

# Theme in the scarlet letter



Today for my presentation I will like to focus on the cultural setting of the scarlet letter. The scarlet letter takes place in Boston, Massachusetts in the middle of the 17-century. During this time, a group of people known as the Puritan inhabited the land.

So basically I will talk about two aspects of the Puritan society and how it relates to the Scarlet Letter. The first point that I like to focus on is their form of government. The Puritan had a form of government known as theocracy. Theocracy is defined as a government ruled by or subjected to religious authority. The Puritan was very religious people and believed that their purpose was to carry out God's commandments. They also believed that it was their place to punish whoever broke any of the commandments.

So they basically based their life on what the Bible said. And their government was established in the same manner. How does theocracy relate to the scarlet letter? In the scarlet letter, we saw that the religious people were the one in charge. Whatever they said and did was deemed righteous.

Earlier I said that the Puritan believed it was their purpose to carry out God's commandments, and also punish whoever broke those commandments. Well in the scarlet letter, the protagonist Hester Prynne committed adultery. Adultery is one of the Ten Commandments. In Exodus 20: 14 it states, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." When her sin was found out, she was subjected to a severe punishment.

The punishment for adultery was death, but for some reason Hester only got 3 hours on the scaffold and a life time of wearing the letter 'A'. It could

be possible that they reason Hester did not receive the death penalty was because of Arthur Dimmesdale. He was one of the religious figures that were in charge in the book.

Because he was a religious person, he had a very powerful influence on the governor. Many things he said was perceive as correct. Before I go to my last point, I will like to ask you if you think the Puritans were really subjected to God and his commandments or to man. Before you answer I will like to remind in you that in the book, Arthur Dimmesdale was so highly exalted, that even when he confessed his involvement in conceiving Pearl, the common people were in denial. Many stated that he was merely using himself as an example.

They thought that he was so righteous and holy and will never commit a sin like that. But in Romans 3: 23 it states, ??? For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God???. The Next thing I will like for focus on is the hypocrisy of the Puritan and how Hawthorne Portrait it in the scarlet letter.