witch-Hunting in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Documentary History 1638–1693*, Second Edition. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2005.

Karlsen, Carol F. *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman Witchcraft in Colonial New England*. Book Club. W. W. Norton & Co Inc, 1987.

Levack, Brian P. *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe.* London: Routledge, 2006.

Norton, Mary Beth. *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Pyle, Ralph E., and James D. Davidson. "The Origins of Religious Stratification in Colonial America." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42, no. 1 (2003): 57–76.
http://www.jstor.org.proxy.bsu.edu/stable/1387985.

Reis, Elizabeth. *Spellbound: Woman and Witchcraft in America*. Wilmington, Del: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998.

Richard, Jeffrey. *Sex, Dissidence and Damnation: Minority Groups in the Middle Ages.* Routledge, 1991.

Thomas, Keith. *Religion & the Decline of Magic*. New York: Scribner, 1971.

Thomson, David. "The Antinomian Crisis: Prelude to Puritan Missions." *Early American Literature* 38, no. 3 (2003): 401–35. http://www.jstor.org.proxy.bsu.edu/stable/25055572.

Uszkalo, Kirsten C. The Witches in Early Modern England Project. 2011, http://witching.org.

Wiesner, Merry E. *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Williams, Peter W. *Perspectives on American Religion and Culture: A Reader*. Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991.

Tool Visualizations

ArcGIS Online Journal Map – journal map located on the "Story Map" page

CartoDB Heat Map – heat map located on the "Story Map" page within the journal map

TimelineJS – timeline of historical events located on the "Timeline" page

TimelineJS – timeline of historian's monographs located on the "Timeline" dropdown menu page as Historiography Timeline

Video – video "Spells and Cases" located on the "Overview" page

Voyant Word Cloud for every charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Connecticut's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Delaware's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Georgia's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Maryland's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Massachusetts' Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for New Hampshire's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for New Jersey's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for New York's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for North Carolina's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Pennsylvania's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Rhode Island's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for South Carolina's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for Virginia's Charter

Voyant Word Cloud for every sermon

Voyant Word Cloud for Johnathan Edwards sermons

Voyant Word Cloud for T. Booker's sermon

Voyant Word Cloud for Thomas Hooker's Thanksgiving sermon

Voyant Word Cloud for Thomas Hooker's sermon

Voyant Word Cloud for Rev. T. Hanford sermon

Voyant Word Cloud for Samuel Parris sermon

Voyant Word Cloud for John Warham sermon

Voyant Links for all Connecticut's sermons

Voyant Word Cloud for Anglican colonies

Voyant Word Cloud for Congregational colonies

Voyant Word Cloud for Dutch Reformation colonies

Voyant Word Cloud for No Established religion colonies

Voyant Word Cloud for every case

Voyant Word Cloud for E. Seager's case

Voyant Word Cloud for Ayer's case

Voyant Word Cloud for Harrison's case

Voyant Word Cloud for Clawson's case

Voyant Word Cloud for Branch's testimonies

Voyant Word Cloud for Disbrough's case

Voyant Word Cloud for Grace Sherwood's case

Voyant Word Cloud for Hall's case

Voyant Word Cloud for Mattson and Hendrickson's' Case

Voyant Keywords in Context of "god" from Anglican colonies

Voyant Keywords in Context of "company"

Voyant Keywords in Context of "god" from No Established religion colonies

Voyant Keywords in Context of "peace"

Voyant Keywords in Context of "godhead"

Voyant Keywords in Context of "witches"