

# The salem witch trials assignment

[History](#)



The people of Salem Village, who were Puritans, settled there to escape religious persecution for their beliefs. They wanted to purify their religion by getting rid of the Catholic influence. They wanted to create a sacred alliance with God and a union of church and state. This was the beginning and the founding of the Massachusetts colony. The Puritans all agreed to live according to God's will and in return that God would grant them a divine endorsement in the New World. The settlers of Salem Village believed in witchcraft, casting spells and that people could manipulate the ores of nature.

They believed that witches existed around them and that these witches were in cooperation with the Devil. It was thought that their practices represented the Devil, their way of life and that the Devil could do physical harm to them through the witches. The people that believed in witches were constantly looking for them and accusing others of witchcraft. Many people were accused of being witches because of this way of thinking. Devotion and discipline was the teaching of the Lord and if anyone acted outside of the realm then they were questioned about their conduct.

People that were accused or did not follow discipline and devotion in the ways of the Lord were punished and humiliated in front of all to see. The settlers' rights of privacy was never respected in the seventeenth century. As a community they were expected to stand righteous in their beliefs. In the church they were taught to watch their neighbor closely for any behavior that was different than what was expected by the church. Men reigned over women and it was difficult for women that did not have a husband, that was

widowed, or who remained single. It was also frowned upon if they had no sons.

If they were women who had no men in their life these women if accused of witchcraft were more likely to be convicted and executed. When the girls Betty and Abigail blamed three women that were Of " low status" Tuba, Sarah Osborne and Sarah Good. Tuba was a slave, Sarah Osborne did not attend church regularly and Sarah Good was poor and she sometimes begged for food. All three were arrested on February 29th , 1692. A Judge by the name of John Hawthorne and Jonathan Corning questioned them. Tuba confessed and Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne lamed they were innocent. All three were imprisoned.

The law stated that if you confessed your life would be spared and if you denied the charges and you were convicted that you would be hanged. No one would stand up for the accused because they were afraid that they too would be accused. Both Sarah Osborne and Sarah Good continued to deny they were witches. Sarah Osborne died while in prison on May 10th, 1692. Tuba was imprisoned but later released. Sarah Good was tried on June 29th, and hanged with four other women on July 19th. The witch trail led to the deaths of twenty people ND of that twenty, nineteen were hanged.

Four others died in prison while waiting for trial. Public opinion did begin to change against the witch trials in the fall of 1692. Many doubts began to form that so many people could be guilty. There was evidence that was presented such as; hallucinations, simple notions and dreams that was used as proof and people were found guilty based on this evidence. The last trial

was held January 1693. Three people were convicted, but was released by the Governor Phips. In May of 1693, Governor Phips pardoned the ones that were imprisoned for witchcraft. In 1697 a day of prayer and fasting was held to ask for forgiveness.

It was named the " Day of Official Humiliation. One Of the judges in the trial, Samuel Seawall, apologized publicly and ask for forgiveness. It is thought that the behavior of the settlers was generated by fear and insecurities. The colony was being threatened by King Charles I. He recalled their charter in 1684. Puritans feared that they would lose their religious grip on the colony. There was also fear of smallpox and attacks by Indians. Many issues of anxiety persisted amongst the people . Perhaps all of the combined fears and anxiety led to increased outbreaks of hysteria.