

The bias towards women during the salem witch trials



Women are not as free as Men. In the first place, women were not as free as men for many centuries. In fact, even today, in many cultures women are lower than men. " For example, in some Middle Eastern countries, women are forced to never show their hair or faces in public" (Rose).

During the years of 1692 and 1693, society treated most women badly compared to men and likewise, men usually treated women as servants in this time period. In literature, many authors expressed their opinion on this idea.

Most authors state that at the time, ' Women were lower than men in the social hierarchy" (Kerosene). For example, " According to this opinion, that women were evil, whorish, deceitful, extravagant, angry, vengeful, and of course, insubordinate and proud" (Kerosene 69) demonstrates how women were thought of during the time of the trials and prosecutions. Men were thought to be the better, more intelligent sex and to be servers of God, which is quite the opposite of women.

Another example in literature of women being treated not equal to men during the Witch Trials, would be, " Other writers argued that women were equal if not superiors to men, called for recognition of the abuse women suffered under men's tyranny, and intimidated that society would be better served if economic power resided in women's hands- but their voices were few and barely heard. More often, defenders of women simply took exception to the worst of the misogynists' charges and recounted the contributions women made to the welfare of their families and their society. " (Kerosene 70).

This quote demonstrates that only few people believed women should be treated equally to men in society. Most men were women hating misogynists. The definition of misogynist is “hatred of women” (Gurgling 909).

They did not care about what any women or well educated man had to say about the social chain, or any idea of that nature. In fact, no one really cared at all about the set social chain at the time. Unjustified Damnation. “The Puritan religion was very committed to serving God. Ministers, the leaders of the Puritan church, believed that women and men were equal to God.

But, women were most likely going to join Satan’s forces” (Borer 1). In literature, many authors communicated that many Puritan men and women believed this. Also, Ministers implanted this idea in their heads and this was how the prosecutions of witchcraft started. Ultimately, Puritan Ministers told all people of Salem the idea that women were overall evil. The quote “Womanhood and evil were inextricably linked in the minds and hearts of seventeenth-century New England Puritans” (Arise 1) demonstrates during the seventeenth century puritans believed that women and evil were connected.

When one thought of women, one would also think of the devil or evil.

Not only did the citizens of Salem believe this, they took these accusations to the next level. The people of Salem started torturing and killing women because of the accused association of evil and their gender. Furthermore, authors also believed that ‘ ‘ Women and men feared hell equally, but

Puritan culture encouraged women to believe it was their vile natures that
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would take them (to Hell) rather than the particular sins they might have committed. " (Arise 1).

Ministers drilled this idea into Sale's citizens' heads.

Ministers allowed Women to be put under prosecution by men who were " serving God", although they were truly serving themselves. Research shows, most of the accusations made by the citizens were false. Some were cries for attention, and others were complete and utter hallucinations. Not only did these accusations of women being evil affect women in general, they also helped stereotypes come even more into place. Stereotypes Ran Sale's Community Research shows, some authors believe most witches were created by stereotypes.

If a woman was " different" compared to other woman, she was most likely categorized as a witch. " If a women had down-syndrome, was epileptic, or even a lesbian, she could have been prosecuted. Even in current times, many women are treated the same way' (Rose). Many authors explained that this occurred because none of Sale's citizens were used to this idea of being " different".

As a result of these stereotypes, many woman were prosecuted for no illegal action. An example of a stereotypical witch in the Salem Witch Trials was being an old women.

The quote " a large proportion of those accused at Salem were indeed quarrelsome old women, some with dubious reputations, who fit the standard seventeenth century stereotype of the witch" (Norton)

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demonstrates that older women were often like the modern weird and crazy cat ladies that did not fit into the seventeenth century society. Even in the current time, Americans can be quite stereotypical like the time of the Salem Trials.

Many other stereotypes ran Sale's society too (Rose). Research shows not going to church was a big indicator that one was a witch.

Not going to church at the time, was often thought of as absurd and not natural. For example, two women who were prosecuted Sarah Good and Sarah Osborne were accused Of being witches because they did not attend church. The quote " Neither Sarah Good nor Sarah Osborne attended church, which made [Ms.

Good and Ms. Osborne] easy targets as witches" (Seller 26) demonstrates all of this. Even though Ms. Good and Ms. Osborne could have been forward thinkers about religion, they ere thought of as absurd and not normal citizens in Sale's society.