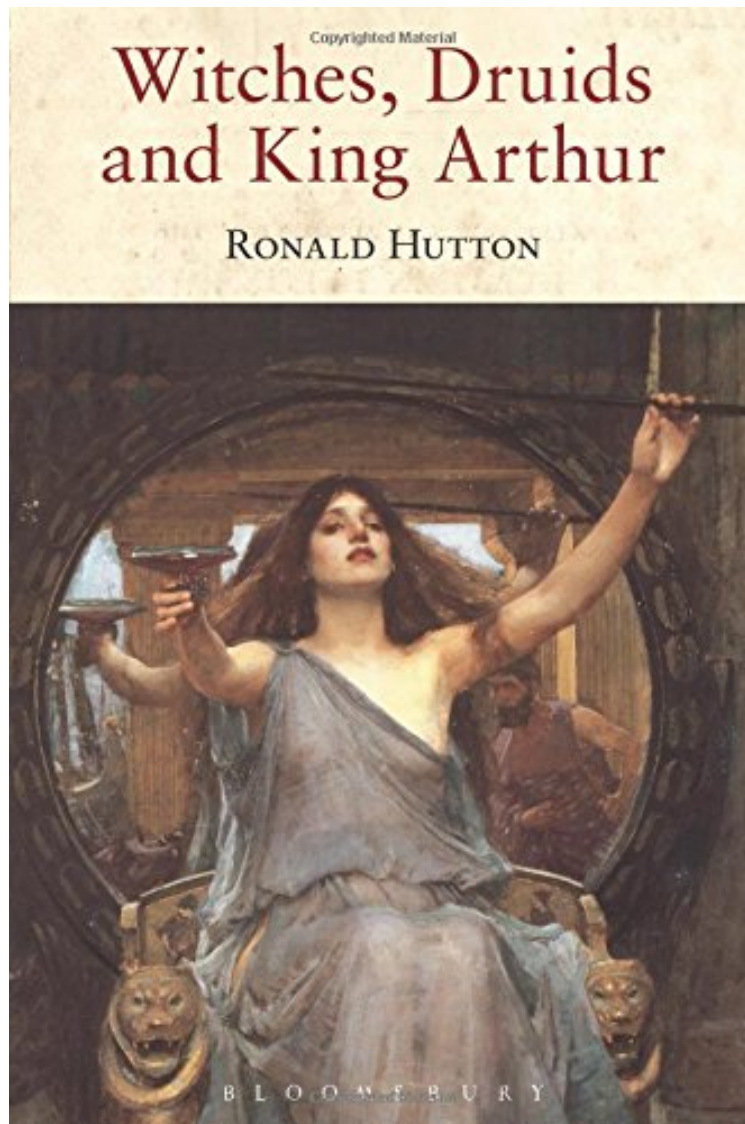


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## Witches, Druids and King Arthur

*Ronald Hutton*

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#2687074 in Books Bloomsbury Academic 2006-09-15 2006-09-15 Original language: English PDF # 1  
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**Ronald Hutton : Witches, Druids and King Arthur** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Witches, Druids and King Arthur:

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Another great book from an honored scholar By Siobhan Olaoghaire Sannes This book is another compelling, if challenging entry from honored pagan scholar Ronald Hutton. Professor Hutton has brought us previous scholar tomes including *The Triumph of the Moon*, a history of modern paganism in Britain, and the historical survey, *The Pagan Religions of the British Isles*, and *Stations of the Sun*, a history of the ritual year in Britain. As anyone who have read Hutton before will know the Professor's published work aims for the

general reading audience, though without doubt an educated one. However, the challenges of reading Hutton are worth it, and it is no less so than in this reviewed work. The book's only flaw, in my opinion, is the fact that this is not a continuous work at all, but a collection of essays that the writer feels are related to each other. This is most true, though a couple, essays on ritual nudity and on the pagan elements in the writings of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, are interesting though they don't seem to fit within the general theme indicated by the title. The rest of the fascinating essays cover: How Myths are Made, Arthur and the Academics, Glastonbury: Alternative Histories, and histories of medieval and modern paganism. In the end, this is a book not to be missed. The discussion is lively and the information is profound. I heartily recommend this book.

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Just FYI for R. Hutton Triumph of the Moon fans. By sky blue Chapter nine of this book is titled "Living with Witchcraft". This chapter is a commentary about the author's experiences before and after writing Triumph of the Moon. It's a very interesting narrative about the politics of researching and writing about a controversial subject like paganism and witchcraft. By the end of the chapter, I was left with the impression that no matter how rational, scientific or tolerant a culture seems from the outside, the average fearful person in Western society is just a hair's width away from allowing the burning of witches, pagans (and their historians) at the stake once again. I think Ronald Hutton's skill, professionalism and political astuteness led to a positive outcome for all involved in producing Triumph of the Moon, but it's easy to see from the narrative that it could have been otherwise. It seems to me that this short narrative is compelling evidence that there is very real danger present in current Western society toward those who publicly expose themselves as witches and to those who even just associate with them. Potentially losing a home, a job, or custody of children is a type of violence approaching the direction of physical torture or killing. It also implies that this danger must have been many times higher in the recent and distant past. It seems quite plausible that people of the distant past who could be classified as having "Witch behavior, knowledge, or characteristics" could actually have been hiding in secret from persecution. There is some discussion of Gerald Gardner and the origins of Wicca. In another book, I've read a court description of a medieval Witches sabbat by a "witness". The sabbat description seemed to me like a bunch of kids going out into the woods to light a bonfire, dance, eat, smoke pot (described as a strange smell in the air), and to have sex. This kind of behavior will get you arrested today, I imagine this kind of "Witchy" behavior could get you killed in the past by the authorities. The point I'm trying to make is that from Hutton's narrative in this chapter there is ample evidence that it is a good idea that Witches of today should keep their religious beliefs and practices publicly secret (or at least anonymous) just as it may have been kept secret in the misty past. I think the book is worth buying just for this chapter. I can't really comment on the rest of the book because I haven't finished it yet.

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyed it. By J. Kelly Hutton is, first of all, a good writer. I've found his books engaging and informative. This collection of essays was interesting and I'm glad I bought it.

An essay collection on all manner of subjects relating to paganism, myth and Arthurian legend, from a leading expert.

'essential reading for anyone interested in the history, recent or older, of paganism.' ~ David Cohen