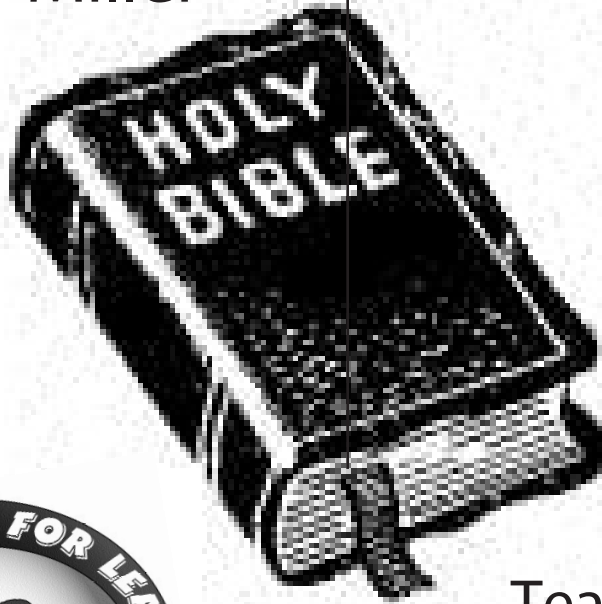


# The Crucible

by Arthur Miller



Teacher's  
Study  
Guide

ALIVE & ALOUD: Radio Plays for Learning in the Classroom

# THE CRUCIBLE

by Arthur Miller



Director, Martin Jenkins  
Executive Producer, Susan Albert Loewenberg  
A L.A. Theatre Works/BBC/KCRW Co-production  
' 1994 L.A. Theatre Works

TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE by Sheryl Hinman  
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# THE CRUCIBLE

by Arthur Miller



## TEACHER'S STUDY GUIDE

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In a June 1957 Esquire essay, John Steinbeck wrote a stirring defense of Arthur Miller, who faced a contempt of Congress charge because he refused to "name names" when called before the House Un-American Activities Committee. The words echo the dilemma faced by many of the characters in THE CRUCIBLE.



**ARTHUR MILLER**

**EXCERPT:**

Now suppose I have children, a little property, a stake in the community. The threat of the contempt charge jeopardizes everything I love. Suppose, from worry or cowardice, I agree to what is asked. My deep and wounding shame will be with me always.

I cannot be reassured by the past performance of the Committee. I have read daily for a number of years the testimony of admitted liars and perjurers whose charges have been used to destroy the peace and happiness of people I do not know, and many of whom were destroyed without being tried.

Which path am I to choose? Either way I am caught. It may occur to me that a man who is disloyal to his friends could not be expected to be loyal to his country. You can't slice up morals. Our virtues begin at home. They do not change in a courtroom unless the pressure of fear is put upon us.

# CAST OF CHARACTERS

Mercy.....	Irene Arranga
Deputy Governor Danforth.....	Rene Auberjonois
Thomas Putnam.....	Ed Begley, Jr.
Rebecca Nurse.....	Georgia Brown
Herrick .....	Jack Coleman
Ezekial Cheever .....	Bud Cort
Reverend Hale.....	Richard Dreyfuss
Tituba.....	Judyann Elder
Giles Corey .....	Hector Elizondo
Elizabeth Proctor .....	Fionnula Flanagan
Susanna.....	Ann Hearn
Mary Warren .....	Carol Kane
John Proctor.....	Stacy Keach
Betty .....	Anna Sophie Loewenberg
Ann Putnam.....	Marian Mercer
Judge Hawthorne .....	Franklyn Seales
Abigail .....	Madolyn Smith
Francis Nurse .....	Joe Spano
Reverend Parris .....	Michael York

# THE CRUCIBLE

## Plot Summary

### ACT I

Giggles. Whispers. A rooster crows. These innocent sounds merge with the tense words of Reverend Parris praying at the bedside of ten-year-old Betty Parris, who has been in a trance-like state for several hours. Earlier, he discovered a group of girls, including Betty, dancing in the woods. Through his conversations with Tituba, his black servant, and Abigail Williams, his niece, Parris reveals his growing paranoia about the incident and its aftermath. He is aware that the community is gossiping about Betty and Abigail. He questions Abigail about their activities, but she denies that the behavior was anything more than "sport." Parris shares the alarming rumors that he has heard. Abigail has been dismissed recently from employment at the Proctor household, soiling her reputation. Abigail hotly defends herself, arguing that Mrs. Proctor wanted a slave instead of a servant.

When Mr. and Mrs. Putnam arrive, he learns that they, too, have an afflicted daughter, Ruth. The Putnams have buried all but one of their children, so Mrs. Putnam has sent Ruth to Tituba to learn the cause of the children's deaths. The Putnams become convinced that witches have invaded Salem. Reverend Parris chooses not to agree with that judgment until he has consulted with Reverend John Hale of Beverly, a noted authority on witchcraft. A crowd gathers, and Parris goes downstairs to pray with them.

When the adults leave, Abigail speaks to Betty and some of the other girls involved in the dancing. She explains that she has told Parris everything about their actions and that they must choose their words carefully because witchcraft is a hanging offense.

John Proctor, a respected farmer, arrives to find Mary Warren present, a servant who now works for his wife. For a few minutes he is unavoidably alone with Abigail, and they discuss the impact of their brief affair. John denies any continued attraction. Abigail criticizes John's wife and berates him for asking her to forget what has happened between them. She then confesses that what the girls have done in the woods is not witchcraft, but simply dancing.

Betty Parris becomes hysterical and various adults swarm the room to try to comfort her. Among them is Rebecca Nurse, an elderly woman who succeeds in quieting the child. Although Betty is calmed, tension continues as Parris bickers with parishioner Giles Corey about the salary paid to the minister.

Reverend John Hale arrives to offer his insights. After greeting people, he proceeds to question Abigail, Tituba, and others. Under threat of punishment, Tituba "confesses" to trafficking with the devil. Betty awakens and wildly calls out accusations. Others take up the cry. The scene which began with giggles and whispers closes with shrieks from the afflicted young women.

## ACT II

Several days later in the Proctor home, John and his wife Elizabeth discuss the recent events in Salem. Fourteen people have been arrested and Mary Warren has gone to the trials daily. John berates Elizabeth for allowing Mary to leave, but she says that she feels powerless to stop Mary. Elizabeth urges John to reveal Abigail's confession to the judges, but John hesitates since he has no witnesses to the admission.

When Mary returns, she says that the accused now number 39. She tries to ease the outrage that John expresses by presenting Elizabeth with a rag doll made during the court sessions. She states that she has defended Elizabeth during the proceedings. When Mary retires to bed, Elizabeth says she fears that Abigail will denounce her in order to win back John.

Reverend John Hale arrives. He questions why the Proctors have not been in church for some time. John says that he dislikes Reverend Parris' attitude. To prove his religious convictions, he attempts to recite the Ten Commandments. However, he stumbles at the one concerning adultery and has to be helped by Elizabeth. She encourages John to tell Reverend Hale that Abigail originally denied any involvement with witchcraft. When Hale says that several have confessed, John counters that only those who confess are spared a hanging.

