SWITCHING SIDES

How a Generation of Historians Lost Sympathy for the Victims of the Salem Witch Hunt

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1. Boyer and Nissenbaum’s “Anti-Parris Network” of suspects accused of witchcraft, built around ties to Israel Porter
2. Boyer and Nissenbaum’s “Anti-Parris Network,” restricted to shown pre–witch-hunt relationships
3. Boyer and Nissenbaum’s network of suspects accused of witchcraft, rearranged in chronological order of accusation, built around the accusing family of Thomas Putnam Jr.
4. Boyer and Nissenbaum’s “Geography of Witchcraft” map of Salem Village, 1692
5. Benjamin C. Ray’s “Geography of Witchcraft Accusations in 1692 Salem Village,” modifying Boyer and Nissenbaum’s original map
6. Boyer and Nissenbaum’s “Geography of Witchcraft” data, with family groups highlighted
7. Accused suspects in Salem witch hunt, by date of first formal legal action (in weeks)
Figure 2. Boyer and Nissenbaum’s “Anti-Parris Network,” restricted to shown pre–witch-hunt relationships. Notes: 1. The full name and corrected relationships of Sarah Hood Bassett have been substituted for the original “Sarah Bassett.” 2. Mary De Rich’s husband, Michael De Rich, has been removed, because the original chart established only a relationship to Israel Porter’s father, not Israel Porter. After the elder Porter’s death in 1676, De Rich appears to have begun working for John Buxton (RFQCE, 5:346, 428; 7:160). 3. Sixteen-year-old Sarah Proctor was the one accused of witchcraft; her older stepsister Elizabeth was never accused. 4. I have found no evidence that Daniel Andrew was the landlord to George Jacobs Jr. or Peter Cloyce. Salem Possessed cited (183n4) Upham’s Salem Witchcraft frontispiece for this information, but Upham states only that the land surrounding their houses was “owned, in 1692, by Daniel Andrew and Peter Cloyce” (1:xxvi). Source: Modification of data from figure 1.
Figure 4: Boyer and Nissenbaum’s “Geography of Witchcraft” map of Salem Village, 1692


Note: The non-Village accused witches shown on this map are those whose places of residence lay on the fringes of the Village boundaries. The following persons are not included on the map or in the accompanying discussion: the “afflicted girls” (see note 26); Sarah and Dorcas Good, who had no fixed residence; Mary DeRich, whose residence we have been unable to locate; and the five Villagers who were both accusers and defenders in 1692.
Figure 5: Benjamin C. Ray’s “Geography of Witchcraft Accusations in 1692 Salem Village,” modifying Boyer and Nissenbaum’s original map.

Notes: Extended family names have been assigned to the data points shown in figure 4 by correlating the data points with the lists of accusers, accused, and defenders presented in Boyer and Nissenbaum, ed., *Salem-Village Witchcraft*, 375-382, and with the households shown on the residential map appearing in Upham, *Salem Witchcraft* 1:xxv-xxvii, plus map insert. The household names of all but two of Boyer and Nissenbaum’s ninety data points (two accusers) could be identified. A complete list of each data point and associated household name appears in appendix 1. Documentation for extended family members not readily apparent from the list in appendix 1 may be found in note 28. I have added to figure 6 four data points not appearing in figure 4 -- the accused witches Sarah Wilds (WL) and Mary Esty (NT) just north of Salem village, and George Jacobs, Sr. (JA) and Margaret Jacobs (JJA) just south of the village -- because they are in line with the rules governing the rest of Boyer and Nissenbaum’s data and they help illustrate the significance of family ties in the witch hunt. Source: Modification of data from figure 4.
Figure 7. Accused suspects in Salem witch hunt, by date of first formal legal action (in weeks). Notes: Each bar represents the number of suspects accused in the week beginning on Monday (the dates displayed along the bottom of the graph) and ending on Sunday just before the start of the next week. Almost no legal actions were taken on Sundays, the Puritan Sabbath. Legal actions include, in descending order of frequency: arrest warrant, complaint, examination, testimony, statement, deposition, and other. A table showing each of the 138 suspects included in this figure, together with their dates and type of legal action, appears in appendix 2. Source: Records, pp. 101–124.