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Arguments can always be found in literature, whether it be one made by the author or one made by a character. These arguments can be explicitly stated or can be found along the lines within greater thematic ideas. For instance, *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller, contains hundreds of arguments made by himself and the vast array of characters. Since the book is based upon the Salem Witch Trials, the arguments may be noticeably biased or false; for example, readers learn Abigail's true motive, jealousy, in her accusations of witchcraft. However, the other characters are swept up in mass hysteria that they believe whatever they are told, specifically those with higher status. This common occurrence throughout the story aligns with the theme and the targeted message for the audience: in society, people are so easily controlled by fear that they will go along with what they are told to escape persecution, and in this case, death. This is a part of a large, prominent argument Miller makes himself. Arthur Miller argues in *The Crucible* that people readily scapegoat others to prevent their own social outcasting and persecution ; this argument can also be affirmed with examples from *Huckleberry Finn* and historical events in the United States.

Miller's argument that people scapegoat to evade their own persecution is affirmed in his own work *The Crucible*. One notable character in the story, Abigail Williams, accuses her slave of witchcraft by claiming, "She sends her spirit on me in church; she makes me laugh at prayer!... I always hear her laughing in my sleep. I hear her singing her Barbados songs and tempting me," (Miller 36.) Scapegoating works in the way that a person or society places faults on another to cover up their own sins; usually, if a group of people are being scapegoated, they

share a specific trait or aspect that makes them different or outcasted from society. Titchuba was Abigail's slave, and she was scapegoated by Abby in this quote. Abigail uses Titchuba's background to prove that she has been performing witchcraft; Abigail also lies that her slave has made her chuckle and goof around in church, which is a sin in their community to not take religion seriously. She bases these reasons to blame Titchuba, even though she is not the one at fault or performing witchcraft. Abigail blamed her slave of this crime to cover her own skin. As she was being interrogated for what she was doing in the forest with the other girls, she knew the truth may slip out; therefore, she placed the blame on her slave. This accusation would be believed and require no proof, which Abigail was aware of. Titchuba, as a slave, was the lowest low in the social hierarchy. On the other hand, Abigail was the Reverend's daughter, placing her with a higher status; she was also trusted by the majority so her word would be taken without the need of proof. Abigail scapegoats Titchuba because she know that she could be killed for what she has done. Instead of taking the blame faithfully herself, she in turn blames her slave, who takes a nasty whipping for her behalf. Another character in *The Crucible* that places the blame on another to keep up their reputation is John Proctor. He knows that Abigail's accusations are wild and dishonest. He also is aware that her schemes in creating hysteria will only back up her claims, and he knows she accuses Elizabeth because she is jealous. Proctor accuses Abigail and her friends of witchcraft when he says, "I'll tell you what's walkin Salem- vengeance is walkin Salem, but now the crazy little children are jangling the keys of the kingdom, and common vengeance writes the law," (80.) Proctor realizes that the children in their society have started to run their community, and he sees that justice has been turned into Abigail's vengeful accusations. He is blaming the girls for causing all of this mayhem and hysteria that has arisen in

their community. He is pointing out that Abigail has altered the society by her crazy claims of witchcraft. This quote expresses his accusation at Abigail and the girls, even though he realizes that they are not performing witchcraft; he blames the girls' creation of mass hysteria. He puts this on them and scapegoats the girls because he himself is sinful. He had an affair with Abigail while Elizabeth was sick, and he feels very remorseful about his lechery as the story goes on. This guilt promoted him to blame the crazy children in their society, so that his crime would be overlooked. He scapegoats her because he does not want to lose the goodness of his name, and he is very guilty that he committed adultery. He may also know that he was the cause of why Abigail was accusing so many women, and he was the cause of their deaths because of Abigail's jealousy. In return, Proctor accuses her and the girls of conformity and foolishness to cover his own sins.