Francis Nurse and Giles Corey arrive upset; their wives have been arrested. Hale is shocked; he has deep regard for Francis' wife, Rebecca Nurse. The town marshal arrives with a warrant for Elizabeth's arrest. The evidence, which convinces the law officer of her guilt, is a needle found in the body of the rag doll. As Elizabeth is lead away, an irate John Proctor rips up the warrant and insists that Mary testify that she made the doll. Reverend Hale is left with growing doubts.

### REVEREND PARRIS

Photo Courtesy of the Arthur  
Miller Historical Society



Elia Kazan & Arthur Miller  
on the set of THE CRUCIBLE

## ACT III

During Martha Corey's trial, Giles disrupts the proceedings. He accuses Mr. Putnam of using the hysteria to make a grab for more land. Giles is removed from court, but he soon returns with Francis Nurse and John Proctor. The men try to convince Judge Hawthorne, Governor Danforth, and others that the witchcraft accusations are false. John Proctor produces Mary Warren, who testifies that the girls were dancing in the woods when Reverend Parris discovered them.

Danforth is skeptical of the claims, because Elizabeth Proctor is one of the accused. John learns that Elizabeth is pregnant, so she will be spared for a year until the baby is born. He persists in his criticism to help others wrongly accused. Giles, too, tries to provide evidence of ulterior motives. He says that Putnam instructed his daughter, Ruth, to name others so he can claim their forfeited land. Giles refuses to provide the name of the witness who overheard Mr. Putnam's instructions and is jailed for contempt of court.

When the girls are summoned to answer to Mary's testimony, Abigail leads the girls in crying out that Mary afflicts them. John resorts to describing his adulterous relationship with Abigail in an attempt to undermine her power. He states that his wife knows the truth of the matter. Elizabeth Proctor is brought into the room to testify. John must turn his back to her, so she will have no hint of his wishes. Although she has a reputation for unfailing honesty, Elizabeth lies to protect John. Tragically, her words condemn him. Elizabeth is taken from the room, Abigail triumphs, and Mary joins in the outcry against John. She declares that he is the devil's man. With Reverend Hale protesting, John Proctor is arrested.

## ACT IV

Several months later, Hawthorne and Danforth speak with Reverend Parris. They are all affected by the growing doubts of the community. Reverend Parris says that Reverend Hale has returned to Salem hoping to convince the remaining prisoners to confess and save their lives.

Abigail and Mercy Lewis have stolen Parris' money and fled the community. Reverend Parris is distraught as he senses the dissatisfaction of the parishioners. Reverend Hale enters and asks to speak with Elizabeth. He persuades her to convince John that he should confess. Elizabeth and John are left alone briefly. She tells him that Giles Corey was pressed to death when he refused to submit to a trial. As each stone was placed upon him, he called for "more weight." By avoiding trial, Giles saved his farm from confiscation.

John agrees to confess knowing that he is not a saintly figure like Rebecca Nurse. Court authorities are elated. Rebecca is brought into the room in hopes that she will confess as well. John signs the confession, then grabs the paper when judges declare that it will be posted on the church doors. John cannot put his name to any document that will be used to continue the blatant abuse of power. His honor restored, John prepares to meet his death. With pride, Elizabeth refuses to intervene.

*Plot summary courtesy of the Arthur Miller Historical Society.*

# A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF ARTHUR MILLER'S LIFE AND WORK

1915 Arthur Aster Miller is born on October 17th in New York City.

1932 Graduates from high school and registers for night school at City College, but quits after two weeks.

1934-35 Enrolls at University of Michigan; studies journalism. Becomes a reporter/night editor on student paper, *The Michigan Daily*.

1936 Writes NO VILLAIN in six days and receives Hopwood Award in Drama.

1937 Miller rewrites NO VILLAIN. Newly titled, THEY TOO ARISE receives a major award from the Bureau of New Plays and is produced in Ann Arbor and Detroit, MI. HONORS AT DAWN receives Hopwood Award in Drama.

1938 THE GREAT DISOBEDIENCE receives second place in the Hopwood contest. THEY TOO ARISE is revised and titled THE GRASS STILL GROWS for anticipated production in New York City. Miller graduates with a B.A. in English.

1938 Miller joins the Federal Theater Project in New York City to write radio plays and scripts.

1940 Marries Mary Grace Slattery. Writes THE GOLDEN YEARS.

1941 Takes extra job working as a shipfitter's helper at the Brooklyn Naval Yard. Writes radio plays for Columbia Workshop (CBS).

1943 Writes THE HALF-BRIDGE and THAT THEY MAY WIN, produced in New York City. Writes LISTEN FOR THE SOUND OF WINGS (radio play).

1944 Daughter, Jane, is born. Adapts Ferenc Molnar's THE GUARDSMAN and Jane Austen's PRIDE AND PREJUDICE for radio. THE MAN WHO HAD ALL THE LUCK premieres on Broadway but closes after six performances, though it receives the Theater Guild National Award.

1947 Son, Robert, is born. ALL MY SONS premieres and receives the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award, and the Donaldson Award. Writes THE STORY OF GUS. Writes an article, "Subsidized Theatre" for *The New York Times*. Works in a factory assembling boxes for minimum wage to stay in touch with his audience.

1948 Travels to Europe where he gets a sense of the Italian background he uses for the Carbones and their relatives in A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE; also meets some Jewish death camp survivors held captive in a post-war bureaucratic tangle.

1949 DEATH OF A SALESMAN premieres and receives the Pulitzer Prize, the New York Drama Critics' Circle, the Antoinette Perry, the Donaldson, and the Theater Club Awards. *The New York Times* publishes his essay "Tragedy and the Common Man."

1950 Meets Marilyn Monroe. THE HOOK fails to reach production due to pressure from House Un-American Activities Committee. First sound recording of DEATH OF A SALESMAN.

1951 First film production of DEATH OF A SALESMAN, with Frederic March, for Columbia Pictures.

1953 THE CRUCIBLE premieres and receives the Antoinette Perry and the Donaldson Awards. Asked to attend the Belgian premiere of THE CRUCIBLE, but denied passport by the US.

1954 First radio production of DEATH OF A SALESMAN, on NBC.

1955 The one-act A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE premieres in a joint bill with A MEMORY OF TWO MONDAYS. HUAC pressures city officials to withdraw permission for Miller to make a film he is planning about juvenile delinquency in New York.

1956 Divorces Mary Slattery and marries Marilyn Monroe. Subpoenaed to appear before HUAC. Receives honorary Doctor of Human Letters (L.H.D.) from the University of Michigan.

1957 ARTHUR MILLER'S COLLECTED PLAYS published. Short story "The Misfits" is published in *Esquire*. Convicted of contempt of Congress for refusing to name names.

1958 U.S. Court of Appeals overturns his contempt conviction. Elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

1959 Receives the Gold Medal for Drama from the National Institute of Arts and Letters.

1961 Divorces Marilyn Monroe. THE MISFITS premieres.

1962 Marries Inge Morath. Marilyn Monroe dies.

1963 Daughter, Rebecca, born. JANE'S BLANKET, a children's book, published.

1964 After visiting the Mauthausen death camp, covers the Nazi trials in Frankfurt, Germany for the *New York Herald Tribune*, AFTER THE FALL and INCIDENT AT VICHY premiere.

