

Crucible vs muslim treatment post 9 11



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Fear in itself is something to be feared. Fear is the primary source of insanity and chaos. Fear alone sent the Puritan society of Salem, Massachusetts into a state of utter hysteria in the year 1692, when one of the world's most infamous witch hunts occurred. Arthur Millers play, *The Crucible*, is a historical fiction depicting the events of the Salem Witch Trials. A witch hunt is a political campaign launched on the pretext of investigating activities subversive to the state.

Every witch hunt is identifiable by the five key elements; the use of a scapegoat, a struggle to maintain moral order, a subversive character or group, an outbreak of hysteria and panic, and ulterior motives that provide justification for people's actions. 249 some-odd years later, another group of innocent people face acts of discriminative hostility. In the early 1940's, Nazi Germany started a war against the Jews in attempts to wipe the race from earth. History repeats itself, as society fails to learn from the tragic results of its faults and errors.

Both Arthur Millers play, *The Crucible* and the groundless mass-murder of Jewish people in the Holocaust demonstrate how fear can result in violent conflict and uncontrolled chaos. Panic is the direct result of fear. 17-year-old Abigail Williams, niece of the town's reverend, initiates *The Crucible* witch-hunt. Abby and her friends are afraid that as a result of their dancing in the woods past nightfall there will be consequence. What begins as a plot of attaining the desired affection of her adolescent infatuation, results in the ruthless massacre of innocent Salem citizens accused of practicing immoral witchcraft.

After false and mocked illness and bewitched behavior, Abigail admits herself to consorting with Satan. However she quickly shifts the blame by randomly accusing others: " I want to open myself! . . . I want the light of God, I want the sweet love of Jesus! I danced for the Devil; I saw him, I wrote in his book; I go back to Jesus; I kiss His hand. I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osburn with the Devil! I saw Bridget Bishop with the Devil! " (48). With great concern for their own souls, not a single soul openly doubts the accusations made by the group of young girls.

Sent into complete hysteria, the people of Salem break into uncontrolled and irrational feelings of fear; a mere accusation from one of Abigail's troop is enough to incarcerate and convict even the most well respected inhabitant of Salem. Moral values are lost amidst chaos, with people acting in a primitive way of self-survival. The Holocaust is history's most painful example of mass-hysteria. With half a race violently extinguished, Nazi Germany deliberately and horribly massacred millions and millions of Jews. The people of Germany were in an economic and social state of disparity, open to all options of self-sustainment.

Living in depression made Germans vulnerable to Hitler and his Nazis. When presented with a solution to their hunger and struggle, they were eager at the opportunity to thrive at the expense of Jews. Like Abigail and her friends, the Germans were faced in a situation of ' kill or be killed'. They had the option of personal consequence verses succeeding through blame and violence. Germany's acts sent the whole world into chaos and sent several large countries to war into a hysteria Hitler not only supported but encouraged.

During the hysteria of the Salem Witch Trials, accusations of witchcraft were made most often with reasons beyond that of simply fear. Any single person had the power to voice an observation with the result of having their neighbor imprisoned and hung. Abigail sets the witchcraft hysteria in motion with selfish intentions of earning John Proctor's love. The hunt stems solely from her yearning for the " John Proctor that took [her] from [her] sleep and put knowledge in [her] heart! " (19). On top of this, she feeds off the power given to her by the court.

Once disregarded by her community, the witch-hunt has put Abigail in a position of authority; she has the power to send any given townsfolk to his/her grave. Accusations are made in attempts to draw attention from the group of young girls' own personal deeds of shame. Abigail and her group of girls continue to accuse innocent women with no provocation in order to draw attention from their own personal shameful deeds. Each time their accusations are questioned a new victim is chosen. Thomas Putnam, Salem resident and farmer, vindictively accuses others in hopes of increasing his personal wealth.

At the beginning of the play, the argument between Putnam, Giles, and Proctor shows contentions between neighbors over land: " The tract is in my bounds, it's my bounds, Mr. Proctor," says Putnam (32). Later in the play, Rebecca Nurse, Giles Corey and John Proctor are prosecuted. To whom will the tract go? Only Mr. Putnam can afford it. Also fueled by selfish intention was Hitler's Holocaust. Hitler wanted to be the most powerful and respected man in the world. He hated the Jews, as Abigail hated the people she

accused, but like Abby he wiped them out with ulterior motives of attention and authority.

Hitler knew that by focusing negative attention on others, he could reign in a role of supremacy. Beyond the ideals of creating the perfect race, World War II can also be seen as a scheme to regain the German wealth and land lost in the First World War. Germany not only slaughtered Jews, but also battled and invaded the territory of surrounding nations. The Holocaust was rooted in hatred for Jews, but the War went beyond Hitler's scapegoat and touched upon multiple issues of European politics.

In the fearful strive to perfection, both Salem Puritans and German Nazis have placed themselves in history as antagonistic figures. The act of intentional hate crime towards a group of innocent people can only be fueled by reactions of fear and self-preservation. Chaos and ulterior motives are only two of the factors characterizing these unforgettable events as witch-hunts. Until fear is conquered by sound moral sanity, similar events of hostility will continue to mark history. The Salem Witch Trials and the Holocaust are each events to be remembered as the human capacity for evil.