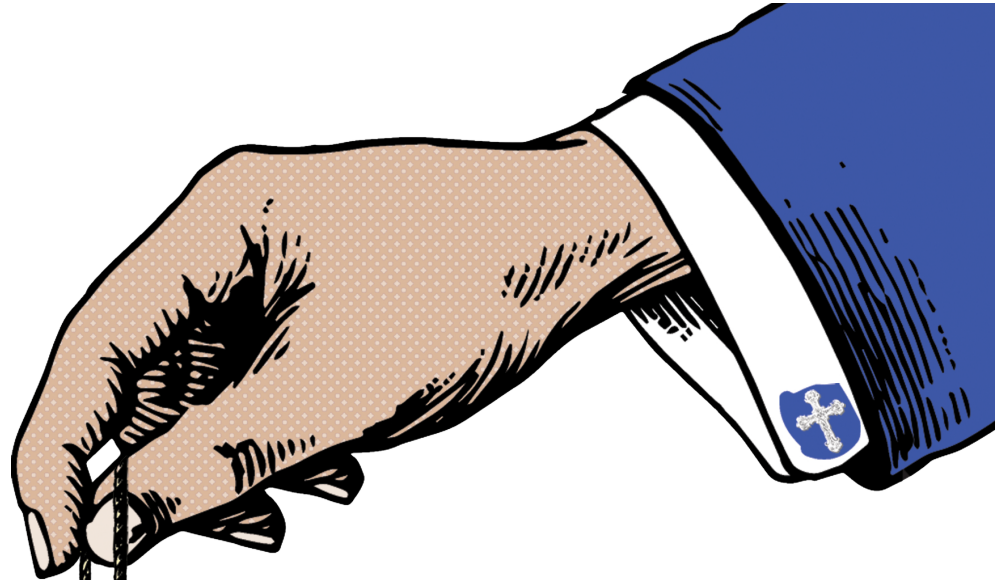




National Players

America's Longest-Running Touring Company



The **CRUCIBLE**

BY ARTHUR MILLER
DIRECTED BY JASON KING JONES



TEACHER TOOLKIT

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INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



What you have in front of you may seem like the largest study guide of all time. In fact, it's not a traditional study guide at all! We wanted to blow up any notion of what a study guide should be and instead give you the power to choose what you want to teach—we've merely assembled the tools you need to teach the subjects you find most relevant.

This Teacher Toolkit includes five unique sections. Each section includes context information, activities, and further reading—all arranged by specific areas of focus. If you want your students to learn about Salem in the 1600s, go to Section 3: The World of the Play; if you want a simple guide to theater etiquette, you'll find it in Section 4: About the Play. Utilize any or all of these tools as you see fit for your students.

Whether your school employs Common Core standards or other standards specific to your region, within these pages you'll find a wealth of resources, sample lessons, and substantial historical and literary support material.

With this National Players Teacher Toolkit, we invite you to build the lessons you choose. Please contact me at jkj@nationalplayers.org with any feedback, questions, or ideas for other tools we can include in future Toolkits. Enjoy!

—Jason King Jones, Artistic Director of National Players

This Toolkit includes:

- Historical context, with insight into the political, social, and cultural atmosphere of the world of the play. This section prepares students to thematically engage with the play and make connections between Miller's world and their own.
- Selected excerpts from the play that relate to its primary sources and historical context.
- An in-depth character study, integrating theatre-making, text analysis, and historical context to help students actively engage with the play.
- Post-show questions and activities used in conjunction with or separate from National Player workshops.
- Additional resources referencing production of the show and the creation of this guide.
- Photos, illustrations, and other images providing nuanced, visual insight into different interpretations of the play.

Engage with the Players

National Players has a 70-year legacy of making the classics relevant and exciting for new audiences; we are always looking for the latest ways to engage with students and audiences. We make our educational and artistic work as accessible and relevant as possible, from the thematic underpinnings of our texts to the creation of each year's national tour. We invite you to engage with us in any way.

Your students are welcome to contact the Players before or after their visits: **track** the Players' travels, **share** classroom materials, **post** questions and comments. Also, chat with the Players about their performances and life on the road! To engage with the Players via Facebook, Twitter, video and more, contact Education Coordinator Zoe Wohlfeld at zoe@nationalplayers.org.



WHO ARE NATIONAL PLAYERS?



HISTORY

Celebrating its 70th season, National Players is a unique ensemble that brings innovative theatre to communities large and small across the United States. Founded in 1949, National Players stimulates youthful imagination and critical thinking by presenting classic plays in contemporary and accessible ways.

National Players is the hallmark outreach program of Olney Theatre Center in Olney, Maryland. A model for artistic collaboration and national education outreach, National Players embodies the Olney Theatre Center educational pedagogy: to unleash the creative potential in our audiences and artists, and to stimulate individual empowerment. National Players exemplifies these goals by presenting self-sustained productions of Shakespeare and other classics to learners of all age in all environments. Through performances and integrated educational programs, National Players empowers these learners to build stronger communities through artistic collaboration.

National Players has performed in 43 states; in the White House; and for American military in Europe, Asia, and the Arctic Circle. Committed to artistic excellence and community engagement, National Players has utilized theatre and education to build community for more than 3 million people.

National Players offers an exemplary lesson in **collaboration** and **teamwork-in-action**: the actors not only play multiple roles onstage, they also serve as stage managers, teaching artists, and technicians. This year, the Players consist of 10 actors, traveling across the country and visiting schools and art centers.

A self-contained company, National Players carries its own sets, lights, costumes, and sound, meaning that the actors rebuild the set and hang lights for more than 100 performances a year.

They also memorize lines for three different plays—this year, *Twelfth Night*, *The Crucible*, and *Around the World in 80 Days*—often performing more than one each day. It is a lot of work, but the Players are dedicated to celebrating and teaching literature and performance to as many audiences as possible.

MISSION

National Players performs extraordinary theatre for diverse populations across the United States and builds stronger communities via outreach and education.

VISION

We strive everyday to live out Olney Theatre Center's vision by unleashing the creative potential of individuals across the United States and to provide performance and educational opportunities to communities without access.

VALUES

- We tell **great stories** and celebrate the great stories of the folks we connect with across the country.
- Through a highly skilled and trained **ensemble**, we exemplify a style of collaborative work that is unprecedented in American theater. The Ensemble is at the center of everything we do.
- Through theatre we enliven people's **empathic awareness**. Through education we inspire a deeper understanding of the work on stage and how it intersects with today's world.
- We are generous with each other on stage and off, and we are generous with the communities we serve. We celebrate the **generosity** of others.
- As individuals and as a company, we insist on continuing to grow into the best versions of ourselves. We celebrate intellectual, creative, geographic, and institutional **growth**.

LIFE ON THE ROAD

Benjamin DeCamp Cole is returning to National Players for Tour 70 after going on the road with Tour 69. In *The Crucible* he plays Reverend Parris. In this interview, Ben reflects on the entire experience of life as a Player—from rehearsals and meeting fellow company members to taking each show on the road. He also shares a general timeline of the production.



AUDITIONS

Auditions for National Players were held January through March. More than 1,000 young actors vied for a place in the company, auditioning in Maryland, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Boston, Georgia, Chicago, Memphis, and New York City.

"I auditioned in New York. It was my second year auditioning, then, I'd had a really positive experience the first time around. The first time, it was clear that it wasn't the right time or that I wouldn't have fit, but I thought I might book it on a second attempt and I did."

MEETING THE GROUP

For the first half of their contract, all ten players live in residency at the Olney Theatre Center, where they rehearse, learn about each other, and prepare for life on the road.

"It was just so unfamiliar that your brain was pretty scared the whole time. I felt connections with people pretty much immediately, then when we started working together, the bonds formed pretty quickly. What is interesting is that the bonds form and break, form and break. That's when you start challenging each other and really create a group that's strong enough to go on the road. By the time you go on the road, you're ready."

REHEARSALS

Players spend approximately three to four weeks with each director, analyzing the text, staging scenes, and incorporating design elements on the Olney stage.

"What was exciting about the rehearsal process was getting to know one another through the work and getting to know one another's work. I think, regardless of how the work is divided, seeing the way people approach different text, directors, and challenges of each play is very interesting."

OFFSTAGE ROLES

In addition to acting roles, each Player takes on at least one offstage job in support of the company, based on his or her skill sets and interests.

