The Crucible Essay, Research Paper

The book, The Crucible by Arthur Miller, is a well-written drama of how scapegoating gone to the extreme can bring about tremendous contention and chaos even among the simplest of people. In this case, the victims of scapegoating were the citizens of Salem, Massachusetts. I feel that Miller did an excellent job on the way in which he conveyed the setting, characters, and plot. The story takes place in Salem, Massachusetts in 1692. In their society there is only black and white, right and wrong. Given that the era is the 1600 s we know that their lives weren t very complex back then. The people back then mainly farmed and worked from sun up till sun down. Therefore we know that they were a simple-minded people. The characters in this book were all necessary for the reader to have the full knowledge of what was going on in the story. The characters in this story are dynamic and have important roles. There are three main characters: Abigail Williams, John Proctor and Deputy Governor Danforth. Abigail is a contemptuous and beguiling woman who will stop at nothing until the last hypocrite is dead (150). Her motivation is to save her own self no matter what the cost may be to anyone else. Proctor s motivation is to try to make sense out of all of the madness going on around him. Danforth is an incredibly stubborn man. His role in the story is that he is the judge of the witchcraft trials but he considers almost all intangible evidence as proof and rejects almost all tangible proof that is submitted to him. The setting and characters were essential to the unfolding of the plot.Some girls were seen in the forest supposedly conjuring up the devil in the woods by Reverend Samuel Parris but before he could identify all who were there, the girls fled. Parris managed to identify two girls; his niece Abigail Williams and his daughter Betty. Abigail claims that various people have practiced witchcraft on her and that she was totally innocent, when in fact, she is the guilty one. Throughout the book people are blaming witchcraft on each other and surprisingly enough people are actually being hung based on here-say rather than true evidence. One of the only people who can see this madness is John Proctor. He once said to Danforth, There are them that will swear to anything before they ll hang; have you ever thought of that (69). Proctor later confessed that he had committed adultery in the past with Abigail Williams. His own wife denies the accusation in hopes to avoid any public embarrassment on her husband and herself. This action incriminates Proctor and he is send to jail waiting for a death sentence. Danforth makes a deal with Proctor; that if he confessed that he had practiced witchcraft, he would not be hung, otherwise he would be. The climax of this story is when Proctor signs the false confession and later decides to tear it up to leave himself some pride and dignity.

Arthur Miller conveyed the setting, characters, and plot very well. Each of the three was portrayed brilliantly. I am amazed that something this nonsensical has actually happened in Salem, Massachusetts. Personally I am glad that I don t live in a society that practices such nonsense. Work Cited Miller, Arthur. The Crucible. New York: Penguin Books, 1981. Given all of the numerous characters in the book, I would have to say that I am most like John Proctor. Given that he was a hero, which I m not, I think that I have some of the same characteristics that he had. He was an honest man throughout the story, and when he wasn t he confessed his sins. He even confessed to committing adultery. Elizabeth, I have confessed it (113). I try to be honest at all times. However sometimes I fall short of that goal but when I do my conscience makes me feel guilty and almost always, I right the wrong. Work Cited Miller, Arthur. The Crucible. New York: Penguin Books, 1981.I think that a major issue today is parents using the schools as a scapegoat for unruly children. I personally have heard more than one parent blame the school system in general for certain problems that they are having with their children. Parents tend to blame everyone else but themselves. Parents have no right to blame anyone else but themselves. They need to stop being so concerned with the treasures of life and focus more on their kids. I don t think that teachers are acclaimed enough for the great things that they do every day to better the lives of their students. They deal with much more than what is on their job description and aren t given enough credit for it. If parents would just spend another twenty minutes with their kids each day the effects of this would be astronomically positive and America would become a better place because of this.