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## The Crucible: Diversity Of Women Characters

The Crucible is a play about the witch trials of Salem in 1692. In these trials, many women and some men were falsely accused and were either put in jail or hanged for not confessing to witchcraft. These accusations started when Abigail and many other teens got caught by Reverend Parris dancing in the woods and casting 'harmless' spells for their hopes and wishes. Except for Abigail, who had wished for something dark and sinister and went as far as to drink a blood charm to get rid of Goody Proctor. Abigail leads the accusations with who was a witch and who wasn't, in the play, she had a lot of power and great leverage over this situation.

Women in Salem back in the late 1600s had a hard time because they were the lowest on the social rank besides the slaves and had no power. In The Crucible, men saw women as weak and that they should always submit no matter what. The only way to climb the ranks is through dishonesty and manipulation. For example, Rebecca Nurse is a truthful, honest, and good woman, yet she is lower than Abigail and doesn't get a chance to tell the truth. Abigail gained power through her dishonesty and false accusations of witchcraft. Abigail shows that no matter how good of a woman you are, you will still be at the bottom of the ranks.

Women in the 1690s were to follow a strict moral code and religious role in life. They were there to take care of the kids, the house, and tend to their husbands. In The Crucible, many men believed that women were the only ones that the devil could control or convert. It was believed that women were so weak that they wouldn't be able to fight off the demonic attacks of Satan. The men started believing that it was real when the teens would say they had the devil in them, and they would confess to save themselves.

The women portrayed in The Crucible are diverse and each different from each others. There is the antagonist, Abigail, who is evil, greedy, and dishonest. Another woman would be Rebecca Nurse, who is a respectable, honest, and godfearing woman. One of the last women would be Elizabeth Proctor, who is moral, untrusting, and faithful to her husband. These women are all different and have different traits.

Miller portrays Abigail as a sick, evil-minded woman with low to no morals in life. She points her finger at hundreds of people even though she is at fault for everything that has happened regarding witchcraft and lies. Throughout the play, Abigail continuously lies every chance she gets without hesitation. She uses her greed for power as a cause for this whole mess. Abigail justifies herself with the reason that she wants John Proctor but at this point in the play, it's just revenge. She is selfish and she depicts feministic power negatively. The substantial amount of power she holds is enough to guide situations to appease her anger inside. This leads to the destruction of Salem and the death of nineteen people.

Elizabeth is seen as the most faithful woman who never lies and is respectable. She's a devoted wife who values marriage and doesn't want to spoil her husband's name with the adultery he committed. Elizabeth is still an obedient wife to John even after he cheated on her with Abigail. She stuck up for her husband in court, when asked if he committed adultery and lied to protect his name. Portrayed as a truthful and honest woman, this was the only time she lied in the play. Though she is a good woman, she is not perfect. She puts the blame on John cheating on

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herself and holds her anger in.

Rebecca Nurse has high integrity and good moral character. She shows these qualities by not being afraid of what people think and speaking her mind. She is genuinely a good woman and is very saintly. When she is accused of witchcraft, Reverend Hale can only come up with the fact that God must have been fooled by her character and purity. She is honest and when accused she was genuine and would tell Danforth and the ministers that she was innocent even if it meant dying. Strong and resilient, Rebecca knew that she was innocent and would not lie in order to save her life.

Miller portrays all the women in different ways, all diverse and not the same. He shows various sides to each woman and the change they go through in the play. All were shown in contrasting ways, yet all had a strong presence in *The Crucible*. Miller's characterization was fair to back then because it was the same in Salem. Many women had no social power and were often targeted. His message is women back then had no power but were able to climb the social ropes with lies, manipulation, and complete dishonesty. It takes women to have leverage over a situation to gain power.