

# Sample essay on saalem witch trials

[Countries](#), [England](#)



Salem witch trials refer to a series of trials and executions of people who were allegedly involved in witch practice. All these incidents of witch practice took place during seventeenth century in newly established colonies of New England, Massachusetts. Puritans used to inhabit in these colonies and their theocracy is blamed for such trials that took place in an organized manner. This paper intends to discuss Salem witch trials, role of puritans in these trials and several other related aspects.

Puritanism is a part of Christian belief that emerged in the England at some point in seventeenth century. Puritans were firm believer that only those will survive who are in covenant to the god. Their faith was very firm in performing the religious procedures and their earnestness attracted the attention of whole England in seventeenth century. They migrated to New England when their views were considered very radical and not in agreement with the main ideas of Christianity (Smith).

Puritans were Protestants who became more radical while trying to demand more and more reformations in workings of Church of England. Puritans started raising questions over Church of England in several subjects and then they were subjected to several restrictions by the government as well as by the church. Puritans views were becoming popular and Church of England as well as government decided to take some hard steps in order to prevent them in spreading their views.

Radical views of puritans further became obstacles in the relation of both ad puritans decided to separate their way. They ended their relation with Church of England when they failed in their mission to purify the church and kept spreading their radical views. They also made all efforts to strengthen

their power and started demanding several rights from the government.

Their demands was not accepted by the king who refused by saying neither bishop no king.

Puritans found other shelters and one of these shelters was New England.

New England was flooded with puritans where they also established their churches. Massachusetts Bay colony was founded by John Winthrop. John

was a lawyer and with other puritan friends he designed a safe haven for themselves. John Winthrop became governor of New England and

encouraged puritans to come there and strengthen the ideology. He also had some vested political interests behind such strategies (Linder).

Puritans used to practice their ideas in New England and their theocracy

resulted in some very peculiar things in New England. Puritans ideology was somehow everything or nothing and witch trials portray as well as reveal the

hollowness of their belief. This part of America was already believed to

practicing witch practices and this impacted the puritans who always claimed to be more progressive and scientific than others.

In the year 1692, in a village Salem, three young girls namely Abigail

Williams, Betty Parris, and Ann Putnam, Jr. were mysteriously sick and

doctors were unable to find any reason or solution to their illness. It was

presumed that these girls were witched and three women were arrested for

the practicing act of witchcraft. These three women were tried and

prosecuted for practicing witchcraft and were sent behind the bars. A local

magistrate controlled the trial and it was concluded that their activity was

not normal, they did not believe in the church and they were involved in

practicing witch craft.

Trial and punishment of these three women namely Sarah Osborne, Tituba and Sarah Good, was a major issue of concern but no steps were taken to prevent such incidents. Puritans and their ideology were in question and people from different sections of society were asking about their idea of purifying the church. Several people demanded to punish the guilty for such incidents. A number of incidents were reported and courts were flooded by the accusations of witch craft. (Boyer and Nissenbaum)

Salem witch trial revealed the theocratic attitude of puritans. All these women were innocent and they were falsely implicated and sent to jail. These women belonged to poor category and they were targeted by others. Sarah was a beggar while Tituba was a black and these women were tortured merely because they belonged to poor class and there was nobody to defend these women. The ideology of puritans was revealed and hollowness of their purity as well as religion was before the world (Boraas).

Puritans seem to believe that human life is merely a struggle between the god and devil. Puritans were solely responsible for these trials as they believed in all the dark rituals and myths that were practiced in only some parts of Africa. These trials were not according to the due process of law and people were arbitrarily tried and prosecuted. The people, who were alleged to practicing witchcraft, were not given rights to defend themselves and this was against the rule of law but puritans did not take cognizance of these things. A number of other cases were reported where people were levelled the charges of witchcraft. Some of them were left by the magistrate while a number of people were sent behind the bars. Appeal court freed some of accusedes but everybody was not able to approach higher authorities.

Actually these people were stuck between puritans and the government. King of England also failed to take actions on these trials while puritans were busy in their own vested interests.

People like John Winthrop were busy in their vested interests. Atate also left people o their conditions. Such cases occurred due to the apathy of state and administration. Actually this whole region witnessed a lack of administrative system. the victims of Salem witch trailk were neither guilty or they were given any opportunity to deffend themselves. This was a violation of atural law but in absence of any interferece from the state, all this occurred.

Puritans proved their hollowness but state also failed to provide them justice.

John Winthrop and other Puritans had imagined to make a city that would be example before the world. They thought to build a model city but thigs did not go their way and their dream was shattered by incidents of Salem witch trial. Instead of making any model city, they founded a place that lacked even very basic principles of statehood. The idea of a city upon a hill was sattered. John had some political interests and he ignored the rule of law and allowed such incidets to take place in new england.

Though John was a prudent person but he failed in making a real city for common people. Growing Radicalism in puritanism was also responsible for incidents like Salem witch trial. Puritans were very counfused people who misjudged everthing and misunderstood the concept of religion in a different manner. They failed to differentiate between the religion and the practicality of world. Puritans challanged the Church of Eglannd but they could not provide any better solution to the issues that they raised.

Church of England and king also were involved in fighting for their supremacy over another. Both of these institutions could not overcome their lacunas for the interest of people as well as the christianity. Their own vested interests prevailed over everything. Incidents like Salem witch trial were not very important issue for them. Church of the England and king did not let any chance to criticize each other. Such circumstances were responsible for the condition of contemporary social conditions.

After having observed a succinct view of the above mentioned subject, it is good to conclude that incidents like witch trail were a result of mixed failure of state, church and other sects of the society. puritan theocracy was also a major reason for the disorders in the society. puritans acted like hooligans and only believed in destabilising the established system. they had no idea of improving the current issues but they were masters of destabilising the whole establishments.

## **Works Cited**

- Boraas, Tracey. *The Salem Witch Trials*. Minnesota: Capstone, 2004.
- Linder, Douglas O. " Salem Witchcraft Trials 1692." September 2009. law2.umkc. 23 November 2013 .
- Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*. London: A & C Black Publishers Limited, 2010.
- P. Boyer and S. Nissenbaum. " Salem Witch Trials." 2011. salem.lib.virginia. 23 November 2013 .
- Smith, Andrea P. *The Salem Witch Trials*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2012.
- Steele, Barry. " A Brief History of the Hollywood Zombie - Part Two." 2

October 2009. heyuguys. 20 October 2013 .

Waves, Brain. " ZombieRama." zombierama. 20 October 2013 .