

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

After analyzing both plays, the present writer comes to the conclusion that the plays have some similarities and differences. First of all, both Arthur Miller's *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman* are concerned with the false view of success. Like most Americans who greatly value material wealth, the protagonist in each play is obsessed with financial success. However, many people, including the protagonists, often have wrong views of success. They are blinded by the concept of success since they think that material wealth is the most important thing in their lives. Their narrow-minded idea of success causes them to make mistakes, which ruins not only their own lives, but also other people's lives.

The present writer sees that both protagonists view material wealth as a way to achieve a better life for the family and to raise their status in society. However, they have different ways to achieve success. In *All My Sons*, Joe is portrayed as a successful businessman. He applies traditional American values: competitive spirit and hard work, in his business. As a businessman, he views that he can do anything to achieve success; he sacrifices other people's lives to maintain his business.

Unlike Joe, Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman* is portrayed as an unsuccessful salesman. He views that popularity and personal attractiveness are the only factors to achieve success. He ignores that people should be competitive, self-reliance, and work hard to achieve success.

Both protagonists have the same view that their profession can help them achieve success. Joe thinks that his profession as a businessman is a way to achieve success; therefore, he works hard in running his business. Willy, on the other hand, thinks that being a salesman can make him rich in a short time. He is a lazy man who wants to achieve success easily. In American society, the profession of a salesman is not seen as prestigious as that of a businessman. The work of a businessman is more respected than other professions because a businessman depends on himself to run his business.

Joe's and Willy's obsession with success affects their lives. Joe's false view of success blinds his responsibility to society. His narrow-minded idea of success causes him to make a mistake in his business. When his factory produces defective cylinder heads, he still keeps shipping them to the Army Air Force. He ships them because he does not want to lose his profit and business. As a result, the defective cylinder heads cause the deaths of twenty-one pilots. However, he does not feel guilty about what he has done since he thinks that he should be responsible for the welfare of his family only. He blames the fault on his partner, Steve Deever. Moreover, his fault also causes his son, Larry, to commit suicide.

In *Death of a Salesman*, Willy's false view of success makes him unable to face the reality. His entire life is filled with his dreams of being a rich and successful man. He cannot accept the reality that he has failed as a salesman. He

always tells both his sons that he is a successful salesman. He tells them that popularity and attractiveness are needed to achieve success. This makes his sons also have a false view of success. Moreover, his unfulfilled dream makes him live in his own world. He imagines that he is respected and popular in society.

It is interesting to see the way the protagonists try to solve their wrong view of success. Both protagonists commit suicide to end their lives. However, they commit suicide with different motivations. In *All My Sons*, Joe commits suicide to show his responsibility to society for his fault. At the end of this play, Joe finally realizes that as a social being, he should show a greater responsibility to society for what he has done. He realizes this after he knows that Larry's death is caused by his fault. Moreover, he also realizes that his concept of success not only causes his own son's death, but also the deaths of twenty-one pilots. Unlike Joe in *Death of a Salesman*, Willy does not realize his false view of success until the end of his life. Willy keeps telling his sons that he is a respected and successful salesman. Then, his sons know that he has lied and they are disappointed with him. As a result, Willy loses Biff's respect. Biff tries to make him realize that they should accept the reality that they have failed to achieve success. However, Willy does not agree with what Biff says. Then, he commits suicide to gain Biff's respect and to get his death insurance for Biff. Willy thinks that Biff will respect him when he sees Willy's funeral is attended by lots of people, which means that he is popular and respected in society. He still lives in his own world since the reality is not as he has imagined. The present writer sees that Willy does not realize that his false view of success makes him unable to face the reality of life so that he commits suicide.

Having read the two plays, the present writer concludes that one should not be obsessed with success. A good understanding of success is needed to help people realize that material wealth is not the only source of happiness in life. People are given the freedom to achieve success, and they should notice that their way to achieve success must not ruin their own lives or sacrifice other people's lives.