1965 Elected president of International P.E.N., attends Yugoslavian conference. Off-Broadway production of A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE.

1966 First sound recording of A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE.

1967 Sound recording of INCIDENT AT VICHY. Television production of THE CRUCIBLE on CBS.

1968 THE PRICE premieres. Sound recording of AFTER THE FALL.

1970 FAME and THE REASON WHY produced. Miller's works banned in the U.S.S.R. as a result of his work to free dissident writers.

1971 Sound recording of AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE. Television productions of A MEMORY OF TWO MONDAYS, on PBS and THE PRICE, on NBC. THE PORTABLE ARTHUR MILLER is published.

1972 THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OTHER BUSINESS premieres. First sound recording of THE CRUCIBLE.

1974 UP FROM PARADISE premieres at the University of Michigan. Television production of AFTER THE FALL, on NBC.

1978 Belgian National Theatre does 25th anniversary production of THE CRUCIBLE. This time Miller attends.

1979 CHINESE ENCOUNTERS published (reportage with Inge Morath).

1991 THE RIDE DOWN MT. MORGAN premieres in London. Receives Mellon Bank Award for lifetime achievement in the humanities.

1992 HOMELY GIRL, a novella, published.

1994 BROKEN GLASS premieres.

1995 Receives William Inge Festival Award for distinguished achievement in the American theater. Tributes to the playwright on his eightieth birthday held in England and America. HOMELY GIRL, A LIFE AND OTHER STORIES published.

1996 Receives the Edward Albee Last Frontier Playwright Award.

1997 Revised version of THE RIDE DOWN MT. MORGAN given its American Premiere in Williamstown, Massachusetts. THE CRUCIBLE (film with Daniel Day Lewis) opens. BBC television production of BROKEN GLASS.

1998 MR. PETER'S CONNECTIONS premieres. Named as the Distinguished Inaugural Senior Fellow of the American Academy in Berlin. Revised version of THE RIDE DOWN MT. MORGAN appears on Broadway.

1999 DEATH OF A SALESMAN revived on Broadway for the play's 50th anniversary.

2000 THE RIDE DOWN MT. MORGAN appears on Broadway, also a revival of THE PRICE. Major 85th birthday celebrations for Miller held at University of Michigan and the Arthur Miller Center. ECHOES DOWN THE CORRIDOR published (collected essays, 1944-2000).

2001 UNTITLED, an unpublished play written for Vaclav Havel opens in New York. Williamstown Theater Festival revives THE MAN WHO HAD ALL THE LUCK.

2002 THE CRUCIBLE is revived on Broadway, starring Laura Linney and Liam Neeson.

# Arthur Miller, "Are You Now Or Were You Ever?"

from *The Guardian/The Observer*, Saturday, June 17, 2000

The McCarthy era's anti-communist trials destroyed lives and friendships. Arthur Miller describes the paranoia that swept America - and the moment his then wife Marilyn Monroe became a bargaining chip in his own prosecution.

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It would probably never have occurred to me to write a play about the Salem witch trials of 1692 had I not seen some astonishing correspondences with that calamity in the America of the late 40s and early 50s. My basic need was to respond to a phenomenon which, with only small exaggeration, one could say paralysed a whole generation and in a short time dried up the habits of trust and toleration in public discourse.

I refer to the anti-communist rage that threatened to reach hysterical proportions and sometimes did. I can't remember anyone calling it an ideological war, but I think now that that is what it amounted to. I suppose we rapidly passed over anything like a discussion or debate, and into something quite different, a hunt not just for subversive people, but for ideas and even a suspect language. The object was to destroy the least credibility of any and all ideas associated with socialism and communism, whose proponents were assumed to be either knowing or unwitting agents of Soviet subversion.

An ideological war is like guerrilla war, since the enemy is an idea whose proponents are not in uniform but are disguised as ordinary citizens, a situation that can scare a lot of people to death. To call the atmosphere paranoid is not to say that there was nothing real in the American-Soviet stand-off. But if there was one element that lent the conflict a tone of the inauthentic and the invented, it was the swiftness with which all values were forced in months to reverse themselves.

DEATH OF A SALESMAN opened in February 1949 and was hailed by nearly every newspaper and magazine. Several movie studios wanted it and finally Columbia Pictures bought it, and engaged a great actor, Frederick March, to play Willy [the central character].

In two years or less, with the picture finished, I was asked by a terrified Columbia to sign an anti-communist declaration to ward off picket lines which the rightwing American Legion was threatening to throw across the entrances of theatres showing the film. In the phone calls that followed, the air of panic was heavy. It was the first intimation of what would soon follow. I declined to make any such statement, which I found demeaning; what right had any organisation to demand anyone's pledge of loyalty? I was sure the whole thing would soon go away; it was just too outrageous.

But instead of the problem disappearing, the studio actually made another film, a short to be shown with Salesman. This was called THE LIFE OF A SALESMAN and consisted of several lectures by City College School of Business professors - which boiled down to selling was a joy,

one of the most gratifying and useful professions, and that Willy was simply a nut. Never in show-business history has a studio spent so much good money to prove that its feature film was pointless. In less than two years Death of a Salesman had gone from being a masterpiece to being a heresy, and a fraudulent one at that.

In 1948-51, I had the sensation of being trapped inside a perverse work of art, one of those Escher constructs in which it is impossible to make out whether a stairway is going up or down. Practically everyone I knew stood within the conventions of the political left of centre; one or two were Communist party members, some were fellow-travellers, and most had had a brush with Marxist ideas or organisations. I have never been able to believe in the reality of these people being actual or putative traitors any more than I could be, yet others like them were being fired from teaching or jobs in government or large corporations. The surreality of it all never left me. We were living in an art form, a metaphor that had suddenly, incredibly, gripped the country.

In today's terms, the country had been delivered into the hands of the radical right, a ministry of free-floating apprehension toward anything that never happens in the middle of Missouri. It is always with us, this anxiety, sometimes directed towards foreigners, Jews, Catholics, fluoridated water, aliens in space, masturbation, homosexuality, or the Internal Revenue Department. But in the 50s any of these could be validated as real threats by rolling out a map of China. And if this seems crazy now, it seemed just as crazy then, but openly doubting it could cost you.

So in one sense THE CRUCIBLE was an attempt to make life real again, palpable and structured. One hoped that a work of art might illuminate the tragic absurdities of an anterior work of art that was called reality, but was not. It was the very swiftness of the change that lent it this surreality. Only three or four years earlier an American movie audience, on seeing a newsreel of Stalin saluting the Red Army, would have applauded, for that army had taken the brunt of the Nazi onslaught, as most people were aware. Now they would look on with fear or at least bewilderment, for the Russians had become the enemy of mankind, a menace to all that was good. It was the Germans who, with amazing rapidity, were turning good. Could this be real?