"As National Players, our duties extend very far off the stage; your offstage duties might be more than your onstage ones. It's going to require learning a new skill set and take up a lot of your thought process. But it has the opportunity to be as much as you want it to be. I personally have enjoyed learning to do the things and have a well-rounded skillset, The opportunity to learn how to take on these roles is a great unique aspect of the company and lets us leave more well-rounded professionals."

TRAVELING

The Players take turns driving the company's three vehicles: a truck for their stage equipment, a van, and a car. Last year, they visited 23 states and 64 cities. Once, they performed five shows in four days in three different states.

"The challenges of travel are all incredibly dependent on where you are. The East Coast you deal with traffic in a way you don't in the western part of the country. In the western part of the country, you tend to deal with conditions: high winds, driving through the mountains, snow, areas where there might not be another gas station for eighty miles or something. The Players came up with the driver-navigator system. There's always a driver, always a navigator. The navigator checks in on gas, Googles where gas stations are, and, of course, takes over if the other person cannot drive anymore."



LIVING ON THE ROAD

Each Player is allowed to bring one large bag and one small bag for their personal belongings. Without regular access to a refrigerator or gym, taking care of themselves on the road is especially challenging.

"The biggest thing about health on the road is just being aware of it. We've had times where we're in the middle of a load-in and we have to tell someone, 'Go eat.' Knowing yourself and communicating that, whether you have to sit down or get water or eat, is so important. In terms of exercise, fortunately, you're unloading and reloading a truck every few days. It's not an inactive lifestyle, even if you spent a lot of time in the truck and car. Fortunately, a lot of hotels have some basic exercise options. But the best way for me was to take advantage of the cool places around: go hiking, explore, even just walking around a city for a full day."

BEING A TEAM

Working together for an entire year means that, despite long hours and challenging load-ins, all ten Players need to work as a cohesive team.

"Everyone brings things to the table, not necessarily always making people happy. Sometimes it's 'I disagree with you on this.' But by the time you've brought all your stuff to the table on all fronts, you're a cohesive team. This is a thrilling, brand new world with new people and new ways of living; that is incredibly rewarding."

WORKSHOPS

Along with performing, the Players host educational workshops for many audiences. Workshops include improvisation, text analysis, stage combat, and more.

"The most exciting and rewarding moments on tour came out of these workshops. You get to connect very directly with the audience on tour. You're gonna bomb sometimes; I don't think anyone gets out of National Players without having a bad workshop. But I think everyone has a good one too."

KEEPING IT FRESH

After presenting three plays dozens of times for dozens of audiences, the Players work hard to keep their performances exciting and authentic.

"Performing is your meat and potatoes work. So when it comes to work onstage, there are cases where people disagree. But everyone finds their own personal balance. I focus on the acting. I want to improve the second time around."

OFFSTAGE ROLES



Company Manager

Schedules regular company meetings, handles emergencies on the road, serves as the point of contact for venues, and relays information to National Players Headquarters.

Tour 70: Jamie Boller

Stage Manager

Runs read-throughs and rehearsals, maintains the script and blocking notes, and calls many of the lighting and sound cues during performance.

Tour 70: Deidre Staples

Technical Director / Load-In Coordinator

Supervises load-in of scenery at each venue and performs upkeep of the set while on the road.

Tour 70: Benjamin DeCamp Cole

Wardrobe

Builds and maintains the costume inventory, creates a laundry and maintenance schedule, oversees repairs.

Tour 70: David Reece Hutchison

Master Electrician

Installs and maintains all lighting equipment, determines position for lighting equipment and cables, executes focusing.

Tour 70: Alanna McNaughton

Sound and Video Engineer

Ensures proper placement, upkeep, and maintenance of sound and video equipment, sets and checks sound levels, microphone cues, projection and camera setup.

Tour 70: Alice Kabia and Zoe Wohlfeld

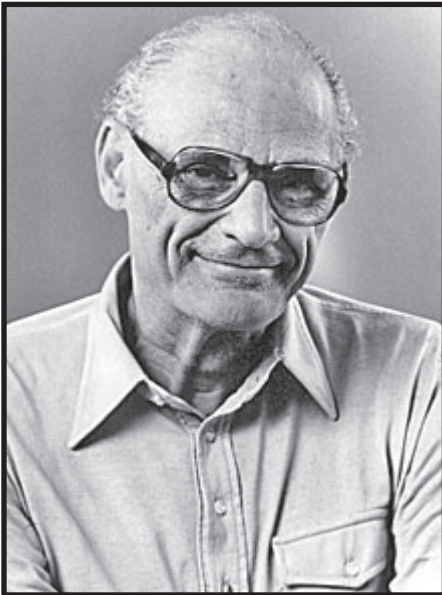
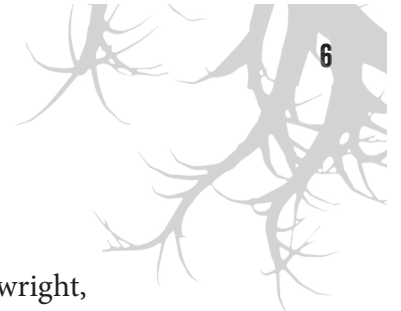
Education Coordinator

Organizes education efforts, including assigning workshops to Players and altering lesson plans for specific venues and workshops.

Tour 70: Zoe Wohlfeld

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ARTHUR MILLER



Career:

Arguably the most well-known American playwright, Arthur Miller is best remembered for *All My Sons*, *The Crucible*, and *Death of a Salesman*, which swept the Tony Awards and received the Pulitzer Prize in Drama when it premiered in 1949. In addition to his many plays, Miller also wrote novels and a series of screenplays. His work deals with American themes: the American Dream (as in the case of *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman*), modern politics (*The Crucible*), and masculinity (*All My Sons*, *A View from the Bridge*).

He started writing plays while enrolled at the University of Michigan and was awarded the school's Avery Hopwood Award for his first play, *No Villain*. He made his Broadway debut, *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, in 1944, but it closed after just four performances. His first novel, *Focus*, was published later that year.

When *All My Sons* opened in 1947, it was a hit and ran for almost a full year; it also earned him his first Tony Award for Best Author, an award he'd win again for *Death of a Salesman* in 1949. *Salesman* won five other Tonys that year, including Best Play, and the Pulitzer Prize. He'd follow that up with *The Crucible* in 1953, at which point he began to split his focus between theatre and film, with plays like *A View from the Bridge* (1955) and *Incident at Vichy* (1964), and films like *The Misfits* (1961) and the screenplay for *The Crucible* (1996).

Personal Life:

Arthur Miller spent much of his life in the public eye, often surrounding himself with other celebrity-types: Daniel Day-Lewis married his daughter (and later starred in the 1996 film version of *The Crucible*) and his fiancé at the time of his death was a well-known painter. But his most famous connection was his ex-wife, Marilyn Monroe. Miller's relationship with Monroe is the source of much controversy. The relationship began while Monroe was having an affair with Elia Kazan, a director with whom Miller had worked closely. Monroe and Miller met at a party in 1951 and were married in 1956, just months after Miller divorced his first wife with whom he had two children; at that time, Miller said in an interview that Monroe would curtail her movie career for the "full time job" of being his wife. In fact, neither of them worked particularly hard during their four-year marriage. This is in part due to Miller's involvement with the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), spearheaded by Joseph McCarthy: Miller was called in to appear before them for questioning about his allegorical play, *The Crucible*, which critiqued the work and the "witch hunt" HUAC created. Still, Miller only wrote one thing during his marriage to Monroe: the screenplay for *The Misfits*, a gift for Monroe, who starred in it in 1961, around the same time of their divorce. She died a year later.

Miller's work changes tone dramatically after Monroe's death. His 1964 play, *After the Fall*, tells the story of Maggie, an inarticulate, drug-addicted woman, who seduces Quentin out of his marriage. Their relationship ultimately falls apart, no matter Quentin's valiant efforts to save her, and Maggie commits suicide. In short, Miller created a play in which he rewrote the narrative of his failed marriage to make himself the hero, a story he continues in his last play, *Finishing the Picture*, which tells the story of a silent sex-symbol, Kitty, who spends most of the play nearly comatose in bed and says not a word, as the rest of the cast talks about how to handle her.

