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The Arthur Miller Society Newsletter

In Association with The Arthur Miller Centre, University of East Anglia

Volume 4

October 2001

Words from the Society's President

Here we are again, thanks to the sterling efforts of our wonderful editor, Jane Dominik, with another collection of articles, announcements, reviews, and conference information. With this set of reviews, we come pretty much up to date with all that has been published on and by Miller in the last decade. It is an impressive collection, and strong evidence of Miller's continuing relevance and importance as an American playwright.

In this issue, you will find reviews of Gerald Weales's Penguin Text and Criticism editions on *The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman*, as well as a run-through of Steve Centola's 1995 *The Achievement of Arthur Miller*, which was compiled from papers given at the first Arthur Miller Society conference in 1992. Keeping an eye on new versions of seminal texts, we also include reviews by George Castellitto and Robert Combs of Chris Bigsby's *Modern American Drama: 1945-2000*, updated from 1990, and Penguin's *The Portable Arthur Miller*, edited by Chris Bigsby and re-issued in 1995.

In addition to these, we have details from Joe Kane of the recently-opened movie based on Miller's *Focus*, a review of a British production of *Broken Glass*, and a wonderfully-detailed article by June Schleuter on the recent Williamstown production of *The Man Who Had All the Luck*. Again, I must thank all of our contributors for taking the time and thought to write such interesting and informative pieces.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Felician conference and hope the society meeting there will be well attended. I have also requested a slot for a society meeting at the next ALA in Long Beach, California. California will also be the state which hosts our first West Coast Arthur Miller Conference, next March, to which I hope many of you will contribute (more details inside). By the way, Miller's Jefferson Lecture came out in the June issue of *Harper's*, and it's worth a read!

— Susan C. W. Abbotson

The Sixth Arthur Miller Conference

The sixth Arthur Miller Conference is being held this week at Felician College in Lodi, New Jersey. Hosted by George Castellitto, the two-day conference includes a keynote address by Steven Centola, numerous scholarly papers, and a special session of high school student papers chaired by Stephen Marino.

Papers include: Stephen Marino of St. Francis College: "Territoriality in Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge*"; Brenda Murphy of the University of Connecticut: "Hannah, Arendt, Julia Kristeva, and Arthur Miller: Forgiveness and Promise in *After the Fall*"; M. Jill Euclide of Mount Wolf, Pennsylvania: "Narrative Truth in *A View from the Bridge*"; Jane K. Domink of San Joaquin Delta College: "Aging In Miller's Drama"; Sue Abbotson of Rhode Island College: "Miller's Children: *Jane's Blanket* and the Art of Parenting"; Kevin Beary of Mercy College: "Birth of a

Farrnhand: Jewish-Gentile Contrasts in *Death of a Salesman*"; Robert McParland of Felician College: "Arthur Miller: Bridge to the Ancient Greek Theater"; Mark Clendaniel of Enola, Pennsylvania: "Comfort In Distance: *Elegy for a Lady*"; Michelle Cirulli of Temple, Pennsylvania: "The Search for Definition in *Mr. Peters' Connections*"; Terry Otten of Wittenberg University: "*Clara*: A One-Act Tragedy in the Shadow of Post-Modernism"; Lew Livesay of St. Peter's College: "Accuser Becomes Scapegoat: Irony at the Heart of Hatred in Arthur Miller's *Focus* and *Broken Glass*"; Terry McAteer of Felician College: "Miller and Film"; Robert Combs of George Washington University: "Reflections of Miller's *Broken Glass* in Pinter and Williams"; and Herb Goldstein of Forest Hills, New York: "Arthur Miller's *The Price* and William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*."

