Fear in the Salem Witch Trials and the Red Scare

In his first inaugural address, President Franklin D. Roosevelt became famous for saying, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself,” meaning the only fear is that which we create in our minds. This quote applies to many events in America's history and in today's world. In the Salem witch trials of 1692, Puritans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony feared being unjustly accused of practicing witchcraft in a time of religious purity. Similarly, during the second red scare in the 1940s and 50, Senator Joseph McCarthy created an atmosphere in which people feared being accused of having communist sympathies in an era of heightened sensitivity to communism. The Salem witch trials and the second red scare share both similarities and differences in that one person spearheaded the campaign to expose alleged wrongdoing, people began to blame each other in order to lessen the severity of their own punishment, and the fear people felt elevated to mass hysteria.

Specific –

your thesis statement

General information

**Body paragraph rough outline:**

|  |
| --- |
| **Feature by feature** |
| **Para 1: feature – one person spearheaded the campaign to expose alleged wrongdoing;** discussion of the similarities and the differences between Williams/McCarthy in this regard  **Para 2: feature – people began to blame each other in order to lessen the severity of their own punishment**; discussion of the similarities and differences between how/why people blamed each other  **Para 3: feature – fear elevated to mass hysteria**; discussion of the similarities/differences in how people’s fears elevated to mass hysteria |