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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CONFLICT AS REFLECTED IN DEATH OF A SALESMAN BY ARTHUR MILLER

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DEDICATION

To the almighty God

To my late father

To my mother

To my brothers and sisters

To my nephews and nieces

This work is warmly dedicated

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this work owes much to the assistance of a number of people that deserve to be thanked:

I am particularly indebted to my supervisor Dr Therese TOYI who accepted to supervise this work despite her numerous duties. Her unfailing and wise guidance, her suggestions and corrections were indispensable.

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Last but not least , many thanks are addressed to my relatives , at the top are my parents , my brothers and sisters , my aunts and cousins who supported me financially and morally in the realization of this work. For this note I am very grateful to my cousin Annick TERIMBERE for lending me a computer in the process of writing. May everyone who contributed in one way or another in reaching this step find satisfaction in it. I am very grateful for your contributions.

ABSTRACT

This work examines parental responsibility and conflict in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. It proceeds to analyze attitudes that Willy, the protagonist of the play nurtures with children and the impact during their life existence. The discovery of parental irresponsibility by Biff created conflict between Willy and Biff, and within Willy himself. This study is written using a sociological approach. This discipline arises from the basic premise that nobody lives a completed isolated existence. Each of us is a product of biological, intellectual, emotional and spiritual influences. As society determines one's existence, so we, too, affect society, by adding to it positively or negatively. This work concludes that, success or failure of children depend highly on the upbringing they get from parents who shape their education, society and the environment in which they grow up in.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

The American dream incorporates a complex of morals, values and romantic ideals. At the socio-economic level, the dream is to have a good career regardless of one's origins. The American dream exalts the self-made–man, the individual who rises in the society through his own efforts rather than inheriting his wealth and status. The depression of the 1930s seemed to break the promise of the "American Dream", the promise that America had made to its citizens—that if one worked hard enough one could enjoy success and prosperity.

In the "American Dream ", each man and each woman should be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position. In the 1940's it was common for Americans to feel disillusioned about the American Dream. According to James Ryan and Leonard Schulp, authors of the Historical Dictionary of the 1940's, the nation was still coping with a Great Depression and some minority groups were seeing the "American Dream " as a nightmare. "As the war dragged on, these groups became more vocal in their pursuit of the American Dream, thereby raising expectations to a higher level." In the 19th century version of the "American Dream" a single man went out into nature and tried to make a fortune from the land (Ryan and Schulp 67).

The crash of the stock market in 1929 ended a particular version of infallible optimism and confidence. The American dream seemed to fade and yet the myth of the American Dream was so potent in the national psyche that it did not really disappear. It lingered on and continues to exercise a tremendous hold in American discourse as individuals evaluate the causes of their success or failure. It was the common person's

experience of this powerful American Myth—a myth that manifested for some but evaded others.

With the American economy, capitalism created a sharp division of society into the lower class and leisure class controlling the economy and practicing conspicuous consumption. The National Economic crisis in 1929 came to add fuel to the fire and American's depression deepened the awareness of the narrow line between myth and reality in the American capitalist system. The ten years that followed the crisis melded with the start of Second World War. All these increased depression in the American minds.

Americans place a high value on work, personal achievement and success. These values are certainly found in the occupational world where most males, especially act them out. The emphasis on work and success often becomes so important that people forget why they are working and striving to succeed. These three powerful values are pervasive in American life. Some observers note that work matters even when they are engaging in leisure activities. Sports are no longer games but highly organized serious competitions where a competitor needs to make hard effort.

Spiritually the American dream is an expression of the basic human desire to transcend the limitation of one's life and to achieve happiness and fulfillment. The American twenties witnessed the betrayal of the ideals underlying the American dream. The jazz age generation ignored Franklin's concern for the moral betterment and public service, while embracing his emphasis on material advancement. American great depression and the chaos of the First and Second World War left its people in state of shock. The generations that witnessed these wars turned to wild and extravagant living to compensate for the bad past they had in their minds.

Problem Statement

Lack of parental responsibility is dangerous to children and impacts them negatively. Parents who have non- positive parenting or are characterized by bad attitudes affect their children. Irresponsibility of one parent or both parents often develops into a conflict between parent and child, conflict between parents and even a conflict within a parent himself. Non-accurate guidance leads to failure whether to the guided or the guider. Additionally, in the play Death *of a Salesman solutions* made by the protagonist did not lead to success as he hoped it. In my society too, wrong solutions are taken by parents even though they take them thinking they are going to overcome their challenges. Sitting together and talk deeply about any problem and finding a solution to any misunderstanding together or even asking for an apology for a mistake done is considered as a humiliation to some parents.

Motivation of the Study

Children are victimized by the unworthy education they get from their society. They are nurtured in wrong principles, whether by their parents or their society, and consequently fail in their lives. There are the youth that get involved in bad behaviors such as being addicted to drugs, banditry, laziness, delinquency and prostitution due to the lack of a sound upbringing from their parents .This conduct leads children to achieve nothing valuable during their life existence or during their adult life. Some parents do not realize that a bad parenting affects both children and themselves. Arthur Miller's play, *Death of a Salesman* reflects this. Willy Loman, the protagonist of the play; is characterized by bad behaviors and has the wrong dreams. He imbued his character in his children and as consequence they failed in their lives whether at school or in everyday life. He realized he had already failed his children when it was too late to change it. Shocked and guilty of his sons' failure, he chose to commit suicide. In addition to feeling ashamed Willy Loman realized Biff loved him when he

cried. Driven by Biff's love, Willy thought of crashing his car. He thought that with the insurance money they would have gained from the car crash, Biff would restart his life plans according to Willy's wrong dreams. By contrast Charley is a good parent and brought up his son Bernard with good model, good moral values. At the end of the day Bernard succeeded in school and became a lawyer. He got marriage and got children while Biff was still single, jobless and hopeless.

Research questions

In this study, the following questions can serve guidance in well conducting this work:

Does Willy's behavior impact their children?

Why does Willy Loman kill himself?

Why should life be framed in terms of success or failure?

Aim of the study

This study aims to examine the cause of Biff's failure in *Death of a* Salesman. It further analyses the relation Biff's failure in relation to his father's behavior and parental guidance. The study proceeds to analyze and explore the fact that the wrong Dream, wrong philosophy and bad parenting that the protagonist has nurtured in his children resulted in failure both on children and on himself. The study further analyzes the conflict between Biff and Willy Loman. Life is framed in terms of success and failure. Biff Loman's failure has a part of result about his father's bad guidance.

Hypotheses

This study is based on the assumptions that:

- Parental guidance and models in Willy Loman did not lead his children to succeed in their lives.

- The protagonist behavior as a parent leads to conflict in his family.

-Teaching Biff to be a hard worker, honest and admitting reality for Willy would lead both Willy and Biff to success.

Scope of the study

The scope of this study is not limited to the play Death of the Salesman by the playwright Arthur Miller but I also consider secondary materials which expose the topics of parental responsibility and conflict. Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* remains a timeless masterpiece because of its ongoing impact on society. Hailed by many reviewers as one of the finest plays to emerge in the American Drama; it won the critics circle award and the inaugural Pulitzer prize for Drama; The play ran for 742 productions on Broadway and by early 1950, eleven foreign productions had opened in Europe, South America and Israel. The success of Death of a Salesman placed Miller into the ranks of leading American writers. It made him a success.

Definition of key terms

1. Parent: In *Oxford English Dictionary*, parent is defined as a person who has begotten or born a child, a father or a mother. Additionally, a parent is a person who holds the position of a parent, a person who exercises the functions of a parent, a protector, and guardian.

According to Francois Dumesnil in *Responsible Parent, Equilibrated child*, a parent is not just a person who begets a child but a parent is the one who is able to nurture an attitude and behavior that will contribute to the success of the child and will help him to play efficiently his role in his adulthood. Dumesnil goes on and defines a responsible parent as one not only interested by accomplishing his child pleasure but also his interest must be driven by the necessity to orient positively the upbringing and improvement of the child. According to Rob George in *International Journal of Law,* a parent is the one disposed to take his parent duties towards his child or his children.

2. Responsibility: The Psychologist Francois Dumesnil in his book *Responsible Parent, Equilibrated Child,* defines responsibility as a virtue of being always ready to accomplish your duty as well as possible. A responsible parent is according to him the one who always stays awake and ready to accomplish as well as possible his duties towards his child.

On his part, Rob George in *International Journal of Law* defines responsibility as the right and duty, power and authority that the law gives to a parent on his child.

In the Oxford English Dictionary, responsibility is defined as the state of being responsible. It furthers its sense and defines it as a charge, trust and or duty for which one is responsible.

3. Conflict: the compact edition of the *Oxford Dictionary* defines conflict as a mental, physical or spiritual struggle of a man. It is the clashing or variance of opposed principles, statements and arguments.

Michael Nicholson defines conflict as an activity which takes place when conscious beings (individuals or groups wish to carry out a mutually inconsistent acts concerning their wants, needs or obligations.

Biography of the Author

Arthur Miller was born in Harlem, New York on October 17, 1915 to an immigrant family of Polish and Jewish descent. His father, Isadore, owned a successful coat manufacturing business, and his mother, Augusta, to whom he was closer, was an educator and an avid reader of novels. The affluent Miller family lost almost everything in the Wall Street Crash of 1929, and had to move from Manhattan to Flatbush, Brooklyn. After graduating high school, Miller worked a few odd jobs to save enough money to attend the University of Michigan. While in college, he wrote for the student paper and completed his first play, *No Villain*, for which he won the school's Avery Hopwood Award. He also took courses with playwright and Professor Kenneth Rowe.

Arthur Miller grew up in the times when Americans were facing depression from World War I. Since he was born two years before the United States entry into that war, this is the reason why his political and artistic convictions were forged in the crucible and national crisis. The great depression World War II made Miller feel the impact of these turbulent years in a very personal way like Tennessee Williams. Arthur Miller is a deeply autobiographical playwright. His plays situate the personal with social realms where the individual is defined as an ethical and social moral agent. As a son of an eastern European immigrant, Miller grew up in a country struggling to come to terms this identity and the increasing tension between its animating myths and ideologies.

In *Death of a Salesman*(1949), Miller determined many of the directions that post war America drama would follow earlier decades and central experiences to which it gives. At high school in Brooklyn, Miller played for the football team but he was an average student. For two years after, he graduated and held after a series of jobs including deliveryman for his father and a salesclerk in an auto parts warehouse in Manhattan. Having saved enough money for him to attend college, Miller applied and

was accepted in the University of Michigan in 1934. He majored in English and began writing Drama. He studied with the English professor Kenneth in playwriting and became aware of Clifford Odets, the author of waiting for the lefty (1935), and other dramatists who made the theater an instrument of social approach and protest during 1930s.