Miller married Austrian-born photographer Inge Morath in 1962 and had two children with her: his daughter Rebecca married Daniel Day-Lewis, and his son Daniel was born with Down syndrome and was institutionalized by Miller. Miller and his son eventually did make contact, when Daniel was an adult and had established a happy life. Morath died in 2002 and Miller soon became engaged to 34 year-old minimalist painter Agnes Barley. However, before they could wed, Miller died of heart failure, in 2005.



The 2012 revival of *Death of a Salesman*

Notable Works:

All My Sons – *All My Sons* opened on Broadway at the Coronet Theatre in 1947, directed by Elia Kazan. From Dramatists Play Service: “During the war Joe Keller and Steve Deever ran a machine shop which made airplane parts. Deever was sent to prison because the firm turned out defective parts, causing the deaths of many men. Keller went free and made a lot of money. The twin shadows of this catastrophe and the fact that the young Keller son was reported missing during the war dominate the action. The love affair of Chris Keller and Ann Deever, the bitterness of George Deever returned from the war to find his father in prison and his father’s partner free, are all set in a structure of almost unbearable power. The climax showing the reaction of a son to his guilty father is fitting conclusion to a play electrifying in its intensity.”

Death of a Salesman – The 1949 Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning play *Death of a Salesman* tells the story of the last days of Willy Loman, a failing salesman, who cannot understand how he failed to win success and happiness. Through a series of tragic soul-searching revelations of the life he has lived with his wife, his sons, and his business associates, we discover how his quest for the American Dream kept him blind to the people who truly loved him.

The Price – Miller’s 1968 play, *The Price*, opened at the Morosco Theatre and was nominated for two Tony Awards. It has been revived on Broadway four times. As outlined in *Variety*: “the conflict, the basic jealousy and the lifetime of, if not hatred, at least corrosive, though unacknowledged anger, is between two brothers, as well as resentment against a selfish, child-devouring father. The siblings meet, after a sixteen-year estrangement, in the attic of the family residence, where the old furniture is to be disposed of. The first is a policeman who sacrificed his education and probably a career as a scientist to care for his ruined, invalid father. The other, who arrives late, is an eminent surgeon who walked out on the demands of family to concentrate on medicine and personal success. Miller works up to the showdown scene slowly. The policeman and his wife first talk of the past and present to fill in some of the background. Then there is a very long, richly amusing, curiously revealing and enjoyable scene between the officer and a marvelously crotchety, humorous and wise old Jewish dealer who has come to buy the furniture but refuses to set a price without prolonged philosophic conversation. When the surgeon arrives, the brothers take a little time for amenities and feeling each other out before the basis of their long alienation and mutual bitterness emerges into short, blunt, enraged accusations. It is a taut, exciting and superbly theatrical scene, and it reveals the characters, including strengths and weaknesses, of the brothers to each other and themselves—as well as to the audience.”

McCarthyism and the House Un-American Activities Committee



Arthur Miller testifying to a HUAC Subcommittee in 1956.

In 1938, the House Un-American Activities Committee was created to investigate alleged disloyalty and subversive activities on the part of private citizens, public employees, and potential Communist ties. Hoping to apprehend Communists and Communist sympathizers, HUAC was known to pressure witnesses to surrender names via subpoenas and hold people in contempt of Congress. Witnesses who refused to comply were labeled as “red,” and their tactics of harassment were labeled “redbaiting;” these created the term “Red Scare,” which refers to the fear of communism and the fear of the HUAC hearings.

A notable figure in HUAC was Senator Joseph McCarthy, for whom the term “McCarthyism” is coined. McCarthyism refers to a leader who is reckless, demagogic, and provides unsubstantiated accusations and public attacks on character. McCarthy’s tenure as Senator was unremarkable until 1950, when he said that he had a list of Communist Party members in the State Department; this prompted a meteoric rise in fame and he became the face of the Red Scare. He’d accuse politicians, government officials, and even those outside the political sphere of being a communist, a communist sympathizer, disloyal to the government, or even a homosexual – running concurrent to the Red Scare was a similar “Lavender Scare,” a fear of homosexuals or being accused of being such – often without grounds for doing so.

Artists were particularly guilty, in HUAC and McCarthy’s collective mind, with Lillian Hellman, Lena Horne, Paul Robeson, Elia Kazan, Aaron Copland, Charlie Chaplin, and Leonard Bernstein called in front of the committee. Around 320 artists were blacklisted from being able to produce work in the United States, effectively ending the career of many of these artists.

One artist who managed to make it out predominantly unscathed was Arthur Miller. *The Crucible*, which opened on Broadway in 1953, was an allegorical play comparing the Red Scare and HUAC to the Salem Witch Trials; this criticism of the movement was enough to accuse Miller of communist sympathy. Miller refused to name names, however, saying, “I could not use the name of another person and bring trouble on him.” Miller, when asked why the Communist Party had produced one of his plays, famously responded, “I take no more responsibility for who plays my plays than General Motors can take for who rides in their Chevrolets.” Miller was declared guilty of contempt of Congress in 1957, with a penalty of a denied passport and either a \$500 fine or 30 days in jail; however, a judge overturned his conviction on appeal.

THE CRUCIBLE



An image from the original production of *The Crucible* in 1953.

The Crucible opened at the Martin Beck Theatre on Broadway on January 22, 1953, though Miller found this production too stylized and cold. Indeed the reviews for it were hostile, though it won the 1953 Tony Award for Best Play regardless. A year later, a new production “succeeded” that one and has since become a staple of American drama. The Broadway production featured Madeleine Sherwood as Abigail Williams, Arthur Kennedy as John Proctor, and Beatrice Straight as Elizabeth Proctor.

It was first revived on Broadway in 2002, directed by Richard Eyre. It ran for three months and featured Liam Neeson as John Proctor, Laura Linney as Elizabeth Proctor, and Angela Bettis as Abigail Williams; Kristen Bell was also in the cast, as Susanna Wallcott, in one of her earliest roles. The production was nominated for six Tony Awards, but won none that year.

The second revival, directed by Ivo van Hove, opened in 2016 at the Walter Kerr Theatre; it featured Saoirse Ronan as Abigail Williams, Ben Whishaw as John Proctor, and Sophie Okonedo as Elizabeth Proctor. This production featured an original score by Philip Glass. It was nominated for four Tony Awards, but won none that year, though it did win a Drama Desk for Outstanding Music in a Play.

The play was also adapted for film twice, once in a made-for-TV film in 1967, and once in 1996, in an adaptation by Arthur Miller. The television movie was directed by Alex Segal and featured George C. Scott as John Proctor and Tuesday Weld as Abigail Williams. The screenplay of the TV film was simply the play script, whereas the 1996 film script was altered by Miller. This movie featured Daniel Day-Lewis as John Proctor, Winona Ryder as Abigail Williams, and Joan Allen as Elizabeth Proctor. The movie was nominated for two Oscars: Best Actress in a Supporting Role for Joan Allen, and Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material Previously Produced or Published.

THE WORLD OF THE PLAY

SALEM IN THE 1600s



When the settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony arrived from England, their goal was to replicate English society as closely as possible. Upon tracts of land determined by the English government, these towns established charters for governance; the charters primarily served as a business-like document, with a leader at the top and then shareholders who each received, in turn, their own tract of land. Most traveled in whole family units, rather than as individuals or indentured servants, and thus took up residence together. Most of these families took residence in the town itself, though there was about a third of the population that lived outside the town in the farming community, now known as Salem Village.

The overarching governing body was to be individually determined by the people, but, as with all British colonies, the highest governmental structure was that of England. Cities like Salem obeyed the British officials who provided them their tracts of land. In 1665 The British Crown appointed Sir Edmund Andros as governor of the Dominion of New England. With this appointment, Andros nullified all former land titles, taking away claims to some properties and plunging the region into chaos. Colonists overthrew Andros in 1691, but the damage was done: there had been turmoil and infighting, which they knew would displease God, opening them up to the Devil's influence.

The two Salems were dramatically different – the town was a bustling epicenter of life and housed affluent members of the community, while Salem Village was spread apart and adhered to more traditional views – but were united in one thing: regardless of the political or religious powers at play, the residents thought they should govern themselves, perhaps in large part because of the blurring of lines between church and state, which was notably more gray than in England. There was an expectation that the reverend of the area was to be its leader, both morally and politically, but Reverend Parris was newer to town than most of the residents and therefore was not respected. Indeed, he was directly in the crossfires of these two philosophies: not a natural leader, Parris assumed he'd simply be respected due to his title upon arriving in Salem, but the citizens disagreed with him on principle, knowing that neither was the other's first choice. It was his duty to oversee the court and any civil disputes, but cases were often retried repeatedly until Parris got what he wanted.

