

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Arthur Miller is one of the greatest American playwrights who wrote different genre of plays such as comedy, tragedy, and satirical plays. His works have won him many awards such as the Pulitzer Prize, Emmy Awards, and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award. Some of his works are adapted into screenplay and many theatre groups perform his plays because of the popularity of his plays. Susan C.W. Abbotson, editor of *The Crucible*, gives a statement about Miller's influences to theatre that Miller's "... plays concerned with more than the life of the individual—plays that consider the whole society and the bonds between individuals and society." Abbotson also adds that "as a humanist, Miller concerned with examining human nature, with an aim to improving it." (Abbotson)

Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* (1947) is one of the best plays in Broadway. This play was running almost a full year due to its success. Miller won the Tony Award for this play in 1947. Furthermore, he received some appreciations from some drama critics.

Charles Spencer, a theatre critic who once was a President of the Critics' Circle, says that "This is a stunning production of a modern classic, . . . one of that those who see it will never forget." (Benedictus) According to Miller, *All My Sons* talks about ". . . living in a world made by men and the past" (Campbell). In addition to this, the former New York Times Drama Critic, Frank Rich, states, "The past plays a huge role, and the Depression seems to haunt all his major plays as a traumatic event." (Campbell)

In this thesis, I would like to discuss the conflicts in *All My Sons*. I find the conflicts in this play very significant: they construct the plot of the play. The conflicts happen within a family such as father versus son and mother versus son, which point at social conflicts. Social conflict is defined as "a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflict groups are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals" ("Theories of Social Conflict").

I apply formalism in analysing the conflicts because I could find the information inside the play without having to look into other sources to perform my analysis. Formalism is defined as "an artistic and literary style that is more concerned with form (= rules about the arrangement or different elements) than with expressing feelings or meaning" ("Formalism").

Statement of the Problem

The problems I am going to discuss are:

1. What conflicts happen in the play?
2. What is the cause each conflict?
3. What is the resolution to each conflict?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the problems above, the purposes of the study are:

1. To show the conflicts that happen in the play.
2. To show the cause of each conflict.
3. To show the resolution to each conflict.

Method of Research

I applied a library research for my analysis. I started by reading Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. Then, I searched for references in the Internet to help me discuss the social conflicts and the resolutions to each conflict. After analysing the play, I drew a conclusion from my analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of three chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction. It consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is the Analysis of the Social Conflicts in Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. Chapter Three is the Conclusion from the analysis of the social conflicts. This thesis ends with Bibliography and Appendices, containing Synopsis of *All My Sons* and Biography of Arthur Miller.