

# The true motive of the salem witch trials

[History](#), [American History](#)



The Salem Witch Trials are widely known for the controversy surrounding the events and what had occurred to those misfortunate enough to be entangled in the conflict. The trials originated in Boston, Massachusetts from 1692 to 1693. It started when a group of girls behaved irregularly to the point where their doctor declared that they were hexed. One of them accused Tituba, a slave, for casting a spell on them, explaining how that caused their odd behavior. Eventually, out of fear for her life, Tituba falsely accused other members of the town, claiming that there were witches among the people of Salem. This all escalated into a witch hunt where many of the townsfolk seek to find out who were the spellcasters. At the same time, others took advantage of the hysteria and accused their rivals and those who they disliked (History. com)

What I find interesting about this event is the sheer scale of it. Over 200 people were alleged to conducting witchcraft. It's fascinating how one's willingness to ruin and even end the lives of others for their personal gain, in this case, the land disputes at that time. I also find it interesting how the novelization of these events, the crucible, is an allegory for McCarthyism, which had occurred during the Cold War. Several of the locals within the colony were involved with this conflict. What should be taken away from all of this is that the behavior shown in the Salem Witch Trials is still common in our society. Although superstition was used to provide justification for accusations towards the innocent, it was likely that the accusers did what they did for their own benefit. This event relates to current history in that it's prevalent throughout society today. For instance, the modern day equivalent to these events would be certain occurrences within the "#MeToo"

movement. This is not meant to undermine legitimate cases where people in high positions of power abuse their status to sexually harass the defenseless, rather, I'm highlighting the occurrences where the accused are condemn as guilty before substantial evidence is put forward to support the supposed crime (Graf). For instance, Jemma Beale caused a man to be wrongfully convicted after a false allegation was claimed against him (Association).

Personally, before executing those suspected of witchcraft, I would seek evidence that would prove their supposed crime. I would try to eliminate the need to immediately execute the accused, essentially putting due process as priority. Of course, this is from someone speaking from the 21st century, so my ideas may not align with those of the Salem Witch Trials' era. 1754-1800 (The Whiskey Rebellion) It began in Pennsylvania on March 1791, when the Federalists at the time passed a law in congress which essentially placed a tax on liquor to further gain funds to support the revolutionary war and the newfound country. Not taking too kindly of this, many distillers rebelled against the government by refusing to pay the mandated tax and even going as far as to attack tax collectors. After several failed attempts to peacefully resolve this issue, Washington eventually ordered the militia, consisting of nearly 13, 000 men, to collect the tax. The opposition soon dwindled away. In 1801, President Jefferson repealed the Whiskey Tax (Britannica). The significance of this event is to show that the government, regardless of what citizens say in the matter, have the authority to impose their law; in this case, to collect taxes. Had it not been for the army that was sent by Washington, the country could've been seen as a place with ineffective leaders.

Nowadays, when the government imposes a new policies, in this case, adjusting the amount of taxes owed, usually occurring when a new president is elected, citizens can't outright refuse to pay without having to face consequences. For instance, Walter Anderson, famous entrepreneur, was found to not having paid over \$200 million in income taxes (Williams). This specific occurrence is similar to the Whiskey Rebellion in that the opposition disagrees with what their leaders are doing. However, the government has the authority to impose their laws. The differences though is that this person is a single individual as opposed to the group formed during the Whiskey Rebellion. I find it interesting that in order for a nation to grow and be prosperous, it must have leaders that are willing to, at gunpoint, enforce the laws set in place. Without order, anarchy would ensue and become prevalent throughout the country, which wouldn't be good, especially for a relatively new nation such as the United States.