The family unit in Salem then became the closest thing to an organized government; indeed, the father of the house was seen as the moral compass for the family and was in charge of ensuring daily prayer. The household included the father, the wife, and children, as well as any servants. The day would begin and end with prayer and singing of hymns and psalms, led by the father. The mother would lead the children in chores, work, and education – play was a forbidden topic, as were most leisure activities, such as dancing. Indeed, most Puritans were taught to read, though very few had the ability to write.

In Salem and other Puritan cities, married women were not allowed to own land; husbands owned and tended to the land while wives tended to the family. Widowed women were allowed to own land, at least until their male children came of age or their female children could marry. However, even with land, women had no right to vote and therefore no political power.

With the family as the closest thing to government, any who broke from that tradition were immediately suspect. The first women accused of witchcraft, for instance, were unmarried and poor; Sarah Good was even homeless and caring for a child with no father. Indeed, the marginalized in Salem were the first to be accused: the slaves, the unmarried, the young, the elderly. Much of this springs from the European mentality that women and people of color were inherently further from God than white men, tracing back to the supposed idea of God making mankind in his image.

DAILY PURITAN LIFE

Puritans were not, as mythologized in American history, joyless religious zealots. They did in fact travel to the New World for religious freedom, as they were discontented with the Church of England, and therefore the church and religion were cornerstones of their very life. Every man was entrusted with the morality of the family and therefore must insist that each day started with group prayer; this included wives, children, servants, and even slaves. All were the moral responsibility of the master of the house. After prayer, the husband would go out to the field to work while the wife and the children would clean the house, pursue academic interests, etc.

There were only a few activities that were specifically banned by the Puritanical society: drama, religious music, and erotic poetry. Drama and erotic poetry were thought to bring immorality, while religious music was thought to detract from the messages during church. There were laws that banned other activities, such as excessive alcohol consumption and dancing, but these were not traditionally followed or enforced.

Recreational activities for Puritans included spending time outdoors, fishing, berry picking, and picnics; indoor recreational activities were often social gatherings: feasts, storytelling, sharing news, card playing, and singing. However, these were not to be started until the work for the day was done by all members of the family; while the mother and children waited for the father to return from his work, should their chores be done early, the children would often be quizzed in the Bible or would read the classics: Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, etc.



REALITY VS. MILLER'S MYTHOLOGY

While many of the details in *The Crucible* are based in historic fact, Miller did embellish and alter some of the details. In Salem, not a lot was written down; indeed, only a portion of the population knew how to read at all. What was documented, particularly during the trials themselves, were riddled with comments and “descriptions,” rather than a word-by-word testimony; this may have been due to the noise in the room making it difficult to hear, the rapidity of the witness’ testimony, or the bias of the transcriber. Therefore, Miller had to invent dialogue for his characters that kept the spirit of the trials.

Miller also theatricalized several characters. Abigail Williams, in the play, is a conglomeration of the 11-year-old Abigail Williams and the 14-year-old Abigail Hobbs. The historical Williams, the niece of the Parris family, was among the first few afflicted by witchcraft; she also was one of the primary accusers. Hobbs was known to be a bit of a mischief-maker and later would be accused of witchcraft herself. Neither one of these women are known to have had any sexual interaction with the real life John Proctor, a man of nearly seventy, who was aged down to his mid-thirties for the play.

Other characters changed too. According to the court documents, Tituba was an American Indian slave, rather than an African American from Barbados. Betty had two siblings in Salem, but Betty in the play is the Parris’ only child. Reverend Hale did not sign any death warrants, though Miller’s version of him has signed seventeen.

WHICH WITCH: WITCHCRAFT IN THE CRUCIBLE

Witchcraft in *The Crucible* covers a wide spectrum of behavior. Below is a list of everything considered and relating to witchcraft in the play:

- Dancing in the woods
- Tituba singing “her Barbados songs” and “waving her arms over the fire.”
- Flying or trying to fly
- “She never waked this morning but her eyes open and she walks, hears naught, sees naught, and cannot eat”
- Death of children soon after birth, specifically Ann Putnam’s seven “unbaptized” babies
- Drinking blood
- Inability to hear the Lord’s name
- Reading a book
- “The stoppage of prayer” or not praying at home
- Seeing an invisible animal, person, or specter
- A chill or a feeling of sudden cold wind
- Laughing at prayer
- Keeping “poppets”
- Premonitions
- Death of an animal through mysterious causes loosely attached to a person
- Reading fortunes

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WITCHCRAFT

- c. 560 B.C. The Torah condemns witchcraft in two books: Exodus and Leviticus; most likely written by a priest, both urge that witches be put to death
- c. 420 A.D. Saint Augustine of Hippo, an influential theologian in the early Christian Church, argues that witchcraft is impossible, as only God can suspend the normal laws of the universe. This mentality is picked up by the medieval church and therefore very little energy is spent in tracking down witches.
- 1273 Thomas Aquinas, a Dominican monk, argues that the world was full of evil and dangerous demons. He begins to spread the idea that sex and witchcraft were intertwined: demons were not just there for their own pleasure, but for leading men into temptation.
- Mid-1400s A series of witchcraft trials erupt in Europe: defendants admit to flying on poles and animals to attend assemblies presided over by Satan, casting spells on neighbors, having sex with animals, or causing storms. Many of the accused are tortured.
- 1484 Pope Innocent VIII commissions two friars, Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger, to publish a full report on suspected witchcraft. This book, *Malleus Maleficarum* (“Hammer of Witches”) argues that Christians have a duty to hunt witches down and kill them. This book can be found in full at <http://www.malleusmaleficarum.org/>.
- 1500 to 1600 Somewhere between 50,000 and 80,000 suspected witches are executed in Europe. About 80% of them are women. In 1590, the torture of suspected witches is authorized by King James I of England, who also commissions another book on witchcraft: *Daemonologie*, which can be found in full at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25929/25929-pdf.pdf>.
- 1606 Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, heavily featured witchcraft, is first performed
- 1662 A family in Hartford, Connecticut accuses a neighbor, Goodwife Ayres, of witchcraft, after their daughter died just days after spending time in her presence. This prompts a witch hunt hysteria in which seven are tried and four executed.
- 1682 England executes its last witch, Temperance Lloyd, an elderly woman; the case is “deeply flawed.”
- 1692 The first trial in Salem begins.

For a more in-depth look at witch trials in England (the historical precedent for Salem), look at *Witches: A Century of Murder*, available on Netflix. For more on witch trials in the United States, specifically Salem, check out *The Witches* by Stacy Schiff.

THE DEVIL OR SOMETHING ELSE? WHAT CAUSED BEWITCHMENT



If magic was not the cause of the strange behavior in the girls, it stands to reason that there must be a logical explanation. As John Proctor claims, it could simply be children play-acting; several characters mention beating the girls to get them to stop.

The accusations often came from one individual or family to a rival, much like Abigail naming Elizabeth due to her relationship with Proctor; though this was invented for the play, the real Salem was rife with land disputes and disagreements on a religion, so it's entirely plausible that the girls simply named and accused those who caused their family harm.

There is also an understanding that tension politically could have caused internal and individual tension in the people of Salem. Over the previous five years, Salem had seen its charter revoked, had combined with neighboring colonies into the Dominion of New England under a new governor, and had its king replaced by a new one, in turn replacing the new colony with a Dominion, combining Massachusetts with Maine and Plymouth. Even within the smaller communities, there was tension: Boston and Salem were in competition for which would serve as the primary port city for the colony, which put pressure on both cities, especially the more rural city of Salem.

Another possible explanation is the behavior was caused by natural causes. During the late 1600s, there was what was known as a Little Ice Age, or an abnormally cold period in Earth's history. This caused problems with crops; a severe lack of food could have indeed caused hallucinations, though the intensity of them is debatable. Experts in the 1970s to 1990s believed that the erratic behavior was caused by ergot poisoning, which would have come from ingesting bread made from moldy rye. When ingested, ergot manifests itself similarly to LSD or other psychedelic drugs and could easily have caused this behavior; however, there are other symptoms of ergot poisoning including deformation of the fingers and toes, primarily through skin peeling, that the girls did not have, so this too is unlikely.