Miller's argument can also be affirmed with occurrences in *Huckleberry Finn*, where groups of people quickly scapegoat others to cover up their own faults. For example, a mob had charged a man named Sherburn's house, yet they did not come upon what they expected. Sherburn surprisingly stated to the mob, "The pitifulest thing out is a mob; that's what an army is--a mob; they don't fight with courage that's born in them, but with courage that's borrowed from their mass, and from their officers. But a mob without any MAN at the head of it is BENEATH pitifulness," (Twain Ch. 22.) Sherburn had killed a man in public, and a mob had formed to lynch him; however, he stands on his balcony and proclaims the mob's faults. Sherburn is expressing their way of scapegoating him. He sees that a mob does not fight with courage, and men are born with courage, so, therefore, the mob is not "manly." He realizes that the mob is pitiful because the mass conforms to its leader. They do this because it is easier to

scapegoat Sherburn than it is to confess their own crimes. Also, the people in the mob may be taking part in this occurrence so that they are not outcasted or seen in a poor way. If a person did not take part in the mob, they may be seen as morally wrong and that they encourage murder; this would ruin someone's reputation. Therefore, the mob is quickly formed because the people readily conform to its standards to ensure their own social status. Another example when the society in *Huckleberry Finn* scapegoated a person to cover their guilts was when Jim supposedly murdered Huck. Jim was easily scapegoated and blamed for Huck's disappearance. Jim was a slave, so he was at the very bottom of the social ladder, like Titchuba in *The Crucible*. This made it very easy for society to blame him for anything wrong. Slavery was a morally justified institution at the time, so most members of the larger community already scapegoated and turned their faults on African Americans, free or not. Also, people sometimes thought slaves could be very violent or murderous, based on slave revolts that occurred at the time. This made it easier for society to place the blame on Jim. The community had failed in finding this young boy or his dead corpse, so they turned their failure to blame. The society also had no idea what or who killed Finn; it was almost plain to see for them that Jim had done this, even though there was no proof. No proof was needed, though, because the accusers' social status was much higher than any slave, so their word was taken openly. Many others only scapegoated and discriminated Jim because he a slave; in addition, Jim had run away and the community wanted to punish him for that. These reasons prove why it was easier to conform to society's standards to cover their own faults in their community.

Lastly, Miller's argument can be affirmed through historical events in the United States where groups of people have been scapegoated by the larger community. For example, during

the span of World War II, the American government placed all Japanese living in the United States into internment camps. Even legal citizens were placed in these horrendous camps. Americans were so patriotic at the time and the threat of any Japanese spies that would forfeit a victory influenced the American government to place them into these camps. The effect was mainly that these people suffered greatly, morally and physically; a long term effect of the concentration camps was that these people's reputations were never regained, and since they were seen as enemies, they were made fun of constantly after America's win in the war. The society was so readily able to scapegoat these people because they were a minority that held very low status already. This made it even easier for the government to place these people in the camps, along with the fervor of nationalism from the war. Another instance where the American society has scapegoated a group of people was during the AIDS epidemic; homosexuals were blamed for this. Homosexuals were already a minority group in America, and they were disapproved at the time, the 1960s, by the Christian majority in American society. It was against Christian morals to be homosexual at the time, and they believed it was an outright sin to be gay. This pre-existing resentment made it easier for society to blame homosexuals for the epidemic. It was said at the time that AIDS was spread by gay people and every homosexual had this disease; that was not true at all, but since people so easily conform to the majority of society than the minority groups, Americans believed this claim. Therefore, the larger community of Americans scapegoated these people until the actual origin of the disease was found, which was not from homosexuals. Even after that, the society still disapproved of gays since society so easily conformed to a united resentment.

Scapegoating leaves a lasting scar on a group or individual. This event of placing the blame on another is done with such fervor that the society as a whole eventually starts to discriminate this specific group, too; even if someone in the society does not scapegoat this group or individual, they are still aware of its impact on the community, like Sherburn in *Huckleberry Finn*. Other times people, like those in *The Crucible*, scapegoat others in order to avoid persecution, social outcasting, and a bad reputation; sometimes people put the blame on others to cover their own faults. In other instances, people may scapegoat people because it is easier to conform to society's standards than going against it; it is also more fearful for people to lose their social status and reputation than to stand up for the minority. These reasons can all explain why people in the past and present scapegoat groups in mass. Therefore, Miller's argument that can be affirmed that people readily conform to society and scapegoat others to avoid their own social outcasting and persecution.