Arthur Miller’s "Death of a Salesman" - The Loman Family and the Father-Son Relationship Between Willy and Biff

Death of a Salesman

Arthur Miller

Understanding Death of a Salesman

Why is Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman still relevant today? Perhaps this simple question begs the question “Is it still relevant?” To any who ask this, the simple answer is an admonition to read the play. Or watch any of the myriad cinematic adaptations. (Dustin Hoffman's portrayal of Willy Loman is arguably a gold standard performance. There are many fine renditions of the role, but the best is surely the one conjured in a careful reader’s mind.) Before we delve too deeply into the lasting meaning of this play and the still poignant struggles of its characters, let us discuss something held so directly before our faces that we may well look through it and never recognize its paramount importance: the play's name. Arthur Miller titled his play -- his first real success -- Death of a Salesman: Certain Private Conversations in Two Acts and a Requiem. Indeed, death hangs heavy here. The title makes it clear and the word requiem makes it tangible. But let us look, briefly, at the title in surgical detail. Why not “The” Death of a Salesman? Or why not Death of THE salesman? These simple words, these direct object identifiers, would change Willy Loman from the everyman to the man. The genius of Arthur Miller is that Loman manages to be both an everyman and a “real” person -- a character we believe existed, with all his faults, his ticks, his occasional smiles, and his undeniable, unbearable descent. This is the story of one man and his family as his life circles the drain, the lives of all those who touch his -- an ever smaller circle of people -- following not far behind. It is a story of neurosis and denial, of failure and suffering and of a falsified, gilded past in which the broken characters try to find happiness and solace. Well, that sounds rather bleak. So why is this such a resonant, potent, and
beloved play? Perhaps because it tells a story we all know, and tells it so well. Perhaps it is because as we watch the ever descending arc that is the lives of Willy, Linda, Biff, and Happy Loman, we are made to whisper under our breath “Yes and there but for the grace of god go I.” Or maybe it is simply because Arthur Miller was such a fine playwright that he could likely have made a three act about pipe fitting enthralling to all. We shall see as we head deeper into the meat of the play; farther down into the minds -- and psychoses -- of the players. But first, who wrought this jewel? “And I looked at the pen and I thought, what the hell am I grabbing this for? EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK

The curtain opens on a small house, several of its walls “removed” so we can see inside it. The lights gradually change to reveal that the house, once quaint and on a lovely spread of land, is now falling apart and is surrounded by tall, drab apartment buildings. The home’s decline mimics that of the head of household, Willy Loman, a man in his 60s and very, very tired. Loman enters late at night, carrying his heavy valises -- the tools of the trade of a salesman in the 1940s -- and shuffling his tired feet. He is greeted by his wife Linda, a kind, patient but sad woman. The couple talk at length and Willy reveals that he could not complete his trip, intended to take him from their home in New York up to Boston, and has sold nothing that day. He could not complete the trip because his tired mind kept wandering into memories of the past and he found the car drifting about the road, following his meandering thoughts. Loman even thinks he was driving a car the family has not owned for years. He is a man whose best years are past; whose very mind is fading buy the book to continue reading!

Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman, the third volume in the Dialogue series, covers six major and controversial topics dealing with Miller's classic play. The topics include feminism and the role of women in the drama, the American Dream, business and capitalism, the significance of technology, the legacy that Willy leaves to Biff, and Miller's use of symbolism. The authors of the essays include prominent Arthur Miller scholars such as Terry Otten and the late Steven Centola as well as young, emerging scholars. Some of the essays, particularly the ones written by the emerging scholars, tend to employ literary theory while the ones by the established scholars tend to illustrate the strengths of traditional criticism by interpreting the text closely. It is fascinating to see how scholars at different stages of their academic careers approach a given topic from distinct perspectives and sometimes diverse methodologies. The essays offer insightful and provocative readings of Death of a Salesman in a collection that will prove quite useful to scholars and students of Miller's most famous play.

