

Compare and contrast oedipus the king and death of a salesman

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Oedipus the King and Death of salesman Introduction Oedipus Rex is a piece of writing done by Sophocles and considered as a masterpiece depicting heroic tragedy. It represents an interpretative and monumental theatrical challenge, presented first to audience in 429 B. C. It revolves around the activities and life of an Oedipus and ranks second in terms of production in Thebes. On the other hand, the play death of a salesman was written by a renowned American playwright, Arthur Miller and published in 1949 (Cohen, 2003). It is a true depiction of present day heroic tragedy. As narrated in the play, Willy the salesman causes his own death through his charming nature and interpreted mistaken belief of oneself.

Comparing Oedipus the King and Death of a Salesman

Both plays have got ends that have got tragedies that are followed by accidents. For instance the act of putting the queen to death looks like just a mere twist of fate but it is in fact a catastrophic act that is faced by Oedipus in future. Willy's death is a tragedy whereas his son's failure to embark on business is a catastrophe (Cohen, 2003). Both plays draw the concentration of the audience in appreciating the manner in which human behavior can have profound emotions on a person. Oedipus after discovering the truth blinds himself, whereas Willy maintains that his son must become a businessperson even after finding out that his son is not interested in business at all.

In both plays, the key characters are portrayed as having heroic qualities. Oedipus is a hero in his own right and there is no doubting that. This becomes evident and clear when he refuses to be victimized at all and instead chooses to remain totally loyal to Thebes people. Willy on other side

kills himself for the noble cause of making sure his family is developed. In both plays, the key protagonists are tragic heroes.

Contrasting Oedipus the King and Death of a Salesman.

Both plays represent cultures and lifestyles settings that are completely different. Death of salesman represents a present day tragedy whereas Oedipus represents an old heroic tragedy. Willy's story is about present day activities like insurance and sales, unlike the story of Oedipus which is told in a traditional setting.

In Oedipus, the main protagonist is the king who is painted as a very confident, however the feeling that he portrays of himself to the audience about the real self is quite different. Oedipus on other hand is so full of himself and feels outstandingly perfect (Cohen, 2003). Although Willy looks like he was treading on the right course in his activities just the way Oedipus did, he does not live to face the outcomes of his activities like Oedipus. While on the other hand, Oedipus in an attempt to discover the truth endures the most of his life. His fame and power are finally extinguished by a light slice of the truth. Willy's story looks normal and can be related to normal people having normal desires, whereas the story of Oedipus is seen as that of extraordinary beings with odd desires and dreams. The actions of the protagonists in the death of a salesman are not as captivating as those of Oedipus the king, which draws the attention and feelings of the audience. In conclusion, both plays are set in such a way as to affect the feelings and emotions of their audiences. The different settings brings out various ingredients and thus providing continued liking and increased timeline for both plays (Cohen, 2003). Death, is presented as a tragic and significant

aspect, that bonds the audience and makes them feel inseparable.

Work cited

Cohen, Robert. Theatre: Brief Version. New York: VonHoffman, 2003.

Sandage, Scott. Born Losers: A History of Failure in America. New York:
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.