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Revision Essay Activity

“The Crucible” deals with many real life events throughout the play. In which Arthur Miller shows this in many of ways. Some examples include relationships, guilt, trial, and death. But the main purpose of “The Crucible” and why it was written was because the author wanted to show how the witch trials happened back then when the Puritans were around. In the setting of “The Crucible” the power of a religious and wealthy person overcomes the power of one who isn’t through, massive scapegoating, the strict Puritan setting, and the power of one’s name.

To clarify, Salem was the home of the strict Puritans. The setting that they lived in influenced those with power. Additionally, the quote from the play states “In meeting, he felt insulted if someone rose to shut the door without first asking his permission.” (Miller 3). This goes back to the thesis statement because, he sees himself as someone above others, so he is using his power to his full advantage. Him being a very religious person as well goes along with the current argument. With this intention, wealth was also a huge part of this in which Elizabeth notes “He would not answer aye or nay to his indictment; for if he denied the charge they would hang him surely and auction out his property.” Unfortunately, very few had gifted families so only the Puritans with extreme wealth (an example would be Thomas Putnam) could afford the

land. So this returns back to the thesis statement. This showed a quick mind photo of how wealth played a huge role. In situations such as Giles Corey's, it helps to visualize how riches back then took a toll on one's land and property. While setting was one dilemma, the next situation has more to do with influence and of being accused. Equally important, scapegoating is no exception with power. After one is scapegoated the power immediately gets used. An example of this happening is when Cheever is talking to John Proctor about the situation with people getting arrested due to accusation. "If Rebecca Nurse be tainted, the nothing's left to stop the whole green world from burning" (Miller 28). To shorten in terms, the quote writes that if even someone as Rebecca Nurse, a wise and smart woman, to be guilty for witchcraft then those who are innocent like her would also be seen as a criminal. So because one person might've done something. In this case if an innocent person denies to be a witch. The community in Salem then begins to believe that those with these traits are witches. Another example of scapegoating takes place when Betty is unconscious and Susanna comes in with news in which she recalls saying "Aye, sir, he have been searchin' his books since he left you, sir. But he bid me tell you, that you might look to unnatural things for the cause of it" (Miller 5). Since religion was a huge deal back this is seen as a scapegoat for the following. The quote mentions the word "unnatural" because of religious reasoning those who were sick, right on the spot their beliefs for this behavior would be because of witchcraft. This is seen as a scapegoat because its only blaming one person who was unconscious makes everyone who is unconscious accused for working with the Devil. At the same time, the name of someone was extremely important. Abigail Williams was a professional of destroying someone's reputation which included Tituba in which she stated, "She made me do it! She made Betty do it!" (Miller 12). The ability of abusing an innocent person's name was a

big deal back then. In another case that had a similar situation. Abigail was claiming Elizabeth as the one who was spreading rumors. In which it proclaims ‘My name is good in the village! I will not have it said my name is soiled!’ (Miller 8) left column. In other words, Abigail was trying to sabotage Mrs Proctor to keep her own name out of danger. This illustrates how power is brought into the picture. As a whole, this play dealt with several dilemmas that applied to real life situations. Situations such as reputation and environment were just a few however these were not the only a few that happened, there was still many more. But in the end abuse of power is not a joke. Power is still misused today in many different shapes and forms. Whether its forcing someone to do something criminal worthy or kicking one out from a country. No matter the form, strong authority is still very much an influential issue that effected both the Puritans and the modern day people.

Resources Used

Miller, Arthur. ‘The Crucible’ Christopher Bigsby 1955