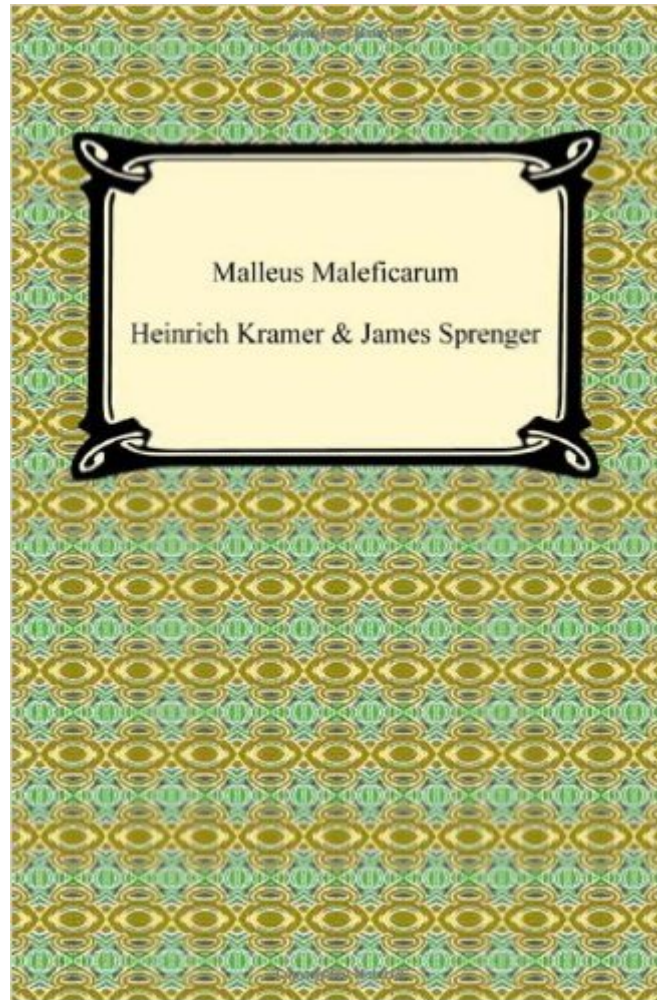


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# Malleus Maleficarum



## Synopsis

First written in 1486 by zealous Inquisitors of the Catholic Church, "The Witch Hammer" came to be the witch-hunting handbook of the fifteenth century. Its main purpose was to refute doubts of the existence of witchcraft, though it proceeds to prove women more susceptible than men, as well as to outline procedures that allowed law enforcers to discover and convict witches. Because of the papal bull acknowledging the validity of this previously pagan belief, the persecution of alleged witches became widespread and brutal with the printing of "Malleus Maleficarum" on the recently invented printing press. Though some of the claims in this work are perhaps humorous to the modern reader, countless individuals lost their lives due to the prevalence of this book throughout late Medieval Europe, and today it can serve as a both a collection of superstitious folklore and a warning against mass hysteria and ignorance.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (102 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

Rating the MALLEUS MALEFICARUM is an exercise in frustration. One cannot "enjoy" this book; like MEIN KAMPF, one reads it for its historical importance. This book should form a part of every thinking person's library as a warning beacon, if for no other reason that it is a seminal textbook on the inhumanity of humanity. First written in 1484 by the Friars Kramer and Sprenger, (and reprinted endlessly), the MALLEUS was immediately given the imprimatur of the Holy See as the most important work on witchcraft, to date. And so it remains. The MALLEUS MALEFICARUM is a compendium of fifteenth century paranoias, all the more frightening for its totalitarian modernity.

("Anything that is done for the benefit of the State is Good.") In form, it is a "how to" guide on recognizing, capturing, torturing, and executing witches. In substance, it is a diatribe against women, heretics, independent thinkers, romantic lovers, the sensitive passions, human sexuality, and compassion. "Vanity of vanities" indeed. In writing the MALLEUS, Kramer and Spenger claimed to be doing "God's work"; these men, and those who followed them worshiped only their own arrogance. Read it and Be Afraid, my friends. Forming a portion of every working law library for 300 years, there is no estimate of how many women and men were put to death through the mechanism of this benighted book. Some historians estimate that the numbers may run into the millions. The text is rife with "caselaw" examples of witchcraft, some of which are clearly delusional and some downright silly, or would be, if they hadn't ended in gruesome deaths for the accused.

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