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What Really Happened in Salem Village: 1692?

In the Salem witch trials, the girls faked the witch trials. The first reason is that the girls helped prove an innocent person by acting it out. The second reason is that the community knew how possessed people acted so the girls took advantage of it and lastly the girls accused everyone they didn't like.

To start off, the girls helped the accusation of the Bishop of being a witch by faking it. "Bishop I know nothing of it. I am innocent to a witch. I know not what a witch is. Then she turned up her eyes, and the eyes of the afflicted were turned up" (Document 4). In the court case, the judge accuses the Bishop of being the witch with just the girls as being the only witnesses. If the accused person didn't have any family members or friends to back them up they would be executed because of the court's philosophy of being guilty until proven innocent. This is why most of the people accused were not well liked.

The second reason is that Salem knew what people who are possessed did and said and the girls knew how to take advantage of it. "This drawing of a nineteenth century hysterical convulsive attack is strikingly similar to the Salem girls fits (document 6). The community knew about this way before the girls actually did the acting. Although it is hard to act, it is possible and the girls only needed to act it out once, to gain the community's trust and start off accusing others about being a witch.

The final reason is that the girls tried to accuse anyone they hated. They tend to accuse people who are on the eastern side, which has richer residents on it while the other side has poorer residents. "Most Putams lived in Salem Village's less fertile western half, and had lost the political influence they once had in town once held in town" (Document 7). This means that the girls could have vengeance on the rich side of the village. A couple of reasons for their hatred is because of their poverty, division between the Putnams and the Porters or political influence. Either way the girls didn't like the rich side of the town.

To end it off, the girls faked the Salem witch trials, one reason for this is that girls were used as witnesses to the court case and if the defender did not have any evidence, they would be executed. The second reason is that the community knew how an possessed person would act and therefore the girls used that information to fake it. The final reason is that the girls wanted to get vengeance on the eastern or richer side.

Works Cited

1. Document #4 "Testimony of Bridget Bishop"
2. Document #6 "Drawing of Convulsion"
3. Document #7 "Map of Salem Village"