Death of a Salesman opened on February 10, 1949 at Broadway's Morosco in productions directed by Elian KAZAN (who also directed All My Sons). Hailed by many reviewers as one of the finest plays to emerge in the American drama, it won the Critics Circle Award and the inaugural Pulitzer Prize for drama. On 742 wrights on the Broadway and by early 1950, eleven foreign productions had opened in Europe, South America and Israel. The success of Death of a Salesman captured Miller into the ranks of Americans leading American writers. In a 1999 essay commemorating the play's fiftieth anniversary Miller described what he considered to be the power of *Death of a Salesman.* Being human – a father , mother , son –is something most of us fail at most of the time ,and little mercy is eminently in order given the societies we live in , which purport to be stable and sound as mountains when in fact they are trembling in fast wind blowing mindlessly around the earth (Miller, Biography)

Theoretical framework

This study will be conducted using a sociological approach. This approach arises from the basic premise that nobody lives a completed isolated existence. Each of us is a product of biological, intellectual, emotional and spiritual influences. As society determines one's existence, so we too, affect society by adding to it positively or negatively. This approach fits my work in the sense that Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* represents and reflects the society that produced him.

In the sociological approach, Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893), one of the earliest to develop this method, tried to make an interpretation by applying the methods of biological science to literature. He looked at the historically verifiable cause of a text and determined three factors: « Race, Milieu and Moment». By race, Hippolyte Taine referred to creative artists of a given country. It is what is considered to cultural influence. Hippolyte Taine went on explaining the second major of the work of literature as one of «Milieu» which refers to the environment of the artist including the family background, education, marriage, income and love affairs. It also includes travel experiences and profession that one combined to create the human being unique character. According to Taine «Moment» refers to less personal influences in a writer's life but to current that govern not the individual but an age. It points to major intellectual currents of a period, its governing ideas and assumptions. *Death of Salesman* portraits the place, time and societal values of Arthur Miller's from childhood times to adulthood times. The place includes cities of the United States of America where Miller grew up from childhood to adulthood.

Arthur Miller was born in Manhattan and enjoyed an affluent life there with his family during his childhood. However Willy Loman's family was forced to move to Brooklyn where life was not enjoyable as it used to be. The time is set in the late 1940 and the twenties of the United States; ideas of this era are at the center of the play. As far as the cultural and societal values are concerned, the American dream incorporates social values of the characters in the play *Death of a Salesman.* The theme of failure and success according to one's effort and determination is recurring. Thus the play reverberates all the features of sociological approach.

Another perspective of the sociological approach was propounded by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren. In theory of literature they name three areas that are of interest to the social critic. First, they note the importance of heredity and environment

of the writer which explain social values, attitudes and opinions that are presented in the work itself. How are culture and society depicted in the text? How does the fictive world reflect the real world? Finally they turn their attention on the world the work entered –that is, the audience for which it was intended. What kind of impact did it have on the readers? How was it critically received? What emotions did it raise in the reading public?

Francois Dumesnil in *Responsible Parent, Equilibrated Child* states that the position of the child is not administered by pleasure but by the necessity to guide positively the educational development of the child. The parent can by rigor delay an intervention but he can never stand away the obligation to react upon child activities and guide them positively from time to time. The obligation to assure the no weaken presence which neither delegated, waken, subjected to norms, nor limited to the role is meant by the feeling of responsibility which oblige the parent to keep on awaking his child in order to be always in a good relationship with his child. The force and power of being a parent is defined by the permanent will of this feeling. (Dumesni, 57)

Devote Hakizimana in« Marital Conflicts and the Machiavellian Syndrome» a study she conducted on D.H Laurence's *The Rainbow* mentions that: ‹‹In a family, the husband is expected to behave in a given way towards the wife and she in turn is expected to love, respect and serve ›› . She goes on and notes that there must be an understanding between the couple in order to make a harmonious climate in their home. Otherwise conflict can arise at any time and if the couple has children, they will be affected too (Hakizimana, 25).

Ian Marsh in *Introduction to Sociology* puts that despite this changing view of the role of children, it is interesting to note the legislation such as the children act 1989 which still recognizes the primacy of the family and the importance of the family on children's life. By means of examples where parenting and relationships have broken

are regarded as exceptions rather than the rule. Thus the law still places a priority on parental responsibility and on the fundamental belief that the family is inherently a positive environment for the healthy socialization and support of the young child (Marsh, 424).

Kammeyer Ritzer Yetman in *Sociology* mentions that parents are socializing agents; almost all parents recognize the responsibility of teaching their children the skills necessary to get along in life. From a sociological perspective, are responding a social role of being a parent. Most adults learn the parental role of being a parent. They learn it through their own socialization. Many parents also feel responsible of their children. Most of Contemporary parents have accepted that the basic sociological views of children's personalities are shaped by the environment influences in general and especially by parental influences on a child (Kammeyer, 345).

Raymond Catell in *Personality and Mood by Questionnaire* argues that the theory of good moral upbringing and personal discipline leads one to expect little genetic correlations but considerable social and psychological associations with the family, social class, church application and low delinquency. Among criteria it is associated with being chosen a leader in face –to- face groups, with being chosen a group, with experience of bereavement and unsuccessful love affairs, with rejection of immoderate drinking with staying at college dropping out, with absence of criticism by parents in with church activity (Raymond, 187).

Robert Freed Bales in *Personality and Interpersonal Behavior* states that the member located in the downward part of the group space by his fellow members seems submissive, conventional and dutiful to point self –sacrifice. He expects punishment and is ready to martyr himself, in fact he may voluntarily seek martyrdom in order to blame and shame others. He thus seems too unfriendly and passively accusing. He sometimes seeks to make himself the object of aggression of others and sometimes

punishes himself. In the realization of his own values he seems to be trying to move toward self-sacrifice in order to preserve some higher set values ‹‹There is nothing the body suffers that the soul may not profit by›› (Robert, 282).

Schultheiss Donna Polladino in *Psychology as a Major* puts that more specifically; relationships with significant people in our lives play an important role in our ability to successfully negotiate career development tasks such as choosing a major. In fact research has suggested that relationships are most important in the career development process at times when you are making a career discussion assessing or affirming educational and career commitments, and making educational and career transitions. Important people in our lives can be influential in a number of ways by serving as a confidante (Having someone to talk important things over with) a role model, providing emotional support, encouragement, belief, tangible assistance and information , offering guidance and advice on how to handle difficult situations(Schultheiss, 89)

Mielder Wolfgang, Stewart Kingsbury and Harder Kelsie in the *Dictionary of American Proverbs* included proverbs that emphasize parental responsibility or the impact of the lack of it such as: "To become a father is easy but to be a father is difficult". This proverb entails that getting a child does not mean that you equally play the father's responsibility. "Like father like son" or "As a mother and father, so are the daughter and son". Here the personality that parents have is going to be reflected in their children. "When the father praises his son he flatters himself. "A misery father makes a prodigal son (201)

Literature review

This section includes reviews on studies already conducted on Arthur Miller's play *Death of A Salesman* within reviews on books and articles related to the topic Parental

Responsibility and Conflict. *Death of a Salesman* is one of the best plays of the American forties. It inspired a lot researchers and it attracted many critics. Among writers on the themes related to this topic Parental Responsibility and Conflict including researchers who conducted their researches on *Death of a Salesman* reviews made are the following.

In the study «Attitudinal Structure »on *Death of a Salesman*, Mutee Abdul Salaam in a study of puts that the sum total of Willy's value system, as it laid bare in the past time switches, unleashes forces that work against Willy himself and ultimately leading him to self-destruction. We identify these attitudinal underpinnings to be Willy's self- defeating dream of success, his sense of achievement, his agonizing guilt, his oversized self-image and reality and illusion (Mutee Abdul Alsaroy, 1).

Frederick Artan, in« Narcissism and the American Dream» states that Willy Loman displays traits such as grandiosity, arrogance, need of specialness and denial of emotions. His relationships with others characters reveals lack of empathy, manipulation and exploitation of others as well as the need of superiority and fear of inferiority (Frederick Artan 1). Artan also mentions that: «From a social standpoint, narcissists are loners and incapable of healthy relationships, ruthless, exploitive and manipulative characterize their behavior towards other people » (Artan 5).

In "The wrong dream, a study on *Death of a Salesman* " Lindsay Amiro mentions that Arthur Miller's play remains a timeless masterpiece because of its ongoing impact on society. Willy Loman has the wrong dream all along and this is what ultimately leads to his downfall. The cultural context of death of Death of a Salesman plays a major role because of the society's expectations dealing with the American Dream. These expectations cause Willy fatal error in judgment, the wrong dream which is the origin of his inevitable failure. (Amiro1).

Additionally, Amiro argues that Willy believes that the promise of the American Dream is that if you are a well liked man in business then you will acquire the material wealth offered by modern American life. He is fixated on all the wrong things in life: Being well liked instead of being hard working as the key to success in order to obtain the American dream. An example of this is Willy's reactions to Bernard; he does not like Bernard because he thinks he is a bore. Actually, Bernard is closer to reaching the American Dream because he is a hard-working (Amiro3).

Jessica L. Tracy in« Death of a narcissistic salesman», a thesis on *Death of a Salesman,* argues that Arthur Miller's tragic protagonist Willy Loman is the quintessential ordinary man striving to achieve extraordinary dreams. Willy's search for the American Dream of fame, fortune and admiration is the hallmark of his identity, but like many of his generation he is unable to meet with the unrealistic goals he has set out for himself. In Death of a Salesman, Miller presents Willy in the final days of his life and depicts a man who has failed to become successful, wealthy or well a liked salesman, who treats his wife with cruelty and disrespect and who has raised one son to follow in his footsteps by cheating and lying his way towards an illusionary dream while his other son, disillusioned with Willy, is homeless, jobless and aimless at the age of 34 (Tracy 2).

Swati Samantaray in« Dystopia», a critique he made when on Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* argues that; the playwright portrays characters of postwar era America who resort to manners of escapism into the illusionary realities in order to free themselves from their harsh and frustrated existence. Their predicaments result from their failure to reach a reasonable adjustment to their contemporary life, lack of fruitful communication among family members in addition to their inner conflicts. Therefore, they all share the dissatisfaction with their realities, a sense of boredom and frustration. Additionally; he claims that the play's characters become victims and victimizers ,

victims of the surrounding circumstances in society and victimizers by deceiving their families whose life as result become tragic. The tragic plight of their family results from their personalities and from contemporary American capitalist society that discards the unsuccessful (Samantaray 1).

Janvière Hakizimana in« Catharsis and Conflict Resolution» argues that through the process of socialization, a child continually learns the characteristics of his society in order to respond to its requirements. However, man is different to other creatures in that he is aware of his existence and knows that he has a past and will have a future. Therefore he accepts and obeys the norms of his society or else he rejects them once he finds them meaningless (Hakizimana 23).

