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### Persuasive Essay on Corruption

Corruption is the dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power. Many people argue as to how this happens, but it is most likely due to a person in power using it against others, and allowing for their emotions to control their actions. It may be argued that wealth caused corruption, but it isn't the sole reason it happens. Instead it is caused by an individual and their emotions, then using their power to their advantage.

The Salem Witch Trials are a perfect example of how people's emotions can get the better of them. When people allow for their emotions to cloud their judgement they make rash decisions. For example, the Witch Trials was a tragic event that happened during the late 1600's, where over 200 people were accused of practicing witchcraft, and nine people were hanged. This happened due to a group of young women accusing others of practicing witchcraft.

Judges took the word of the women, and proceed to weed out anyone who might be a witch. To do this they required anyone who was accused of being a witch to confess to their crimes, and tell them who else might be one. If anyone were to disagree with them, then they were held in contempt of court. For example, in an article by Salem.lib.edu they claim, "Hathorne altered the tradition of previous witch trials by encouraging those under examination not only to confess to witchcraft but also to name

others who might be witches - a move that accelerated the number of accusations” (Ray 1). Hawthorne was a judge who was later criticized because of his inhumane actions, and was the cause of many of the deaths in Salem. To get their way, the judges continued to spread fear in order to meet their own agenda.

Another aspect of their corruption, was how they used their greater power to bring death to those who they opposed with illegitimate reasoning. During the Salem witch trials, individuals sought to harm others out of greed or spite. In a article written by Amy Nichols, she states:

By the end of the trial Elizabeth Hubbard had testified against twenty-nine people, seventeen of whom were arrested, thirteen of those were hanged and two died in jail. As a strong force behind the trials, she was able to manipulate both people and the court into believing her. One way she and the other girls did this was through their outrageous fits in the courtroom” (1).

The article later tells how her actions may have been due to the lack of knowledge for her future. She was a orphan girl, so it became very easy for her to manipulate others to do her bidding. Hubbard was able to use her innocence in order to destroy the lives of many. Both the judges and the women are at fault for the deaths; due to the women’s horrendous accusations, and the judge’s lack of investigation.

Another historical tragedy that has similar components to the Salem Witch Trials is the Holocaust. Even though the Holocaust and the Salem Witch Trials may seem to be completely different situations, they still have similarities. One factor that is present in both cases was that a ultimate power forced people to agree with their ideals. During

the Salem witch trials the judges had dictated the final verdict without anyone to question them. This is very similar to the Holocaust, because if a person were to withhold valuable information from Nazis, then they were killed. A handbill was made that stated, "Not only Jews who have left their designated residential area will be punished with death, but the same penalty applies to anyone who knowingly provides refuge (a hiding place) to such Jews" (ushmm.org). This statement was given out by the SS and police leaders in the Warsaw district to punish those who oppose them. In each circumstance there are evidences of a higher power forcing others to follow their ideals or die.

The judges brought fear to those who opposed the court's decisions, and the SS threatened those who sought to help Jewish escapees. In both instances innocents were slaughtered because of a personal hatred. During WWII Hitler had a personal hatred of Jews and clouded his judgement.. At [www.haaretz.com](http://www.haaretz.com), there is an article written by David B. Green, who stated, "In Hitler's mind, all the groups that he saw as foiling Germany – Bolsheviks, socialists, social democrats – became identified with Jews, because indeed, Jews were so prominently represented among each of them" (1). Adolf Hitler made the Jewish population a target for the people of Germany and blamed them for all that is wrong with the world. The article also states, "His political theories blended with increasingly technical racial theories that imagined the Jews, along with other groups like Slavs and Gypsies, as biologically inferior to Aryans, the white northern European race that pure Germans were presumed to belong to" (1). This directly shows that his actions were made because he spread propaganda that his fellow white

Germans are superior to Jews. By putting his own emotions before reason, he caused the deaths of millions of innocents. In both the Holocaust and the Salem witch trials, those with power abused their capabilities and killed those who stood in their way.

As you can see, the Salem witch trials and the Holocaust have key components that lead to the demise of innocents. In both situations there were people in power who put their emotions before logic, and brought fear to those who disagreed with them. We can look at the past and see what others did wrong, and try and prevent a similar event from happening again. This could be done with defined checks and balances for those with political power.

Many people believe that money is the only cause for corruption, but it isn't the sole reason for it. There is a definite correlation, but it isn't the cause of it. Instead, corruption is caused by a person in power using emotions over rational reasoning. With this irrational reasoning they punish anyone they oppose. In both cases wealth had little to no part in the reason the crimes were committed. Extreme wealth and power can actually create positive effects on the world, not just chaos and corruption. For example, at [gatesfoundation.org](https://www.gatesfoundation.org) they claim that Bill Gates has given The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation more than \$35.8 billion. Bill Gates has used his massive wealth towards making the world a better place, rather than tear it down. He had the choice to abuse his wealth to get what he wants, but he chose to put it towards something productive, and has made an effort to improve the lives of many. Wealth doesn't create chaos, it only amplifies the personality traits of those who have it. To say that wealth only causes

corruption is unfair for those who try and help others. Corruption is due to attributes that were pre existing.

Also, if corruption were based on wealth, then communism would always lead to prosperity, but it hasn't worked well in the past. For example, Joseph Stalin was a fierce communist ruler that bent the will of his people, and starved them. He was given the chance to create a bright future for his country, but instead he left a trail of blood in his wake. A study conducted from five different institutes and universities concluded that under Stalin's rule, "[Starvation] claimed the lives of 3.9 million people, about 13 percent of the population." Communism doesn't solve corruption, therefore equal distribution of wealth isn't the answer to creating a utopia. Since corruption is based on the inability to control emotions, peace will likely never be achieved, and everyone will will never be truly equal. Individuals will always be filled with mistrust, and will struggle to put others before themselves. To change humanity to such an extreme is impossible. However, to limit the damage caused by those who corrupt, humanity must try to limit the power given to a single person or a group of people. Other forms of leadership, such as Democracy aren't perfect systems, but they provide less risk than that of a dictatorship.

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