



Witch-Hunt: Mysteries of the Salem Witch Trials

By Marc Aronson

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Salem, Massachusetts, 1692. In a plain meetinghouse a woman stands before her judges. The accusers, girls and young women, are fervent and overexcited. The accused is a poor, unpopular woman who had her first child before she was married. As the trial proceeds the girls begin to wail, tear their clothing, and scream that the woman is hurting them. Some of them expose wounds to the horrified onlookers, holding out the pins that have stabbed them -- pins that appeared as if by magic. Are they acting or are they really tormented by an unseen evil? Whatever the cause, the nightmare has begun: The witch trials will eventually claim twenty-five lives, shatter the community, and forever shape the American social conscience.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up-Aronson has produced a legitimate piece of original scholarship that is at the same time an interesting narrative. Examining the events in the Massachusetts of 1692, and immediately discounting much of what readers may already know about the trials, he answers some of the questions they will bring, but raises even more. In the brilliant introduction, the author actively encourages the rethinking of past notions of the events leading up to the accusations and hearings. He sets straight the issue of Tituba's ethnicity, the motives and means of Cotton Mather and his colleagues, and the societal contexts and compulsions of the accusers. These participants are introduced and preliminary events are related, all culminating in the hearings. At this point, some readers may get bogged down in respectable yet monotonous he-said-she-said, while others may feel the copious direct quotes from primary sources are just right. Writing with an unabashed political bent, Aronson draws intrepid parallels between Salem and post-September 11th society (as well as the 1960s), and alternately charming and shocking connections between the 400-year-old participants and classic folk- and fairy-tale characters. In the charge to form one's own deduction about what happened and why, this bold book cautions that while readers' interpretations will vary and are valid, conclusions may not even be possible.

Andrew Medlar, Chicago Public Library

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 9-up. Was it pagan faith or a trick gone bad? A devious teenager's power play or a rebellion against the strictures of a rigid religious community? Aronson shows off both his talent for historical interpretation and his facility as a nonfiction writer as he reconstructs events surrounding the witch trials of 1692. He isn't shy about injecting his own voice in the mix; he often speaks directly to readers, putting the history into a context that sharp teens can grasp and encouraging them to think about how the events connect to their lives and to contemporary culture and politics. To enrich and clarify the history, he quotes from an extraordinary, well-documented array of sources and recorded testimonies (of accused and accuser alike), producing a dense, wide-angle view of the tragedy that evaluates causative theories ranging from deceit and outright fraud to spoiled food that caused hallucinations. The subject will undoubtedly attract readers, but this is not for those in search of spoon-fed fact; rather, it's for teens who love to debate and to dig into what's *between* the pages of their history books. *Stephanie Zvirin*

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Review

"Readers will be swept up in this complex mystery."

-- *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

"Excellent history writing."

-- *Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

"A legitimate piece of original scholarship that is at the same time an interesting narrative."

-- *School Library Journal*, starred review

"A gripping, sophisticated narrative that establishes the contemporary relevance of this oft-recounted tale. A brilliant appendix discussing the relationship of historical events to Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* will be of great interest to readers of all ages."

-- Mary Beth Norton, author of *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*

"A welcome book for young adults that would also serve regular adults much better than most books about the Salem witch trials. Beautifully written and accurate. Teachers should throw away other books they have been using for young adults and turn to this one."

-- Bernard Rosenthal, author of *Salem Story: Reading the Witch Trials of 1692*

"A skillful retelling of the endlessly fascinating story of the 1692 witchcraft crisis for young readers...a gripping, sophisticated narrative."

-- Mary Beth Norton

"A highly readable narrative."

-- *New York Times Book Review*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Terri Hatfield:

In this 21st century, people become competitive in each way. By being competitive now, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice by means of surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a guide your ability to survive boost then having chance to stay than other is high. To suit your needs who want to start reading a book, we give you this specific Witch-Hunt: Mysteries of the Salem Witch Trials book as nice and daily reading e-book. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Gloria Brower:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or go to the outside with them household or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity this is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent the whole day to reading a reserve. The book Witch-Hunt: Mysteries of the Salem Witch Trials it is rather good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. These were enjoying reading this book. When you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore very easily to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book offers high quality.

Joan Marcial:

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Julio Keith:

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