Guendouzi Amar in «Tragedy of the Modern Age» a study he conducted on *Death of a Salesman* mentions that Willy Loman struggles to preserve his own image of himself, it means the dignity, and this may be illustrated in his arguments with Charley over the card game and the job and his arguments with his own son Biff about not being a " Dime a dozen " which means worthless. Behind Willy's continuous struggle to keep his personal dignity, Miller probes the essence of the American Dream and depicts the shortcoming of the capitalistic society during the years of depression. In fact, Willy drifts in and out of the dream. In spite of his old age, his ideas of success in business and respectability in society still stir his emotions and hearken his passions (Amar23).

Fidèle Bigirimana in " Moral Emptiness in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby",* argues that human relations and activities are somehow characterized by hypocrisy. The desire of characters drives them to behave in habits that are contrary to moral principles. The lies between characters are the main characteristics of hypocrisy. Hypocrisy traces how Americans of the 1920s pretended to be honest whereas in reality they are not. Characters in The Great Gatsby use hypocrisy in order to improve

their lives. They do not turn to the dreams that are separate from the realities of their present lives. Rather, the dreams that seem most vibrant to them are those that change their everyday lives or realities into something seemingly meaningful. As a consequence, they embrace the various illusions that give shape to their lives and increasingly, sometimes deliberately assume roles and outgrowths of their illusions (Bigirimana 21).

Milton Saperstein in Emotional Security argues that the intimacy of marital relationships should create a haven of emotional security where both partners can relax completely and if necessary be helpless on occasion without feeling threatened or losing self-esteem. Neither partner should be required to play full time superman norshould neither partner be helpless to the extent of denying the others dependent needs. They should be both capable of being affective adults most of the time, be able temporally to play a protective role have a leeway for feeling inadequate some of the time. (Saperstein 17)

Rob George in *International Journal of Law, Policy and Family*, volume 24 puts that parental responsibility remains a core concept in family law. Having parental responsibility means having all rights , duties , powers , responsibilities and authority that the law gives to a parent while a responsible parent is the one who is disposed to take his parental duties(George 348).

Structure of the study

Including the general introduction and the general conclusion this work is divided in five parts. The general introduction unveils the general ideas that are developed in the work. It appeals and exhibits the whole study. The first chapter of the work, entitled "Parental Responsibility" examines attitudes required for parents to fulfill their responsibilities in order to serve a good model to their children. In the

society a child is firstly shaped psychologically and behaviorally by his parents, any person who holds the position of a parent or any person who exercises the functions of a parent such as a guardian. The second chapter, "Conflicts in *Death of a Salesman*" traces different kinds of conflicts that the protagonist faces in the play *Death of a Salesman*. The third chapter, titled "The Author's Vision," explores escaping from the truth and reality as factors leading to failure. This chapter comes back to honesty and determination that parents nurture with their children which significantly help them to succeed. The whole work concludes that irresponsibility of parents or non-positive parenting leads to failure of children and parents, too , and gives recommendations to different groups involved.

CHAPTER I: PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Personality, moral and ethical values are at the foundation of fulfilling responsibility. Children need positive parenting or those who insure their education. Well organized children who reach their goals give honor to parents. The success of children is often the result of the good guidance and even the strict supervision that they get from their parents. Children's success highly depends on the guidance they get from their society. Likewise children's failure often results from the bad education and unsound guidance they got during their childhood.

Irresponsible parents often abuse their children, both willingly and unintentionally. Other children face the challenge of parents' neglect in terms of planning future projects. Additionally, the relationship between the couple impacts their children whenever the couple has them. To fulfill their responsibility there are traits that parents need to have. These traits include honesty, faithfulness, humility toward your mate and children and serving as good model. In this regard, Willy Loman is a dishonest, sexually unfaithful and characterized by grandiosity and lies.

In fact the protagonist in *Death of a Salesman* lacks the virtues of a responsible parent capable of assuring positive parenting. During Biff and Happy's childhood, Willy trained his sons to achieve success by developing the philosophy of being liked. Lyndsay Amiro, in the« Wrong Dream» in *Death o f a Salesman,* states: « Willy Loman has instilled the idea of being well liked in both Biff and Happy and thinks that this is the ultimate key to success. He tells them that they will not work hard for anything» (Amiro, 5). Instead of encouraging his children to work hard for success, Willy Loman instills them in being only liked. Amiro writes that: « Everything will come very easy because of likeability » (Amiro, 5) an accurate parenting or positive parenting is significant to lead one's children to a successful life. A good and positive parenting is what Willy Loman missed to guide positively his children. Disciplinary

practices which could help Biff and Happy were not nurtured in them during their childhood. In *Death of a Salesman*, the protagonist of the play Willy Loman is a father of two sons Biff and Happy. During their childhood, Biff and Happy are trained to achieve success by developing the idea of being well liked. Instead of encouraging them to review their lessons, he informs them that he brought them a punching bag in order to practice sport and develop their physical strength. The discussion between Willy and his children is as follows:

Happy: Where is the surprise, Pop?

Willy: In the back seat of the car.

Biff: What is it, Dad? Tell me, what'd you buy?

Willy :(laughingly cuffs him): Never mind, something I want you to have.

Happy :(offstage): It's a punching bag (1.386-391).

Willy wants his children to get a punching bag. This is something that can help them to achieve being well-liked. Developing physical appearance is even more advantageous according to Willy than getting a lot of marks as we are going to see it in the following discussion with his sons.Barri Flowers in The Adolescent criminal, statesthat:

Parental disciplinary practices have been shown to be an important factor in delinquent behavior. More specifically, lax or inconsistent disciplines as well as harsh discipline are seen as being more likely to result in juvenile delinquency than consistent, reasonable disciplinary practices. A number of longitudinal studies utilizing both self-report and official data have documented a strong predictive relationship between poor disciplinary practices of parents and eventual delinquent behavior of children. (Flowers 135)

Due to inconsistent discipline that Biff and Happy got from their father Willy Loman, Biff involved in stealing while Happy ends up to be a prostitute and womanizer. During their childhood, Biff and Happy are urged by their father to develop physical strength. He inspires them to be well liked in the society like big stars like James Joseph Tunney (1897-1987); an American boxer who was undefeated world heavy weight champion in 1926 to 1928. According to Willy's ideas developing physical strength will lead his children to be well liked and being well liked is the only way to success.

Biff and Happy are students and need enough time to review their lessons. Willy Loman is urging them to practise sport and develop physical strength instead of advocating them to study hard. He pays little attention to his sons by guiding and supervising them in reviewing their lessons in order to get good results at school. His dreams are to imbue his children with physical abilities and will help them in the business world. Intellectual and moral values that could help them during their adulthood were not given a paramount consideration by Willy Loman. At school Biff is a member of football team and he likes to play. However, he gives much time to playing and practising .Willy Loman was pleased to see his sons physically well built. Biff was the captain of the school team. Biff informed his father that on that Saturday he is going to break through for a touchdown. The answer that his father gives him proves the joy about Biff's information towards his father.

Willy: You nervous, Biff, about the game?

Biff: Not if you're gonna be there.

Willy: What do they say about you in school, now that they made you captain?

Happy: There is a crowd of girls behind him every time the classes change.

Biff (taking Will's hand): This Saturday, Pop, this Saturday just for you, I'm going to break through for a touchdown.

Happy: You are supposed to pass.

Biff: I'm taking one play for Pop. You watch me, Pop, and when I take off my helmet that means I'm breaking out. Then you watch me crash through that line.

Willy :(kisses Biff) oh! Wait till I tell this in Boston!

(1.3.448 - 459)

Biff wanted to please his father. Informing him that he would watch him break through that line entails that he will perform well during the match. Biff knew that Willy's dream included the philosophy of being well liked. Actually Willy was very pleased and he kissed his son Biff and even answered him that he would tell that in Boston. He was pleased that the dream he had for his sons would be realized. His dream for them was to be well liked in the world. He wants them to be stars. Even the punching bag he brought them had a signature of James Tunney. James Tunney was an American undefeated world heavyweight champion, 1926-1928. Being champions is a dream that Willy had for his children. When Biff realized that his father is pleased he asked his father if had seen the new football he got. Willy was interested to know where he got it. However what is more interesting for him was to hear that the coach lended him the ball because he likes him. Being admired by his coach is something that pleases Willy as a father who would like to see his son reach something great during his life. He even mentions that the coach will probably congratulate Biff for that initiative.

Unfortunately Biff did not take his time to prepare the Regents exam .The Regents as the exam that students were supposed to do to get access to the university. Additionally Bernard, Biff's classmate and neighbor came to remind Biff to prepare the

exam the exam together. Willy advocates his son to go on practicing football instead of studying for the Regents. Additionally he looks down Bernard and attributes him to be anemic. The discussion between Bernard and Willy prove Willy's non positive parenting as it can be realized below:

> Bernard: Biff, where are you? You are supposed to study with me today.
>
> Willy: Hey, Looka Bernard. What are you looking so anemic?
>
> about, Bernard?
>
> Bernard: He's gotta study, Uncle Willy. He's got Regents next week.
>
> Happy (tauntingly, spinning Bernard around) Let's box, Bernard!
>
> Willy: You better study with him, Biff. Go ahead!
>
> Bernard: I heard him!
>
> Willy [angrily]: what are you talking about? With scholarships to three universities they're going to flunk him?
>
> Bernard: But I heard Mr. Birnbaum say –
>
> Willy: Don't be a pest, Bernard! [To his boys] What an anemic!
>
> (1.5. 460-478)

Since Biff was a child, he was unable to make an accurate choice in accomplishing duties, Willy Loman would help him. Willy gave a little consideration to the Regents exam. Even though he firstly told his son that he'd better study with Bernard, he completely changed his mind when Biff showed him his sneakers on which he printed University of Virginia. However it was not just the print that was on his sneakers that would help him to be graduated as Bernard stated it to Willy: "Just because he printed University of Virginia on his sneakers doesn't mean they've got to graduate him, Uncle Willy". (1.5.471-472). Even though he was a child Bernard has a logical thinking than

Willy. From that discussion, the failure of Biff in the Regents is predictable especially in math because he did not take his time to prepare it. Then parental responsibility of Willy was put into question at that level. He was not well accomplishing his role as a good parent. After the Regents exam failed Math as it was predicted by Bernard. Then there were still a chance of taking up summer school and graduate then.

Willy Loman did not tell the truth to his sons. He used to tell his sons that he was liked everywhere. He used to tell them that he was respected everywhere and well known. Traits that characterize Willy Loman are grandiosity and arrogance. Young children often believe in their parents views. They trust them in most of everything. Biff and Happy trust in their father during their childhood. However, as his name implies it, Willy Loman is not a great man as he said it. Loman is the diminutive of low man which means he is a simple person, a man important for nothing, a coward.

