

#1. The Witch Hunts were an example of medieval cruelty and barbarism.

FACT: While frequently cruel, the Witch Hunts took place after the Middle Ages and were conducted by civilized people.

#2. The Church was to blame for the Witch Hunts.

FACT: While Christianity clearly created the framework for the Witch Hunts, no single "Church" was to blame, and many secular governments hunted witches for essentially non-religious reasons.

#3. The Witch Hunts specifically targeted women.

FACT: While many witch hunters explicitly went after women, men fell victim to the witch hunts.

#4. The Witch Hunts were an attempt at "femicide" or "gendercide," meaning the persecution of the female sex, equivalent to genocide.

FACT: While a few witch hunters abhorred all women, the necessity for women to be involved in procreation of our species and the lack of means to carry out the extermination of every woman prevented any realistic approach toward genocide.

#5. The Witch Hunts are/were all alike.

FACT: While the Witch Hunts share some essential similarities, they were enormously different depending on time and place.

#6. Millions of people died because of the Witch Hunts.

FACT: While millions of people might have been affected, the best estimates of recent historians range from 50,000 to 200,000 dead.

#7. People condemned during the Witch Hunts were burned at the stake.

FACT: While indeed governments did burn many witches at the stake, most were executed by other means.

#8. During the time of the Witch Hunts, witches actually existed and worked magic.

FACT: While some people have claimed to be able to work witchcraft, there is no scientific, empirical, reasonable proof that any actual witches existed or that the magic they claimed to perform actually did what it was supposed to do.

#9. In modern usage, the term "Witch Hunt" can be applied to any organized persecution of a group of people.

FACT: While the term "Witch Hunt" does involve persecution of a group, that group may or may not exist in an organized fashion; and the proper use of the term especially requires that the targeted group is not a real threat to society.

#10. Modern witchcraft/magick/wicca is a direct descendent of those practices done by people during the Witch Hunts of 1400-1800.

FACT: While modern witches and pagans have tried to resurrect witchcraft activities described by witch hunters, there exists only a very tenuous connection between modern witches and those before 1800.