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Literature

Death of a salesman, written by Arthur Miller, is a twentieth century modern play which primarily delineates the life of the modern man in today's contemporary world that is getting sophisticated on a daily basis in numerous facets including the advancement of technology. The fundamental aim of the play is to portray how money has turned into an obsessions to many people these days, and how the modern life of people in today's world is determined through the quantum of his earnings, either daily or on a monthly basis. The protagonist of the play Death of a Salesman is Willy Loman, a salesman by profession. However, Arthur Miller portrays him to be an unsuccessful man, on the professional front, which leaves him frustrated and discontented in life, eventually provoking him to commit suicide by the end of the play. Fascinatingly, the character of Willy Loman certainly possesses a few positive qualities. Willy is confronted with the prime challenge which, contrarily can be attributed to be the bitter truth that is surely a big deal both personally as well as in view of the remaining members of his family. With this dissatisfaction and depression; the dejected salesman Willy Loman choses death to be the only solution to his problems in life, and thus commits suicide.

This story of Arthur Miller, essentially divulges the relationship that exists between gender relations as well as family behaviors that are largely dysfunctional in nature.

All through the play Willy experiences a constant conflict of some kind or the other. To be precise, there is a conflict between Willy and both his sons, Biff and Happy, as well as with Linda, his wife and also Charley, who is his neighbor. These conflicts that Loman experiences are essentially ongoing and this is apparent throughout the play, especially the conflict between Biff and Loman. The conflict originates from the philosophy of parenting that Loman holds and his overall philosophy towards life. He strongly believes that, the key to success in life is to be admired, popular, handsome, and fundamentally outmaneuver one and all .

Arthur Miller's play certainly exhibits the element of modernity. According to Klages's essay; today's contemporary society crafts the paradigm of disorder. This society has demarcated a set of specific rules and regards anything that is not in conformity to the defined rules to be a disorder. This notion is very apparent in Miller's story. Miller tries to depict the failure of the capitalistic society. He shows how Loman has been obsessive with capitalistic ideologies and tries to discover a new connotation for his individuality. He depicts the way in which the capitalistic system has ruined the very gist of an individual's life. In this story, Loman is obsessed with the notion of chasing immense wealth, and this obsession apart from just making his life unhappy, also destroys the lives of his entire family.

Miller's writing style clearly expresses the disgust with the values that are propagated by the capitalistic system that is in place in the modern era. This is in conformity with the modern writing. Modern writing replicates the principles of the modern era. Dr. Klages, in her essay, refers to modernity, as a time period, in which order is articulated by the norms of the societies.

Issues that fail to conform to such pre-defined or set societal standards are regarded as immoral doings. The reality is also regarded as outright and complete, even within a social context." Miller exhibits these elements clearly in his writing. Miller passes verdict on capitalism on the basis of what is regarded right according to him or his culture. His language is flawless and transparent. This is completely in conformity with the rudiments of modernity.

While Miller's play is a classic example of modernism, the play *Glengarry Glen Ross*, written by David Mamet is another work that has similar elements of Arthur Miller's play. Even this story of Mamet is about salesmen and their constant endeavors to reach higher positions in their life and earn more money. The salesmen in Mamet's play are all ambitious towards achieving more success in life and they associate the same with wealth as in the case of Willy Loman in Miller's play.

The salesmen in this play decide to do any kind of deeds, if such deeds fetch them money. Williamson, the office manager, squeezes money from the other salesmen in exchange for the leads that he gives him. This is regardless of the very duty of the managers being responsible for offering leads to their sales team. Levene and Aaronow break into the office of Williamson with a motive of stealing a contract and obtain the deal from another sales person." Similar to Miller's work, even Mamet's play depicts flaws of the capitalistic system. Yet, the same theme is communicated by the author in an unprejudiced manner, contrary to Miller's prejudiced judgments. Mamet's attitude to this issue is objective, and this replicates elements of post modernism.

Postmodernism, contrary to modernism, does not define disorder. According to Dr. Klages, postmodernism does not possess an outright truth. It construes things based on the social context. It identifies dissimilarities with a motive to rejoice the notion of disintegration and disorganization. Things are always dependent on the given situation and are contingent. Postmodern writing replicates the ideas of post-modernistic era. They fail to take an impartial or unbiased position on matters as they try to back the presence of various perspectives on different matters. Post-modern literatures also advocate that there is no enduring reality. Post-modernistic elements are highly obvious in Mamet's work. The story also delineates the flaws of the capitalistic society. Yet, the same views are presented by the author in a hilarious manner.

Mamet does reveal his approaches and meaning within the play. This, however, is in conformity with the postmodern writing style unlike the case of Miller. This era highlights objectivity in writing. The author does not take a specific stance on matters as they are viewed from various and dissimilar perspectives. Relativism is the key element of postmodern writing. Mamet's writing brings out this element in an excellent way.

This article evaluates two different plays namely, Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*. Both the plays present similar themes, yet in different ways. Miller uses the elements of modernism in his writing and the same is apparent all through the play. This approach involves presenting matters from the personal view of the author. Miller flawlessly communicates his perceptions that capitalism is wrong and even goes on to advocate what the appropriate situation needs to be. On the

other hand, Mamet takes postmodernism approach. According to this approach, presentation of matters is done in an objective manner. Mamet does not take a stance on any issues as, postmodern philosophy believes that there are multitude of approaches to any issues and thus one cannot take a specific stance on a particular issue. Issues are construed based on the contexts and facts keep changing from one context to the other.

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