Actually Willy Loman is an ordinary man.To prove the ordinary life that Willy was leading, we can firstly analyze the kind of job he had. He was a salesman and he worked for Howard Wagner. A salesman was not a great man as Willy used to say it. His job did allow him to satisfy his family for getting basic needs. He had a lot of debts to different people. Linda told him that he owed around a hundred and twenty dollars by the fifteenth. He himself agreed to his wife Linda that he would be unable to pay if his business didn't pick up. He used to plead his neighbor charley to lend him money. However he sang all the time of his greatness. This proves that Willy is periodically unable to reach his image of strength he had always dreamed about. Secondary Willy is aging without achieving his dreams. He used to say that many people will come at his funeral but when he died only his family and his neighbor charley came.

Willy trained his children in lying and in stealing instead of being honest and hardworking. Biff and Happy admired their father. They obeyed him and even idolized him. Linda told his husband that: « Few men are idolized by their children as you are.

»(1.576). Hence what was unsound and inaccurate was that they trusted him while he told them wrong things and they obeyed him when he obliged them to accomplish non-positive actions. He used to tell them lies which prove his arrogance. In the discussion he made with his sons, it is obvious that what is telling them is wrong if we consider the end of the play when at his funeral only his family attended it.

> Willy: You and Hap and I, I will show you all the towns. America
>
> is full of beautiful towns and fine, upstanding people. And they know me boys; they know me up and down in New England.
>
> New England is full of the finest people. And when I bring you fellas up , there will be open sesame for all of us all , cause one thing , boys , I have friends. I can park my car in any street in New England, and cops protect it like their own. This summer, heh? (1.4.435-443).

In this discussion above, Willy tries to convince his sons that he is well-liked in New England. According to him his friend are not mere people but these people are respectable, reputable and honest because he mentions that they are upstanding ones. Not only his friends are upstanding but also they are fine. He insures his children that they will be well welcomed when they will visit these Americans towns.

However, the reality was the other way round. Willy was an anti- model to his sons. when Ben, Willy's elder brother came for a visit Willy invited his sons for fight in other to prove to Ben that his sons are strong. Additionally he thinks he is training them to be liked, well liked all around. Linda inquires to know why they must fight but without a convincing answer. Linda had a contrastive view about their fighting but she can't stop them fighting.

> Willy: Go to it, Biff! Go ahead, show him!

Biff: Okay! [He cocks his fists and starts in]

Linda: Why must he fight, dear?

Ben [sparing with Biff] Good boy! Good boy!

Willy: How is that, Ben, heh?

Happy: Give him the left Biff!

Linda: Why are they fighting? (1.7.825-831)

Parents are like a corner stone of their children education. They are the pillars in the family. Willy would like his children be able to fight with a stranger. This pleased him because his brother Ben would realize that he has strong boys who will make outstanding life in their future. However Linda did not understand why they are fighting. She seemed to be aware that this kind of training will make them fail rather than making them succeed. In addition she was afraid as a mother that they might be harmed while fighting. This is the reason why she insisted on asking the objective of their fought: « Why must he fight, dear? » or; «why are you fighting? » These were kinds of questions that she inquired. The similar question was asked twice which acknowledges to the reader that she was more concerned by the fight. However her inability to do anything about in order to stop it gives us a picture of the place of the woman in America comparing to a man in that time.

Linda concern is both the problem of his husband than his sons. However she loves them and she loves his husband too. She is rather preoccupied by his husband. Then she tries to support his husband even when his decisions seem to be wrong. This is done because she was afraid of increasing his irritation. She knows that his husband was suicidal and she was afraid of irritating him. When Linda is discussing with her sons, the words she tells Biff are strong words which proves that she really loves her husband Willy:

> "I love him. He is the dearest man in the world to me, and I don't want anyone to making him feel unwanted and low and blue. You've got to make up your mind now, darling there is no leeway anymore. He is your father and you pay him that respect, or else you're not to come in here. I know he is not easy to get along with, nobody knows better than me but..." (1.7.964-979)

These words are strong words which proves Linda's love towards his husband. She told his sons must respect him as their father whatever the circumstances in which he is. Actually a parent owes respect whether he is poor or rich, whether he is strong or weak. However being respectful does not mean accepting to be misguided by them or accepting to accomplish whatever they tell you even though these actions are wrong ones.

Willy Loman loves his sons but he is an anti-model to them. He ignorantly teaches them stealing and does it to show his brother Ben how his children are courageous. He tells them: « Boys! Go right over to where they are building the apartment house and get some sand. We're gonna rebuild the entire front stoop right now » (1.6.851-853)! In contrast to Willy, Charley is a responsible parent. He is a good model to his son Bernard. He even advises Willy to be careful about the education he is giving his children. Charley warns him that they will end up in jail. He tells him: « Willy, the jails are full of fearless characters » (1. 6.859). Willy has in mind that he is helping his sons to be competitive and fearless characters by challenging the watchman. Willy and charley are different as far as character is concerned. Though both are parents their goals in shaping their children education are totally different. Willy was training his sons to be well-liked in the world while Charley wants that his son Bernard be disciplined and studious. As they have different goals they have

different ways of guiding their children which had been the cause of their argument on it.

Equally important Willy Loman is unfaithful to his wife Linda. Being unfaithful to one's partner is one of the main causes that destroy harmonious relations between the couple and between parents and children. Unfaithfulness weakens not only harmony and love between married couples but also it often destroys harmony between parents and children. After Biff's discovery of his father with the woman in the hotel, their relationships with his father turned bad. Biff is chocked by the fact that his father was cheating on her mother. He lost trust in him. He did no longer believed in what he told him. He even decides to leave his father's home. The discovery of Willy Loman's affair with the woman in the hotel is the starting point of Willy and Biff's misunderstanding. After He flunked math and missed the points to get access into university, Biff goes to look for his father in Boston when then discovered his parent affair with the woman. Biff trusted in his father in his childhood but he no longer trust in him during his adulthood. When he discovers that Willy's unfaithful, he is disappointed and even denies his help;

> Biff: Somebody in there?
>
> Willy: No, that was next door [the woman laughs offstage]
>
> Biff: Somebody got in your bathroom!
>
> Willy: No, that was the next door, there is a party.
>
> The woman [enters, laughing. She lips this]: Can I come in?
>
> There's something in the bathtub, Willy, and it's moving! [Willy looks at Biff, who is staring open-mouthed and horrified at the woman.](2.10. 1076-1080).

Willy Loman is humiliated. He tries to hide that he has no the relationship with the Woman. He tells the Woman: « Ah- you better go back to your room, they must be finished painting now. They are painting her room so I let her take a shower here. Go back, go back ... ». [He pushes her](2, 1080-1084). Biff is very shocked. He is now aware of his father's real behavior. Biff finds out that his father is an unfaithful parent. Biff's mother does not have stockings but he sees his father giving the stockings to the Woman. Biff tells his father « You gave her my mama's stockings [his tears break through and he rises to go» (2.11.1143). Since that time, Biff started to rebel to his father. All the respect he has for him was gone. Willy tries to calm down him but in vain [getting down beside Biff]:« Never mind! He is going to give you those points. I will see to it. (2, 1030) However Biff does not believe him as he used to do it before. » He replies that « He wouldn't listen to you » (2, 1031).

After the discovery of this affair, Biff thinks of managing his life by his own. He does no longer expect anything positive from his father. The scene he watched in Boston about his father cheating his mother changed his character and he even pushes him to escape from his father's home. However Willy Loman still has hope in Biff. He hopes that there is still a possibility of better things. Additionally he does not want to feel ashamed all his remaining life. He thinks of an action he can accomplish which would prove to his son Biff and his whole family in general that he is not a coward as Biff told him so.

After Biff gave up his school, he was involved in doing different kinds of small jobs but he was failing in all. He used to lie in what he was doing. He even became a creptoman. Biff involved in stealing and he was imprisoned. Happy became a womanizer like his father. After trying different jobs but never succeed in any, Biff thought of coming back home and be a farmer instead of wandering without any profit. However his father and Happy were against his view. Biff later realized that he his

father contributed to their failure. He accuses his father of being the real cause of their life degradation. He tells happy: « Hap, the trouble is we weren't brought up to grub for money » (1.284-285). They go on discussing on the fact that their father did not shape them with good values in order to succeed:

> Happy: Well you really it on a farm? Are you content out there?
>
> Biff [with raising agitation]: HAP, I've had twenty or thirty different kinds of jobs since I left home before the war and it always turns out the same. I just realized it lately. In Nebraska when I herded cattle, and the Dakotas, and Arizona and now in Texas. It's why I came, I guess. Because I realized it. This farm I work on, its spring there now see? And they've got fifteen new colts. There is nothing more inspiring and or beautiful than the sight of a mare and a new colt. And it's cool now, and its spring. And whenever spring comes to where I am, I suddenly get the feeling my God. I am getting nowhere! What the hell I am doing, playing around horses, and twenty dollars a week! I am thirty four years old; I ought to be to making my future, that's when I come running home. And now I don't know what to do with myself. [After a pause] I've always made a point of not wasting my life , and every time I come back here , I know that all I've done is to waste my life . (1.2. 235-250).

Biff feels tired to orient himself in actions which seem not profitable. He is compelled to seek the truth about himself. While his father and brother are unable to accept the miserable reality of their respective life, Biff acknowledges his failure and eventually manages to confront it. Biff sees himself as trapped in Willy's grandiose fantasies. Biff

longs for the territory and instead of being a salesman he would like to be a farmer instead of wasting his life in things which will not make him prosper as his discussion with his brother Happy entails it above. However happy is not on his side. He is committed to be in his father steps till the end of the play. While Biff is not longer inspired by his father's fantasies, Happy is by the contrast determined in fulfilling his father's dreams.

Biff realized that his life from childhood to adulthood had been worthless. He failed rather than succeeding. He escaped from his home but he founded out that nothing better happens. Things went from bad to worse. Then he comes home again. However, the main reason that made him leave his home was the shock of the discovery of his father's affair with the mistress. Hence the affair was still in his mind. Coming back home reminds him of his father's unfaithfulness and irresponsibility towards nurturing them. For Willy, it is also humiliating to see Biff again at home. It reminds him of the scene which happened in Boston when Biff came to see him. Biff is grown up and is forty four years old. He should have achieved something great or even should have got married as his father wished it. However he has achieved nothing and is still aimless. He realized that the real cause of his failure was the non- positive parenting he got from his father in addition to the chock he got when he discovered his father's infidelity. He was then prepared to unveil the truth to his father and explain to him why he failed in everything.

