

The Crucible as an Allegory for McCarthyism

McCarthy

- "I have in my hand a list of 205 cases of individuals who appear to be either card-carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist Party"
- *How does this relate to The Crucible?*
- *Write down the quote and your connection to the play*

Allegory

- A double story
- One story serves as a hidden or double meaning for something else that is going on
- In The Crucible we have an allegory of two situations

The Crucible Allegory

- **Story one:** a historical reflection of the witch trials
- What did the witch trials stand for? A town under pressure, powerful women (a big no-no) and lust for land
- **Story two:** In Miller's time, the hunt for communists

Communist America...

- Senator Joseph McCarthy
- From Wisconsin in 1950s
- Takes advantage of fear during the Cold War
- House of Un-American Activities (HUAC)
- Investigates the lives of accused Americans
- Targeted: State Department, government workers, labor unions, Hollywood and entertainment personalities



I spy....A COMMUNIST!

Main Principles of Ideal of Communism

- Common ownership
- Classless system
- Replace the wealthy with the working middle class
- Threatens the idea of democracy and free enterprise

So what if you were accused?

- Lost job
- Blacklisted
- Lost neighbors
- Harassed by government agents

What happened to McCarthy?

- Ed Murrow, a TV news anchor begins to question McCarthy's claims/abuse of power on TV
- Senators begin to renounce McCarthy
- McCarthy dies of liver failure shortly after

Why Miller Wrote the Play

- He was not interested in preserving the historical accuracy of Salem, Mass.
- It was safer to discuss how people were being hunted as being commies under the cover of telling a story about witches
- Miller points out the dangers of lust, power, greed, and unchecked power

Witch hunts...

- What are other examples of witch hunts in modern time that you can think of?