

The crucible by arthur miller and community's selfishness portrayed

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



In the play by Arthur Miller, *The Crucible* that took place in Salem, Massachusetts in 1692 during the Salem witch trials, people were falsely accused of witchcraft by members of the community. People who were accused were often put to death. Each individual who accused someone of witchcraft had their own specific motive. The town turned to witchcraft as a cause of some strange happenings in the town after two girls, Betty Parris and Ruth Putnam, seemed to not be able to speak or move as they were laying in their bed. Reverend Hale was brought in to find the source of the witchcraft in Salem, and the witch hunt began.

The first to be under suspicion was Abigail Williams. Her uncle, Reverend Parris, had caught her and her friends dancing in the woods with her friends and his slave, Tituba. She quickly turned the attention away from her by accusing Tituba, saying, " She made me do it! She made Betty do it!" (Miller 40). After Tituba accused Sarah Good to save herself from being hung, Abigail began accusing more people to draw the attention away from her. Once she had gotten herself deeply involved in the situation, she saw a perfect opportunity to get something she wanted. Abigail had recently had an affair with a married man named John Proctor. She used her position as a victim in the situation as an opportunity to eliminate the only thing she thinks is keeping her from being with Proctor, his wife Elizabeth. She stabbed herself in the stomach with a needle, to mimic the poppet that was given to Elizabeth Proctor by her servant. The needle in the poppet was enough evidence to get Elizabeth Proctor taken into custody. Abigail had two motives to cause her neighbors to be hung; to protect herself and to get what she wanted.

One of the girls who were with Abigail in the woods was Mary Warren. She was a servant to the Proctors. She began to accuse people of witchcraft to protect herself, from accusation and from Abigail. She said to the girls, " Let either of you breathe a word, or the edge of a word about the other things, and I will come to you in the black of night and I will bring a pointy reckoning that will shudder you." (Miller 19). Mary Warren supported Abigail's lies to avoid any harm that she could do to her. Once Abigail accused Elizabeth Proctor, John forced Mary to go to the court and admit to her lies and turn on Abigail. Once suspicions were focused on Abigail, she began to act like Mary Warren's spirit was attacking her in court, yet again turning the focus away from her and onto someone else. But Mary Warren turned the attention away from her by saying John Proctor was a witch, and he was forcing her to attack Abigail and come to the court to free his wife. Mary Warren's prime motive was only to protect herself.

Another person who was involved in the accusations was Ann Putnam. She believed that witchcraft and the Devil were responsible for the deaths of her children. She lost seven children during childbirth or shortly after. After the girls accused Bridget Bishop and Sarah Good of witchcraft, Ann Putnam helped convince the court of their guilt by telling them they were both present at the births of her seven children. She is also motivated to get her neighbors hung by her husband, Thomas Putnam, who was land greedy. He was known to accuse people stealing his land. George Jacobs, one of the accused, owned land that Putnam wanted. If Jacobs were to die, Putnam would be the only one who could afford to buy his property. It is believed

that the Putnam's daughter Ruth was coached by her parents to convince the court of Jacob's guilt. Ann Putnam's motives were to get revenge for her children's deaths and to help her husband get the land that he wanted.

The witch hunt in Salem was driven by the members of the community's selfishness. Everyone involved in the accusations had their own interests at heart. Some were trying to save themselves, and some were just looking for their own personal gain. In the end, the selfishness of the community caused the deaths of 19 men and women.