



## **CONTENT WARNING: Suicide, sexual assault, death, racism, and snakes**

After watching the movie, please take some time to discuss the following questions. Please try to keep your answers brief so that everyone has a turn to share their thoughts. It's okay if you don't have time to get through all the questions.

### **Ethics, Power, And Responsibility**

1. There is great power when people come together, which can be used for good or bad, but as they say in the film, it all comes back threefold. Do you believe that the Universe punishes or rewards people based on their actions? If so, why do you think so many innocent people suffer and so many harmful people never face accountability?
2. During a ritual, each girl says what they want to gain or manifest. Sarah wants to force Chris to love her. Why would this be harmful or unethical?
3. Bonnie wants to heal her burn scars. Is it harmful or unethical to want to change your appearance? Later in the movie, the girls use glamours to change their appearance by impersonating other people. Is this harmful or unethical? What are some differences between the two scenarios?
4. Rochelle wants to punish her classmate for racism and bullying. Is it harmful or unethical to pray for someone to be punished for harming others? Sarah had cast a love spell on Chris to punish him for lying about her and other girls. What are some differences between the two scenarios?
5. Nancy wants to have power. She lives in an abusive home and struggles with poverty and bullying. Is it wrong of her to want power and money when she has been poor and powerless her whole life? How can manifesting money be harmful or unethical?
6. Sarah performs a binding spell to prevent Nancy from harming others. Was it right or wrong for her to try to control Nancy? She also performed a binding spell to make Chris love her. How is that different?

### **Consequences and Corruption**

1. Do you believe that the girls were "good people" before realizing their power, or not? What are some examples from the movie to support this belief? Why do you think their personalities changed after realizing their power?
2. Do you believe that you are a "good person"? How do you think you would change if you were able to affect the world around you and the lives of others?
3. Throughout the movie, Chris is portrayed as the villain. After he tries to sexually assault Sarah, Nancy finds him and kills him. Typically in movies, the person who defeats the villain is seen as a hero, but when Nancy kills Chris, Nancy is seen as the villain. Why do you think audiences see her this way? Why do you think Chris is portrayed as a victim?

## Portrayals of Witchcraft and Paganism in Movies

1. The Craft has some of the most accurate portrayals of Witchcraft in film, partly because the filmmakers brought in a practicing Wiccan as a consultant: Pat Devin, High Priestess of Covenant of the Goddess. Fairuza Balk who played Nancy was so immersed in the world of witchcraft that she ended up buying Panpipes Magickal Marketplace, the pagan shop she had visited during her time researching her role as Nancy. Many phrases, tools, and rituals in the film were pulled from Wicca, a modern Celtic reconstructionist religion. Do you think this film helped people to understand Wicca and Witchcraft, or created more misconceptions about this faith?
2. The filmmakers made The Craft to fit a PG-13 rating. They followed all of the guidelines to earn that rating, but in the final outcome the film was rated R because the film dealt with teenage girls using witchcraft. Why do you think that our society sees Witchcraft as "for adults only", but there are many PG-13 movies about other faiths that use the power of prayer to influence their lives?
3. Great care was taken during the filming to go through the motions of the many rituals without actually "performing" the rituals, including inventing the name of a made-up god (Manon). The official website of the film said: "The crew had to return to the location a second time to complete filming, interrupted by several weird occurrences that even caused witch consultant Pat Devin to raise an eyebrow. As the fog rolled in at midnight, the four actresses used actual Wiccan rites and language to invoke powerful forces. Then, as Fairuza Balk's character Nancy attempts to invoke the deity Manon, a flock of bats hovered over the set and the tide rose dramatically, extinguishing the circle of candles. Witchcraft consultant Devin recalls that "Manon, a fictitious creation for the film, sounds very close to Mananan, the Gaelic god of the sea. Luckily, we weren't all swept to sea!" Director Andrew Fleming is quoted: "'Every time the girls started the ceremony, and only when they would start the ceremony, the waves would start coming up tremendously fast, pounding heavily. Then, right when Nancy says her line, "Manon, fill me," right at that exact moment, we lost power. It was a very strange thing.'" Do you believe that it is possible that our thoughts and words can affect the world around us, even if we don't personally believe in prayer or witchcraft?

## Female Empowerment

1. There's a reason so many young girls have been inspired by The Craft. Not only does it feature a strong narrative of female friendship, but it also depicts young women becoming empowered and empowering one another. Why might women, especially young women, feel drawn to witchcraft?
2. How do you think the characters were affected by peer pressure? All of the characters experienced bullying from their classmates. Why do you think they were so quick to begin bullying each other?
3. Each of the girls could have studied and practiced witchcraft on their own, but preferred to work with others. What did they gain emotionally, socially, or spiritually from working with a coven?
4. In most movies, when men have supernatural powers, they are seen as helpful superheros. When women have supernatural powers, they are typically portrayed as dangerous witches. Why do you think society is afraid of powerful women? How do you feel about this movie depicting powerful girls as dangerous or evil?



This discussion guide was created by Tree of Knowledge Community Coven for the women of Madison Correctional Facility and encourages personal reflection around the topics of ethics, morality, and witchcraft in media. For more Pagan prison ministry resources, please contact support@treeofknowledgeindiana.com