

Salem witch trials assignment

[History](#)



A recent small pox epidemic and the threat of attack by warring tribes created a fertile ground for fear and suspicion. Soon prisons were filled with more than 150 men and women from towns surrounding Salem. Their names had been “cried out” by tormented young girls as the cause of their pain. All would await trial for a crime punishable by death in 17th century New England, the practice of witchcraft. Elizabeth Paris 9, and her cousin, Abigail Williams 11, and a slave woman, Tuba, cared for the two girls. She would tell them stories of voodoo to entertain them.

Elizabeth and Abigail were so fascinated with the stories that they began to play with the idea of telling each other’s fortune. They soon had several of their friends involved. All of a sudden, the young girls, Elizabeth and Abigail became very ill. They started convulsing, screaming in pain, and making animal like noises. Her father, Reverend Ferris, contacted a Dr. William Grids, who then examined Elizabeth and Abigail and couldn’t find anything medically wrong with them. He, the doctor, claimed they were possessed or bewitched. By this time, rinds of the girls started showing signs of the same behavior.

Tuba and Mary Sibyls, a neighbor, tried to help. They tried a ritual that was supposed to indicate who the guilty party was. The ritual did not work, and at the same time, rumors spread quickly about Tuba practicing magic. This made her a suspect among the towns’ people. Tuba was then beaten and confessed to being a witch. Elizabeth and her friends were put under tremendous pressure from the towns people, they started naming other’s, along with Tuba. There was Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne and several other’s accused. All three women were rested, put into iron chains to await trial.

Sarah Osborne died awaiting trial. Reverend Cotton Mather, from Boston, tried to convince the judges to accept gossip, stories, and hearsay as evidence. In May of 1692, the trials were moved to Salem Village to Salem. Friends' of the Reverend Mather were appointed judges. There was a member of the community, Rebecca Nurse that was a Christian, and a great deal to the community that was also accused. The court did not find her guilty until a commotion from the adults and children caused the court to overturn their decision, and she was sentenced to die.

Her two sister', Mary Est. and Sarah Close came to her defense, and were also convicted of witchcraft. Martha Corey was accused by her daughter, Ann Putnam Jar. , and even had her husband make claims in court against her. She was sentenced to die. By this time, all the young girls were throwing fits of torment and anguish that whatever the girls said, the courts would believe. One other that was unbelievably accused, was a pouf-year-old girl named Dorsa Good. She was sent to jail and out in chains. Rebecca Nurse, Sarah Good, Elizabeth Howe, Sarah Wild, and Susan Martin were waiting their sentence to be carried out.

Reverend Noose asked them to confess. Sarah Wild cursed him saying, " you will have blood to drink for your part in this evil day. " The girls also accused the governor's wife of being a witch. After this, the Governor ruled out hearsay evidence as not admissible in court. After all this hysteria, the madness had eventually died down, and if it had not been for Tuba's confession, this whole thing might not have been started. In all, 200 people had been accused, 19 were hanged, and one crushed to death. As the years passed, victim's families were offered apologies and restitution.

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