In the unions, communists and their allies, known as intrepid organisers, were to be shorn of membership and turned out as seditious. Harry Bridges, the idol of west coast longshoremen, whom he had all but single-handedly organised, was subjected

to trial after trial to drive him back to his native Australia as an unadmitted communist. Academics, some prominent in their fields, were especially targeted, many forced to retire or fired for disloyalty. Some were communists, some were fellow travellers and, inevitably, a certain number were unaffiliated liberals refusing to sign one of the dozens of humiliating anti-communist pledges being required by terrified college administrations.

But it is impossible to convey properly the fears that marked that period. Nobody was shot, to be sure, although some were going to jail, where at least one, William Remington, was murdered by an inmate hoping to shorten his sentence by having killed a communist. Rather than physical fear, it was the sense of impotence, which seemed to deepen with each week, of being unable to speak accurately of the very recent past when being leftwing in America, and for that matter in Europe, was to be alive to the dilemmas of the day.

As for the idea of willingly subjecting my work not only to some party's discipline but to anyone's control, my repugnance was such that, as a young and indigent writer, I had turned down lucrative offers to work for Hollywood studios because of a revulsion at the thought of someone owning the paper I was typing on. It was not long, perhaps four or five years, before the fraudulence of Soviet cultural claims was as clear to me as it should have been earlier. But I would never have found it believable, in the 50s or later, that with its thuggish self-righteousness and callous contempt for artists' freedoms, that the Soviet way of controlling culture could be successfully exported to America.

Some greatly talented people were driven out of the US to work in England: screenwriters like Carl Foreman and Donald Ogden Stewart, actors like Charlie Chaplin and Sam Wanamaker. I no longer recall the number of our political exiles, but it was more than too many and disgraceful for a nation prideful of its democracy.

Writing now, almost half a century later, with the Soviet Union in ruins, China rhetorically fending off capitalism even as in reality it adopts a market economy, Cuba wallowing helplessly in the Caribbean, it is not easy to convey the American fear of a masterful communism. The quickness with which Soviet-style regimes had taken over eastern Europe and China was breathtaking, and I believe it stirred up a fear in Americans of our own ineptitudes, our mystifying inability, despite our military victories, to control the world whose liberties we had so recently won back from the Axis powers.

In 1956, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) subpoenaed me - I was cited for contempt of Congress for refusing to identify writers I had met at one of the two communist writers' meetings I had attended many years before. By then, the tide was going out for Huac and it was finding it more difficult to make front pages. However, the news of my forthcoming marriage to Marilyn Monroe

was too tempting to be passed. That our marriage had some connection with my being subpoenaed was confirmed when Chairman Walters of the Huac sent word to Joseph Rauh, my lawyer, that he would be inclined to cancel my hearing if Miss Monroe would consent to have a picture taken with him.

The offer having been declined, the good chairman, as my hearing came to an end, entreated me to write less tragically about our country. This lecture cost me \$40,000 in lawyer's fees, a year's suspended sentence for contempt of Congress, and a \$500 fine. Not to mention about a year of inaction in my creative life.

My fictional view of the period, my sense of its unreality had been, like any impotence, a psychologically painful experience. A similar paralysis descended on Salem. In both places, to keep social unity intact, the authority of leaders had to be hardened and words of scepticism toward them constricted. A new cautionary diction, an uncustomary prudence inflected our way of talking to one another. The word socialism was all but taboo. Words had gotten fearsome. As I learned directly in Ann Arbor on a 1953 visit, university students were avoiding renting rooms in houses run by the housing cooperative for fear of being labelled communist, so darkly suggestive was the word cooperative. The head of orientation at the university told me, in a rather cool, uninvolved manner, that the FBI was enlisting professors to report on students voicing leftwing opinions, and - more comedy - that they had also engaged students to report on professors with the same views.

In the early 50s, along with Elia Kazan, who had directed ALL MY SONS and DEATH OF A SALESMAN, I submitted a script to Harry Cohn, head of Columbia Pictures. It described the murderous corruption in the gangster-ridden Brooklyn longshoremen's union. Cohn read the script and called us to Hollywood, where he casually informed us that he had had the script vetted by the FBI, and that they had seen nothing subversive in it. But the head of the AFL motion picture unions in Hollywood, Roy Brewer, had condemned it as untrue communist propaganda, since there were no gangsters on the Brooklyn waterfront. Cohn, no stranger to gangsterism, having survived an upbringing in the tough Five Points area of Manhattan, opined that Brewer was only trying to protect Joe Ryan, head of the Brooklyn longshoremen (who, incidentally, would go to Sing Sing prison for gangsterism).

Brewer threatened to call a strike of projectionists in any theatre daring to show the film. Cohn offered his solution to the problem: he would produce the film if I would make one change - the gangsters in the union were to be changed to communists. This would not be easy; I knew all the communists on the waterfront - there were two of them (both of whom in the following decade became millionaire businessmen). So I had to withdraw the script, which prompted an indignant telegram from Cohn: "As soon as we try to make the script pro-American you pull out." One

understood not only the threat but also the cynicism: he knew the mafia controlled waterfront labour. Had I been a movie writer, my career would have ended. But the theatre had no such complications, no blacklist - not yet - and I longed to respond to this climate of fear, if only to protect my sanity. But where to find a transcendent concept?

The heart of the darkness was the belief that a massive, profoundly organised conspiracy was in place and carried forward mainly by a concealed phalanx of intellectuals, including labour activists, teachers, professionals, sworn to undermine the American government. And it was precisely the invisibility of ideas that was frightening so many people. How could a play deal with this mirage world? Paranoia breeds paranoia, but below paranoia there lies a bristling, unwelcome truth, so repugnant as to produce fantasies of persecution to conceal its existence. The unwelcome truth denied by the right was that the Hollywood writers accused of subversion were not a menace to the country, or even bearers of meaningful change. They wrote not propaganda but entertainment, some of it of a mildly liberal cast, but most of it mindless, or when it was political, as with Preston Sturges or Frank Capra, entirely and exuberantly un-Marxist.

As for the left, its unacknowledged truth was more important for me. If nobody was being shot in our ideological war but merely vivisected by a headline, it struck me as odd, if understandable, that the accused were unable to cry out passionately their faith in the ideals of socialism. There were attacks on the HUAC's right to demand that a citizen reveal his political beliefs; but on the idealistic canon of their own convictions, the defendants were mute. The rare exception, like Paul Robeson's declaration of faith in socialism as a cure for racism, was a rocket that lit up the sky.

On a lucky afternoon I happened upon *The Devil in Massachusetts*, by Marion Starkey, a narrative of the Salem witch-hunt of 1692. I knew this story from my college reading, but in this darkened America it turned a completely new aspect toward me: the poetry of the hunt. Poetry may seem an odd word for a witch-hunt but I saw there was something of the marvellous in the spectacle of a whole village, if not an entire province, whose imagination was captured by a vision of something that wasn't there.

In time to come, the notion of equating the red-hunt with the witch-hunt would be condemned as a deception. There were communists and there never were witches. The deeper I moved into the 1690s, the further away drifted the America of the 50s, and, rather than the appeal of analogy, I found something different to draw my curiosity and excitement.