The failure of Biff and Happy was predictable during their childhood by analyzing the education and socialization they got from their parents. Stealing, grandiosity and lying that Biff and Happy were shaped with during their childhood could inevitably impact them during their adulthood. In contrast Willy had confidence in his sons during his childhood. As an illustration Willy informs that he will tell about his match in Boston as I stated it above. Additionally he kisses him which was a sign

of love, congratulation and encouragement on his performances in football. Happy too was well physically made and both Biff and Happy had good physical appearance and they were attractive. These traits meet with Willy's philosophy of being well-liked. Willy Loman was then astonished and shocked about his sons' failure in their adulthood. From the beginning of the play when he comes from his job a word-sigh that escapes his lips was addressed to his sons: "oh boy oh boy." This is a proof that Willy very preoccupied by his sons well being. He loves them very much. He was doing anything possible to make them prosper. However the outcome of his effort was negative and the philosophy he leaned on to educate his children lead them to failure rather than success. Biff and Happy parental influence was not positive and as the American English proverbs states it: «Like father like son» or «As mother and father so is the daughter and son », Biff and Happy behave themselves like their father. Later Biff realized that their father's behavior was unworthy and he was no longer influenced and interested to follow his father's dream.

Being at the sun set of his life, Willy wants to see his boys able to manage their lives by themselves. He is tired of his trips of selling. He works on commission and is obliged to borrow money every week and he pretends that it is his own money. This bores him as an aging man and as the father of two sons. He is responsible of his family. This shocks him that he often tries to commit a suicide by crushing his car. Going off the bridge in his car was also one of the attempts. The gas heater was also found in his house which revealed to Linda that his Husband wanted to suffocate him. Willy was then disillusioned in his dreams. Linda tries to calm down her husband and she tries to unify him with his sons who are often in conflict with especially Biff. However their Willy ended up by committing a suicide in a car crush.

The decision to commit a suicide has also a relation of the failure of his sons even though there other causes. So he was alarmed to the fact that they do not make a

progress in their lives. As a loving father this increases his anger for the children in whom he had confidence in the past. Besides his sons no longer pay him respect as they did in their childhood. As a parent it is painful to be treated mercilessly by your children. Linda has told his sons to respect their father whatever the circumstances. Whether poor or rich, Linda tells his sons that are worth respecting their father. Then the one of the causes of committing suicide as parent was revenging his sons who negret him especially Biff. Biff is at the top because he knows his father affair with the Woman in the Boston hotel.

In conclusion, it has been analyzed through this chapter that Willy's philosophy did not help him to prosper and their sons too. Willy Loman lacks positive and accurate virtues as a parent and as a father. He allowed his children to do whatever they wished. He thinks that being well-liked is the only virtue which can lead his children to success. When he applied it the result was negative. Hardworking was rather the virtue that was worth giving to Biff and Happy. When Biff stole the ball, he encourages him and claims that the coach will congratulate him from his initiative. His wrong philosophy of achieving success by being well- liked ruined him and his children became the victims of it too. Willy Loman infidelity towards his wife Linda made things from bad to worse. All his parental responsibility was lost in the eyes of Biff. Biff realized that thinking that they are much important as his father used to say it was wrong. Biff does not trust him again or respects him as he used to do it in the past. He was shocked and his anger leads him to escape from his father's home. Then his escapism could not serve him in anything since he was not brought up with good values.

CHAPTER II: CONFLICT IN DEATH OF A SALESMAN

This chapter explores different kinds of conflicts that we have in Death of a Salesman. Conflict is the essence of drama. Throughout the play, three kinds of conflict will be analyzed and discussed: Man versus man conflict, man versus society conflict and man versus self conflict. Man versus man conflict in the play is a father –son conflict and it is mainly the conflict between Willy Loman and his son Biff. Man versus society conflict is portrayed by Willy Loman who lives in the society that no longer recognizes his value. His customs and values are challenged by ones of his society. Within conflict versus self, Willy Loman is in conflict with self. He later realized tha he is the cause of his sons' failure.

Biff's discovery of his father's affair with the Woman in Boston creates a conflict with his father. Ever since, the scene of his father cheating his mother has scorned Willy's husband and father act, although evidently he has never brought himself to tell anyone else of this affair. Biff looked up to his father as a role model in his childhood. But his confidence and faith in him was severely shaken by accidentally finding out him cheating his mother.Willy on his part blames Biff, he feels disappointed in his sons especially in Biff and he refuses to recognize and admit his mistakes as a father. Biff chooses to leave his home while Willy Loman is always traumatized whenever he comes home. Apart from the cheating on their mother that Biff discovered in Willy Loman, Biff realized that the parental guidance they got during their childhood was wrong. Lindsay Amiro states that,

> Biff's sense of inadequacy derives from his father and recognition is what sends him "running home". Biff cannot escape his father and his society's ideas and expectations for success and the American dream. It takes the shattering moment when Biff finds out about "The woman" for views towards his father change. Up

> until then Willy has been a role model, one whom Biff respects and admires(6) .

Good relationship between Willy Loman and his son Biff Loman ended up with Biff childhood. Life turned bitter and conflicting in Biff adulthood and in Willy Loman's old age. Biff left his home after the discovery of his father's affair with another woman. Biff realized that his father cheated on their mother. Whenever Biff comes back home, it is a quarrel:

> Biff: He's not like this all the time, is he?
>
> Linda: It's when you come home he's always the worst.
>
> Biff: When I come home?
>
> Linda: When you write you 're coming, he's all smiles, and talks about the future, and just Wonderful. And then the closer you seem to come, the shaky he gets, and then by the time you get here, he's arguing, and seems angry at you. I think it's just that maybe he can't bring himself to be open up to you. Why are you so hateful to each to each? Why is that? (1.5.924-940)

Willy Loman feels ashamed when Biff comes home. Even though he loves his son he is afraid that the latter could reveal his unfaithfulness towards his mother. His shame is one of the is reasons which pushes him to be at odds when Biff is at home. Then he gets the worst when Biff comes home. Willy suffers depression and anxiety as result of his estranged relationship with his eldest son Biff based on his extra marital affair. He is aware of his son's depreciation about his cheating on his wife. Not only has his shame pushed him to escape from Biff's presence but also it pushes him to commit his suicide. He suffers when he feels under estimated and feels he can rather kill himself

instead of living in the eyes of the family who looks down him and whom he not serving as he used to do. As the father of the family Willy feels a shame and attempts to commit suicide.When he comes back from his business, he insures himself whether his sons are there. The answer given by Linda and the reaction and the reaction of Willy explains Willy's inner thoughts towards their sons.

Willy: The boys in?

Linda: They are sleeping. Happy took Biff on a date today

Willy: [interested] that's so? (1.1. 6o-63)

Willy Loman is interested to hear that Happy took Biff on date. This is good news for him because he gets that they might be planning to marry. He gets joy and happiness because this would be making a step in their lives. He was angered by the fact that Biff is aging without the ability to make his own life. At his age, Willy expected Biff to have already married. He accuses him of being a lazy bum but Linda her wife denies it and according to her Biff is going to find him. Linda supports Biff and considers life as a casting off. She still hopes that Biff will get the opportunity to be successful. However Willy does not understand how a boy of 34 years cannot find himself. The conflict between Biff and his father turns into a familial conflict.Willy Loman often argues with Linda about Biff. They disagree on Biff's failure:

> Willy: Figure it out. Work a life time to pay off a house. You finally own it, and there is nobody to live in it.
>
> Linda: Well, dear life is a casting-off. It's always been that way. You shouldn't have criticized him, Willy especially when he got out of the train. You mustn't lose your temper with him. (1. 1.62-65)

When Linda mentions that life is a casting off, she means that life is made of failures, problems and frustrations which a person has to cope with and overcome them. According to Linda to cope with it is a solution for it because it is always like that. Casting off is a knitting term also known as a binding off. It is used to define an edge such as the bottom of the sweater or the top of a sock. The stitch is used to secure the last row that you have completed so you can concentrate on the next. Linda, being a homemaker uses a metaphor related to knitting. In her mind, each trouble, joy, frustration. obstacles in life is like a row in knitting. Eventually the row ends and you cast it off and begin focusing on holes in her stockings, solving problems. She finds the hose unde · the water heater and takes it as casting off. She suspects he is having an affair but he always comes home to her casting off. She steadfastly made payments to the house despite their financial hardships and her husband loses a job. All these are a casting off. Linda calms down her husband for all these that happens because she hopes that Biff will find himself and prosper. She tells him not to lose his temper and asks him take things at ease:

> Willy: When the hell did I lose my temper? I simply asked him if he was making any money. Is that a criticism?
>
> Linda: But, dear, how could he make any money? He was a crestfallen Willy. You know how he admires you. I think if he finds himself, then you'll both be happier and not fight any more (1.1.65-70).

Willy Loman accuses Biff to have failed to achieve success. He complains towards him: « No, no, some people – some people accomplish something. Did Biff say something after I went in the morning» (1, 60) Loman expected Biff to be a great personality, a well liked person. During his childhood, Biff was well-built like Adonises, Hercules and David Singleman. All these persons are great personalities who achieved success during their life toward. However the results are different to Willy

Loman dreams. On his part Biff knows why his father is mocking him all the time. He is aware that all originates from the secret he holds about his father's affair with the woman in Boston.

Biff returns home to find out who he is. Biff manages to disburden himself by defining himself about who he is. He talks to happy about his life and the way has run on a certain repetitive cycle over the last few years. Biff returns every spring because he always starts to think of his life and he is doing with it at this point He Willy desperately wants Biff to succeed in every way possible. Biff has realized working outdoors and making a farm by using their own muscles can only help them to build a successful future. Biff is tired of working for others and gaining nothing. He tells Happy: «Sure maybe we could buy a ranch. Raise cattle, use our muscle. Men built like us should be working in the open » (1, 270-271)

Biff advises Happy to use their physical strength in order to cultivate and make animal husbandry and make money through farming. However this idea dream collides with Willy's dream which is selling. Willy believes that selling is the greatest job a man can have. Involving in farming is considered by Willy as a failure. Willy tells Linda:

Willy :How can he find himself on farm? Is that life of being a farmhand?

Willy: Not finding yourself at the age of forty four is a disgrace

Linda: Shh!

Willy: The trouble is he is lazy, goddammit!

Linda: Willy, please!

Willy: Biff is a lazy bum!

Linda: They are sleeping. Get something to eat. Go down.

Willy: Why did he come home? I would like to know what brought him home. (1.1. 80-91)

The conflict between Biff and his father expands to a family conflict. Biff's mother enters in conflict with him. Linda accuses Biff of not caring for her and his father. Linda accuses him of paying no respect to his father. She not only accuses Biff but also Happy. She asks them to show him respect. Linda agrees that Willy Loman is not a great man. But whatever he is, he needs a care as a human being. Linda is angry by the fact that they call him crazy. Linda is aware that her husband is obsessed by Biff's failure. Then Linda acts as a mediator. Towards her husband she explains that Biff is finding himself and he is crestfallen. Toward her son Biff, she explains that his father needs attention and accuses him of not caring for him. However, Linda does not know the real cause of the conflict between her husband and his son. She does not know that the conflict between Biff and his father lies in Biff's discovery of his father's unfaithfulness.