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Contributing Information Instructions

Information and requests to submit articles are encouraged, including those regarding book, film, and production reviews, and announcements of upcoming productions, events, and conferences. MLA style sheet preferred; disks in Word are appreciated. Submission address:

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In This Volume:

Words from the President	1
Sixth Arthur Miller Conference	1
West Coast Conference	3
Miller Receives Award	4
New York Productions	4
<i>Salesman</i> Video Available	4
<i>Focus Film</i>	4
<i>The Man Who Had All the Luck.</i>	5
<i>Broken Glass.</i>	6
<i>Modern American Drama</i>	7
<i>Death of a Salesman Critical Text</i>	7
<i>The Crucible Critical text</i>	8
<i>The Portable Arthur Miller</i>	9
<i>The Achievement of Arthur Miller</i>	10
Contributor	11
Members	11
Membership Form	12

Call for Papers
The First West Coast
Arthur Miller Conference

*Arthur Miller, The Mirror of Modernity:
The Universal Impact of an
American Playwright*

March 8-9, 2002

San Joaquin Delta College
Stockton, California

Since its premiere on February 10, 1949, *Death of a Salesman* has never not been performed somewhere in the world. The impact of this American masterpiece continues, yet it is not the only Miller play to have impact; there are twenty-one other Miller plays which have been published and produced. In addition to his plays, Miller has also written collections of essays—socio-political and theatrical, a novel, screenplays, short stories, radio plays, books with his wife, Ingeborg Morath, as photographer, and a children's story.

We invite papers on any aspect of Arthur Miller's works and life, including those plays which do not always receive the critical attention they deserve, as well as papers which deal with mounting productions of his plays or teaching them in the classroom. Papers which examine his writings in non-theatrical genres are also encouraged.

In addition, separate panels and discussions by college and high school students will be offered. Submissions for these are welcome as well. There will be an on campus production of *After the Fall* and scenes from other Miller plays performed by acting students during the conference.

Abstracts or completed manuscripts (to be read in a twenty-minute presentation) should be sent to:

Jane K. Dominik
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Stockton, CA 95207

or sent via email to jdominik@sjdccd.cc.ca.us

The deadline for the submission of papers and abstracts is December 1, 2001.

Arthur Miller Receives Award

Arthur Miller received yet another prestigious award on October 3. The Community College Alumni Association presented him with the John H. Finley Award for Exemplary Service to New York City at their annual dinner held at the New York Marriot Marquis.

Salesman Video Available

Death of a Salesman starring Lee J. Cobb is available on video from the Broadway Theatre Archives. This access to the early production will fill a gap for those who have not see the original Willy Loman, and allow for more thorough comparisons and analyses of this world-famous character.

New York Productions

Miller's plays continue their renaissance of production in New York City. His rarely-produced *Creation of the World and Other Business* is in production this month at the Riverside Church. And, coming to Broadway for an anticipated much more successful run than its premiere, and Miller's first premiere on Broadway fifty-seven years ago, is *The Man Who Had All the Luck*. The Williamstown production (see review in this issue) will be moving to the American Airlines Theater on 42nd Street in March, produced by The Roundabout Theatre Company. Finally, *The Crucible* will also make its way to New York, starring Liam Neeson and Laura Linney. Thus, plays from three decades of Miller's career will afford theatre goers an opportunity to see the depth of his dramatic production.

—Stephen Marino/Jane Dominik

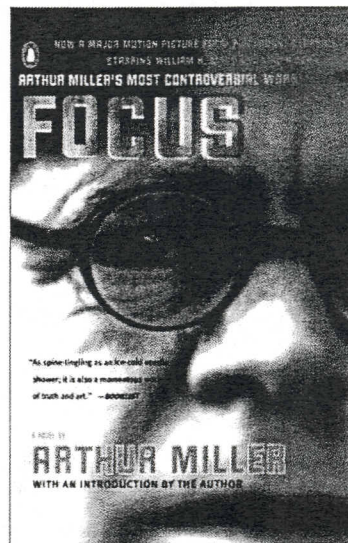
Miller's Novel, *Focus*, To Be Released As a Major Motion Picture

Paramount Classics will release a new motion picture based on Arthur Miller's 1945 novel, *Focus*. The advertising tagline for the new film is "Everything is about to become very clear." *Focus* will be released in New York and Los Angeles on Wednesday, October 10, 2001, with a wider distribution in subsequent weeks. *Focus* was shot in June and July 2000, and had its world premiere at the Toronto Film Festival in September 2001.

The film stars William H. Macy as Lawrence Newman and Laura Dern as Gertrude, a couple who are mistaken for being Jewish by their anti-Semitic neighbors in Brooklyn during the closing days of World War II. One of the anti-Semitic neighbors is played by Meat Loaf Aday (yes, the singer). The couple suddenly find themselves the victims of religious and racial persecution. To survive the onslaught, they turn for friendship and help to a local Jewish immigrant, played by David Paymer.