Since the existence of life on earth there has been the struggle between the stronger and the weaker of all creatures. The species that had adapted best obtained the greatest chance to prevail in this “combat”. In exactly the same way we can consider the history of mankind as a surviving of the fittest. Nowadays it is not the physique alone that decides if somebody gets above the others or not. It’s more or less the right combination of certain abilities, ambitions and values that make up the secret of success. Nevertheless we can still talk about a kind of natural selection. Although skills and knowledge can be trained, and abilities and competences can be improved by means of special learning methods, somebody who wants to be at the top must already have a certain biological and genetic qualification. Willy Loman, the main character of the play Death of a Salesman, is a salesman.
past sixty years of age. In his youth he believes that he has found the secret to success. Willy is convinced that he will make it if he tries his luck in the business and starts his career in a selling firm. He never has any doubt about achieving his aim as he is of the opinion to have all traits of character and competences he needs. But in reality Willy can be considered as a looser and a poor guy who only claims himself to be at the top. He brings up his two boys in these illusions and is assured of having chosen the right way. The paper deals on the one hand with the main character of the play himself, his dreams, illusions and wrong values that finally lead to his failure and suicide. On the other hand it treats the influence that these illusions exert on his two boys and their wrong upbringing.

Textanalyse und Interpretation des Theaterstücks, Angaben zu Leben und Werk des Autors etc.

A fresh and exciting approach to English Literature

The first critical history of one of American theatre's most famous plays, Death of a Salesman.

Death of a Salesman has been called the quintessential American play, and Arthur Miller remains above all the creator of Willy Loman and his tormented family. Half a century after its epochal premire on Broadway the play is constantly revived in the USA and all over the world, including China. It has been made into several cinema and television films, and audiences are still deeply moved by this poignant American tragedy that manages to present all the contradictions and the beauty of the American Dream. Using colloquial American English, Miller has written not only a great play a world classic, but also a vibrant poetic tribute to his country. In his own words, Death of a Salesman is really, a love story between a man and his son, and between both of them and America. The author of the present essay explores the various facets on the drama. Taking into account most of what has been written on Miller's masterpiece, he advances his own theories about a play he has taught in French and American universities for over twenty years.

Every day, in some part of the world, an Arthur Miller play is performed. In the nearly 60 years since its first production, the Pulitzer Prizewinning Death of a Salesman has become a classic, a staple of school anthologies of American literature and of acting companies' repertoires. It has received worldwide productions, whether as a study of parent-child relationships, as in its landmark 1976 production directed by Miller in Beijing, or as a critique of Western capitalism and has been filmed once for television and twice for movies.

Unlock the more straightforward side of Death of a Salesman with this concise and insightful summary and analysis! This engaging summary presents an analysis of Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller, a tragic drama centred on the character of Willy Loman and his turbulent relationship with his eldest son, Biff. Over the course of the play, flashbacks or dream sequences are used to reveal the reasons why their bond has disintegrated to such a degree, focusing on Willy's obsession with material success and Biff's rejection of the narrative of the American Dream to illustrate the stark contrasts between their personalities and attitudes towards life. Arthur Miller is considered one of the most influential dramatists of the 20th century, and Death of a Salesman is one of his best-known plays. It remains popular today, and new productions of the play are frequently performed. Find out everything you need to know about Death of a Salesman in a fraction of the time! This in-depth and informative reading guide brings you: • A complete plot summary • Character studies • Key themes and symbols • Questions for further reflection Why choose BrightSummaries.com? Available in print and digital format, our publications are designed to accompany you on your reading journey. The clear and concise style makes for easy understanding, providing the perfect opportunity to improve your literary knowledge in no time. See the very best of literature in a whole new light with
The Pulitzer Prize-winning tragedy of a salesman's deferred American dream. Ever since it was first performed in 1949, Death of a Salesman has been recognized as a milestone of the American theater. In the person of Willy Loman, the aging, failing salesman who makes his living riding on a smile and a shoeshine, Arthur Miller redefined the tragic hero as a man whose dreams are at once insupportably vast and dangerously insubstantial. He has given us a figure whose name has become a symbol for a kind of majestic grandiosity—and a play that compresses epic extremes of humor and anguish, promise and loss, between the four walls of an American living room. "By common consent, this is one of the finest dramas in the whole range of the American theater." —Brooks Atkinson, The New York Times "So simple, central, and terrible that the run of playwrights would neither care nor dare to attempt it." —Time