Biff does not reveal why he is in conflict with his father. Both Linda and Happy think that Willy Loman accuses Biff for not being settled. Happy tells Biff that their father always mumbled. Additionally he let him know that he thinks he mumbles about the fact that he is settled that he is still in kind up in the air. However the young Biff dreams changed after discovering his father's infidelity. He realized that selling is not the greatest job a man can do while his father is always driven by this dream of selling. Additionally he realized that the main reason for which they remain poor is because their father is a spendthrift. He wastes the money he earns in womanizing instead of financing the family. Biff tells Happy that he does care what they think! They have laughed at their father for years, and tell Happy that he knows why? Biff tells Happy

it's: « Because we don't belong in that nuthouse! We should be mixing cement or some open plain, or –or some carpenters. » (1, 1111-1114)

Willy Loman would like Biff to follow his dreams, but the latter realizes that this job is worthless. Linda is eager to reconcile Biff and her husband by getting them to talk their problem over. She often takes both sides and tries to explain that all of them are right. She informs Willy that Biff has decided to go to see his former boss, Bill Oliver, to discuss the matter of staking him. She thinks that this idea will please and appease Willy. When Biff pretends that Bill Oliver said he will stake him, Linda thinks that Willy will be appeased. Willy does not agree that this is wonderful because there are fifty men in New York City who would stake Biff. However, he is never able to nurture his son Biff into a man he wanted him to be. Apart from main conflict throughout the play between Willy Loman and his son Biff, Willy faces a conflict in himself. He is the man who is not able to accept his real identity. He cannot accept that his dreams and his philosophy are wrong. He tells the opposite to his sons instead of telling them the truth. He informs them that he is not the ordinary man.

Willy struggles to exhibit his likability and rightness while he knows he is a weak and a low man. Until his death when he commits suicide, we discover the inner conflict of the protagonist through different discussions with other characters especially his son Biff, his wife Linda his brother Ben and his neighbor Charley. As stated above the protagonist Willy Loman endures conflict with himself throughout the play. He is at odds with who he perceives himself to be and who he is in reality. He is the man who has strong pride in himself, one that may be too strong. He is afraid to reveal the lack of strengths toward his family and towards Charley. Within the discussion he made with Linda, Willy tells her that he knows it when he walks in they seem to laugh at him and seems to admit that he is not a great person. Willy accuses himself. He realizes that he is a problem. He notices that he talks too much but unfortunately he is

unable to stop it. Additionally he mentions that he doesn't know why. Willy allows himself to believe that Biff was a top salesman for Bill Oliver, when in fact he was a chipping clerk. He says that he never told his boys to steal but it was known that he told them to go where they are constructing and bring some land. Additionally Willy tells Bernard that he doesn't know what came over Biff causing him to give up going to college but actually he knows it and he wants to keep it as a secret.

There is a conflict between what he intends to do and what he does. He fails his target and feels ashamed of himself. However Linda his wife appeases him and mentions that he doesn't talk too much; he is just lively. Directly he agrees with her wife and even gives an explanation that he jokes in order to enjoy life, which is short. Willy says. «Well, I figure, what the hell, life is short, a couple of jokes. » (1, 564). Indirectly, Willy tells himself that he jokes too much and the smile he had when he was telling that to his wife dies out.

Throughout the discussion between Charley and Willy Loman, he presents himself as superior to Charley. He even rejects the job that Charley offers him. He doesn't accept that he is an ordinary man. He refuses to work for Charley even though he would pay. Accepting a job offer from charley towards Willy would be like an insult to his esteem. He is jealous of Charley, his next door neighbor. Whereas Willy is a boastful man, Charley is a modest man of few words. Willy is also a dreamer but Charley is a real and likes working hard in order to succeed rather than dreaming to become a great person. Willy is afraid to admit the real man he is and does not want to reveal to accept that he is a poor man and an ordinary one. The fact that Willy goes to borrow money to Charley is the proof that Willy Loman is done financially but he fails to admit it to Charley and his family. The guilt Willy feels for coming to charley is almost unbearable, he will never be able to repay Charley and he knows it. Willy tells Charley: "I am keeping account of everything remember. I will pay every penny

back." (2. 562-563) Willy is aware that he Howard has fired him and he reveals it to him. Once again Charley attempts to convince will to accept to work for him but he refuses a job offered by him and working for him. Later he remarks that an individual is: "Worth more dead than alive" (2. 609-610) .Willy is as stubborn as a mule on a decision which does not profit him. He is afraid of being looked down by Charley. He accepts to lose his last chance to put his life back to. That is the loss of an opportunity to start his life over and end to suffer in his living. This job would be done by Willy being almost at home but Willy accepts to bear all the consequences instead of accepting to feel shame and looked down by Charley.

The exchange between Willy and charley's son Bernard throws light to Willy's conflict with self.

> Willy: Let me talk to you – I got nobody to talk to. Bernard, Bernard, was it my fault? Y'see? It keeps going in my mind; maybe I did something to him. I got nothing to give him.
>
> Bernard: Don't take it so hard.
>
> Willy: why did he lie down? What is the story there? You were his friend!
>
> Bernard: Willy, I remember, it was June, and our grades came out. And he flunked math.
>
> Willy: That son of a bitch!
>
> Bernard: No, it wasn't right then. Biff just got very angry, I remember, and he was ready to enroll in summer school.
>
> Willy [surprised]: He was?
>
> Bernard: he wasn't beaten by it at all. But then, Willy, he disappeared from the block for almost a month. And I got the idea that he'd gone up to New England to see you. Did he have a talk with you then? [Willy stares in silence]

> Bernard:Willy?
>
> Willy: [with a strong edge of resentment in his voice]. Yeah he came in Boston. What about it? (2. 496 -512)

Willy accepts that his conflict with Biff keeps going in his mind. He knows all what happened in Boston hotel when Biff discovered his affair with the woman. When Bernard reminds him the scene, he stares in silence and misses what to say. This chocks him to the point that he does not want to express himself on it. He inquires what Bernard thinks of it. When Willy tries to speak he doesn't speak well, there is resentment in his voice. This proves the fact that this always harm s him in his inner heart. It is like they are pushing a sword in his heart. He suffers about this more and more and especially when something or someone remembers this to him.

When Howard Wagner fires Willy, he feels angry and humiliated. He is surprised by the fact that people around him and his boss no longer see him capable of the activity of salesmanship. For choosing the career of salesmanship, Willy Loman was inspired by the older salesman Dave Singleman. Willy's hero David Singleman reached at eighty four years old and had drummed merchandise in thirty-one different states just by calling up buyers who would place orders. Willy says that he decided then that he wanted to be traveling salesman because he wanted to become like Singleman, and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people (1. 163). Dave Singleman was his inspiration. He mentions that he realized that selling was the greatest career that man could want. (1.3.169). Willy's generation remembered the time when there was 'respect, and comradeship, and gratitude' (1.176-178) in business, for the aspiring salesmen were urged to develop the qualities of character that would make customers respect and want to buy from them to make the sales a success, as Willy puts it, "the man who makes an appearance in the business world, the man

who creates personal interest, is the man who gets ahead" (1.5.125). Willy articulates his need in appealing to his employer with an image of the past, a Golden Age: «In those days there was personality in it, Howard. There was respect, and comradeship, and gratitude in it. Today it's all cut and dried, and there's no chance for bringing friendship to bear-or personality» (1.8.180-181).

Loman once found Singleman having coffee with the mayor of Providence, by being recognized in places like Slattery's, Filene's, and the Hub, and by enjoying such good standing with New England policemen that he could park his car anywhere he liked without getting a ticket, Willy feels he is like Singleman . Such gestures of recognition provided signals that society, for a period in his life, was a home for him, one where he might hope to make his sons happilyand at ease as he. Swati Samantary, in« Dystopia»: A Critique of Death *of a Salesman* mentions that: «One of the reasons for Willy's failure is that he cannot adapt to modern society. He tends to compare the past with the present. He is not able to let go of the past and accept the present times and the changes that have taken place in society» (Samantary, 5). The modern society in which Willy lives is a competitive society. One has to work hard in order to achieve success. Honor and respect is not due to what you are but it is due to what you can accomplish and achieve. Samantary also adds that: «Willy cannot keep up with the speed of technical progress. In the process of scientific advancement human beings have brought changes in nature as well» (Samantary, 5).

Remembering the past when life was enjoyable makes Willy suffers his present. It is noticed that Willy is often engaged in a series of memories where he remembers and re-imagines the past. The most astounding is the pride he used to have in Biff within his belief that Biff will be a great man one day. His memories demonstrate his ideas of success at times a contrast to his current state. Willy feels he does not have the respect he deemed to have in his job of a salesman. People no longer value

salesmanship as they used to do it in the past. The exchange he makes with Howard proves it:

> Willy: Oh, yeah, my father lived many years in Alaska. He was an adventurous man. We've got quite a little streak of self-reliance in our family. I thought I'd go out with my older brother try to locate him, and maybe settle in the North with the old man. And I was almost decided to go, when I met a salesman in the Parker House. His name was Dave Singleman. And he was eighty-four years old, and he'd drummed merchandise in thirty-one states. And old Dave, he'd go up to his room, y'understand, put on his green velvet slippers — I'll never forget — and pick up his phone and call the buyers, and without ever leaving his room, at the age of eighty-four, he made his living. And when I saw that, I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want. 'Cause what could be more satisfying than to be able to go, at the age of eighty-four, into twenty or thirty different cities, and pick up a phone, and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people? Do you know? When he died and by the way he died the death of a salesman, in his green velvet slippers in the smoker of the New York, New Haven and Hartford, going into Boston when he died, hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral. Things were sad on a lotta trains for months after that. (He stands up. Howard has not looked at him.) In those days there was personality in it, Howard. There was respect, and comradeship, and gratitude in it. Today, it's all cut and dried, and there's no chance for bringing friendship to bear or personality. You see what I mean. They do not know me anymore.

Howard : Kid, I can't take blood from a stone, I ...

In the exchange above, Willy comes back on his past and the reason why he chose salesmanship as the interesting job. Salesmanship was a job which could help a salesman to be respected and acknowledged before the twenties. However, this was a traditional salesmanship and was not more providing. Willy has now a grief and regret of the decision he took. What inspired him were the way David Singleman was respected and the fact that they paid him tribute after his death. But when he explains to Howard and Howard does not agree with him. Willy feels then trauma. Howard is not interested to listen to him which makes Willy angrier. There is no longer personality in what he is doing as it used to be in the past. Willy is always reminding everyone including himself, of all people who have liked and admired him along the way. Yet he finishes in failures in everything he tries.

