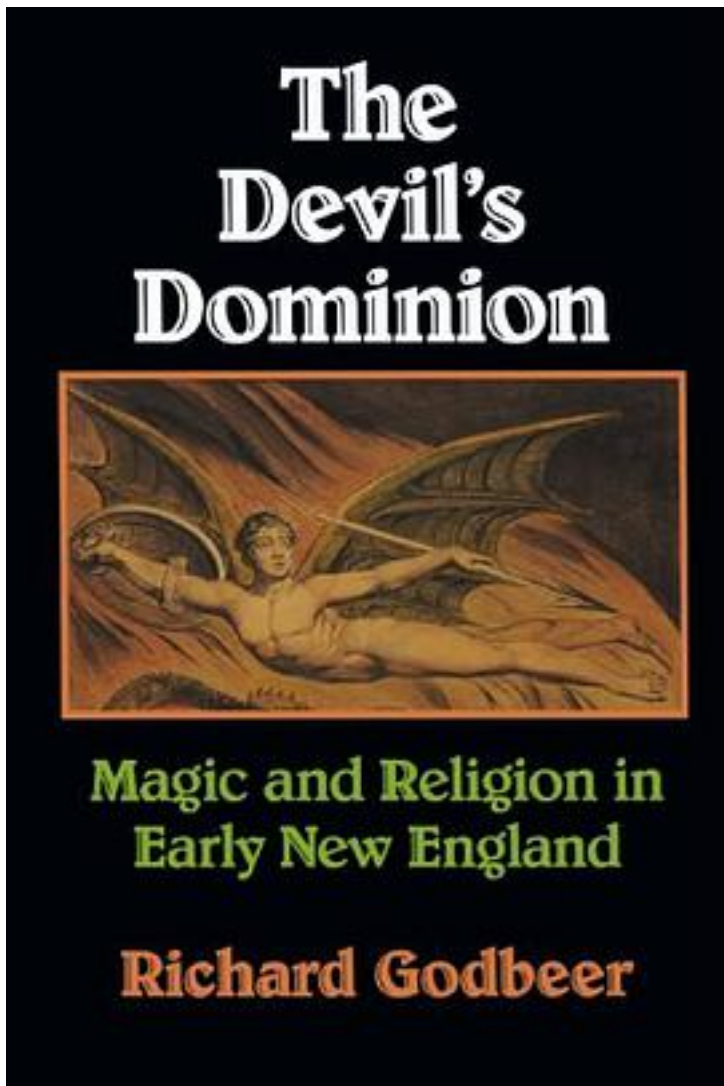


The Devil's Dominion



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The Devil's Dominion examines the use of folk magic by ordinary men and women in early New England. The book describes in vivid detail the magical techniques used by settlers and the assumptions which underlaid them. Godbeer argues that layfolk were generally far less consistent in their beliefs and actions than their ministers would have liked; even church members sometimes turned to magic. The Devil's Dominion reveals that the relationship between magical and religious belief was complex and ambivalent: some members of the community rejected magic altogether, but others did not. Godbeer argues that the controversy surrounding astrological prediction in early New England paralleled clerical condemnation of magical practice, and that the different perspectives on witchcraft engendered by magical tradition and Puritan doctrine often caused confusion and disagreement when New Englanders sought legal punishment of witches.

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