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Rhetorical analysis for Stacy Schiff's Essay "The Witches of Salem: Diabolic Doings in a Puritan Village."

Stacy Schiff presents different historical circumstances that were happening in Salem in the years of the 17th century. In her essay "The Witches of Salem: Diabolic Doings in a Puritan Village", she describes historical issues such as witchcraft, sorcery, idolatry, and biblical teachings that affected people in Salem. Witchcraft and sorcery seem to have been out of hand during that period with the people who were found guilty of the act being sentenced to death by hanging. She however does not give an explanation to the cause of the witchcraft and sorcery frenzy that was happening in Salem during that period of time. Stacy Schiff uses a powerful technique so that the readers can reflect on what the people in the past believed about supernatural powers.

It would be necessary for the reader not to dismiss the viruses that are even taught in universities like Harvard. Presenting different issues that have been affecting societies such as witchcraft, sorcery, idolatry, and blasphemy beliefs presented in the essay as backward will lead to missing an important point on how our thoughts help us in understanding everything that happens around us. Stacy Schiff manages to link the ancient events that were happening in Salem in the 17th century to more recent and modern occurrences such as infectious diseases, germs, and wizardry, plus explaining the punishment that culprits were subjected to, Stacy Schiff in her

essay manages to link the ancient world with the modern world. Most of these historical issues will keep happening even in the coming years despite the harsh punishments they carry.

Schiff's purpose in writing the article was to inform the readers about witches and the historical events that were happening at that time and how the trials' occasions still influence the world today. She used an argumentative style in writing the article, which was so compelling in an attempt to clarify to past of witchcraft and make people believe that witchcraft really exists. Many points seen in the Salem Witch trials can be found in the information we have today. The documentation from the court transcripts and the villagers' pronouncements who survived the frenzy is all that we have. Those people who were believed to be witches were also accused of many things, just like how it happens in the world today, such as not going to church, acting weird, and even conversing by themselves.

The theme of Schiff's article was to stand up for what you believe in. The report showed how the villagers wanted to know if their peers were witches or not. They tried to stand up for what they believed and bring out their opinions regardless of what other people thought. Schiff was trying to imply that witches are true, and there is evidence considering the trials. Therefore, the article's thesis was used to persuade the readers throughout the text, with many individuals being blamed for being witches, and many of them were females. The females being hermit, supporting other people that were thought to be witches, conversing with themselves would make the females being blamed.

The series of trials in Salem's witches were believed to be fact less as many people perceived that witchcraft was counterproductive. Many historians have said that the trials were only due to the local ministers' conflicts, which led to the hunt of witches in Salem. Many people lived in the

town, but they were conflicting over political divisions, and this made to arise of religious tension over the people where the Puritans started to believe in God and found the other people to be sinful in their beliefs. The author used this to explain the emergence of evil and supernatural powers across the world as most things in Massachusetts could be argued to be right but have superstitious beliefs.

The first witch to be convicted in the Salem trials' witches was Bridget Bishop, who was hanged and killed for being a witch. Stacy Schiff used the witchcraft crisis rhetorically. Over 100 men and women in the Massachusetts Bay colony were accused of being witches and they were taken into custody. After Bishop's sentence, the other eighteen convictions were made with the women being killed. One of the suspects who did not confess too witchcraft was tortured to death by being crushed under rocks slowly. The people of Massachusetts were very angry with the fact that their children were possessed, and they had to come up and help their children. In this regard, there was a great need for the trials that Schiff used to explain why people were being arrested and prosecuted. The public as a whole found is right for the prosecutions to be made to save their children from being subjected to any torture by the devil. Even though the judgments and trials were made, the people of Massachusetts were distraught with the judges' actions who decided to annual the decisions.

Stacy Schiff used the audience in explaining the puritan lifestyle, which was restrained and rigid. The people were supposed to work hard and suppress their emotions, and they believed that when someone did anything sinful, they were supposed to get punished by God. Just as they thought that God existed, they also believe that the devil is real and exists. Keeping up with these beliefs made the women accused of being witches and mostly those who did not go to church.

The women were viewed as pariahs, and they were to be treated and seen differently with the people. Had the government given them an opportunity to defend themselves and not to dwell on what religion only says, not doing investigations through the trials, many of those who were killed could not have been killed. The people of Massachusetts were puritan colonists who were seeking freedom and religious acceptance, and so they believed that all the sins that are committed should be punished with how they lived according to a resistant code. When someone broke these codes, the Puritans saw it as God's will to not help them but punish them.