In conclusion, three main conflicts are faced by the protagonist Willy Loman in the play Death of a Salesman. The first and the paramount one is his conflict with Biff. He fails to nurture his son with positive values. The affair with the Woman that Willy made is the essence of the conflict that Biff has with his father. In fact, Willy's wife Linda says at the very beginning of the drama that the two never got along. When Biff and his brother Happy are both at home, they contribute to Willy growing sense of despair. The confrontation takes place in family home, right after ill-fated restaurant dinner. In his conflict with self, Willy never accepts his identity. He thinks he is greater than he is. He does not want to face reality in order to change his behavior. He only realized that he is the cause of his son's failure at the end of the play. By the conflict versus his society, Willy is no longer recognized as useful by his society. He loses hope when the society around him responds to him with indifference. His boss fires him from his job in his older age. He makes flashbacks from his past and finds that people around him no longer pay him respect as they used to do that. He feels that

charley his neighbor looks down him. After all Willy is determined to commit suicide in order to be more worth dead than alive. The three main conflicts lead Willy Loman to death.

CHAPTER III: THE AUTHOR'S VISION

Throughout this play, the author presents us Willy as a character who resorts to escapism. Willy Loman is dragging in conflicts because he fails to admit reality. He escapes into the illusory world. Willy Loman escapes in the illusory realities in order to free himself from his harsh and frustrated existence. He pretends to be a person he is not and vows to be respected and superman while he is a low man. He fails to conform and adjust himself to the real status he has both in his family and in his society. He wants to lead a luxurious life even though he is a low man as far as means are concerned. He fails to be industrious, frugal, humble and honest, which were virtues that could lead him to success. Later he realized that his dreams were wrong and that he is responsible for his sons' failure. He felt guilty but fails to admit it and ask for forgiveness. He decided to end up his life by committing suicide. In his mind his death will prove to his children his fame and his dream of success will be achieved.

One of the major themes discussed in *Death of a Salesman* is reality and illusion. Willy Loman has the wrong dreams which lead him to fail his family and himself. Lyndsay Amiro states in "Wrong Dream" a thesis on Death *of a Salesman* that:

> Willy has the wrong dream all along and this is what ultimately leads to his downfall. He puts too much emphasis on being "well-liked" as successful rather than hard work and dedication .The cultural context of Death of a Salesman plays a major role because of society's expectations dealing with the American Dream. These expectations cause Willy's fatal error in judgment, the wrong dream, which is the origin of his inevitable failure. In this context, this is a play about the American family and the American Dream. (Amiro, 1)

The illusions that Willy Loman has in his dream is to achieve success by implementing his philosophy. His thoughts of being well-liked are based on illusions. However, it is this philosophy that he wants to nurture his children with. In reality hard work and determination would lead Willy and his sons to success, grandeur and prominence. Willy Loman thinks that he is driven by the dream of success. The dream of success is the American Dream. This Dream implies that one can achieve success provided that he is a hardworking person. Amiro, in The Wrong Dream in *Death of a Salesman* argues that;

> Willy has a diluted vision of the American dream which sets him up for a swift decline. Willy has instilled the idea of being well-liked in both Biff and Happy. He thinks that this is the ultimate key to success. He tells them that they will not have to work hard and for anything and everything will come very easy to them because of their likability (Amiro 5).

Instead of being a hardworking man, Willy Loman prioritizes joy and leisure. Willy wastes his time in talking too much. He favors joke and talks too much rather than working hard. Industry is the virtue, the force that leads a person to success. However, Willy favors leisure rather than industry. According to Willy, grandiosity and likeability are two virtues needed in one's life to make an impression and appearance in the world of business.

Uncontrolled or disoriented leisure especially by consuming one's wealth decreases and indirectly decreases one's success. Benjamin Franklin in the *Way to Wealth* mentions that,

> Methinks I hear some of you say, must a man afford himself no leisure? I will tell thee, my friend, what poor Richard says, employ thy time well if thou meanest to gain leisure, and, since thou art no sure of a minute, throw not away an hour. Leisure is time for doing something useful. This leisure, the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man will never obtain as poor Richard says, a life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things. Do you imagine that sloth will afford you much comfort than labor... trouble springs from idleness and grievous toil from needless ease. (Franklin23)

It is obvious that Benjamin Franklin is very against wasting one's time in doing non – productive actions. According to him, even leisure should be oriented toward something profitable. On the same page Franklin goes on to distinguish the fruits of industry from the fruits of idleness. According to him many without labor will live by their wits only, but they break for want of stock:

> Whereas industry gives comfort and plenty and respect. Fly pleasures and they will follow you. The diligent spinner has a large shift, and now I have a sheep and a cow, everybody bids me good morrow, all which is well said by Poor Richard : " But with our industry we must likewise be steady and settled and careful and oversee our own affairs with our own eyes and not trust too much to the others." So much for industry, my friends and attention to one's own business, bu to these we must add frugality, if we would make our industry more certainly successful. A man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, keep his nose his all his life to the grindstone, and die not worth a gloat at last. (Franklin 23)

Willy Loman's attitudes are different to attitudes Benjamin Franklin. Franklin calls upon us to adopt frugality in order to achieve success in our life. Willy extols likeability to gain success while industry and frugality for gaining respect and achieve success .Willy ideas are based on illusions because he is always in debt and unable to pay it. It is within these illusions that he educates his sons Biff and Happy. Later he realizes that his dreams are wrong but fails to admit reality and change it for better. Lindsay Amiro in The Wrong Dream» in *Death of a Salesman* mentions that,

> Willy has the wrong dream all along and this is what ultimately leads to his downfall. He puts too much emphasis on being "well-liked" as successful, rather than hard work and dedication. The cultural context of *Death of a Salesman* plays a major role because of society's expectations dealing with the« American Dream». These expectations cause Willy's fatal error in judgment, the wrong dream, which is the origin of his inevitable failure. This is a play about American family and American Dream (Amiro 1)

As far as the« American Dream» is concerned it has different versions:

Firstly, freedom is a major element equals success. In the middle of the twentieth when the play was performed, Americans were driven by the American which was at the center beliefs and is still now a pillar in the American values. The American writer and Historian James Truslow Adams (1878-1949) in his book The Epic of America, he defines the American Dream as: «A belief of freedom that allows all united residents to achieve their goal, the dream of living a land where life should be fuller for every one with the opportunity for each American according to his ability of achievement» (Adams, 404). The American Dream is rooted in the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims that "all men are created equal" with the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

Different characters in death of a salesman represent different versions of the American Dream including Willy Loman. Willy dreams of more than one kind of ideal life. His American Dream is the ability to become prosperous by mere charisma. According toWilly being well-liked is the key to success rather than hard work and innovation. As the father then he wants to make sure his boys are well-liked and popular. As an illustration when Willy is told by his son Biff that he has made his classmates laugh by imitating his math teacher, Willy was interested:

Biff: I crossed my eyes and talked with a lithp.

Willy: (Laughing) You did? The kids like it?

Biff: they nearly died laughing! (1. 426-428)

Willy is interested to hear that his son can make his classmates laugh. This will push them to like him. This meets with his motto which is to be well-liked in order to achieve prosperity. According to Willy being able to make people laugh is a sign of being liked.. In contrast this has a negative sense on Biff because he can be used to only make people laugh without even in forbidden situation or formal situations.

Another example is when Biff informs Willy that he will watch him crash the line. Willy was very happy because this is a sign that Biff is going to become a famous football player:

> Willy: What do they say about you in school, now that they made you captain?
>
> Happy: There is a crowd of girls behind him every time the classes change.
>
> Biff [taking Willy's hand] This Saturday, pop; this Saturday just for you, I am going to break through for a touchdown.

Happy: You're supposed to pass.

Biff: I'm takin'one play for pop. You watch me, pop , and when I take off my helmet , that means I's breakin' out . Then you watch me crash through that line!

Willy [kisses Biff] Oh, wait'll I tell this in Boston.

(1.450-457)

In the above exchange Willy inquires about Biff's popularity at school. The answer that Happy gives makes Willy happy. He promises to make publicity about Biff's popularity. Biff is also happy that his father will be there when he will be playing. According to Willy's version of the Dream , having a good look, being charismatic, and being well-liked are ways of achieving success which is one element of the American Dream. Biff is good looking because he is strong, well-built. He has charisma too and other boys obey and do what he orders. Biff is also well-liked by his classmates and girls make crowds around him.

Ben represents another version of American Dream which is the ability of starting with nothing and making a fortune? Ben vows to have made fortune in only four years. His words towards Willy about how he enriched himself are not only inspiring but also heroic. The exchange he makes with Willy is inspiring and proves that his dream is different from Willy's Dream:

Ben [giving great weight to each word , and with a certain vicious audacity]: William , when I walked into the jungle , I was seventeen .When I walked out I was twenty one. And, by God I was rich!

> Willy: ... was rich! That is right the spirit I want to imbue them with! To walk into the jungle! I was right! I was right! I was right! (1. 894-898)

Ben vows to have made fortune in only four years. This is outstanding and inspiring. Going into the nature and trying to make fortune from that was one of the versions American Dreams. Ben came in the Gold Coast of Africa and accumulated wealth because this area is rich in mines , especially gold. Discovering another world in order to exploit it as far as its natural resources are concerned is great and inspiring. This is the reason why Willy is interested and thinks of imbuing his sons with such a spirit. Not only hard work is then needed to enriched oneself but also having this dream of looking for new areas rich in natural resources such as minerals push a person to succeed his life especially for Americans.

Biff on his part has a couple of the versions of American Dream. Biff has a dream of being a salesman like his father. But this dream dies out when the conflict between him and his father arose. Then in Biff's mind arises another dream, the dream of nature, working outdoors and working with his hands. The family members of Willy Loman seek success in different manners. Willy's father found success in Alaska but his brother Ben became rich in Africa. Biff, on his part realizes that he has been working on farms can make his success, out in the open. The exchange that Biff makes with his brother Ben extends Biff's dream:

> Biff [with enthusiasm] Listen why don't you come out west with me?
>
> Happy: You and I,heh?

> Biff: Sure, maybe we could buy a ranch. Raise cattle, use our muscles. Men built like we are should be working out in the open. (1.1. 267-270)

Biff is determined to use his hands in order to succeed. He has already realized that salesmanship cannot push him to success. According to Biff buying a ranch in west can profit them with his brother Happy. Buying that land from the west and exploiting it is the proposal Biff makes toward his brother. This is then the second Dream that Biff has and according to him they will be known all over the counties when they will be working out in the open. However Happy is in his father's foots. Being well-liked stays his motto and he wants to be like his father. He has the same dreams as Willy till the end of the play. He vows even that he will imitate him while Biff is determined to change.

