

Chapter 1 : Salem Village Witchcraft Crisis | Researchomatic

*Salem Witch Trials Salem Witch Crisis: Summary The Salem witchcraft crisis began during the winter of - , in Salem Village, Massachusetts, when Betty Parris, the nine - .*

The parsonage in Salem Village , as photographed in the late 19th century The present-day archaeological site of the Salem Village parsonage In Salem Village, in February , Betty Parris , age 9, and her cousin Abigail Williams , age 11, the daughter and niece, respectively, of Reverend Samuel Parris, began to have fits described as "beyond the power of Epileptic Fits or natural disease to effect" by John Hale , the minister of the nearby town of Beverly. Deodat Lawson , a former minister in Salem Village. A doctor, historically assumed to be William Griggs , [11] could find no physical evidence of any ailment. Other young women in the village began to exhibit similar behaviors. When Lawson preached as a guest in the Salem Village meetinghouse, he was interrupted several times by outbursts of the afflicted. Some historians believe that the accusation by Ann Putnam Jr. At the time, a vicious rivalry was underway between the Putnam and Porter families, one which deeply polarized the people of Salem. Citizens would often have heated debates, which escalated into full-fledged fighting, based solely on their opinion of the feud. She was accused of witchcraft because of her appalling reputation. At her trial, she was accused of rejecting Puritan ideals of self-control and discipline when she chose to torment and "scorn [children] instead of leading them towards the path of salvation". She was accused of witchcraft because the Puritans believed that Osborne had her own self-interests in mind following her remarriage to an indentured servant. She was accused of attracting girls like Abigail Williams and Betty Parris with stories of enchantment from *Malleus Maleficarum*. These tales about sexual encounters with demons, swaying the minds of men, and fortune-telling were said to stimulate the imaginations of girls and made Tituba an obvious target of accusations. Brought before the local magistrates on the complaint of witchcraft, they were interrogated for several days, starting on March 1, , then sent to jail. If such upstanding people could be witches, the townspeople thought, then anybody could be a witch, and church membership was no protection from accusation. Dorothy Good, the daughter of Sarah Good , was only four years old, but not exempted from questioning by the magistrates; her answers were construed as a confession that implicated her mother. In Ipswich, Rachel Clinton was arrested for witchcraft at the end of March on independent charges unrelated to the afflictions of the girls in Salem Village. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. Abigail Hobbs, Mary Warren, and Deliverance Hobbs all confessed and began naming additional people as accomplices. On April 30, the Rev. Mary Eastey was released for a few days after her initial arrest because the accusers failed to confirm that it was she who had afflicted them; she had been arrested again when the accusers reconsidered. In May, accusations continued to pour in, but some of those suspects began to evade apprehension. Until this point, all the proceedings were investigative, but on May 27, , William Phips ordered the establishment of a Special Court of Oyer and Terminer for Suffolk, Essex and Middlesex counties to prosecute the cases of those in jail. Warrants were issued for more people. Sarah Osborne, one of the first three persons accused, died in jail on May 10, Warrants were issued for 36 more people, with examinations continuing to take place in Salem Village: When the Court of Oyer and Terminer convened at the end of May, the total number of people in custody was It is very certain that the Devils have sometimes represented the Shapes of persons not only innocent, but also very virtuous. Though I believe that the just God then ordinarily provides a way for the speedy vindication of the persons thus abused. The Court of Oyer and Terminer This section needs additional citations for verification. April Chief Magistrate William Stoughton â€” Bishop was described as not living a Puritan lifestyle, for she wore black clothing and odd costumes, which was against the Puritan code. When she was examined before her trial, Bishop was asked about her coat, which had been awkwardly "cut or torn in two ways". She went to trial the same day and was convicted. On June 3, the grand jury endorsed indictments against Rebecca Nurse and John Willard, but they did not go to trial immediately, for reasons which are unclear. Bishop was executed by hanging on June 10, The afflicted state of our poor neighbours, that are now suffering by molestations from the invisible world, we apprehend so deplorable, that we think their condition