The currently held belief is that the girls actually were suffering from psychological trauma or disease. PTSD is a candidate: there was a generational trauma from both King Phillip's War, a series of violent skirmishes with Native Americans as English settlers began colonizing their land, which could have easily triggered the girls' reaction, and King William's War, a series of fights with French colonies in the New World that was running concurrent to the events in Salem. Notably, if Abigail's claims in the play are correct, Betty's fainting in the woods when her father startled her corroborates this theory; she was startled by her father's appearance in a similar way to what she may have felt in an ambush situation from either a French rival or a Native American attack.

Emerson Baker, a history professor at Salem State University and expert on the witch trials, has a different theory: conversion disorder. Conversion disorder is a psychogenic disorder in which mental anguish is physically converted into exterior symptoms, including twitching, shaking, facial tics, garbled speech, trance states. This stems from PTSD in many ways, as it is usually brought about by trauma as well. Baker notes that "the interesting thing about it is today mass conversion tends to be most common in teenagers, and overwhelmingly teenage girls. And it tends to start out at the top of social order;" the daughter of the reverend is followed by the daughters of the doctor and the wealthiest man in town, so that pattern follows.

More on these can be found at <https://www.boston.com/news/history/2017/10/31/the-theory-that-may-explain-what-was-tormenting-the-afflicted-in-salems-witch-trials> or <http://historylists.org/events/list-of-5-possible-causes-of-the-salem-witch-trials.html>.

ABOUT THE PLAY

CHARACTER MAP



Authority Figures



Reverend John Hale
An expert on witchcraft, Hale is called in to examine Betty Parris



Judge Danforth
A Boston judge, called in to preside over the Witch Trials



Judge Hathorne
The local judge assigned to the Witch Trials; serves as second to Danforth

Others in the Community



Giles Corey
A kind, but talkative, farmer who lives just outside Salem; he and Proctor are friends

The Parris Household

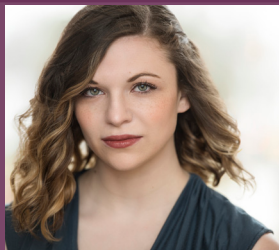


Reverend Parris
The minister of Salem's court, disliked by many in his community

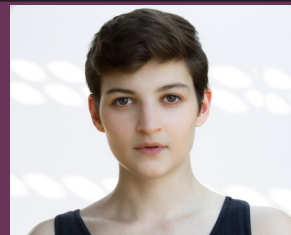


Tituba
Parris' slave, who is accused of witchcraft after singing and dancing in the woods with the girls

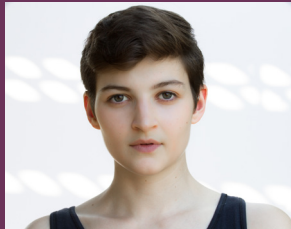
Not pictured:
Betty Parris
Parris' daughter, the first to show symptoms of bewitchment



Abigail Williams
Parris' niece and John's former lover; she is a primary accuser in the trials



Ann Putnam
A superstitious woman who has lost seven children; a primary accuser in the trials



Mercy Lewis
their servant, friend of Abigail, one of the primary accusers in the trial

The Putnam Household

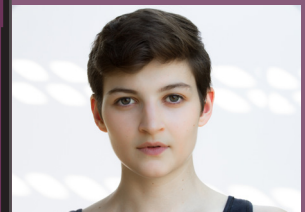


Thomas Putnam
The richest man in town and a supporter of Parris; married to Ann

Not pictured:
Ruth Putnam
the Putnam's unseen daughter; one of the first to show symptoms of bewitchment



Rebecca Nurse
An older and respected member of the Salem community, later hanged for witchcraft



Ezekial Cheever
A tailor turned clerk of the court

The Proctor Household



John Proctor
A farmer who lives just outside Salem with his wife Elizabeth and their four sons; months prior to the play beginning, he had an affair with Abigail Williams



Elizabeth Proctor
John Proctor's wife and mother to three sons, accused in the play of witchcraft



Mary Warren
The Proctors' maid and a friend of Abigail



John Willard
A marshall of the court

SYNOPSIS

As the play begins, Betty Parris is lying sick in bed, attended by her father, Reverend Samuel Parris. The previous evening, she had been caught dancing with her cousin Abigail, the Parris' slave Tituba, and several other girls in the woods. Rumors have spread through the village that Betty's illness is due to witchcraft, which brings many townspeople to the Parris' house, including Ann Putnam, whose daughter Ruth is also afflicted. When questioned, Abigail admits that the girls were not just dancing, but also conjuring spirits.

The adults leave the room, where Abigail and two other young women, Mercy Lewis and Mary Warren, are left to discuss what happened. Betty wakes and says that Abigail drank blood to cast a spell to kill Elizabeth Proctor, the wife of Abigail's former lover, John Proctor. Abigail threatens the girls in order to ensure their silence. John Proctor then enters the house; when he is alone with Abigail, she confesses that she still loves him, but he rejects her because he has committed again to his wife.

Reverend Hale, a minister from the neighboring town of Beverly, arrives to investigate Betty's situation; Abigail confesses that Tituba called the Devil, in part to redirect blame off herself. To save her life, Tituba confesses, and the girls all throw blame on several women, whom they claim they've seen with the Devil.

The second act takes place at the Proctor's farm, as John and Elizabeth discuss the witch trials now taking place in Salem. Though he hesitates, John is finally persuaded to go tell the court that Abigail is lying. Their servant, Mary Warren, who is an "official of the court," returns to the house and gives Elizabeth a doll she made, also revealing that Elizabeth was named a witch. Reverend Hale corroborates this story, as he arrives to question the Proctor's faith. Giles Corey arrives to reveal that his wife has been arrested.

Ezekial Cheever likewise arrives at the house in order to arrest Elizabeth, saying that Abigail accused her of attacking her through the same doll Mary just gave her. Though Mary tells the truth to Hale and Cheever, Elizabeth is still taken away, as John makes the claim that hypocrites are finally being punished for their sins.

Act Three brings us the trial, in which Judge Hathorne is aggressively questioning Martha Corey; Giles enters to defend his wife and is dragged into another room, where he is soon joined by Deputy Governor Danforth, Parris, Hale, and Cheever. This group, after brief discussion, is similarly joined by John Proctor and Mary Warren, who reveals that the girls were faking the entire time; Proctor presents a document signed by community members willing to vouch for the characters of Elizabeth, Rebecca Nurse, and Martha Corey. Danforth demands these signatories be questioned, prompting Giles Corey to testify that Thomas Putnam had Ruth make accusations in order to seize his neighbor's land.

Proctor reveals his affair with Abigail to prove her unreliability, but she denies it; unfortunately, when Elizabeth is brought in to defend John's character, she lies, hoping her lie will save her husband. Proctor is arrested and Hale quits the court at this display of irrationality.

The fourth act occurs at the jail, as Marshall Herrick has cleared the jail cell for Judge Danforth and others. Parris, reveals that the city of Salem is in a state of unrest due to all the arrests and the hangings: Abigail and Mercy Lewis have run away, with Abigail stealing Parris' life savings. Parris worries that hanging Rebecca Nurse and John Proctor will enhance that unrest. Elizabeth is summoned to urge Proctor to confess, telling him about Giles' death for not giving any further information. John confesses, but ultimately decides against it when Danforth demands he incriminate others. With no confession, Proctor and Rebecca Nurse are taken away to the gallows.

AN ACTOR'S

PERSPECTIVE

*Zoe Wohlfeld is an actor in the Tour 70 company and plays Betty Parris and Elizabeth Proctor in *The Crucible*. She earned her BA in Theater and Performance from Bard College (Dyson Scholar) and trained at the National Theater Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center and Shakespeare & Young Company Conservatory at Shakespeare & Company. Zoe is excited to join National Players, and make her debut at Olney Theatre Center. Previous credits include: Shakespeare & Company: *Hamlet* (Guildenstern), *The Servant of Two Masters* (Ensemble); Flock Theatre: *The Tempest* (Sebastian).*



When did you first read or see *The Crucible*? What were your impressions of the play and of the character Elizabeth Proctor?

