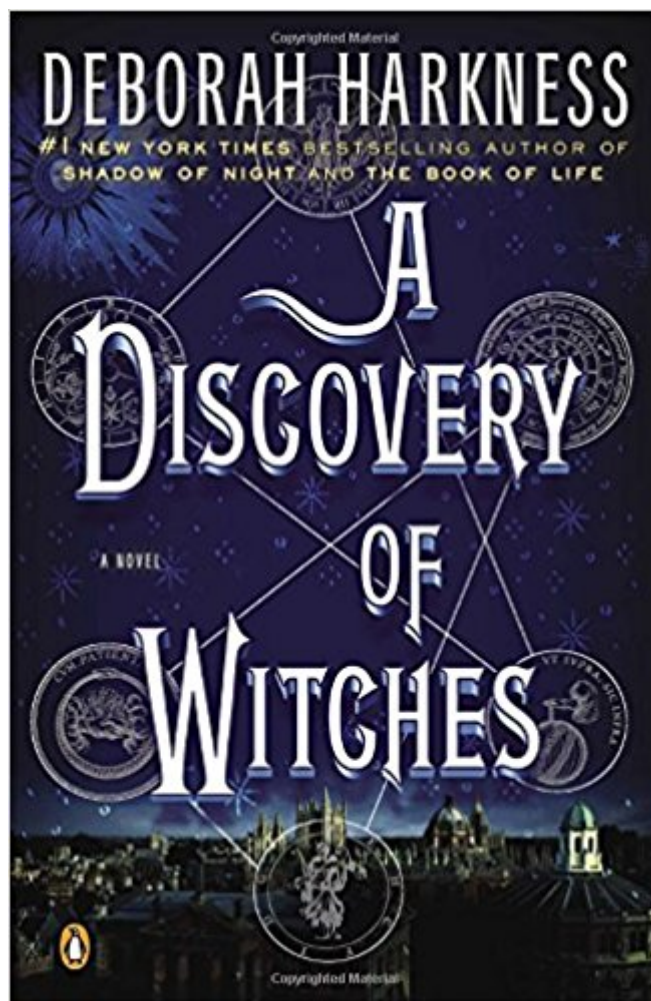


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A Discovery Of Witches (All Souls Trilogy)



Synopsis

Book one of the New York Times bestselling All Souls trilogy – "a wonderfully imaginative grown-up fantasy with all the magic of Harry Potter and Twilight" (People) Deborah Harkness's sparkling debut, *A Discovery of Witches*, has brought her into the spotlight and galvanized fans around the world. In this tale of passion and obsession, Diana Bishop, a young scholar and a descendant of witches, discovers a long-lost and enchanted alchemical manuscript, Ashmole 782, deep in Oxford's Bodleian Library. Its reappearance summons a fantastical underworld, which she navigates with her leading man, vampire geneticist Matthew Clairmont. Harkness has created a universe to rival those of Anne Rice, Diana Gabaldon, and Elizabeth Kostova, and she adds a scholar's depth to this riveting tale of magic and suspense. The story continues in book two, *Shadow of Night*, and concludes with *The Book of Life*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Best of the Month, February 2011: It all begins with a lost manuscript, a reluctant witch, and 1,500-year-old vampire. Dr. Diana Bishop has a really good reason for refusing to do magic: she is a direct descendant of the first woman executed in the Salem Witch Trials, and her parents cautioned her be discreet about her talents before they were murdered, presumably for having "too much power." So it is purely by accident that Diana unlocks an enchanted long-lost manuscript (a book that all manner of supernatural creatures believe to hold the story of all origins and the secret

of immortality) at the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and finds herself in a race to prevent an interspecies war. A sparkling debut written by a historian and self-proclaimed oenophile, *A Discovery of Witches* is heady mix of history and magic, mythology and love (cue the aforementioned vampire!), making for a luxurious, intoxicating, one-sitting read. --Daphne Durham

Ten More Books for Readers of *A Discovery of Witches* Interested in learning more about magic and science? I may have written a novel, but I'm still a history professor! Here are some reading suggestions for those of you whose curiosity has been stirred up by the story of Diana Bishop, Matthew Clairmont, and the hunt for the missing alchemical manuscript Ashmole 782. All of the titles here are non-fiction, and inspired some aspect of *A Discovery of Witches*.

Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum*: Don't be put off by the Latin title. This is a collection of English alchemical texts that were gathered by Elias Ashmole. The missing alchemical manuscript that Diana finds in the Bodleian library is not among them, alas, but if you are interested in the subject this is a fascinating glimpse into the mysterious texts that she studies as a historian.

Janet Browne, *Darwin's Origin of Species: Books That Changed the World*: Browne is not only a great scholar, but a superb writer. A highly-regarded biographer of Darwin, here she turns her talents to writing a "biography" of his most famous book—and one of Matthew Clairmont's favorites, as well.

Owen Davies, *Grimoires: A History of Magic Books*. If you are interested in the history of magic and witchcraft, Davies's description of the development of magical spellbooks will provide insights into how ideas about magic, science, and nature developed over the centuries.

Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England*. Diana Bishop is descended from a long line of witches. You will find out more about some of those witches—the Bishops and the Proctors—while reading this classic interpretation of what happened in Salem in 1692.

Robert Kehew, Ezra Pound, and W. D. Snodgrass, *Lark in the Morning: The Verses of the Troubadours*. Matthew is a very old vampire, who has slightly old-fashioned views on love and romance. You might be surprised at the love poetry of his early life, and come away with a whole new appreciation for "old-fashioned." Bruce Moran's *Distilling Knowledge: Alchemy, Chemistry, and the Scientific Revolution*. This marvelous book is not only deeply learned but extremely readable. Touched with Moran's sense of humor and his compassion for his subject's tireless efforts to understand the natural world, you will come away from this book with a new appreciation for the alchemists.

Alexander Roob, *Alchemy and Mysticism*. Diana Bishop is an expert on the enigmatic imagery that is used in alchemical texts. Many are included in Roob's book, along with other illustrations from mystical and magical traditions. Lyndal

Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany*. This scholarly book was important to me as I wrote *A Discovery of Witches* because it helped me understand how the belief in witches influenced the imagination. Many of the notions we have about witchcraft today have their roots in these terrifying fantasies. James Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in Early Modern England*. Sharpe's book is an ideal starting point if you are interested in the history of witchcraft beyond Salem or Germany. One of his most controversial arguments focuses on the role that women played as accusers – not just as victims – in the witchcraft trials. Bryan Sykes, *The Seven Daughters of Eve: The Science That Reveals Our Genetic Ancestry*. I was fascinated by the combination of history, genealogy, and science in Sykes's work. The book provides an introduction to the study of genetics, and to the legacies that are carried from generation to generation among the population. --Deborah Harkness (Photo of Deborah Harkness © Marion Ettlinger) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In Harkness's lively debut, witches, vampires, and demons outnumber humans at Oxford's Bodleian Library, where witch and Yale historian Diana Bishop discovers an enchanted manuscript, attracting the attention of 1,500-year-old vampire Matthew Clairmont. The orphaned daughter of two powerful witches, Bishop prefers intellect, but relies on magic when her discovery of a palimpsest documenting the origin of supernatural species releases an assortment of undead who threaten, stalk, and harass her. Against all occult social propriety, Bishop turns for protection to tall, dark, bloodsucking man-about-town Clairmont. Their research raises questions of evolution and extinction among the living dead, and their romance awakens centuries-old enmities. Harkness imagines a crowded universe where normal and paranormal creatures observe a tenuous peace. "Magic is desire made real," Bishop says after both her desire and magical prowess exceed her expectations. Harkness brings this world to vibrant life and makes the most of the growing popularity of gothic adventure with an ending that keeps the Old Lodge door wide open. (Feb.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

You might stop reading after this first book in the All Souls Trilogy, but only if you have super-human reading restraint strength. History and mystery in conjunction with the mystical, metaphysical, alchemical, and surreal weave a story so incredibly fantastic. Layers of magic, witches, vampires, daemons, and humans come together over centuries and continents to form a world both realistic and hopeful. Harkness has created a saga as solid as Marion Zimmer Bradley's *Mists of Avalon* and as complex as Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*.

