Lyndal Roper (PhD, F RHist S, FAHA, FBA)

Lyndal Roper was born and educated in Australia, where she graduated in 1977 with a degree in History and Philosophy at the University of Melbourne. After studying at the University of Tubingen she completed a doctorate at King’s College London. She has taught at Royal Holloway, University of London, and Balliol College, Oxford, and is currently Regius Professor of History at the University of Oxford, the first woman to be appointed to this prestigious chair. She was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2011.

Her groundbreaking publications have exercised a paradigm-shifting influence on the study of the German Reformation and on the historiography of witchcraft in the early modern period. *The Holy Household. Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg*, her first book, published in 1989, argued that the Reformation developed a theology of gender, offering a vision of a ‘holy household’ where the roles of men and women were clearly distinct.

Her second book, *Oedipus and the Devil* (1994) ranges through the literary culture of the sixteenth century to the use of psychoanalysis in studying witchcraft. *For Witch Craze* (2004) she undertook four archivally based case studies of witch-hunting in southern Germany. This book argues that what powered the witch craze was a set of fears about fertility in the human and the natural world. The study encompasses areas of human experience that often elude the historical record, realms such as fantasy, envy and terror.


Lyndal Roper’s current research centres on the leader of the German Reformation, Martin Luther, the subject of the Lee Lecture.