I first read *The Crucible* when I was a sophomore in high school. I remember being super curious about the hysteria that led to the Salem Witch Trials. I also remember being very into stories of good vs. evil and, when I first read *The Crucible*, I saw the story and the characters in a starkly good or starkly bad way. There was good and there was evil and I was apt to polarize the two. When I was fifteen I wasn't as interested as I am today in understanding the complexities and humanity of these characters. I remember seeing Elizabeth as "the good one."

Elizabeth is a bit older than you. How do you connect to a character with that many years between you?

Elizabeth would probably be 5-7 years older than me, which isn't insanely older but she has a completely different life experience than I do. Not only did she live in the 17th and 18th centuries, but she is devoutly religious, married, has three children, and lives in a society where gender structures were insanely strict and she had very little freedom as a woman. Because I am alive today, I am not devoutly religious or married and I don't have any children, and though we still live in a patriarchy I definitely have way more agency as a woman, I have found it most helpful to simply use my imagination and do research on what it was like to be a woman then, and even better (since Elizabeth Proctor was a historical figure) research this actual person. I am still figuring out how this character, who has lived a life very different from my own, lives in me. But the base of it is imagination and research.

In this play, you and many of the actors double roles. What are the challenges of this? What are the rewards?

I have a quick change that is physically very challenging, besides that I think it's a lot of fun to play an eleven-year-old girl and an adult woman who are on opposing sides of this story.

How would you describe the role of women in this play?

I think women are obviously very restricted in this play. They live in a rigid patriarchy where they have no power. Any agency a woman might have is through her husband or father. To some extent, I think this play explores what happens when those who are suppressed (the girls) find ways to obtain power in a society that is heavily based in fear. I think the girls find liberation through their accusations and through the hysteria they cause throughout their town. Elizabeth, on the other hand, I think, finds liberation through her faith. She does not have much agency throughout the play, but where she exerts any sort of power I believe it comes from trust in her religion.

What do you hope students get from our production of *The Crucible*? What message do you hope they receive?

Ideally, I hope they see a dynamic story that embraces multiple points of view, one that shows us how complicated it is to be human, and one that implores us to ask questions about our world today.



John and Elizabeth Proctor have a conversation in their home in NP Tour 70's Production of *The Crucible*.
Photo: C. Stanley Photography

A DESIGNER'S PERSPECTIVE

Charlie Calvert is the set designer for Tour 70. This is Charlie's first tour with National Players, but Olney Theatre Center audiences will recognize his work from Dial M for Murder, Fickle: A Fancy French Farce, and The Tempest. Other regional credits include Blithe Spirit, Love's Labour's Lost, Henry VIII, The Learned Ladies, Our Town, Arms and the Man, Noises Off, The Compleat Works of Wllm Shk-spr (abridged) and Comedy of Errors at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Next to Normal at Charleston Stage Company and The Royale and Glengarry Glen Ross at PURE Theatre. Charlie received his MFA in set design from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and serves on the faculty of College of Charleston's Department of Theatre and Dance.

What are a set designer's main responsibilities?

In a nutshell, the set designer is responsible for creating an environment for the play - the world of the play, if you will. I explain it to my students in a slightly different way. I tell them that the set designer creates a world in which the play can take place. I think this leaves it more open to varying approaches and allows for some freedom of creativity.

How would you describe the National Players' aesthetic?

Since this is my first experience with the Players' tour, I think I'm still finding out. But I love the stripped down quality of the work. I mean "stripped down" in a good way. It seems that everything about the Players is about peeling away the layers to find the essence of the piece. This happens in the scenery by choosing to use only what is necessary and by creating a space that isn't filled with unessential details--only what's important to tell the story.

How is the collaborative nature of National Players unique?

Again, I think I'm still discovering this, but I haven't often had experiences with this "troupe" mentality--where there is less specialization and everyone is pitching in to their part. It's really neat and kind of a romantic idea reminiscent of turn of the century theatre groups.

The collaboration in the creative process is also great. I attribute that to Jason King Jones. As I see more and more theatre companies fail to really embrace truly collaborative projects, Jason always tries to make sure everyone is always communicating with each other. And that the costume designer is contributing to the scene design, and the scene design is contributing to the lighting design. This is especially important with the touring nature of the Players.

Can you walk us through a brief timeline of your design process?

After reading the play a few times, I'll always have a quick chat with the director to listen to thoughts about the overall vision of the piece. Then, I'll spend a great deal of time on the next step--the Visual Research. This is the most important step for me. It's the one that sets the tone for everything else that happens after it.

After that, there really is no prescribed method to what happens. Every show is different, so I may do some sketches or maybe some collages--anything that will push the process along.

For Tour 70, I jumped right in to a model that I sent to OTC. Since each show had the same unit set to play with, I wanted the directors to be able to have the model with them to play around with some different configurations.

The most important thing to keep in mind about a design process is that it is not linear. We constantly have to go back and repeat steps all along the way--especially the research part.

What is the research process like for scenic design?

This is probably different for everyone. I tend to respond to “inspirational” research more than to “period” research. For example, Jason and I found an image of vintage dresses hanging from trees. This was a more meaningful image than any pictures we were looking at that came from Puritan Salem. I tend to love photography. It’s the art form that I respond to the most.



If I want to be a set designer, what skills should I work to cultivate?

This is a good question, and one that seems to change each decade. I think 10 years ago, people would tell you that you need to be able to draw and paint. But with technological advances and the digital age, the computer can do so much of that for you.

So, skills aren’t so much what I tell people to work on. To me, it’s more about being a curious person (or learning to be curious). A set designer has to “become” so many things when they are designing a show--an architect, a brick mason, an interior designer, a landscaper, etc. So, being a person who pays attention to details and the way things are made is really important.



Images of *The Crucible* set models by set designer Charlie Calvert.



WHY THIS PLAY NOW: THE CRUCIBLE IN 2018-19



The Crucible has never been more relevant.

Yes, Arthur Miller wrote it 65 years ago about a series of events that occurred in the 17th Century, but the play's themes resonate with deafening clarity in America's present moment. Many of us are familiar with the House UnAmerican Activities Committee and the terror Joseph McCarthy brought upon Hollywood actors, playwrights, and directors--demanding that artists identify colleagues they thought to be Communists, or face career-ending blacklisting. Working in Hollywood at the time, Miller wrote *The Crucible* as a metaphor for the McCarthy hearings and the intense fear they created: fear that enemies were lurking in plain sight, fear that America's identity as a nation was threatened from within, fear that the innocent were getting sucked into the vortex of McCarthy's witch hunt.

Arthur Miller gives us John Proctor to stand up to the tyranny of his own witch trials, but in our world today, I'm thinking more about Salem's young women and the collective power they discover within themselves during these extraordinary circumstances. Salem's community was based on a Puritanical sect of Christianity: it was rigidly patriarchal, consolidating the power of the community to the adult male landowners. If you were a woman, without land, mentally unwell, suffered from any kind of addiction, or were (perish the thought) not a Christian, you were powerless in Salem. But the mere accusation of witchcraft--a fear that was very real and doctrinally believed--gave the young women of Salem a stunning and disturbing level of control.

In the first scene we learn that the girls and young women of Salem were caught dancing in the forest and experimenting with Tituba's Vodou practices, flouting a host of religious and social rules. Faced with punishment and risking the revelation of even darker truths to be revealed, Abigail Williams constructs a shocking lie: witches have infiltrated Salem. As the lie of witchcraft spreads throughout Salem, the young women discover their power and mount a revolution, taking revenge on those who have abused them or shamed them and terrorized the innocent along the way. In no way am I excusing the lies told by children in this play; rather, I am recognizing how those who feel powerless, when given power in a paranoid society, can sweep up the guilty and innocent in its wake.

I believe we are in the midst of a gigantic cultural reckoning, one as yet unresolved. Americans across the political system have felt disempowered by events of the past few years, and that sense of disempowerment has led to a host of movements, including the Tea Party, Black Lives Matter, Me Too, and #NeverAgain. Each of these politically and socially disparate movements fit a larger pattern, demanding recognition of injustice and demanding action that will change the way we function in society. I see all these these movements as pieces of a greater reckoning that will continue to radically transform the landscape of American society.

And that's why this play matters today. Because it forces us to grapple with the complex humanity of the people at the heart of a cultural reckoning. It reminds us that there are human costs to all the screaming, the yelling, and the accusations flying across our television screens and social media feeds. It reminds us that we all still have a great deal of work to do to improve our society and ourselves, and it implores us work together to enact that change with care, with compassion and with each other.