Willy does not admit reality because he is a dishonest man. He lies to his wife and his children. Miller depicts Willy as the common man who is crushed by the uncontrolled external forces and false ideas. He does not want to accept its blame. He wrongly accuses Biff but actually he is the one who ill-guided him during his childhood. However, Bernard is aware that Willy is a lenient parent. He remembers the day he came to seek Biff in order to study together and Bernard insisted on telling Willy Loman that he heard the math teacher saying he would flunk Biff. Willy did not forbid his son to change his behavior:

> Bernard: No, it wasn't right then. Biff just got very angry, I remember, and he was ready to enroll in summer school.
>
> Willy (surprised) He was?
>
> Bernard: He wasn't beaten by it at all. But then, Willy, he disappeared from the block for almost a month. And I got the idea

> that he'd gone up to New England to see you. Did he have a talk with you then? (Willy stares in silence)
>
> Bernard: Willy?
>
> Willy [with a strong edge of resentment in his voice] Yeah, he came to Boston. What about it?
>
> Bernard: Well, just that when he came back- I will never forget this, it always mystifies me. Because I'd thought so well of Biff, even though he'd always taken advantage of me. I loved him, Willy, you know? And he came back after that month and took his sneakers- remember those sneakers with «University of Virginia» printed on them? He was so proud of those, wore them every day. And he took them down in the cellar furnace. We had a fist fight. It lasted at least half an hour. Just the two of us, punching each other. (2.4, 604-620)

Bernard tries to convince Willy that he has a great influence on the failure of Biff but Willy denies it. The exchange between Willy and Bernard after the latter achieved success is worth analyzing in the sense of Willy influence on Biff failure. Bernard remembers that Willy never encouraged Biff to well organize himself in achieving success in his life goals.

Death of a Salesman is a tragedy based on the protagonist Willy Loman. Willy Loman is a salesman who is plagued by his American Dream that is unrealistic and impractical. Willy wants to achieve success through being well-liked. However, he struggles to fulfil his dream as he makes a mistake of being travelling salesman without realizing what is the most important to him. He gets caught in his own spiritual redemption of being salesman. As he gets older he realizes that his life is

ending away when he is still far away from achieving his dream. He fails to accept and create new dream and get defeated by his redemption and make a determination of committing suicide.

Willy is trapped in many of his spiritual redemption. He struggles to overcome and eventually fails to achieve any of his goals as his spiritual redemption works as an obstacle of many problems. He eventually fails to achieve one thing out of his burst of heroic determination. Willy, finally realize that he cannot do or accomplish anything and chooses his destiny to leave his legacy of his dream on Biff. When Willy founds hope from his son, Biff, of following his American Dream, he gets defeated by his spiritual redemption and makes a determination of committing suicide. His spiritual redemptions make him to struggle his life and eventually commits suicide to leave his legacy upon his son Biff. Willy decides to commit suicides to get Biff's life insurance. He tells that to in his flashbacks of Ben's image:

> Willy: oh, Ben, how do we get back to all the great times! Used to be so full of light, and comradeship, the sleigh-riding in winter, and the ruddiness on his cheeks. And always some kind of good news coming up, always something nice coming up ahead. And never even let me carry the valises in the house, and simonizing, simonizing that little red car! Why, why can't I give him something and not have him hate me?
>
> Ben: Let me think about it. [He glances at his watch] I still have a little time. Remarkable proposition, but you've got to be sure you are not making a fool of yourself. (2. 1250-1257)

Willy asks his brother about his decision of committing suicide to assure himself that this action is a good one. Willy himself doubts of its whether it will get good results

but he thinks that his family will admire it especially Biff whom he realizes that he has failed. The insurance he thinks he would get will help him to start up his life. However, in the exchange that precedes Ben vows to Willy that Biff will rather call him a coward rather than thanking him for his action.

Ben: He will call you a coward.

Willy: No, that would be terrible.

Ben: Yes. And a damned fool. [2.11.1234-1247].

Biff wants to get an abrupt conversation with his father without lying to each other. Firstly, he admits that he has failed his life but he wants to bring his father that he failed his too. However Willy Loman never accepts he is wrong. He is as stubborn as a mule to his dreams which are based on illusions. When Biff reveals the reality to his father, Willy Loman accuses him to be spite. However, he wants his father to change his mentalities based on illusions, his grandiosity and lies and live on honesty and humbleness:

Biff: Pop, I am dime a dozen and so are you!

Willy: I am not a dime a dozen I am Willy Loman, and you are Biff Loman![Biff starts for Willy, but is blocked by happy, in his furry Biff seems on the verge of attacking his father.]

Biff: I am not a leader of men Willy, and neither are you…

Willy [Directly to biff]: You vengeful! Spiteful mut! (2.1365-1375)

At this moment wants to make everything clear. All what they have hidden to each other with his father is going to be revealed. He would like then to bring Willy to see

the things with the same eye. He is trying to convince his father that what pushed them to fail is that they have been lying about who they are really. Valuing what they are and what they have would lead them to success. Willy as usual denies facing the truth. He is considers Biff's words as vengeful and spiteful. Willy is still sticked to his Dream of being liked everywhere and in everything.

Willy tragic throw of committing a suicide for earning money and for making his family like him for his decision proves that he did not change his dream. Alone onstage with the ghost of Ben who abandoned Willy in search of wealth, Willy chooses to abandon his family in search of wealth: the payout of his life insurance policy. Willy's warped sense of the American Dream, his focus on money as the only measure of success, makes him value himself not as a loving father or husband but rather in purely monetary terms. However, after Willy death, only his family and Charley attended his funeral. Only Happy is decided to follow his dreams.

In conclusion, it has been realized and analyzed throughout this chapter that Willy dreams things he cannot achieve. His dream is unrealistic. He has a different version of dream comparing to other characters of the play except his son Happy. Biff changed his Dream of achieving success by being a well-liked salesman which is his father's dream. Biff realized that this is a false dream. Biff chooses rather working out in the open by using his hands and his muscles. The general nature of American dream is hold by Ben who asserts that he has made success in only four years. Willy assures himself by asking Ben if the decision he wants to make by committing a suicide is a good one. He knows that his brother made success. After his death, not tribute was paid to him except his family and charley which proves that he was not well-liked as he used to tell it.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This study sets out to explore the theme of parental responsibility and conflict as portrayed in the play Death of a Salesman by the American playwright Arthur Miller. Throughout the play, Parental Responsibility, conflict in death and the author's vision have been deeply discussed and analyzed. Among parents analyzed in terms of their responsibilities include Willy Loman, a father of twosons,his wife Linda Loman, and Charley the father of Bernard and neighbor of the family of Willy Loman. This work analyses also different conflicts that are in the play among these characters or inside a single character. The author's vision is also discussed and analyzed. Reality and illusion within the American dream are themes that are looked into in the last chapter.

The first chapter "**Parental responsibility,**" explores non positive attitudes that lead a parent to lose responsibility. Willy Loman is the parent and the protagonist whose personality is non- positive. In the discussion made on this chapter, it has been realized that Willy Loman is endowed with attitudes based on grandiosity, arrogance, dishonesty carelessness and unfaithfulness towards his wife Linda. These are the same attitudes he nurtured his children with. Appearance and likeability were the principles that he wants to imbue with them. Biff and Happy were still children and unable to differ the right from the wrong. They heed to their father's principles. Hence these principles lead them to failure rather than success.

In the second chapter, "**Conflicts in *Death of a Salesman* ",** it has been analyzed how the protagonist was challenged by different kinds of conflicts due to his wrong attitudes. Willy Loman did succeed to nurture his son the kind of a person he wanted him to be. His son has a dream different from his father's dream. This conflict is at the head of all other conflicts that Willy Loman faced. It is a conflict of man versus man. He also never accepts his identity and was therefore in conflict with self. He only realized that he is the cause of his son's failure at the end of the play. By conflict

versus society, Willy feels he is no longer recognized as useful by his society. He loses hope when the society around him responds to him with indifference. His boss fires him from his job in his older age and his neighbor charley denies lending him money. All the three main conflicts lead Willy Loman to death.

The last chapter, **"The Author's Vision"** explores the themes of reality and illusion including the American Dream. The protagonist of the play Death of the Salesman Willy is a common man but he has unrealistic dreams. He is a character who is attached to false ideologies. He wants to achieve success by only being well-liked which is his dream. In general the American Dream states that each American can achieve success through hard work regardless his origin. In this work, the definition of James Truslow Adams has been leaned on to throw light to the conception of the American Dream.

Willy's death is a tragic act. He decides to commit suicide thinking that Biff will be magnificent and rich thanks to the insurance money his family would get. In his mind, Biff would gain the insurance money paid because of his car crushed and this money would help him to start up his life. However these were illusions .Willy Loman was humiliated felt guilty of failing his sons Biff and Happy. He even thought that thousands and thousands of people will attend his funeral but none came apart his wife, his sons and his neighbor charley and Bernard charley's son.

Death of a Salesman is then the tragedy of a common man and this work thoroughly analyses how Willy's dreams and attitudes affected not only himself but also his family. Willy is a salesman and according to him his job requires to attract people and being liked is virtue for succeeding in salesmanship. Unfortunately Willy fails to achieve success. Biff and Happy had a dream of achieving success leaning on being well-liked like their father Willy during their childhood. However they failed as their father also failed. However, when Biff realized that his father dream is wrong he

decided to change. This created a conflict which goes on till Willy's death. Willy's death is considered by him to be an action that could resolve the failure that has committed during the past.

A man is the product of his society that produced him as this is stated by French historian Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893). Willy Loman dream affected his sons and his family. The society determines one's existence, so we too, we do affect the society either by adding to it positively or negatively. Willy attitudes as a father did not help much his children. His infidelity towards his wife Linda affected Biff and felt guilt all the time he would remembers this. Both Willy and Biff were shocked himself when they have this flashbacks.

When Willy realized that Biff really loves him, he gets ready to martyr himself. In fact he voluntarily seeks martyrdom in order to honor himself; blame and shame Biff but also let him discover that he loves Biff too. In the realization of his own values he seems to be trying to move toward self-sacrifice in order to preserve some higher set values as Robart Bales states it that: ‹‹There is nothing the body suffers that the soul may not profit by›› (Robert, 282).

Willy as a parent has the responsibility to guide his children and help them to organize themselves, especially during their childhood. Listening to advice that his neighbor Charley gave him would have helped him to succeed. Instead of refusing to work for Charley when he offers him a job, he should have agreed to do it in order to go on providing for his family. Deciding to commit suicide for Willy is an action which is based on his wrong dreams.

From this analysis emerge the following recommendations:

- Serving as a good model in society is of a paramount significance and for parents this is their responsibility.

- Examining the logic, causes and effects of one's decisions and actions benefits not only oneself but also one's family and society

This study is not exhaustive on the topics of interest which can be drown from Arthur Miller's play Death of a Salesman. Other researchers should then explore other themes contained in the play such as Reality and Illusions in Death of a Salesman , Materialism or the American Dream.

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