Focus is directed by Neal Slavin, with the screenplay by Kendrew Lascelles. Both are making their feature film debuts. The film is edited by Tariq Anwar, who also edited the 1996 version of *The Crucible*. The official website for *Focus* is <http://www.paramountclassics.com/focus/focus.html>. The site is strikingly designed and includes the film's trailer.

In conjunction with *Focus*' release, Penguin re-released a paperback version of the original novel in August, with a new introduction written by Miller (240 pages ISBN: 0142000426). The book features a close-up photograph of William H. Macy on the cover and an excerpt of a review by *Booklist*: "As spine-tingling as an ice cold needle shower; it is also a momentous work of truth and art." Above the title, Penguin bills the novel as "Arthur Miller's most controver-



sial work."

Of his novel, Miller said in a 1945 interview:

"As an inadvertent chameleon I have been party to the intimate fears that people of the several ethnic groups have for one another. What has always struck me during these conversations at one minute to midnight was their hallucinatory quality. A man is talking to you. He is speaking intimately because you are both the 'same.' A point arrives

and you tell him you are not what he thought you were. The spell is broken. His eyes change. You change in his eyes. You are still the same man you were a moment before but now you are different, for better or worse. Because now he knows 'what you are.' Anyone who has visited an institution for the insane knows the feeling of being mistaken for the devil or an angel. The patient's face, his breathing, his very soul seem to turn as he views you from his fear side or his welcoming side. And still, you are neither devil nor angel. Everything is going on inside him exclusively.

"I have tried, in *Focus*, to show this turning of the soul of a man from fear to welcoming in the presence of a city which has changed its idea of him when his face changes. I have tried to confront a man with his own hallucination."

— Joseph Kane

Williamstown Theatre Festival Revives

The Man Who Had All the Luck

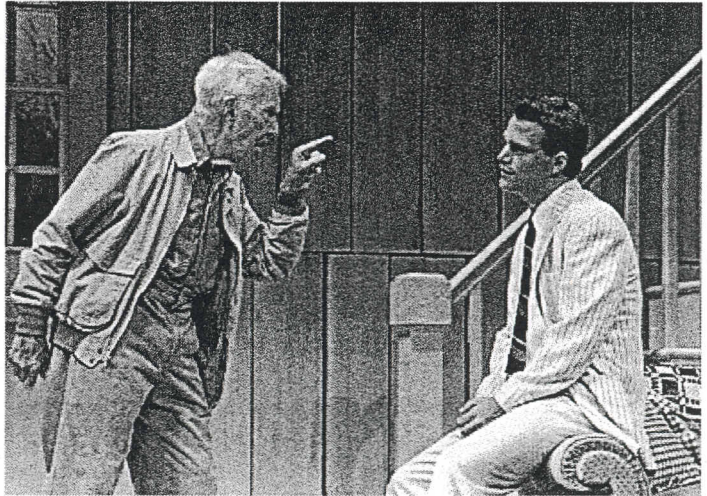
Few Arthur Miller scholars have had the opportunity to see the first of his Broadway plays, *The Man Who Had All the Luck*. Hence it was a special treat to attend the Williamstown [Massachusetts] Theatre Festival's July 2001 production of this early Miller work, which suffered through four New York performances in 1944 before closing. Still remembering its reception, Miller chose not to include it in his *Collected Plays*, and it did not become generally available until 1989, when Methuen Drama issued it in paperback, along with *The Golden Years*.

Miller's introduction to the volume, written from the perspective of nearly fifty years, speaks of the ethos of the thirties and the struggle of the individual against the passive acceptance of fate. For him, the play is an anti-fascist "fable," insisting on one foregrounded idea, not unlike the *Book of Job*. But David Beeves's suffering is not of the ordinary sort: lucky beyond the deserving of any man, he smiles through one good fortune after another before realizing that life's generosities are directed only at him. Even as he reaps the rewards of his Midas touch, his business associates, friends, brother, and father—all "good" men—fail. Shory, a World War I veteran, is confined to a wheelchair, the price for his having been in the wrong "whorehouse" on Armistice Day. J. B. Feller, an alcoholic friend who owns a department store with thirty-one departments, longs for an heir, but he and his wife are childless. David's brother Amos, who trained as a pitcher under his hopeful father for twelve years, gets turned down by the Detroit Tigers scout, shattering the dream and the father-son relationship. Dan Dibble, who drives a Marmon and manages a lucrative mink farm, loses his business to tainted fish. And Gus Ebersson, the Austrian mechanic who knows more about cars than David, cannot succeed in business in the provincial midwestern town that prefers the homegrown David to a foreigner. Collectively, David's associates create a pathetic view of the uncompromising currents of life and the inability of men to navigate—or change—the course.

