

*J L Tracy, Jr brings readers on an adventure that sees Colonial Americans Aaron and Cyrus to the modern day with all its amenities. When they return home, their modern friends become swept up in the furious and highly suspicious community of Salem, Massachusetts. They must find a way to rescue their futuristic friends without raising suspicions and accusations on themselves.*

## General Discussion Questions

1. The author begins the story with a scene involving two residents, a man and a woman, of the Salem community in the year 1692. How do their different attitudes toward the witch trials reflect the environment surrounding Salem? Whose attitude is more justified? Was it necessary for the author to set this scene as the opening of the story?
2. Aaron and Cyrus discuss Cyrus' behaviors with women. Our perception of Colonial Americans is often that of the Puritans who founded Plymouth. Is Cyrus' personality a surprise? Is their general attitude toward witchcraft a surprise?
3. When Cyrus falls through the portal, Aaron wrestles briefly with the dangers of pursuing him. Why does he struggle to decide to go through? What are his fears? What motivates him to overcome those fears? Is this a leap of faith?
4. The author takes care to use only words and sentence styles that are historically accurate when following the thoughts of each character. Does this writing style help to distinguish the characters? Later in the story, we see how the written word appeared in 1692. How did the literacy of the average townsfolk compare to that of people today?
5. Is Jeremy's decision to handle getting Aaron and Cyrus home himself before returning the time device to the scientists based on genuine discomfort about their motivations? Does his own fandom of science fiction and time travel play a significant or minor role in his decision-making?
6. Could Dr. Duncan's team's pursuit of the Time Opener be considered aggressive? Is their aggression justified by the dangers of the Time Opener falling into the "wrong hands"? Is Jeremy's resistance to just returning the device to them justified in the face of this aggressiveness?
7. Why did Brent jump out of the SUV and run after Jeremy, Aaron and Cyrus? Was the situation dire enough to warrant this decision? What other ways could he have tried to intervene that could have prevented further issues?
8. What are some qualities of the jail described by the author that stand out? Would you describe them as humanitarian? What are some legal protections that prisoners today are afforded when in jail?
9. Jeremy makes several attempts to stand up for Lisa's honor. Is he being chivalrous? Should he have held his tongue?

**70.** Modern-day police precincts around America proudly display the motto “To Serve and Protect”. If you were able to ask the Constables in 1692 if they felt this motto represented their work, what do you think they would say? Are they public servants? Do their harsh treatment of prisoners, including the jail quality, take away from their roles as public servants?

**71.** When Reverend Cotton Mather calls for a meeting of the town magistrates, why does he want to expedite the trial of Jeremy, Lisa and Duncan? Do all the magistrate agree with his reasons? Do they seem to already have a decision on the ultimate verdict in the meeting or are they open to a not-guilty verdict?

**72.** How would you describe the legality of the way the magistrates conduct the trial? Is justice their true motivation? How does their sense of justice differ from judges today (*consider interviewing a judge for this*)? What aspects of the trial resemble modern courtroom trials?

**73.** Jeremy and Duncan argue over the merit of exposing the truth of their presence: Jeremy says they should tell the magistrates they are time travelers, while Duncan argues that such an admission would be worse than the witch accusations. What might the magistrate’s reaction have been had they told them they were time travelers?

**74.** Were Jeremy and Duncan subjected to the same treatment as Lisa during the witch examinations? Did they experience the same humiliations? Was there any part of the doctor’s examination that could be used as evidence in a modern court?

**75.** The author does not reveal Dr. Duncan’s race until he crosses paths with Jeremy midway through the book. Does this reveal alter the reader’s perception of the character of Duncan? Should it? What does Duncan learn about racism and his ethics after his ordeal in 1692? Does his wife learn anything from this as well? Does his team?

**76.** The leading theories surrounding the start of the hysteria in Salem Town and Salem Village involve a disease called ergot poisoning as well as conspiracy among the accusing girls. In the story, we see hints that the girls are playing to the situation. What would compel the town elders and magistrates to so easily take the young ladies’ accusations so seriously as to put people to death over them?

**77.** Cyrus becomes a central character in the second half of the story while Aaron becomes a secondary character. Does Cyrus show growth as a person as well in the second half? What personality traits makes him a stronger character? Does Aaron’s role become useless? How does Aaron maintain the peace between Cyrus and Brent?

**78.** Brent’s role takes center stage in the second half of the story as well. Does Brent show growth as a person? Does the conflict between Brent and Cyrus lead to any better understanding of each other? Despite their conflicting personalities, does Brent relate better with Cyrus than Aaron?

**79.** Was the use of blue face makeup as disguises an effective tool to play on the Colonials’ fears and superstitions? Do you think anyone ever connected the Blue Wraiths with either Aaron or Cyrus afterwards?

**20.** How well does Lisa deal with the harsh examinations and sad realities of the women she meets in jail? Should she have kicked the constable during the rescue sequence? Did that action help her deal with her ordeal? In a story with few female lead characters, is Lisa ultimately a weak or strong character?