



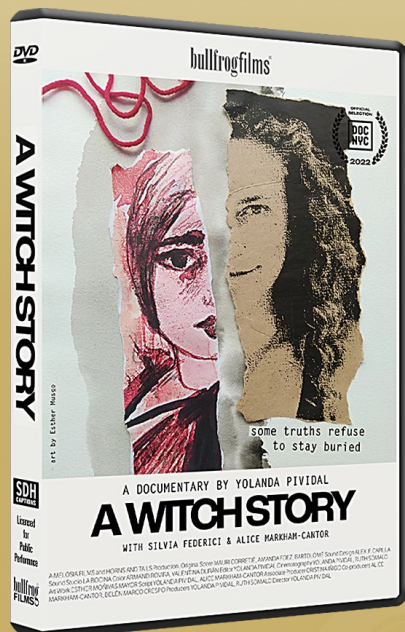
Community Screening & Discussion Guide

A WITCH STORY

Use your screening of **A WITCH STORY** as a tool for educating your community about connections between the Salem Witch Trials and contemporary oppression of women in the US and abroad. This guide offers some background information, helpful tips & discussion questions for an informative, rewarding screening. **Good Luck!**

what you'll find inside!

- about the film & filmmaker
- ready to watch! screening guide
- ready to talk! discussion guide
- resources



About the film

Young writer Alice was a teenager when she discovered something that changed her life forever: she was a descendant of Martha Allen Carrier, a woman hanged for witchcraft during the Salem Witch Trials of 1692. At 24, after scouring archives, reading academic texts, and compiling hundreds of pages of notes on witch hunts, Alice is ready to share her findings in a book. But before finishing the story, she has some last strings to tie up, which leads her to revisit the last days of Martha in Salem and to reckon with the fact that for millions around the world, Salem is not over.



About the filmmaker

Yolanda Pividal is a Spanish filmmaker and multimedia journalist based between New York and Madrid. Her documentary films mostly focus on the impact of geopolitical borders in the lives of women and children and "in-between" cultures, and have been awarded and exhibited in festivals and theaters internationally. Her work has also received support and recognition from The IFP and Fledgling Fund, the IDA, the New York Council of Arts, the National Board of the Review, the Chicken & Egg pictures grant, and the International Filmmaker-in-residence fellowship by the Jacob Burns Film Center.

ready to watch!

Ideas and best practices to help make your community screening a success!

1. Publicize Your Event! This is the most important step because it not only tells the world what you're up to, but it lets the Bullfrog Community team know what your plans are so we can help you publicize your event. Visit <https://www.bullfrogcommunities.com/awitchstory> to register and get the word out about your upcoming screening. You can also email us at info@bullfrogcommunities.com if you need help getting started!

2. Visualize Your Goal! What do you hope to achieve with your screening? Your goal could be to generate a lively post-film discussion about issues raised in the film, gain support or recruit volunteers for a local grassroots campaign, or raise funds for a group on your campus or in your community. Or, you can simply use the screening to provide an opportunity for your audience to watch and learn together.

3. Where To Host? Consider which locations in your area would be ideal for accommodating an in-person community film screening of the size you anticipate: downtown movie theaters, churches and synagogues, town halls, community centers, public libraries, school auditoriums, university and college venues, warehouse spaces, a local business, outdoor screenings at parks and playgrounds, and even private homes have been venues for many successful community screenings. Virtual screenings can be hosted on <https://streaming.bullfrogcommunities.com>, or by using a customized screening room on Vimeo.

4. Find A Partner! Give some thought to who is already working on this issue in your community. Can they help sponsor the event? Spread the word? Participate in a panel discussion or Zoom meeting after the screening? Some potential partners include: student groups at schools, universities and colleges; a local public or campus library; representatives from local religious congregations or faith-based community groups; local chapters of national/global activist or grassroots organizations; faculty members at nearby universities and colleges; reporters/journalists from local news publications such as newspapers and magazines; local nonprofits; and any community organizations that share goals or views with the film you are screening.

