Hysteria And The Crucible Essay, Research Paper

Hysteria. That word describes the frantic happenings in The Crucible by Arthur Miller. In the play unexplainable events happen and send a village into panic of hysteria do to the supernatural events. People talk about the happenings through out Salem Village, and one girl is behind the plot to get rid of her enemy; not to mention, she is the first building block in a wall that is being built on a mass extinction of people being hung in this full blow panic.

Abigail William’s, Reverend Parris’ niece, is the ring leader in this case of hysteria. First she knows that she and her friends will just get a spanking for being caught dancing in the woods, but she also knows that if she accuses people of being witches and being “forced” to dance, there will not be punishment, none whatsoever. Abigail ruins a marriage, causes people to be hung, and manages to loose all respect from people towards herself. She herself even said. ” She sends her spirit on me in church, she makes me laugh at prayer (page 1057)!” to convict Tituba.

Parris:, In fright : How can it be the Devil? Why would he choose my house to strike? We have all the manner of licentious people in the village (1056)! As the girls “confess” to doing the Devils’ work people are trying to figure out a good reason why the devil would choose a member of the Parris family, when the truth being that there really isn’t a devil choosing anybody in the Parris family. It is on central person causing the hysteria and devilish attitudes.

While the day’s turned into weeks, and the weeks into months more and more people are prosecuted and hung while innocent. Abigail Williams adds to the mass hysteria by continuously “confessing” the people she saw with the devil. Along with her other people of the village

become so afraid for their own good they will try and convict any of they feel are affiliated with, or being with, the Devil.

Abigail: I want to open myself! They turn to her, startled. She is enraptured, as though in a pearly light. I want the light of God, I want the sweet love of Jesus! I danced for the Devil; and I saw him; I wrote in his book, I go back to Jesus; I kissed his hand. I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osbur with the Devil! I saw Brigitte Bishop with the Devil (1060)!

As Abigail and the other girls keep confessing in the play, it becomes clear that Judge Hawthorne and Deputy Governor Danforth can not find a reasonable, truthful, and respectable answer for the accused to be set free, or to be convicted. Soon they will realize their mistakes and how they partly caused Salem Village and Town to have a plague of mass hysteria.

Even though masses of people wore brutally killed through fear, ignorance, and hysteria do to several girls trying to get out of punishment, at least as people we have learned from our terrible mistakes and have based our country on that you are innocent until proven guilty; not the other way around.