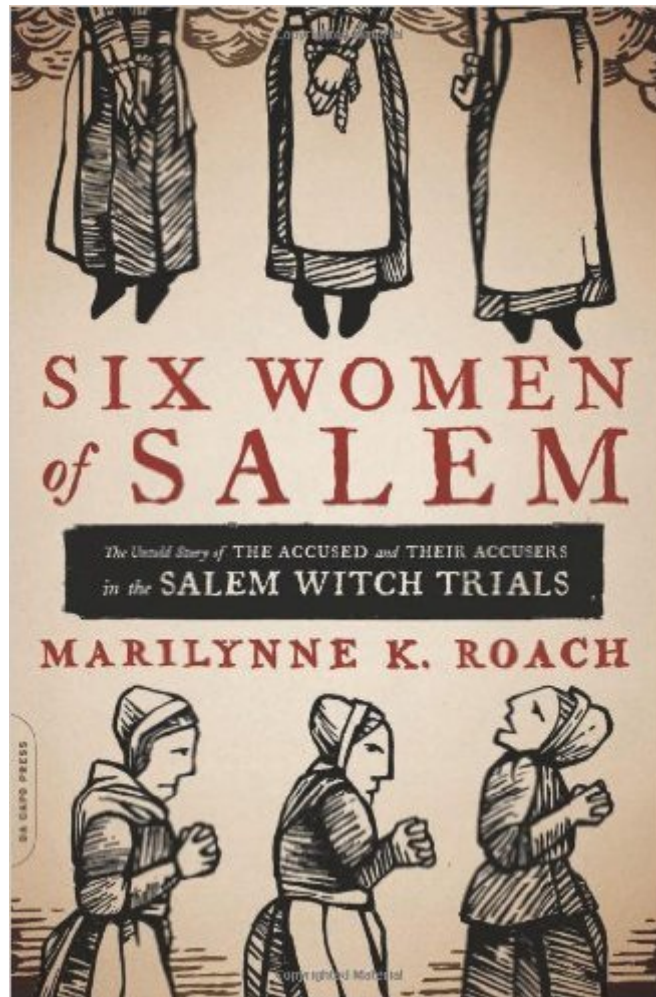


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Six Women Of Salem: The Untold Story Of The Accused And Their Accusers In The Salem Witch Trials



Synopsis

Six Women of Salem is the first work to use the lives of a select number of representative women as a microcosm to illuminate the larger crisis of the Salem witch trials. By the end of the trials, beyond the twenty who were executed and the five who perished in prison, 207 individuals had been accused, 74 had been afflicted, 32 had officially accused their fellow neighbors, and 255 ordinary people had been inexorably drawn into that ruinous and murderous vortex, and this doesn't include the religious, judicial, and governmental leaders. All this adds up to what the Rev. Cotton Mather called "a desolation of names." The individuals involved are too often reduced to stock characters and stereotypes when accuracy is sacrificed to indignation. And although the flood of names and detail in the history of an extraordinary event like the Salem witch trials can swamp the individual lives involved, individuals still deserve to be remembered and, in remembering specific lives, modern readers can benefit from such historical intimacy. By examining the lives of six specific women, Marilynne Roach shows readers what it was like to be present throughout this horrific time and how it was impossible to live through it unchanged.

Book Information

Paperback: 472 pages

Publisher: Da Capo Press; Third Impression edition (September 3, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0306821206

ISBN-13: 978-0306821202

Product Dimensions: 1.5 x 6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (64 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #59,217 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #46 in [Books > Law > Legal History](#) #88 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > New Age & Spirituality > Wicca, Witchcraft & Paganism > Witchcraft](#) #93 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > Colonial Period](#)

Customer Reviews

Many thanks to Perseus Books Group / Da Capo Press for providing this eGalley to me through NetGalley. Although it was provided at no cost, I am under no obligation to give a positive review. Growing up, I was very fortunate to have my maternal grandmother and her husband work in the tourism industry in Williamsburg, Virginia. I got an early exposure to colonial America to go along with my always strong love of history in general. Naturally, I have also been interested in the

happenings in Salem, Massachusetts, knowing it can be very difficult to separate fact from fiction from urban legend. Enter this wonderful book by Marilynne K. Roach. It should be noted before beginning that this is not Roach's first rodeo when it comes to scholarly work on the Salem witch trials. She's well-respected in that area as a quick Google search will reveal. That said, what Roach brings to the table with this offering is humanization of the accused as well as providing a smaller scope of the trials. Rather than looking at the trials in a larger overview, she takes six women accused of being witches and gets into extraordinary detail about their lives. With each woman, she digs into their family, genealogy and the events surrounding the accusations against them and subsequent trial. This works very well to humanize the accused, as you can see them as individual persons, not just numbers or statistics. Additionally, Roach makes an effort to get into each woman's head to try and see the happenings through their eyes. This further brings the subject to a more personal level. The only downside of the book is that it does get tedious at times. It took me a bit before I really got rolling, once I finished the first woman's story.

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