

Death of a salesman by arthur miller

Business



In an age where youth, success, money and fame are more important than ever, playwright Arthur Miller's work "Death of a Salesman" seems more relevant today than when it was first published in 1949. Did Arthur Miller provide us with a glimpse of the future, a time when the famous "American Way of Life" would cause us to value success in business far beyond family relationships and acceptance of who we truly are? Success versus personal Happiness, Tradition versus Change Like perhaps most parents, doomed protagonist Willy Loman, a salesman, wants the best for his two sons Biff and Happy, but he fails to understand and accept that their aspirations and hopes for the future do not match his. While Willy Loman is "winding down" as the family's breadwinner, his two sons are failing to step up to the mark.

Willy is unable to see that this failure on his son Biff's part has less to do with a lack of capability and everything to do with Biff having lost faith in his father's life choices. When children grow up, they see parents, especially fathers, as paragons, god-like beings who cannot possibly fail to live up to our high expectations. Discovering parents are only human and can thus err can come as quite a shock. Biff's discovery that his father has had an affair causes him to question his father's way of life, a type of existence that involves deceit at every level. Willy Loman is of a generation that places financial success above all things.

No matter what one's personal inclination might be, to be a man in 1940s America means to be successful in business and improve one's family's material situation, not their emotional one. Summary Biff can see himself in a more realistic light and as a single individual, rather than the head of a household. He can accept his shortcomings and his strengths and see a <https://assignbuster.com/death-of-a-salesman-by-arthur-miller-essay-samples/>

future happiness that is not based on financial success. Biff is able to embrace the concept of change, while his father Willy is not. Biff's younger brother Happy is still at a stage in his development where he wants to please his father, no matter what.

Even after Willy's death, even if following in his father's footsteps will not bring him personal fulfillment; the younger son is determined to become a salesman like his father. Like Willy, Happy cannot accept change. He must carry on the " American Way of Life" and forfeit personal happiness in favor of material success. Conclusion" Death of a Salesman" gives us a bitter taste of things to come. Uncritical following of material lifestyle has led Western society to a place in history where traditional family units are falling apart, drug use and suicide rates are increasing. Society as a whole has broken down on the concept of " success".

Few playwrights in history have held up a mirror to society with such startling insight as Arthur Miller did in 1949.