Anyone standing up in the Salem of 1692 and denying that witches existed would have faced immediate arrest, the hardest interrogation and possibly the rope. Every authority not only confirmed the existence of witches but never questioned the necessity of executing them. It became obvious that to dismiss

witchcraft was to forgo any understanding of how it came to pass that tens of thousands had been murdered as witches in Europe. To dismiss any relation between that episode and the hunt for subversives was to shut down an insight into not only the similar emotions but also the identical practices of both officials and victims.

There were witches, if not to most of us then certainly to everyone in Salem; and there were communists, but what was the content of their menace? That to me became the issue. Having been deeply influenced as a student by a Marxist approach to society, and having known Marxists and sympathisers, I could simply not accept that these people were spies or even prepared to do the will of the Soviets in some future crisis. That such people had thought to find hope of a higher ethic in the Soviet was not simply an American, but a worldwide, irony of catastrophic moral proportions, for their like could be found all over the world.

But as the 50s dawned, they were stuck with the past. Part of the surreality of the anti-left sweep was that it picked up people for disgrace who had already turned away from a pro-Soviet past but had no stomach for naming others who had merely shared their illusions. But the hunt had captured some significant part of the American imagination and its power demanded respect.

Turning to Salem was like looking into a petri dish, an embalmed stasis with its principal moving forces caught in stillness. One had to wonder what the human imagination fed on that could inspire neighbours and old friends to emerge overnight as furies secretly bent on the torture and destruction of Christians. More than a political metaphor, more than a moral tale, *THE CRUCIBLE*, as it developed over more than a year, became the awesome evidence of the power of human imagination inflamed, the poetry of suggestion, and the tragedy of heroic resistance to a society possessed to the point of ruin.

In the stillness of the Salem courthouse, surrounded by the images of the 1950s but with my head in 1692, what the two eras had in common gradually gained definition. Both had the menace of concealed plots, but most startling were the similarities in the rituals of defence, the investigative routines; 300 years apart, both prosecutions alleged membership of a secret, disloyal group. Should the accused confess, his honesty could only be proved by naming former confederates. The informer became the axle of the plot's existence and the investigation's necessity.

The witch-hunt in 1692 had a not dissimilar problem, but a far more poetic solution. Most suspected people named by others as members of the Devil's conspiracy had not been shown to have done anything, neither poisoning wells, setting barns on fire, sickening cattle, aborting babies, nor undermining the virtue of wives (the Devil having two phenomenally active penises, one above the other).

To the rescue came a piece of poetry, smacking of both legalistic and religious validity, called Spectral Evidence. All the prosecution need do was produce a witness who claimed to have seen, not an accused person, but his familiar spirit - his living ghost - in the act of throwing a burning brand into a barn full of hay. You could be at home asleep in your bed, but your spirit could be crawling through your neighbour's window to feel up his wife. The owner of the wandering spirit was obliged to account to the court for his crime. With Spectral Evidence, the air filled with the malign spirits of those identified by good Christians as confederates of the Beast, and the Devil himself danced happily into Salem village and took the place apart.

I spent 10 days in Salem courthouse reading the crudely recorded trials of the 1692 outbreak, and it was striking how totally absent was any sense of irony, let alone humour. I can't recall if it was the provincial governor's nephew or son who, with a college friend, came from Boston to watch the strange proceedings. Both boys burst out laughing at some absurd testimony: they were promptly jailed, and faced possible hanging.

Irony and humour were not conspicuous in the 1950s either. I was in my lawyer's office to sign some contract and a lawyer in the next office was asked to come in and notarise my signature. While he was stamping pages, I continued a discussion with my lawyer about the Broadway theatre, which I said was corrupt; the art of theatre had been totally displaced by the bottom line, all that mattered any more. Looking up at me, the notarising lawyer said, "That's a communist position, you know." I started to laugh until I saw the constraint in my lawyer's face, and I quickly sobered up.

I am glad that I managed to write THE CRUCIBLE, but looking back I have often wished I'd had the temperament to do an absurd comedy, which is what the situation deserved. Now, after more than three-quarters of a century of fascination with the great snake of political and social developments, I can see more than a few occasions when we were confronted by the same sensation of having stepped into another age.

A young film producer asked me to write a script about what was then called juvenile delinquency. A mystifying, unprecedented outbreak of gang violence had exploded all over New York. The city, in return for a good percentage of profits, had contracted with this producer to open police stations and schools to his camera. I spent the summer of 1955 in Brooklyn streets with two gangs and wrote an outline. I was ready to proceed with the script when an attack on me as a disloyal lefty opened in the New York World Telegram. The cry went up that the city must cancel its contract with the producer so long as I was the screenwriter. A hearing was arranged, attended by 22 city commissioners, including the police, fire, welfare and sanitation departments, as well as two judges.

At the conference table there also sat a lady who produced a thick folder of petitions and statements I had signed, going back to my college years, provided to her by the HUAC. I defended myself; I thought I was making sense when the lady began screaming that I was killing the boys in Korea [this was during the Korean war]. She meant me personally, as I could tell from the froth at the corners of her mouth, the fury in her eyes, and her finger pointing straight into my face.

The vote was taken and came up one short of continuing the city's collaboration, and the film was killed that afternoon. I always wondered whether the crucial vote against me came from the sanitation department. But it was not a total loss; the suffocating sensation of helplessness before the spectacle of the impossible coming to pass would soon help in writing The Crucible.

That impossible coming to pass was not an observation made at a comfortable distance but a blade cutting directly into my life. This was especially the case with Elia Kazan's decision to cooperate with the HUAC. The surrounding fears felt even by those with the most fleeting of contacts with any communist-supported organisation were enough to break through long associations and friendships.

Kazan had been a member of the Communist party only a matter of months, and even that link had ended years before. And the party had never been illegal, nor was membership in it. Yet this great director, left undefended by 20th Century Fox executives, his longtime employers, was told that if he refused to name people whom he had known in the party - actors, directors and writers - he would never be allowed to direct another picture in Hollywood, meaning the end of his career.

These names were already known to the committee through other testifiers and FBI informants, but exactly as in Salem - or Russia under the Czar and the Chairman, and Inquisition Spain, Revolutionary France or any other place of revolution or counter-revolution - conspiracy was the name for all opposition. And the reformation of the accused could only be believed when he gave up the names of his co-conspirators. Only this ritual of humiliation, the breaking of pride and independence, could win the accused readmission into the community. The process inevitably did produce in the accused a new set of political, social and even moral convictions more acceptable to the state whose fist had been shoved into his face, with his utter ruin promised should he resist.

I had stopped by Kazan's house in the country in 1952 after he had called me to come and talk, an unusual invitation - he had never been inclined to indulge in talk unless it concerned work. I had suspected from his dark tone that it must have to do with the HUAC, which was rampaging through the Hollywood ranks.

Since I was on my way up to Salem for research on a play that

I was still unsure I would write, I called at his house, which was on my route. As he laid out his dilemma and his decision to comply with the HUAC (which he had already done) it was impossible not to feel his anguish, old friends that we were. But the crunch came when I felt fear, that great teacher, that cruel revealer. For it swept over me that, had I been one of his comrades, he would have spent my name as part of the guarantee of his reform. Even so, oddly enough, I was not filling up with hatred or contempt for him; his suffering was too palpable. The whole hateful procedure had brought him to this, and I believe made the writing of *The Crucible* all but inevitable. Even if one could grant Kazan sincerity in his new-found anti-communism, the concept of an America where such self-discoveries were pressed out of people was outrageous, and a contradiction of any concept of personal liberty.

