The Crucible 4 Essay, Research Paper

The Crucible

Arthur Miller

The selection, “The Crucible”, is in the form of a play. The setting takes place in Salem, Massachusetts in the year 1692. The people of Salem led a strict life, whose concerns were mostly concentrated upon the worklife while following the principles and rituals of the Christian religion. Any time off of work meant that they would only concentrate harder on praying. They were a “God-fearing” community believing that they were under constant surveilance by God and will be damnned for all mortal sins.

The story first starts out in Rev. Samuel Parris’s house in the bedroom of his daughter Betty. She is apparently sick and he is praying by her bedside. Many people of the town have gathered to discover some explaination for her sudden sickness. They all have heard rumor of possible previous witch-craft causing her sickness. Rev. Parris does not want his church to corrupt on the fact that his daughter many have made contact with the devil. He is more concerned about the fate of his church than the well being Betty. Betty and other girls of the town have been seen dancing to psalms of witch-craft with the Reverend’s servant Tituba. After the arrival of Rev. John Hale, Betty awakes and tells of her visions of many women the the town with the devil. Those women who were accused were to be tried in court for contact with the devil through witch-craft.

As a God-fearing communtiy, any evidence of evil could not be denied. Because they believe that if they deny evil, then at the same time they are denying goodness, which is God. So no defense of accused peoples could be based upon evidence, simply because evil can not be seen. So any accused person must confess to it and be

rehabilitated, or will be hung if they are willing to show pride in their innocence. The court in which they base the law states that “God damns all liars”. Ironically, if they were to confess guilt and yet they were innocent then they will be “damned by God.”

Arthur Miller, through the context of the play, could be telling us that when dealing with our inner conflicts, our desicions should be based on what our conscious thinks is right. The desicions that the characters faced in the story may be the most important desicions they have ever made. And the desicions they made was right with their own hearts.