But for David, suffering comes not from misfortune but from its expectation. Indeed, ill fate becomes the wished-for "curse" that will both destroy and redeem the man who feels he has forfeited his humanity to unrelenting good luck. Miller is skillful in revealing each of life's rescues, purposely constructing them as coincidences that stretch probability taut. And he is even better at building the climactic moment, first in the anxious hours following the ball game, when father and sons await the verdict, and then when David anticipates the news that his son is stillborn and the mink farm in which he has invested his life savings has failed. But the audience is both startled and relieved when, once again, luck intervenes, producing a perfectly healthy baby boy and minks that escape poisoning and an electrical storm. The disappointed David is near madness, unable to understand what, if any, system of justice prevails or what the relationship between human agency and fate might be. He knows that being a "good" man has little to do with what one gets, and though he would like to think that individual responsibility

determines results, he cannot reconcile his own success with the failure of others. Are we, as Scoly would have it, merely jellyfish, carried, rudderless, by the tide?

Film actor Chris O'Donnell, in his stage debut, plays the bewildered David, who at first gratefully accepts good fortune but becomes increasingly frightened by the prospect of ruin and finally, almost perversely, wishes that catastrophe would strike so that he would no longer be ashamed. James Rebhorn plays Patterson Beeves, the controlling and caring father who devoted years to perfecting Amos' pitching arm;



Mason Adams and Chris O'Donnell in *The Man Who Had All the Luck: A Fable* at Williamstown Theatre Festival

— Photo by Richard Feldman

when his son doesn't make the Big League, the elder Beeves, guilt-ridden and defeated, packs up and leaves town. Mason Adams plays Dibble, the successful mink farmer who loved driving his Marmon and who escapes punishment when he accidentally hits and kills Hester's father but who, unlike David, loses his mink farm.

The car accident is the play's first "*deus ex machina*," conveniently occurring moments after Hester's hateful father tells David he cannot marry his daughter. (Miller makes nothing of the old man's accusations about David's having burned the church down, allowing everyone else's observation that David is a good man to stand.) David's second rescue occurs when Gus, a master mechanic, appears just in time to repair the Marmon, an act that assures Dibble's favor, a tractor contract, and, eventually, the choice breeders that will, within the three years between Acts I and II, raise David's savings from \$394 to \$14,000.

There are moments in the play (which was originally a novel) that are vintage Miller: the father training the boy to be a baseball hero, even as he dismisses his schoolwork as unimportant; the devoted wife, who, through most of the play, holds her husband at the center of her world; the successful, entrepreneurial businessman whom the protagonist admires; the sentimental alcoholic who cannot find his place in the world; an aunt who, in her pedestrian recognitions and sniffing intelligence, suggests the many women Miller left as

Continued on page 6

caricatures even as he used full brush strokes for his males. And, most familiar, is the hapless hero who struggles to control his world and to understand.

Allen Moyer's set creates a fourth wall across the proscenium stage, which rises to reveal the inside of the auto shop in Act I and the inside of David and Hester's home in Act II, when the couple is married, financially secure, and sleeping in the old man's bed, and Act III, when Hester is in labor. Constructed of vertical slats, it suggests the gray wooden siding of middle America's homes. In deference to Miller's insistence that the play should not be judged by the standards of realism—as critics seem to have done in 1944—there are wide cracks between the slats. Otherwise, the production recreates the objects of David's world. Michael Krass's late thirties costumes remind one of photographs from the period, with vests and caps, woolen topcoats, and other pre-polyester clothes. And a masterfully-designed classic sedan that is pushed onstage in Act I clearly establishes the time period as well as the wealth of its owner (a staff member told me that Adams actually saw the play on Broadway in 1944).