Is all this of some objective importance in our history, this destruction of bonds between people? I think it may be, however personal it may appear. Kazan's testimony created a far greater shock than anyone else's. Lee J Cobb's similar testimony and Jerome Robbins's cooperation seemed hardly to matter. It may be that Kazan had been loved more than any other, that he had attracted far greater affection from writers and actors with whom he had worked, and so what was overtly a political act was sensed as a betrayal of love.

It is very significant that in the uproar set off by last year's award to Kazan of an Oscar for life achievement, one heard no mention of the name of any member of the Huac. One doubted whether the thought occurred to many people that the studio heads had ignominiously collapsed before the HUAC's insistence that they institute a blacklist of artists, something they had once insisted was dishonourable and a violation of democratic norms. Half a century had passed since his testimony, but Kazan bore very nearly the whole onus of the era, as though he had manufactured its horrors - when he was surely its victim. The trial record in Salem courthouse had been written by ministers in a primitive shorthand. This condensation gave emphasis to a gnarled, densely packed language which suggested the country accents of a hard people. To lose oneself day after day in that record of human delusion was to know a fear, not for one's safety, but of the spectacle of intelligent people giving themselves over to a rapture of murderous credulity. It was as though the absence of real evidence was itself a release from the burdens of this world; in love with the invisible, they moved behind their priests, closer to that mystical communion which is anarchy and is called God.

Evidence, in contrast, is effort; leaping to conclusions is a wonderful pleasure, and for a while there was a highly charged joy in Salem, for now that they could see through everything to the frightful plot that was daily being laid bare in court sessions, their days, formerly so eventless and long, were swallowed up in hourly revelations, news, surprises. *THE CRUCIBLE* is less a polemic than it might have been had

it not been filled with wonder at the protean imagination of man.

*THE CRUCIBLE* straddles two different worlds to make them one, but it is not history in the usual sense of the word, but a moral, political and psychological construct that floats on the fluid emotions of both eras. As a commercial entertainment the play failed [it opened in 1953]. To start with there was the title: nobody knew what a crucible was. Most of the critics, as sometimes does happen, never caught on to the play's ironical substructure, and the ones who did were nervous about validating a work that was so unkind to the same sanctified procedural principles as underlay the hunt for reds. Some old acquaintances gave me distant nods in the theatre lobby on opening night, and even without air-conditioning the house was cool. There was also a problem with the temperature of the production.

The director, Jed Harris, a great name in the theatre of the 20s, 30s and 40s, had decided that the play, which he believed a classic, should be staged like a Dutch painting. In Dutch paintings of groups, everyone is always looking front. Unfortunately, on a stage such rigidity can only lead an audience to the exits. Several years after, a gang of young actors, setting up chairs in the ballroom of the McAlpin Hotel, fired up the audience, convinced the critics, and the play at last took off and soon found its place. There were cheering reviews but by then Senator McCarthy was dead. The public fever on whose heatwaves he had spread his wings had subsided.

*THE CRUCIBLE* is my most-produced play. It seems to be one of the few surviving shards of the so-called McCarthy period. And it is part of the play's history that, to people in so many parts of the world, its story seems to be their own. I used to think, half seriously, that you could tell when a dictator was about to take power, or had been overthrown, in a Latin American country, if *THE CRUCIBLE* was suddenly being produced in that country.

The result of it all is that I have come, rather reluctantly, to respect delusion, not least of all my own. There are no passions quite as hot and pleasurable as those of the deluded. Compared to the bliss of delusion, its vivid colours, blazing lights, explosions, whistles and liberating joys, the search for evidence is a deadly bore. My heart was with the left. If only because the right hated me enough to want to kill me, as the Germans amply proved. And now, the most blatant and most foul anti-semitism is in Russia, leaving people like me filled not so much with surprise as a kind of wonder at the incredible amount of hope there once was, and how it disappeared and whether in time it will ever come again, attached, no doubt, to some new illusion.

There is hardly a week that passes when I don't ask the unanswerable question: what am I now convinced of that will turn out to be ridiculous? And yet one can't forever

stand on the shore; at some point, filled with indecision, scepticism, reservation and doubt, you either jump in or concede that life is forever elsewhere. Which, I dare say, was one of the major impulses behind the decision to attempt THE CRUCIBLE.

Salem village, that pious, devout settlement at the edge of white civilisation, had displayed - threecenturies before the Russo-American rivalry and the issues it raised - what can only be called a built-in pestilence in the human mind; a fatality forever awaiting the right conditions for its always unique, forever unprecedented outbreak of distrust, alarm, suspicion and murder. And for people wherever the play is performed on any of the five continents, there is always a certain amazement that the same terror that is happening to them or that is threatening them, has happened before to others. It is all very strange. But then, the Devil is known to lure people into forgetting what it is vital for them to remember - how else could his endless reappearances always come as such a marvellous surprise?



V O C A B U L A R Y



conjure  
crucible  
faction  
abomination  
providence  
formidable

pilgrimage  
sniveling  
prodigious  
sarcasm  
whim  
defamation  
afflicted  
precise  
fraud  
recite  
begrudge  
tainted  
blasphemy  
daft  
contemptuous  
affidavit  
quail  
denounce



## THINKING/WRITING/READING

## EXERCISES

1. Authors sometimes modify events to enhance the drama of a situation. Locate one or more major differences between the play and history. Why might a playwright take this literary license? Does your view of a character change with your knowledge of the actual history?
2. Survey your peers to learn what superstitions they know. For example, what is the significance of a black cat, knocking on wood, walking under a ladder, or opening an umbrella inside the house? How are those beliefs similar to the beliefs and reactions of the characters in the play?
3. Compose music that might be used to introduce or close the play.
4. Consider the social messages in the play. Develop a skit that shows how peer pressure can influence others.
5. Create a poster that symbolizes a meaningful quotation from the play.
6. Follow-up by researching what happened to major characters. How many died? What led to the closing of the trials?
7. Three hundred years after the Salem trials, the community dedicated a memorial to the victims of the trial. Research victims of a modern "witch hunt" such as the Hollywood Ten. Create a visual product that symbolizes their tribulations or write an essay or poem that might be read at a ceremony about the event.
8. Design a program cover that could be used for an audience attending the radio production.
9. Consider "what if?" Make a list of elements in the plot that are pivotal.
10. Relate current events from newspapers or internet sites to what took place in THE CRUCIBLE. Are there parallels between THE CRUCIBLE and present day?

EXTRA: Can you relate THE CRUCIBLE to any other recordings that you have heard? How does THE CRUCIBLE compare to ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN?



# TEAM

# RESEARCH

# PROJECTS

## Setting the Scene

To fully appreciate the historic setting, select one of the topics below and research it using reference and Internet resources. Focus questions follow each topic. Share your findings with the class.

## Salem, Massachusetts

Locate maps and images related to Salem at the time of the witch trials.