Jason King Jones
National Players Artistic Director

OTHER THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR

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I wrote the previous to be included in the program of Olney Theatre Center's production of *The Crucible* which ran in the spring of 2018. My thoughts about the play and its relevance continue to develop. We consider the musings above and below as a place to begin our exploration, not an anchor to keep us in port.

The people of Salem lived a majority of their lives in isolation, with rigid rules regarding how to live based on their dogmatic view of *The Bible*. This was a community without money, but with land; it was close to metropolitan centers, but not easily accessible; they were a community but had invisible walls up that separated them. All of this adds to the hysteria of the play, which is the result of a lack of understanding of how people operate, specifically when they operate outside the standard "acceptable" behaviors. This hysteria manifests itself as fear: of witchcraft, of the devil, of your neighbor. What are each of these characters afraid of? Are any of these people truly evil? What is the essence of evil, where does it come from, and how does it manifest?

This is also, as mentioned in the note above, a play about power. What happens when people with no power in a society suddenly find themselves with it? What happens when those who have power start to lose it? Did Abigail and the other young women have another choice they could have made? What would be different if the elders listened to the young women, rather than seeing them simply as innocent things who could be corrupted by the devil? We're going to be interrogating the idea of the "other": what makes people feel included or excluded from a group? What makes people feel the need to exclude others? The topic of inclusion can make people uncomfortable; why is that? Why is exclusion a more navigable route?

This exclusivity is directly paralleled today: people are able to grab onto an idea and run with it without evidence to back it up, leading to a "with us or against us" mentality. National Players is an organization that works hard to build bridges, but this story is one of tearing those bridges down and keeping people isolated. This production is designed to be toured across the country. The audiences we will serve may well identify with these characters in ways we don't, so it's important to be mindful of that in preparation for this piece and in our performances, talkbacks, and workshops. What will fundamental Christians think of this play? Where might they see the blame? What about our audiences in prisons, who might see themselves reflected in the young women in the show, who took desperate actions when they felt a lack of agency? As we explore the play, we also must explore our audiences: where are their invisible walls? Why do those walls exist?

This play is a parable about our times, based on historical events. We know that the events of the HUAC hearings and the Salem Witch Trials were aberrations and that people knew they'd made mistakes afterwards, but these people couldn't admit it whilst in the middle of the event. Yet they knew their actions would directly or indirectly lead to the deaths of innocent people. What happens to us when we know that we've made a wrong choice that we're living in the middle of?

BEFORE YOU WATCH: THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Coming to the theatre involves a more active form of participation than other types of entertainment, such as film or television. Theatre is a two-way art form: the performers and audience feed off each other, so the more energy coming from the spectators, the greater the experience will be for everyone. That said, a certain degree of respect and decorum is necessary for the actors to perform their very best. This etiquette guide is designed to help you enjoy this artistic experience as much as possible, whether this is your first or fiftieth time watching a live performance:

DO respond to the onstage action with applause and laughter. Performers feed off your energy, so feel free to engage with them as much as possible.

DON'T speak aloud or whisper to your neighbor during the show; there will be plenty of time for discussion after the performance, and you run the risk of distracting the actors from their work.

DO turn off your cell phone and similar devices *before* the performance begins.

DON'T check your phone during the performance. Even if you have your device on silent, the bright light can be a distraction for the performers.

DO use to the restroom *before* the performance. If you must leave the theatre in the middle of the show, be as quiet and respectful as possible.

FURTHER EXPLORATION

WRITE YOUR OWN SCENE: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

OBJECTIVE: Students will be able to utilize historical events and information to discuss modern issues and events in new ways. They will be able to discuss issues they are passionate about, discover more about United States history, and flex their creative writing muscles.

SUPPLIES NEEDED: For research, a computer with internet access, or history books, newspapers, and other research documents & materials. For writing, a computer with a word processing app, or paper and writing utensils.

1. Talk about how Arthur Miller used the Salem Witch Trials to refer to events happening in the present day. Even though the House Un-American Activities Committee and the Trials were three centuries apart, what were the parallels?
2. As a class, discuss the artistic liberties taken by Miller. Topics can include:
What aspects were changed? Why do you think they were? Were they done only to make the story more acceptable to audiences? To simplify the production? Did he change aspects of the story to match his own life experiences?
3. Have students choose a recent event or phenomenon to view through the lens of a past event, movement, etc. This should be something they disagree with or would like to draw attention to (or both), and feel there is a strong comparison to previous events in American history.
4. Students should now research past events in American history that compare to the contemporary issue they have chosen to focus on.
5. Once students feel they have ample research, it's time for them to write their scene. Some things to consider:
 - a. Their scene should feature at least two characters, and be set around the historical event and in the time period they focused on.
 - b. The language of the play can be entirely contemporary, period, or some combination of both - what the playwright feels would better serve the story.
 - c. As Miller did take artistic liberties, students can take minor liberties as well, so long as it doesn't change the story from 'Creative Nonfiction' into an entirely fictional story. These liberties can include things as simple as consolidating personalities (similar to using Hathorne & Danforth to represent a large number of judges), adjusting ages or characteristics (making John Proctor middle-aged as opposed to a senior citizen), or even just incorporating personal experiences into the story.
6. As an added exercise, students can cast, rehearse, and perform their scenes in class.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST: WITCHCRAFT IN POPULAR CULTURE

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OBJECTIVE: Students, either separately or in groups, should be able to prove their skills in historical research, as well as demonstrating their public speaking and presentation abilities, presenting information to their classmates in engaging and informative ways.

SUPPLIES NEEDED: For research, a computer with internet access, books & related materials. For writing, a computer with a word processing app, or paper and writing utensils.

1. As a class, talk about how witchcraft is portrayed in the play. Discuss the events behind the original Salem Witch Trials. What was considered grounds for witchcraft?
2. Discuss how the idea of “witchcraft” in both the real world and pop culture has changed since the 17th Century. How is it different now? How does “witchcraft” differ between cultures in the same time period (e.g. how was witchcraft treated in 17th Century New England vs. 17th Century Africa)?
3. Have students create a report on two witches/warlocks/wizards/uses of magic and witchcraft in pop culture, compared with the Salem Witch Trials. They should be spaced far apart in time, and can be fictional or historical (e.g. comparing the Salem Witch Trials to Harry Potter and Voodoo practice).
4. The students, upon completing research, should present their findings to the class. This can be done in any way that is most comfortable, or best matches the needs of the class (e.g. a question and answer session, a brief lecture, a Powerpoint presentation).

BONUS STEP:

As an added component, students can add the difference between the perception of magic based on gender; that is, why female witches were so separate from ‘wizards,’ or that while there is a more direct male counterpart to the word witch (warlock), why there isn’t a direct female counterpart to wizard, it’s still “witch.”



Mercy Lewis and Abigail Williams react to witchcraft in the courtroom scene of NP Tour 70's Production of *The Crucible*.

Photo: C. Stanley Photography

GROUPTHINK: THE DETRIMENTAL NATURE OF IN-GROUP THINKING AND SOCIAL PRESSURES



OBJECTIVE: Students will be able to understand the danger of ‘Groupthink’ and mass social hysteria. They will experience firsthand the danger that comes from suppressing dissenting viewpoints in favor of a group consensus.

SUPPLIES NEEDED: A deck of cards, or the supplies here. A hat/bowl/bag containing each student’s name on a slip of paper. Paper dollars, which can be found on page 26 or can be substituted with a handmade dollar or Monopoly money. If a deck of cards is unavailable, you can download a printable PDF of a playing card deck at https://www.printableboardgames.net/preview/Playing_Card_Deck.

NOTE: Due to the nature of this activity, students should not be given any background information prior to the activity. They should experience the activity before having any discussion of what “Groupthink’ is.

