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## The Influence Of Society: The Crucible By Arthur Miller

"The Crucible," (1953) is a play composed by Arthur Miller to allegorically comment on the behaviors seen in society at the time of his writing the play. Miller uses the word 'crucible' to depict a test of the most decisive kind or a severe trial however it is normally referred to as a vessel in which substances are heated to high temperatures, the impure elements being melted away to leave the pure elements behind. Influenced by Salem and McCarthyism, the playwright highlights the behavior of individuals of characters in the play which are reflected from his society.

Salem was a small settlement based in New England in the last decades of the seventeenth century. This settlement was formed by Puritans which had a very different conception of life and religion. They were English Reformed Protestants that started to rebel against the Catholic and the Anglican churches of England. With the reign of Elizabeth I, Puritanism developed in England as an extremely religious group of people that intended to purify the Anglican Church. This movement was notably controlled because they were supposed to revolutionize the country. Expanding into America the only way of identifying the invisible crime of witchcraft was by the confessions of the accusers. Specifically, in Salem, the trial decided to save from the gallows those people accused who confessed and who cooperated in the investigation of the witch trials. Miller uses this form of accusations to bring light to the toxic nature of individuals who will do anything to keep themselves out of trouble or benefit their self-gain by snitching on other individuals in town or to be. This is seen in "Use the town's fear of all things supernatural to fuel their campaign of lies," where Miller indicates certain individuals in town are falsely accusing others to resolve their grudges against others or seek vengeance against those who have wronged them previously.

In an already war-torn country after World War Two, the Cold War began between the United States and the Soviet Union, creating great fear of the Communist movement taking root in America which was known as the 'Red Scare.' This created panic and hysteria as the common belief was that Soviet Communist spies, the reds, were hiding amongst the American people with sinister plans. During the second red scare, Senator Joseph McCarthy gave a speech claiming to have two hundred and five names written on a piece of paper that were members of the communist party. The press sensationalized McCarthy and the term McCarthyism was born. Thousands of Americans were placed on the list of HUAC, McCarthy, FBI investigations, loyalty tests, and sedition laws. If found guilty Americans were deported, jailed, blacklisted, fined, and/or lost their passports. Little evidence was needed in order to pass a judgment an accusation was usually enough to be blacklisted or worse. Similarly seen in 'The Crucible,' the girl's accusations were enough for the people of Salem to be found guilty of witchcraft. The penalty to be found guilty of witchcraft was to be put to death unless of course, they were to confess and name more witches. Miller brings to light the hysteria, paranoia, and propaganda that surrounded the McCarthy trials.