How significant was the community in terms of size and importance in the colony?



## Puritans

What was the origin of the Puritan form of worship?

Why had they settled in America?

## Examining Witches

Rev. Hale speaks of testing the witches.

What were some of the methods used to determine guilt or innocence?

What were the consequences of confessing to witchcraft?

## King James

The King James version of the Bible was available.

Who was King James and what were his beliefs about witches?

## Senator Joseph McCarthy

What was his role in the House Un-American Activities Committee?

What behaviors characterize his investigative style?



## Arthur Miller

What were his experiences with the House on Un-American Activities Committee?

What does he have to say about the parallels between the play and the politics of the 1940's and 50's?

# IN DEFENSE: A TRIAL STRATEGY SIMULATION

Read the entire "The Trial of Arthur Miller" essay.  
<http://ocean.st.usm.edu/~wsimkins/trial.html>

Develop teams of attorneys to create a defense strategy for various characters in the play. You do not need to be limited to those who were accused. How would your team defend the actions of Mary Warren or Abigail Williams as they are portrayed in the various scenes?

Be prepared to point to quotations and actions from the play that support the defense strategy that you develop.

Write an opening and deliver an opening speech to the jury that lays out what your defense team will try to prove about your client.

Read primary documents related to the trial. The Salem Trials website includes the arrest warrant for Elizabeth Proctor, the petition for John Proctor, and the testimony in the cases of Tituba, Rebecca Nurse, and others.

Print a sample of the testimony and highlight "evidence" that was used to condemn the accused.

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/salem.htm>



# TALKING

# POINTS

## ACT I

1. Listen closely to the sound effects that begin the play. Wind and giggles dissolve into the tortured moaning of a child and the distress of those who surround her. In what ways, do these effects foreshadow later events? (Disc 1, Track 1, 1:40)

2. The opening scene will introduce most of the major characters. Divide the class into small groups and assign a character to each group. Listeners should pay special attention to the words spoken by their characters. At the conclusion of the scene, they should meet briefly to discuss the following questions:

What is the emotional response of the character to the events?

What motivates the character to behave as he/she does?

"What you see is what you get" is an expression meaning that a person does not try to hide his personality or goals. Is your character honest or full of hidden motives?

Have one member of the group summarize the findings and share those with the entire class.

3. Abigail confronts John Proctor. What comments build sympathy for her plight? Which lines lead listeners to see her in a negative light? (Disc 1, Track 4, 0:30)

## ACT II

1. Suspicion reigns in the Proctor household. What lines indicate Elizabeth's doubts? How does John try to reassure her? (Disc 1, Track 9, 0:00)

2. One test used to prove evidence was the ability of the accused to recite Biblical passages and the Ten Commandments without fault. What is ironic about the attempt by John Proctor to meet the test? (Disc 1, Track 12, 0:38)

3. Reverend Hale asks them what abomination has been hidden that might have brought this tragedy upon Salem? Think about the actions of the men who question Tituba, the jealousies that surface in dialogue, and the scandals that are described. What are some of the behaviors that could be categorized as abominations? (Disc 1, Track 15, 0:00)

### ACT III

1. "Don't take this personally, but..." often precedes criticism. What errors in the trials were being pointed out by Giles Cory and Francis Nurse? How does the judge personalize the criticism? What concerns does Danforth have? (Disc 2, Track 1, 0:00)
2. Review the scene in which John Proctor tries to prove that the girls are frauds. How does irony play a part? (Disc 2, Tracks 5-7)

### ACT IV

1. The opening dialogue makes the audience aware that some of the accused are mad and the jailer is drunk. How does this behavior resonate with the whole process of the trials? (Disc 2, Track 8, 0:00)
2. Reverend Hale and Reverend Parris have changed. Describe their actions and explain their current attitudes toward the trials. (Disc 2, Tracks 8-9)
3. The leaders put great pressure on John Proctor to accept guilt and name others. What is their motive for emphasizing the impact of his confession? (Disc 2, Tracks 10-12)
4. As John Proctor weighs the options, what factors tip the balance? (Disc 2, Tracks 11-12)
5. The crowing of a rooster is heard the background as the story closes. In what ways are characters and the community "awakening"? (Disc 2, Track 12, 3:34)



## VISUALIZING

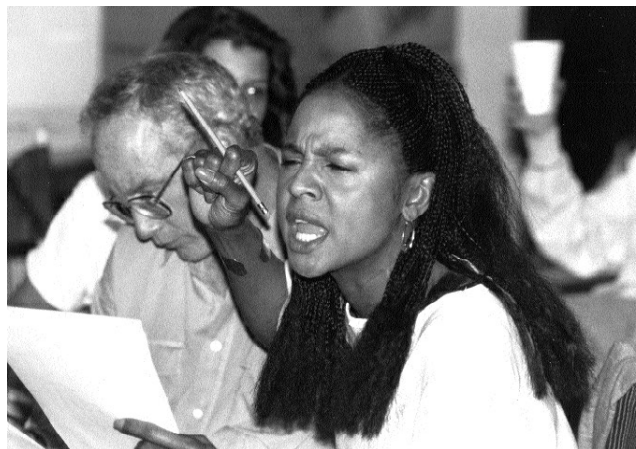
## EMOTION

In silent movies, the actors used facial expressions and body movements to carry the plot. Dialogue was flashed on the screen periodically.

During a radio production, listeners must rely solely on words and sound effects. Reverse that process by developing digital photos to represent key dialogue in the play.

Work with a small team of people to analyze one scene from the play and produce a series of digital photos to portray the emotions of characters.

1. Review the scene assigned to you and locate a quotation or action that you can represent.
2. Listen to the scene again and discuss the facial expressions and postures that you believe would best represent the lines.
3. Take pictures from several angles and have team members act out the lines.
4. Select the best examples and place them in chronological order. If you have access to software, you may want to add the text to the photo or display the results using a program such as PowerPoint.



Richard Dreyfuss and JudyAnn Elder  
during the recording of THE CRUCIBLE.

# A Poem by Increase Mather

from the title page of his diary

Give me a Call

To dwell  
Where no foot hath

A path  
There will I spend

And End  
My wearied years

In tears

Increase Mather authored the classic book used to determine the signs of witchcraft -- *Cases of Conscience Concerning Evil Spirits Personating Men, Witchcrafts, Infallible Proofs of Guilt in Such as Are Accused with that Crime*. He was the father of Cotton Mather, who would eventually record comments on the Salem trials.

Activity:

Select a character from the play and create an appropriate poem or statement to be placed on the grave. Try various computer fonts or calligraphy to establish a typographical style that works well with the wording.

Many grave markers of the time included elaborate stone carvings. You may also want to create a sketch of the marker.



## INTERVIEW WITH THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



Susan Albert Loewenberg

**Q.** A director develops \_\_\_\_\_ an overall concept of the play. What ideas were at the heart of this production?

**A.** The director, Martin Jenkins from the BBC in London, heard the play expressed through tense, almost whispered dialogue to evoke a sense of secrecy, envy, shame and, as the play unfolded, desperation. He wanted to invoke the sense of a tight, isolated community and high emotion through the voices.