This activity is twofold. The first piece is to effectively create tension and divides in the group over minute details. The second piece is to show the danger of allowing those tensions and divides to dominate a society,

Part One: Creating the In-Group

1. Distribute one card from the deck to each student. There should be an even split of red & black cards, and each of the four suits should be distributed evenly. Both number and face cards should be distributed, but they don’t have to be equal.
2. Have students form small groups of 3 or 4. Try to spread out the cards (e.g. so there isn’t a group of four red face cards)
3. Distribute paper dollars to each group, three for each student (i.e. a group of three gets 9 dollars total, a group of four gets 12).
4. Students should now decide how to divide the dollars between them. If necessary, make sure to note that the playing card they have should have no bearing on how much money they take. Each group should work towards the common good
5. After a few minutes of deliberating, or when the money has been divided, alert the students that there are two different tiers of cards: Tier 1, or the Uppermost Tier, are black cards. Tier 2, the lower tier, are the red cards. The top tier is considered more important in this society. Have the students again distribute the money between them. There is no qualifier for who gets what amount other than the color of the card.
6. After a few minutes of deliberating, or when the money has been divided, alert the students that there is a new set of tiers, this time divided by card suits. While this maintains the red/black divide, this new divide is more important and creates a new tier system. So, the new tier system is: 1-Clubs, 2-Spades, 3-Diamonds, 4-Hearts
7. After a few minutes of deliberating, or when the money has been divided, tell the class that there is a new set of divides, based on the value of the card. Again, while this does not stop any previous divides, they are more important in tiering people. The new tier system is: 1-Club face cards, 2-Spade face cards, 3-Diamond face-cards, 4-Heart face cards, 5-Club number cards, 6-Spade number cards, 7-Diamond number cards, 8-Heart number cards.
8. After a few minutes of deliberating, or when the money has been divided, have the students break from their groups and create one large group again. However much money they have from their group they should bring with them. If the group was unable to reach a decision, for now the money is distributed evenly between them and they return to their seats.

Part Two: The In-Group

1. Tell students that now, they are again one group working toward a common good.
But, two students have committed an unspecified crime. They may have committed said crime together, or separately. Randomly select two people from a hat. Announce them to the class--for these instructions, they will be called 1A & 1B.
2. 1A & 1B have been anonymously accused of crimes in the society. They will be exiled from the society and their money lost, and they cannot defend themselves in any way. Instead of a defense, they have the chance to claim innocence and accuse two other students, one each, of the crime. For these instructions, they will be called 2A & 2B. These accusations should be based on past behavior in the group activity, and any type of behavior can be used (e.g. because they had a face card and tried taking too much money, they had a low value heart card and wanted a fair split, they were an average tiered card but did nothing to help solve an argument). They cannot talk of their own behavior, though. After the accusations, 1A & 1B can then no longer speak.
3. 2A & 2B are allowed to justify why 1A & 1B committed the crime. But, they cannot defend themselves. After this, 2A & 2B can no longer speak.
NOTE: If it is beneficial to the argument, while they can't accuse each other, students can also try to throw blame to the other member of their pair. For instance, 1A cannot accuse 1B of the crime they have already been accused of, but they can try to pin blame on 1B in addition to the student they accused. Likewise, 2A cannot accuse 2B, but they can make the case against 2B stronger.
4. After the four students have been identified and silenced, the rest of the group must now vote on which two people to exile. It can be any combination of the four, it doesn't matter how or when they were accused. The vote, though, must be unanimous. If the vote is unanimous, skip to step 16.
5. If the first vote is not unanimous, students may discuss and justify their positions, explain why they voted as they did, and try to convince others to join their side. They have 5 minutes with which to do so.
6. Before the final vote, tell the students that the vote must be unanimous. If it is not, majority rule will have their plan enacted. Additionally, anybody who votes in the minority will be exiled from the society and stripped of their money. If there is an even tie in votes, all members of society will be exiled and lose their money.
7. Have the final vote.
8. All students who have been exiled must forfeit their money. If it was not unanimous, any person who voted in the minority is now exiled and forfeits their money. They can no longer speak or participate in society discussions.
9. Draw another name from the hat. It should be somebody who hasn't been exiled. If an exile's name is drawn, draw again until a non-exile is found. All the money forfeited will either be given to this person, or distributed even among the group.
10. Students have two minutes to discuss if this is fair or not. After two minutes, all discussion must end.
11. Before the vote, tell the students that again, it must be unanimous. If not, any minority vote will be exiled, and their money will be distributed evenly among those who voted in the majority. If it is a tie, again all students will be exiled, and money forfeited.
12. Have the vote.
13. Exile those who voted in the minority, and redistribute the money accordingly.

Discussion

The activity is now over. Facilitate a discussion about the activity. Key points include:

- Who ended up with the most money? Who had the least (that wasn't exiled)? Was it dictated entirely by chance? Were they a face card of clubs so they started with the most already?
- How did the majority/minority rules feel? What happened when dissenting/minority voices were threatened with exile? Was it beneficial to the whole group, or exclusively to the majority?



- Even though the group was supposed to ignore the value of everybody's cards, how did they play into the voting? Did people vote based on the card? Did they vote based on prior actions? Effectively, did prior tiering and biases come into play during the group portion of the activity?
- Those accused of crimes, how did it feel to be accused of something that wasn't specified at all? To be accused randomly? To be accused because of your actions?
- How quickly did people change their votes once the exiling of minorities became a possibility? Did people knowingly change to avoid exile? Did people actively vote knowing they'd be exiled to stand their ground?

\$	1	One Dollar	\$	\$
\$	1	One Dollar	\$	\$
\$	1	One Dollar	\$	\$
\$	1	One Dollar	\$	\$

GLOSSARY



- Affidavit (69) a written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation for use as evidence in court
- Base (48) having or showing little or no honor, courage, or decency
- Befouled (98) made dirty, polluted
- Contempt (47) the offense of being disobedient to or disrespectful of a court of law and its officers
- Desperate (3) referring to a desperate or delicate position
- Discomfits (26) make someone feel uneasy or embarrassed
- Greatcoats (100) a large overcoat typically made of wool, designed for warmth and protection against the weather
- As God have... Joshua to stop this sun from rising (105) a biblical allusion to Joshua, before the Battle of Jericho, praying to God to give them a few more hours of darkness in order to win the war
- Incubi (25) a male demon believed to have sexual intercourse with women
- Intimations (7) an indication or hint; or the act of making something known, especially in an indirect way
- Lechery (65) excessive or offensive sexual desires, lustfulness
- Lynn (69) a city approximately ten miles north of Boston, colloquially referred to as the City of Sin for its historic reputation of crime and vice
- Marblehead (69) once a major shipyard, now a coastal resort town in Essex County, Massachusetts
- Official (38) perhaps self-appointed, Mary Warren says that she has power in the court and must attend, though it is unclear what position she is claiming to occupy
- “The Old Boy” (22) a slang term for the Devil
- Prodigious (17) could refer to 1) remarkably or impressively great in size, degree, or extent; or 2) unnatural or abnormal
- Providence (6) the protective care of God or of nature as a spiritual power; or, timely preparation for future eventualities
- Pulpit (3) physically, any raised platform in a church or chapel from which a preacher delivers a sermon; spiritually it refers to the teachings from those sermons
- Quail (99) to lose courage, decline, fail

GLOSSARY (CONT.)

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- Sarcastical (45) relating to or characterized by sarcasm
- Strongbox (102) a small lockable box, typically made of metal, in which valuables may be kept
- Succubae (25) a female demon believed to have sexual intercourse with men
- Trafficked (3) dealing or trading in something illegal
- Trifle (52) a small amount
- “You are no wintry man” (15) Abigail is saying that John is not cold, that there has been warmth between them in the past
- “Your justice would freeze beer” (41) Proctor is saying that Elizabeth has been emotionally cold to him since the affair, so cold that it could freeze alcohol
- “Remember what the angel Raphael said to the boy Tobias” (75) an allusion to the story of Tobias and the Angel, in which Raphael told him, “Do what is good and no harm can come to thee”; Proctor is saying that Mary will be protected when she tells the truth



John Willard rests in despair over the atrocities happening in Salem in NP Tour 70's Production of *The Crucible*.

Photo: C. Stanley Photography

RESOURCES

BOOKS

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Reds: McCarthyism in Twentieth-Century America, by Ted Morgan; Random House, Inc., 2003

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The Witches: Suspicion, Betrayal, and Hysteria in 1692 Salem, by Stacy Schiff; Back Bay Books, 2016

WEBSITES

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<http://www.malleusmaleficarum.org/>

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25929/25929-pdf.pdf>

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On the importance of this play today:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/22/theater/gender-stereotypes-carousel-my-fair-lady-pretty-woman.html>

VIDEO

Witches: A Century of Murder, available at <https://www.netflix.com/watch/80118891?trackId=13752289&tctx=%02C0%2Cb66d3638-8fbc-4e6e-875e-48d0a410b144-164096927>