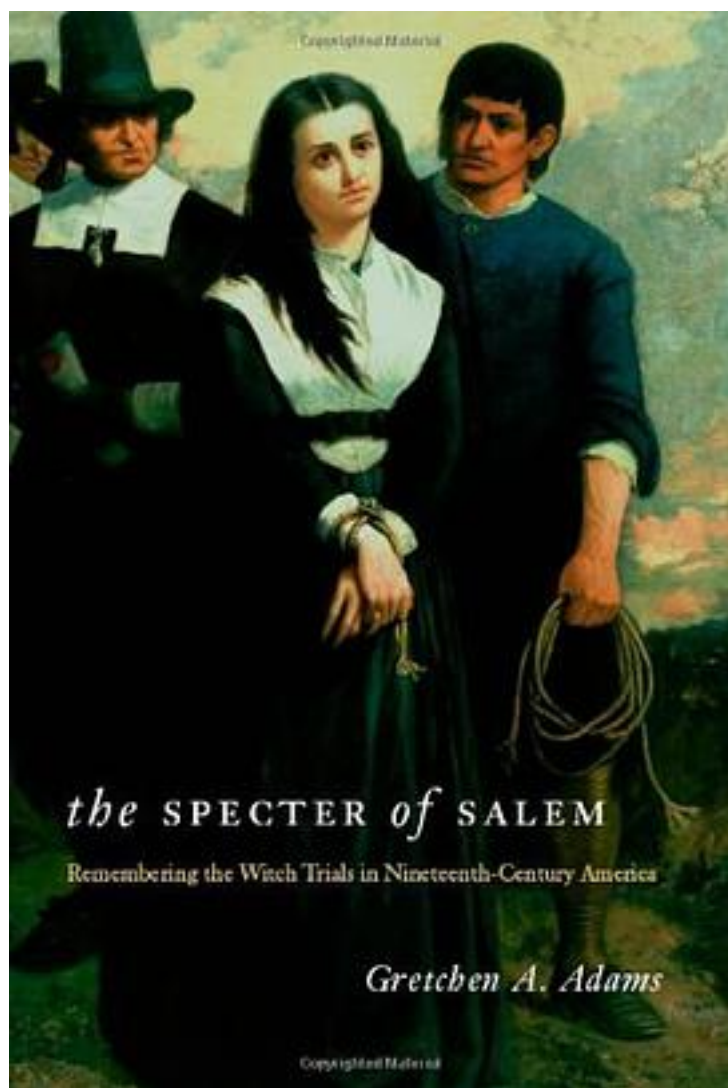


The Specter of Salem



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In "The Specter of Salem", Gretchen A. Adams reveals the many ways that the Salem witch trials loomed over the American collective memory from the Revolution to the Civil War and beyond. Schoolbooks in the 1790s, for example, evoked the episode to demonstrate the new nation's progress from a disorderly and brutal past to a rational present, while critics of new religious movements in the 1830s cast them as a return to Salem-era fanaticism, and during the Civil War southerners evoked witch burning to criticize Union tactics. Shedding new light on the many, varied American invocations of Salem, Adams ultimately illuminates the function of collective memories in the life of a nation.

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