Willy Loman has been a salesman all his life, but at sixty he is forced to take stock of his life and face its futility and failure. His predicament gives him heroic stature in this modern-day tragedy.

Seminar paper from the year 2008 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2.0, University of Paderborn, language: English, abstract: He wants to live on through something - and in his case, his masterpiece is his son. I think all of us want that, and it gets more poignant as we get more anonymous in this world. This quote, said by the author of Death of a Salesman Arthur Miller in 1984, provides just a slight insight into the father-son relationship of Willy and Biff Loman which I will analyze in the present term paper in depth. Moreover, I will have a closer look at the Loman family and how they interact. Firstly, the author will be briefly introduced and the background and the reasons for writing the play are pointed out. Furthermore I will give an overview of the drama and its structure and formal aspects. After this my attention will be directed on the Loman family and I will initially focus on its members and characterize them. Then I will analyze how the relationship between Willy and Biff has developed and why it fails during the play. Finally, I will give a conclusion which will sum up the most important findings which I figured out during my analysis.
Discusses the writing of Death of a salesman by Arthur Miller. Includes critical essays on the play and a brief biography of the author.

Easy to use in the classroom or as a tool for revision, Oxford Literature Companions provide student-friendly analysis of a range of popular A Level set texts. Each book offers a lively, engaging approach to the text, covering characterisation and role, genre, context, language, themes, structure, performance and critical views, whilst also providing a range of varied and in-depth activities to deepen understanding and encourage close work with the text. Each book also includes a comprehensive Skills and Practice section, which provides detailed advice on assessment and a bank of exam-style questions and annotated sample student answers. This guide covers Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller.

The original CliffsNotes study guides offer a look into critical elements and ideas within classic works of literature. The latest generation of titles in this series also feature glossaries and visual elements that complement the classic, familiar format. CliffsNotes on Death of a Salesman shares an intimate glimpse into the dreams and disappointments of an American family. Following the story of Willy Loman, an aging salesman who can't accept change within himself and society, this study guide provides a character list, character map, and character analyses to explore the personalities within Arthur Miller's masterful play. Other features that help you figure out this important work include Personal and career background of the author Introduction to and brief synopsis of the play Summaries and expert commentaries for each act and scene Essays that explore the play's major themes and the author's manipulation of time and space A review section that tests your knowledge and suggests essay topics and practice projects A Resource Center full of books, publications, films, and Internet resources Classic literature or modern-day treasure—you'll understand it all with expert information and insight from CliffsNotes study guides.
In the spring of 1948 Arthur Miller retreated to a log cabin in Connecticut with the first two lines of a new play already fixed in his mind. He emerged six weeks later with the final script of Death of a Salesman - a painful examination of American life and consumerism. Opening on Broadway the following year, Miller's extraordinary masterpiece changed the course of modern theatre. In creating Willy Loman, his destructively insecure anti-hero, Miller himself defined his aim as being 'to set forth what happens when a man does not have a grip on the forces of life.'

The author has managed to combine the whimsical and profound in this jaunty and endearingly honest recollection of anecdotes and observations on his life as a sales executive over the last thirty years. These tales and musings conspire to make Near Death of a Salesman difficult to put down.

One of the great popular successes of recent Broadway history, this ingeniously constructed play offers a rare and skillful blending of two priceless theatrical ingredients—gasp-inducing thrills and spontaneous laughter. Dealing with the devious machinati