A Discovery of Witches is by far, my favorite book. OK, the whole ADOW series are my favorite books. I just love how Deborah Harkness incorporated actual historical events and locations into her books. This series is beautifully written and thoroughly entertaining. Every time I read the books I can't put them down; I purchased the Audible versions so I can continue the stories throughout my day. You definitely need to one-click this series.

I have read this three times and I love it more every time I read it. I am deeply impressed by the vocabulary, writing style, research as well as engrossed in this story. It is just plain brilliant. If you like speculative fiction at all, you may well enjoy this. I mean, it isn't every day that we meet a Roman Catholic vampire, now is it? Seriously, this is really good. And it took me two days to read as it is so long.

I started out needing to read this book for English class and ended up listening to all three books. Extremely good plot lines and good plot connections between all three books which is a rarity these days. Even for a 20 year old college guy it kept me entertained throughout and wondering what would come next as I drive to and home from school. The characters have such depth that it would be surprising if Harkness did not plan it all out before writing.

The supernatural world, the cultures and norms, is so beautifully set up in this book that it feels real. The characters are sympathetic and flawed, completely relatable. At its heart this is a love story, but it's so much bigger, the story full and gripping with edge-of-your-seat twists. History and mythology and romance and suspense, this book is multifaceted. I just bought book two and can't wait to see what happens next.

Very Good tale but the telling of the tale is much too cryptic at some points. I just want to hear the story. I just want to understand where it's going. And when I close the book after having read the last page, I want to know where I've been.

I have to start this by saying that this story sucked me in and did not let go. It's incredibly well-researched, and the world and characters are incredibly deep and engaging. As far as a foundation for a series goes, I think this is excellent, which is why I couldn't bear to rate it any fewer than 4 stars. If you're interested in a new, interesting take on what a mystical world that intersects

with our own could be like, I highly recommend it. That being said, the story had some major issues that nearly caused me to rate it lower, and I could tell this was a first publication because of them. These issues might not bother anyone else, but for me, they were a serious problem. One of the characters actually had a line that perfectly described what I was thinking: "First I thought this was about [x], then I thought it was about [y], and now I'm not sure what it's about!" At its heart, this sort of twisting and turning in the plot is fine...but by the end of the novel, I noticed that none of the plot threads had been resolved (the only one that WAS somewhat resolved was more abandoned than anything else). Personally, I found that very discouraging--I'm not as willing to spend money on the second volume of a series if you haven't yet proven to me that you can resolve a plot line in a satisfying way. As the first in a series, you have a lot to prove to keep us investing both our time and our money in the next installments. I'd be furious if I bought the second novel, just to see the same thing happen again. That's my only complaint about this book. Again, it has incredibly engaging characters, an interesting, intricate plot, and a version of a magical/modern world that I've never seen before. I'm interested in more of this world...I'm just not sure if the author will make me purchase all three novels to get any resolution on anything that happens. I'm okay with that for an overarching plot...but I still like to have little resolutions for minor subplots all the same.

I started reading this book as part of the annual read-a-long. The intent of the read-a-long is to reach each chapter on the calendar day on which the events occur, from Sept. 18 - Oct. 31. I did well the first few days, and then I just couldn't do it anymore--I HAD to keep going! Then I went on a trip so I bought the Audible version to listen to in the car. Night time reading plus 10 hours driving with the audio and the book was done. Not sure how much I like Matthew (he's a bit overbearing for my tastes), but when he and Diana are together you know you're going to eventually get to some vampire-witch sexy fun times! I'm looking forward to book 2.

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