

# Discussion Questions

1. Why do you suppose there are so many potential explanations for this phenomenon? Which ones seem most plausible and why?
2. What challenges do historians face when trying to determine what people beliefs were in the 16<sup>th</sup> can 17<sup>th</sup> centuries? What limits are there to the methodologies discussed in the reading?
3. Are you surprised at all by the lack of apparent knowledge about Christianity among common people of the era? Does the prevalence of odd belief surprise you?
4. How did views about witches and witchcraft change in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century – and *why?*
5. How did leading thinkers of the time argue against witchcraft persecution and with what results?
6. What role do you think misogyny played in the witchcraft phenomena? What other motivations do you think accusers might have had?
7. Why did the witch trials come to an end? What was the primary factor involved?