calls for the utmost help of all persons in their several capacities. We cannot but, with all thankfulness, acknowledge the success which the merciful God has given unto the sedulous and assiduous endeavours of our honourable rulers, to detect the abominable witchcrafts which have been committed in the country, humbly praying, that the discovery of those mysterious and mischievous wickednesses may be perfected. As in complaints upon witchcrafts, there may be matters of inquiry which do not amount unto matters of presumption, and there may be matters of presumption which yet may not be matters of conviction, so it is necessary, that all proceedings thereabout be managed with an exceeding tenderness towards those that may be complained of, especially if they have been persons formerly of an unblemished reputation. When the first inquiry is made into the circumstances of such as may lie under the just suspicion of witchcrafts, we could wish that there may be admitted as little as is possible of such noise, company and openness as may too hastily expose them that are examined, and that there may no thing be used as a test for the trial of the suspected, the lawfulness whereof may be doubted among the people of God; but that the directions given by such judicious writers as Perkins and Bernard [be consulted in such a case]. We know not whether some remarkable affronts given to the Devils by our disbelieving those testimonies whose whole force and strength is from them alone, may not put a period unto the progress of the dreadful calamity begun upon us, in the accusations of so many persons, whereof some, we hope, are yet clear from the great transgression laid unto their charge. Nevertheless, we cannot but humbly recommend unto the government, the speedy and vigorous prosecution of such as have rendered themselves obnoxious, according to the direction given in the laws of God, and the wholesome statutes of the English nation, for the detection of witchcrafts. Hutchinson sums the letter, "The two first and the last sections of this advice took away the force of all the others, and the prosecutions went on with more vigor than before. Major Nathaniel Saltonstall Esq. According to Upham, Saltonstall deserves the credit for "being the only public man of his day who had the sense or courage to condemn the proceedings, at the start. Suspect Roger Toothaker died in prison on June 16, All five women were executed by hanging on July 19, In mid-July, the constable in Andover invited the afflicted girls from Salem Village to visit with his wife to try to determine who was causing her afflictions. Ann Foster, her daughter Mary Lacey Sr. Elizabeth Proctor was given a temporary stay of execution because she was pregnant. Burroughs was carried in a Cart with others, through the streets of Salem, to Execution. The accusers said the black Man [Devil] stood and dictated to him. As soon as he was turned off [hanged], Mr. Cotton Mather, being mounted upon a Horse, addressed himself to the People, partly to declare that he [Mr. Burroughs] was no ordained Minister, partly to possess the People of his guilt, saying that the devil often had been transformed into the Angel of Light. And this did somewhat appease the People, and the Executions went on; when he [Mr. Burroughs] was cut down, he was dragged by a Halter to a Hole, or Grave, between the Rocks, about two feet deep; his Shirt and Breeches being pulled off, and an old pair of Trousers of one Executed put on his lower parts: Matteson , inspired by the Salem trials In September, grand juries indicted eighteen more people. The grand jury failed to indict William Proctor, who was re-arrested on new charges. On September 19, , Giles Corey refused to plead at arraignment, and was killed by peine forte et dure , a form of torture in which the subject is pressed beneath an increasingly heavy load of stones, in an attempt to make him enter a plea. Four pleaded guilty and eleven others were tried and found guilty. Noyes turning him to the Bodies, said, what a sad thing it is to see Eight Firebrands of Hell hanging there. Mary Bradbury aged 77 managed to escape with the help of family and friends. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. The first five cases tried in January were of the five people who had been indicted but not tried in September: All were found not guilty. Grand juries were held for many of those remaining in jail. Charges were dismissed against many, but sixteen more people were indicted and tried, three of whom were found guilty: All were found not guilty, but not released until they paid their jail fees. Lydia Dustin died in jail on March 10, John Alden by proclamation. It heard charges against a servant girl, Mary Watkins, for falsely accusing her mistress of witchcraft. They dismissed charges against all but five people. Legal procedures Overview After someone concluded that a loss, illness or death had been caused by witchcraft, the accuser entered a complaint against the alleged witch with the local magistrates. In , the magistrates opted to wait for the arrival of the new charter and governor, who would establish a Court of Oyer and Terminer to handle these cases. The next step, at the superior court

level, was to summon witnesses before a grand jury. Several others, including Elizabeth Bassett Proctor and Abigail Faulkner, were convicted but given temporary reprieves because they were pregnant. Five other women were convicted in , but the death sentence was never carried out: Giles Corey was pressed to death during the Salem witch trials in the s Giles Corey , an year-old farmer from the southeast end of Salem called Salem Farms , refused to enter a plea when he came to trial in September. The judges applied an archaic form of punishment called peine forte et dure, in which stones were piled on his chest until he could no longer breathe. After two days of peine fort et dure, Corey died without entering a plea. As soon as the bodies of the accused were cut down from the trees, they were thrown into a shallow grave and the crowd dispersed. Oral history claims that the families of the dead reclaimed their bodies after dark and buried them in unmarked graves on family property. The record books of the time do not note the deaths of any of those executed. Spectral evidence Title page of Cases of Conscience Boston, by Increase Mather Much, but not all, of the evidence used against the accused, was spectral evidence , or the testimony of the afflicted who claimed to see the apparition or the shape of the person who was allegedly afflicting them. Unfortunately the work did not get released until after the trials had already ended. The publication A Tryal of Witches , related to the Bury St Edmunds witch trial , was used by the magistrates at Salem when looking for a precedent in allowing spectral evidence. Since the jurist Sir Matthew Hale had permitted this evidence, supported by the eminent philosopher, physician and author Thomas Browne , to be used in the Bury St Edmunds witch trial.