5. Invite A Guest Speaker! Guest speakers and panelists are a great way to encourage discussion and debate after a community screening. When people are engaged and thinking about the issues they will stay engaged long after the screening has passed. Contact representatives of local non-profits, faith groups, journalists and reporters from local media outlets, or teachers and professors who have expertise and/or insight into the issues raised by the film, and invite them to attend your screening—in person, via Skype or Zoom, etc—and participate in a discussion or Q&A session with your audience.

6. Engage Your Audience! Use this discussion guide to engage your audience. Included in this guide is a section called Ready to Talk! with a few suggested discussion questions to get the conversation started, and a section called Ready to Act!— which can be used as a handout — listing additional resources for further investigation about key issues raised in the film.

7. Spread The Word! Think about the best methods available to you for publicizing your film screening to people in your community. Sending emails to a contact list, creating event notifications on Facebook, Instagram, Eventbrite or an online community calendar, using Twitter to announce your event, and placing screening announcements in local newspapers and newsletters is a good start. In addition to this guide, you can download a screening poster and press photos that can be used to help publicize your event: <https://www.bullfrogcommunities.com/awitchstory>

8. Tell Us How It Went! Visit <https://www.bullfrogcommunities.com/awitchstory> to tell us about your event. Contribute to the film's discussion page (if available) to help other student groups, universities, non-profits, congregations and community groups further the discussion and put on successful screening events of their own. Where was your screening held? Who attended? What went well, and what was challenging? What did you discuss? Your feedback will help others to organize their own events, and will energize Bullfrog Communities as a whole.

ready to talk!

**Your audience will be excited to discuss the issues raised by the film.
Here are some questions that will get people talking.**

- 1.** Check a historical timeline of the Salem Witch Trials, like the ones often found in textbooks. After watching this film, do you feel any data or historical events are missing?
- 2.** Who do you think has decided to include certain historical events and not others in that timeline? Why?
- 3.** Do you think it would be possible for a new witch hunt to occur in your country today? Why or why not?
- 4.** What conditions do you think would need to exist for such persecution to occur, and who do you think would be the persecuted? Why?
- 5.** Think of the current criminalization of immigrant populations, the dismantling of women's reproductive rights, or the persecution of LGBTQ communities around the world: What similarities can you identify between these phenomena and the great witch hunts in Europe and Colonial America?
- 6.** In the final scene of the film, Alice enters a dark room where images from the past and present related to violence and oppression against women, as well as their struggles, are projected. If you were responsible for recreating that final scene, what images would you choose to project onto the walls of your room?

resources

handout

Salem Witch Trials: Documentary Archive & Transcription Project

<https://salem.lib.virginia.edu/home.html>

The Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archive and Transcription Project consists of an electronic collection of primary source materials relating to the Salem witch trials of 1692 and a new transcription of the court records, including court records, contemporary books, and record books.

The Cornell University Witchcraft Collection

<https://rmc.library.cornell.edu/witchcraftcoll/>

Part of Cornell University Library's Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell's Witchcraft Collection contains over 3,000 titles documenting the history of the Inquisition and the persecution of witchcraft, primarily in Europe.

Witch Trials in the 21st Century

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/witch-trials-21st-century/>

A multi-media lesson on contemporary belief in witch craft and ways to prevent modern-day witch hunts. For grades 5-12.

Salem Witchcraft Trials Research Guide

<https://www.congregationallibrary.org/salem-witchcraft-trials-research-guide>

In this research guide, users will find information about resources held at the Congregational Library & Archives and partner institutions related to the Salem witch trials

Crisis & Critique - Podcast interview with Silvia Federici (4/24/24)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBIfEj72vPg>

Agon Hamza and Frank Ruda sit down with the Italian feminist theorist and activist Silvia Federici to discuss her work on feminism, critique of Marx(ism), primitive accumulation, contemporary feminism, wars, and many other things.

The White Review - Interview with Silvia Federici

<https://www.thewhitereview.org/feature/interview-with-silvia-federici/>

Silvia Federici discusses feminism, housework, the necessity for women to look for structures outside of capitalism, and her own political coming-of-age.

You Are There - The Salem Witch Trials (1953)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LttzSt3zZy4>

Directed by Sidney Lumet and hosted by Walter Cronkite, this episode of the 1950s television series "You Are There" dramatizes the Salem Witch Trials and features interviews with the accused.