

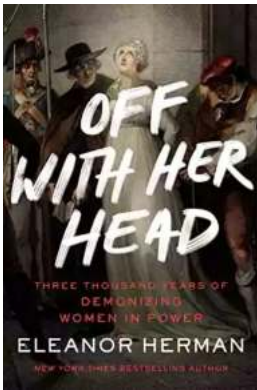
Three Thousand Years Of Demonizing Women In Power



A crossroad where gender and power intersect, history has witnessed a widespread and deep-rooted practice of demonizing women in positions of authority. This article delves into the historical accounts spanning over three thousand years to shed light on the long-standing tradition of discrediting and vilifying women who dared to challenge the prevailing social norms.

The Ancient Era: Myth and Misrepresentation

From ancient civilizations to classical mythology, women in power were often represented as conniving, manipulative, or even evil. Queen Cleopatra of Egypt, a powerful and intelligent leader, was depicted as a seductress seeking to undermine the Roman Empire. These fictional narratives propagated perceptions that women in positions of authority were threatening and disruptive forces.



Off with Her Head: Three Thousand Years of Demonizing Women in Power

by Eleanor Herman (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Screen Reader: Supported

Print length : 196 pages



Similarly, the notorious story of Adam and Eve in the Genesis further solidified this negative portrayal. Eve, as the first woman in existence, was blamed for the expulsion from Paradise due to her supposed weakness and her ability to resist temptation. These tales ingrained the notion that women in power were destined to bring downfall and ruin.

Medieval Times: Women as Pawns in Patriarchal Systems

During the medieval era, women in power faced significant challenges. They often served as mere pawns within patriarchal systems, with their authority constantly undermined and questioned. Joan of Arc, who led French forces against English domination during the Hundred Years' War, faced intense scrutiny and was eventually executed on charges of heresy. Her story exemplifies how

women in positions of power were subjected to exceptional scrutiny and were treated as anomalies rather than legitimate leaders.

Furthermore, the infamous witch trials during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance saw countless women targeted and executed under allegations of practicing witchcraft. Many of these women were healers or individuals knowledgeable in herbal medicine, which threatened the patriarchal control over medical practices. The persecution of these women illustrates how powerful and independent women were seen as a threat to societal norms and stability.

Modern Era: Breaking Barriers and Overcoming Stereotypes

As society progressed into the modern era, women started to challenge societal norms and strive for equality and recognition. However, even in the face of progress, women in power continued to be subjected to derogatory labels and prejudices. Female politicians and leaders of the 20th century, such as Margaret Thatcher and Angela Merkel, were often targets of sexist remarks and belittlement in the media.

These disparaging portrayals of women in power are not limited to Western societies. In various parts of the world, powerful women have been subjected to defamation, character assassination, and even physical harm. These incidents highlight the deeply entrenched biases and societal discomfort with women exercising authority.

Changing the Narrative: Striving for Equality

It is crucial to recognize and challenge the historical legacy of demonizing women in power. By understanding the deep-rooted nature of these biases, society can actively work towards creating an inclusive and equitable future.

By promoting women's leadership, encouraging mentorship, and combating gender stereotypes, we can begin to break free from the oppressive stigma surrounding female authority. Education, awareness, and representation play pivotal roles in dismantling the narratives that have hindered women's progress for thousands of years.

The demonization of women in power has persisted for centuries, with its roots deeply embedded in historical narratives and societal constructs. This article has provided a glimpse into the long-standing tradition of discrediting and vilifying women who dared to challenge the status quo.

It is essential to acknowledge the damaging effects of these stereotypes and work together to build a more inclusive and equal society. Women leaders have proven time and again their competence and capabilities, and it is high time they receive the recognition and support they deserve.



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New York Times bestseller Eleanor Herman, author of *Sex with Kings* and *Sex with Presidents*, returns with another work of popular history, exploring the history of misogyny against women with power from Cleopatra to Kamala Harris.

Imagine Donald Trump as a woman, called Donna. Would Donna Trump have been viewed as blunt, honest, and refreshing? Would she have won the election?

Imagine Hillary Clinton as a man. Howard Clinton says and does the exact same things as Hillary. Would Howard Clinton have been portrayed in a thousand Pinterest images as a witch, stirring a cauldron or riding a broomstick? Would he have been called a bitch on countless T-shirts? Would his thoughtful, circumspect answers to media questions have been seen as inauthenticity, secretiveness, and untrustworthiness?

There is a particular kind of rage—let’s call it unadulterated bloodlust—usually reserved for women, especially women in power or vying for it. From the ancient world, through the European Renaissance, up to the most recent U.S. elections, the *Misogynist’s Handbook*, as Eleanor Herman calls it, has been wielded to put uppity women in their place.

In a story that is shocking, eye-opening, and a powerful force for change, Eleanor Herman’s signature wit and humor explores the patterns that have been operating for more than three thousand years—and are still operating today—against powerful women across the globe, including Cleopatra, Anne Boleyn, Marie Antoinette, Catherine the Great, Hillary Clinton, Kamala Harris, and more.

Each chapter analyzes a tried-and-true misogynistic method to keep women down, including: *Her Overweening Ambition*, *Why Doesn’t She Do Something About Her Hair?*, *The Dangers of Female Hormones*, *The Alarming Shrillness of Her Voice*, *The Mysterious Unlikability of Female Candidates*, *She’s a Bitch and Other Animals*, *She’s a Witch and Other Monsters*, and *Her Sexual Depravity*. Herman ends the book by looking forward, examining ways to rip up the *Misogynist’s Handbook* once and for all.



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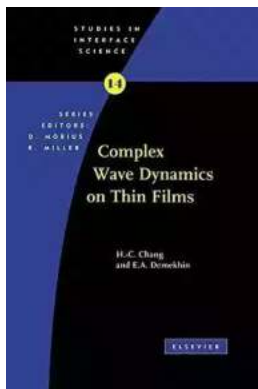
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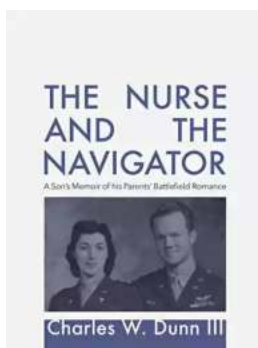
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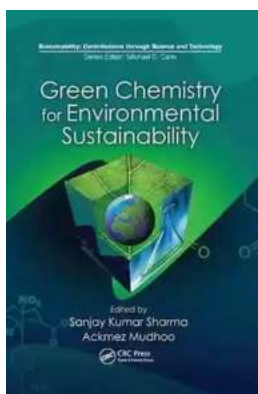
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