**Chapter 2 : In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of by Mary Beth Norton**

*The Salem witch trials were a series of hearings and prosecutions of people accused of witchcraft in colonial Massachusetts between February and May. More than people were accused, nineteen of whom were found guilty and executed by hanging (fourteen women and five men).*

Depiction of the Salem Witch Trials Source Ergot Source The Ergot Poisoning Theory The Salem witch trials have fascinated historians for centuries, largely because of their bizarre nature and the great uncertainty that surrounds them. One of the most intensely debated topics is the question of why the girls began to accuse seemingly random townspeople of witchcraft. However, there is little evidence to support any theory, and consequently historians are forced to rely heavily on speculation. Many, including author and scientist Linnda Caporael, have found the traditional theories of fraud and hysteria to be inadequate. The Puritan Witch-hunt Myth Although popular culture often portrays Puritan New England as a place where ministers were more powerful than the government, accusations of witchcraft were ever-present, and it was commonplace for accused witches to be condemned to death, in reality very few witchcraft trials had taken place in Massachusetts prior to the events in Salem in . When witchcraft trials were held, they rarely resulted in convictions, much less capital punishment for the accused. Their illness did not subside, and they continued to allege that certain members of the community were witches. The first witchcraft case was heard on June 2 and resulted in a conviction and a hanging of the accused. The Massachusetts ministers, including Cotton Mather, continued to caution the judges associated with the trials of using insufficient evidence to convict the accused witches. Every accused person who admitted guilt was spared from execution, but those who maintained their innocence were sentenced to death. Twenty people had been executed when the trials reached an abrupt halt, and approximately accused witches awaiting trial were released and had the charges against them dropped [3]. Source Traditionally, this bizarre sequence of events has been attributed to either fraud or hysteria. Many historians believe that fraud is the most likely explanation, in part because it is the least complex. Fraud-theorists posit that the young girls did not realize the full consequences of their accusations, and that they were either seeking attention or attempting to escape punishment. To escape punishment, the girls pretended to be possessed and accused others, including Tituba, of witchcraft. Scientist Linnda Caporael counters by arguing that no eyewitness accounts present fraud as a possibilityâ€”and most New Englanders attributed their condition to demonic possession. The Puritans developed a mob-mentality and were stricken with a need to cleanse their community of witchcraft. However, Caporael points out that it is highly improbable that all of the girls would be overtaken with hysteria simultaneously. Further, the Puritans had dealt with previous accusations of witchcraft very sober-mindedly and had been very reluctant to resort to capital punishment. She admits that the argument is largely circumstantial, but she believes that the evidence better supports her case than any other. Ergot grows on a variety of cereal grains, including rye, and Alan Woolf notes that the growing conditions necessary for the growth of ergot, cold winters, warm, humid summers, and swampy farmland, were present in Salem in . Convulsive ergotism has been known to cause LSD-like symptoms in those that it infects. The largest farm in the village, owned by Thomas Putnum, consisted of swampy marshland and was the home of three of the afflicted girls. Two more of the girls lived in the Parris residence, which would have likely received a large payment of Putnum rye grain because Parris, as a minister, was paid in provisions received through taxes. Another afflicted girl was a servant in the household of a doctor, who may have either purchased ergotized grain or received it as payment. Her attempts to rationalize inconsistencies make an already complicated theory simply too complex. She relies heavily on extreme theories and improbable conjecture. She cannot explain how the two remaining girls contracted ergotism, because she cannot connect them to the Putnam grain. She admits that in one of the cases, it is simply impossible to know how she came in contact with the ergotized grain. However, she dismisses Sarah Churchill, the final accuser, as a fraud because she was not connected to the Putnam grain and only testified in a limited number of cases. Not only does this claim border on conspiracy theory and lack any semblance of supporting evidence, but it contradicts evidentiary support she used earlier in the article. She had formerly

claimed support for ergotism by noting the fact that all of the original accusers were young girls and thus the most susceptible to ergotism. Caporaël also fails to explain why the Salem ergotism outbreak was an isolated incident. She makes no attempt to reconcile the fact that the Salem incident was not duplicated anywhere else in Puritan New England, which was characterized by small agricultural communities very similar to Salem. Further, she does not offer reasoning for why the Putnum grain was never again infected with ergot, considering that it was grown in conditions prime for an ergot outbreak.