**Q.** What steps did the company take to prepare for the performance?

**A.** The company of actors worked with a dialogue coach to find a uniform speech pattern, which would replicate the sound of 17th century Salem, Massachusetts. We used a segment from the Public Television Series, "The Story of English," which explained how people spoke during that time. The coach made a tape for each actor of several vowel sounds and \_\_\_\_\_ specific words and examples from "The Story of English" segment. The actors concentrated on two or three specific vowel sounds and learned to uniformly pronounce key words in order to create the sense that they were all from the same place.

**Q.** What are the special challenges that exist in a radio performance of this play?

**A.** The greatest challenge is to make these historical characters real and to recreate the world of 17th century Salem in a highly charged emotional atmosphere where calm resolve and hysteria are both present in this struggle for life or death. The actors needed to use their voices to express a wide range of emotional and mental states. They worked on \_\_\_\_\_ pacing, and changing the rhythms of their dialogue. Sounds such as breathing, crying and various other non-verbal cues are used to express various emotional states.

**Q.** Describe ways that these particular actors added depth and insight to the characters they portrayed.

**A.** Actors do a read-through of the script with the director. Usually, the director talks about the play and his concept of the production. Actors do a considerable amount of "homework" or preparation before the first read-through. They make choices for their \_\_\_\_\_ character, which often change as they work with the director and their fellow actors. The rehearsal period, in this case 10 days, is a time of great growth and change as the actor goes through the rehearsal process and begins to "show" his or her character and to \_\_\_\_\_ eventually "own" it.

**Q.** THE CRUCIBLE reflects the political climate of the 1950's. How did that period of witchhunts affect the entertainment industry? How does the play speak to society?

**A.** During the witch-hunts of the 1950's when the House Un-American Activities Committee led by Senator Joseph McCarthy began investigating subversive activity in the entertainment industry, actors, directors, writers and others were asked to testify about their political affiliations and to name names — that is, to tell the committee what they knew about the affiliations of colleagues and friends. People were asked to swear under oath that they had never been members of the Communist Party or to admit it and renounce their affiliation. Those who refused to testify, by invoking the Fifth Amendment, were blacklisted by the Hollywood studios. A group of 10 screenwriters known as The Hollywood Ten, were blacklisted — in most instances their careers were destroyed and their lives and those of their families were seriously impacted. In another L.A Theatre Works recording, Eric Bentley's ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN?, a re-enactment of the HUAC Hearings is re-created entirely from the original transcripts.

**Q.** Arthur Miller is generally recognized as one of America's greatest playwrights. What qualities make his works so notable?

**A.** Arthur Miller is able, more than any other American playwright, to combine great characters and important themes in powerful dramatic terms. Some authors can do wonderful dialogue but are not good at plot; others tell great stories but the themes are shallow or not well realized; other playwrights deal with important problems or subjects, but their characters are wooden. Arthur Miller beautifully integrates all the elements of great drama — plot, dramatic action, character, dialogue, and complex, interesting, important themes.

### **ACTIVITY:**

If you were going to see a production of THE CRUCIBLE, what questions would you ask? What questions would you ask the director? What questions would you want to ask the actors?

In groups, come up with questions that you would want to ask of people involved in a production of THE CRUCIBLE. Prepare a full interview (as if you were going to be on 60 MINUTES) with either the author, an actor or a director.



# B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Belfrage, Cedric. *The American Inquisition 1945-1960: A Profile of the McCarthy Era*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press. 1973.

History of the McCarthy Era, including artistic influences.

Hill Francis. *A Delusion of Satan: The Full Story of the Salem Witch Trials*. New York: Doubleday. 1995.

Detailed history, chronology, summary of major people involved, photos of main buildings associated with the period.

Jackson, Shirley. *The Witchcraft of Salem Village*. New York: Random House. 1998.

Concise history at a middle school reading level. Available in paperback.

Miller, Arthur. *Timebends*. New York: Grove Press. 1987.

\_\_\_\_\_ Arthur Miller's own autobiography.



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## HEAR

## MORE

## ABOUT

## IT

**Other L.A. Theatre Works recordings of interest from the Audio Theatre Collection**



\* **ADDITIONAL DIALOGUE: THE LETTERS OF DALTON TRUMBO** by Christopher Trumbo

Starring: Jeff Corey, Harry Groener, Christopher Trumbo and Paul Winfield

In 1947, witty, outspoken, irascible Dalton Trumbo (Academy Award-winning screen writer) went to prison for defying HUAC and became one of the Hollywood Ten. Trumbo's letters to his son create a touching portrait of an extraordinary man.

\* **ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN?** by Eric Bentley

Starring: Edward Asner, Bonnie Bedelia, Richard Dreyfuss, Hector Elizondo and James Earl Jones

In the mid 1950's, the House Un-American Activities Committee began investigating communist influence in the entertainment industry. Judy Garland, Lillian Hellman, Arthur Miller, Paul Robeson and others deplored the witch-hunt. This searing docudrama from actual transcripts from the hearing reveals how decent people were persuaded to name names and the steep price paid by those who refused.

\* **THE VALUE OF NAMES** by Jeffrey Sweet

Starring: Hector Elizondo, Garry Marshall and Sally Murphy

Thirty years ago, Benny Silverman's acting career was early destroyed when his friend and colleague, Leo Greshen, named him in front of HUAC. The two men haven't spoken since. They meet in Malibu where Benny's daughter is to star in a play directed by Leo.

\* **THE WALDORF CONFERENCE** by David Kimmel, Marty Reisman & Nat Segaloff

Starring: Edward Asner, Charles Durning and Ron Rifkin

A dramatic speculation of what occurred when the most powerful men in American film met in New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel to decide how to address the HUAC communist witch-hunt. At this conference, the blacklist was born.

# INTERNET

# RESOURCES

**Arthur Miller Society**, <http://www.ibiblio.org/miller/index.html>

Frequently updated site posts background and information about scholarly events related to the author.

**Communist Scare**, <http://www.scsd.k12.ny.us/alex/coldwar/hunt.htm>

Brief information about Communist witchhunt.

**Curriculum Support**, <http://www.ebicom.net/~tct/crucible.htm>

Theater company provides resources for viewing a production, questions, and links.

**Hysteria and Ideology in The Crucible**, <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/50s/crucible.html>

Article by Richard Hayes written for Commonweal in February 1953 critiques the play and makes brief remarks about the Martin Beck production.

**Interactive Background**, <http://www.school.discovery.com/schooladventures/salemwitchtrials/index.html>

Life in Salem, presentation of events

**Kennedy Center Honors**,

<http://kennedy-center.org/programs/specialevents/honors/history/honoree/miller.html>

Tribute provides basic biographical information.

**Presentation of History**, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/features/97/salem/>

Photos, expert opinion from curator of the Rebecca Nurse Homestead.

**Rebecca Nurse**, <http://www.wizard.net/~aldonna/rn.htm>

Biography includes references and related links.

**Salem Tour**, <http://www.salemwitchmuseum.com/tour/index.html>

Visit each of the main locations mentioned. Images and information.

**Trial Information**, <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/salem/salem.htm>

Evidence, background, primary documents, and much more.

