

Why did the salem
witch trials happen?



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The Salem Witch Trials were a progression of preliminaries endeavoring to discover, recognize, and slaughter every single known lady and men honing black magic. The preliminaries happened in Colonial Massachusetts from 1692 and 1693, and for the subjects there, all killings were a triumph as the residents trusted they were disposing of the underhanded spirits expedited by the demon, until the point that they swung to catastrophe when the natives acknowledged they had slaughtered honest blood. A thing to ask ourselves today, is for what reason did the Salem Witch Trials happen, who was charged and why, and what was the result of the trials.

In the late 1600's, two young girls in pioneer Massachusetts, were analyzed and diagnosed that they were being controlled by a demon. They would begin to throw objects, had extraordinary fits, muscle spasms, hallucinations and spewing. When different young ladies began getting determined to have "bewitchment," warrants were issued for the Parris' Caribbean slave, Tituba, and two other women the destitute hobo Sarah Good and poor people, elderly Sarah Osborn, all who the young ladies professed to have possessed or bewitched them. The principal hanging that occurred of the Salem Witch Trials was for Bridget Bishop. Bridget Bishop was the first trial, and had the most informers and observers than any other "witch" because of her exceptional state of mind, been hitched 3 times and did not dress as usual Puritan norms. Bridget Bishop was hanged on June 10, 1692. That was far from the end of the Salem Witch Trials. Shortly afterwards, 13 people, from slaves to the wealthy, were executed for the use of witchcraft. One man, Giles Corey was executed by being crushed to death, one of the more violent executions of the trials.

The people awaiting trial were often kept in dreadful holding cells, and many died before their trial even occurred. In the dungeons or cells, the accused witches would be chained to the wall, so their spirits escaping the prison, and attacking more civilians. The Salem Witch Trials, were held at the Salem Village Meetinghouse. Then, the witches would be taken in to the courtroom, in front of judge and jury and be questioned. They were allowed no legal counsel, and had to plead guilty or not guilty without counsel. This of course would lead to easily convicted people of witchcraft. This led to the conviction of Rebecca Nurse. Different from most convicted witches, she was a well respected member of the community. When she was arrested, the town even signed a petition asking for her release. When her trial began, she was found not guilty, until the accusers started to act out in the court. The judge at the time, Stoughton, asked the jury to rethink their verdict. This was a turning point for the Salem Witch Trials, because most witches were known to be ugly, lower class, slaves, weird, or anti-social, human beings, but this was the first trial that, at the time, proved, that anyone could be a witch.

A main component of the Salem Witch Trials, was the ability and freedom to use spectral evidence. During the trials, spectral evidence was the best proof you would have to indict a witch. The most popular and used one was Live spectral evidence. In one of the early trials, the two girls who accused the first witch would start to act uncontrollably and show all the symptoms they testified for. The prosecution would then be able to use that evidence stating that the person was using witchcraft at the time of the trial. Another form of evidence that could be used was Dream Evidence. If a victim testified that while in a dream the witch contacted and attacked them, the judge would

convict them promptly. This is exactly the case for Sarah Good who testified that Sarah Osbourne was possessing girls through dreams. As the trials progressed many people started disagreeing with the use of spectral evidence. It was not until 1693 when people started to protest the use of spectral evidence in court. , the court magistrates banned usage of spectral evidence, concluding that spectral evidence was insufficient proof to indict people. The banning of spectral evidence effectively caused the end of the witch-hunt. The reason it ended the witch-hunt was because spectral evidence was the puzzle piece needed to convict witches and without it, the witch-hunt was nothing.