### Chapter 3 : Salem Witch Trials | Stanford History Education Group

*The Salem Witch Crisis offers a readable narrative of events surrounding the Massachusetts witch trials of Studies of early American witchcraft in the past two decades have been specialized ones.*

Nearly people were accused of witchcraft and by the end of the trials, 19 were sentenced to death by hanging and executed. The historians agree that the Witch Trials were a result of mass hysteria but there are several theories about its causes. Listed below are 5 possible reasons for one of the most tragic events in American history.

**Boredom** One theory claims that it all started because the girls in the village were bored. In addition, the Puritans held very strict beliefs which forbade many forms of entertainment not only for adults but for children too. And for girls, it was even worse because the restrictions for them were more severe than they were for boys.

**Strong Belief in the Occult** The Puritans strongly believed in the existence of witches and witchcraft. According to the belief, witches were in alliance with the devil that gave them power to do harm. They were blamed for all kinds of misfortunes from illnesses and failed crops to bad weather and other things that had a perfectly rational explanation even three centuries ago. But due to the strong belief in the occult, the villagers were inclined to the most improbable explanations. For them, witches and witchcraft were a very real threat.

**Disputes, Rivalries and Personal Differences** Many of those who were accused of witchcraft had unsettled accounts with their accusers or were seen as a threat to the Puritan values. About 50 people were directly or indirectly accused by the members of the Putnam family which strictly followed the Puritan beliefs and customs, and strongly supported Reverend Samuel Parris, the initiator of the witch hunt. But the attempt had failed and 19 of their supporters got accused of witchcraft.

**Cold Weather Theory** According to this theory, the Salem tragedy might have been related to the cold weather, more specifically a pursuit for something or someone to blame for the related hardships such as crop failure. This theory is supported by historical records which indicate that the years preceding the Witch Trials were particularly cold. Also, the notorious witch hunt took place within the period of the so-called Great Witch Craze which in turn coincides with what is known as the Little Ice Age, a period of abnormally cold climate between the mid and mid century.

**Ergot Poisoning** Consumption of rye grains contaminated with a fungus known as ergot is another possible explanation for the witch hysteria in the late 17th century Salem. If eaten, the fungus can cause hallucinations and convulsions similar to those that were reported to be experienced by the allegedly bewitched girls. And according to Linnda Caporael, professor at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute who introduced the ergot poisoning theory, all the conditions were right for the ergot spread just before the Witch Trials.

### Chapter 4 : Salem Witch Trials - HISTORY

*Published: Mon, 5 Dec The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of represents a low point in the history of colonial New England. There have a variety of interpretations crafted in an effort to explain the rise of this period of crisis.*

### Chapter 5 : Salem witch trials - Wikipedia

*The Salem witch trials have fascinated historians for centuries, largely because of their bizarre nature and the great uncertainty that surrounds them. One of the most intensely debated topics is the question of why the girls began to accuse seemingly random townspeople of witchcraft. However, there.*

### Chapter 6 : Salem Witch Trials - Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History

*The Salem witchcraft crisis began during the winter of , in Salem Village, Massachusetts, when Betty Parris, the nine-year-old daughter of the village's minister, Samuel Parris, and his.*

### Chapter 7 : List of 5 Possible Causes of the Salem Witch Trials - History Lists

*The infamous Salem witch trials began during the spring of 1692, after a group of young girls in Salem Village, Massachusetts, claimed to be possessed by the devil and accused several local women.*

## Chapter 8 : Satan and Salem | The University of Virginia Press

*The Salem witchcraft crisis began during the winter of 1692, in Salem Village, Massachusetts, when Betty Parris, the nine-year-old daughter of the village's minister, Samuel Parris, and his niece, Abigail Williams, fell strangely ill.*

## Chapter 9 : Causes of the Salem Witchcraft Trials

*Salem Village, where the witchcraft accusations began, was an agrarian, poorer counterpart to the neighboring Salem Town, which was populated by wealthy merchants.*