Indeed, a number of the actors were senior members of the profession and, under Scott Ellis' direction, performed as though Miller, who gave advice on the production, had handpicked them all. As David and Amos' father, Rebhorn portrayed the passion and hope of an America that treasured opportunity even as Europe was slowly succumbing to Hitler. As Miller points out in his introduction, America's passivity in the years between the World Wars was fascism's best asset. Were it not that Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, he opined, we may have let Europe slip away, secure in our distance and in our dreams. Gus, the Austrian, at times becomes Miller's young but prescient voice, cautioning the country about the price of inaction and cynically but hopefully attributing all that occurs to "America." Clearly the play explores the significance of individual agency—or, as Miller puts it, "the centrality of the individual and the importance of what he thought and did." Yet its lesson, finally, is unclear. For the causality one would like to believe exists in individual acts short-circuits every time. In the end, David and Hester, not unlike George and Martha in Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, face the next day together, he climbing the stairs to join his wife and to hold his baby for the first time. Apparently aware that his point was not yet made, Miller revised the ending twenty times.

The language of *The Man Who Had All the Luck* is less accomplished than that of the later plays, and its craft is less subtle. Yet the play is clearly the work of a promising playwright. In the same year as its Broadway run, it was staged off-Broadway, and Charles Marowitz directed it in England some sixteen years later. After that, the play virtually disappeared until BBC Radio 3 broadcast it in 1987. In the sixty-plus years since its writing in 1938, the Williamstown Theatre Festival may be the only major professional company in this country to have recognized its worth. Indeed, their production persuaded at least this scholar that the play deserves to be revisited and reclaimed.

— June Schlueter

Broken Glass at The West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds, UK.

Award-winning writer Arthur Miller excels in his latest offering, *Broken Glass*, set in Brooklyn in November 1938. The audience is invited to witness a Jewish couple's marriage problems, during which time the historical persecution of Jews, by the Nazis, reaches fever point. Wife Sylvia Gellburg is obsessed with stories of the horrific maltreatment of Jews around Europe. Her hysteria leads to paralysis, and she becomes unable to walk. Her husband, Philip, remains incredulous of this event throughout most of play, offering little genuine sympathy for her anguish. A sufferer of stress and anxiety himself, in part due to his suffering long-term sexual dysfunction, Philip becomes more and more desperate to find a cure for his wife, and at the cost of his own health. Trusting in his philandering doctor and friend, Harry Hyman, Philip begins to see the magnitude of his marital difficulties. He begins to suspect that Dr. Hyman and his wife's relationship is more than a professional one. Subsequently, his jealousy and his obsession to be the finest employee in a company that only employs one Jewish person, lead him towards further heartache and life-threatening events.

The West Yorkshire Playhouse cast of six was, without exception, able to convey Miller's message with admirable reality. The New York accents were good. They were appropriately adjusted according to the status of the character and, also, suited to the era. The actors maintained relevant pace and presence, and the stage design was planned meticulously to cope with the rigours of having to move a wheelchair around from room to room. The lighting and sound were so good that they created atmosphere without one knowing of their actual presence. The gauze backdrop provided an excellent opportunity for certain characters to observe the play's action at key points, bringing the anguish closer to the audience.

In my opinion, this play is one of Miller's finest. It is gripping, dramatic, and brave. It succeeds in its attempt to reveal the human tendency to inflict and suffer psychological and physical torture, whether it exists in the context of war or within the domestic domain. Go see this wonderful work at your earliest opportunity, though not when you're feeling a little down, or when you fancy a jolly old comedy, since you may be disappointed.

(The production ran May 4-June 9, 2001.)

— Jeanette Senior

C. W. E. Bigsby. *Modern American Drama: 1945-2000*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

C. W. E. Bigsby's updated version of his critically-commended text *Modern American Drama: 1945-1990* offers new insights and analyses of the significant dramatic theories and dramatists that are prevalent indicators of the consciousness of the twentieth century. Bigsby progresses thoroughly from the psychological concerns of O'Neill, and the sociological and cultural leanings of Williams and Miller to the more dialogical and linguistic endeavors of the latter playwrights Albee, Shepard, and Mamet.

The current text is not only an excellent survey of the themes of the dramatists' major and minor works, but also provides an invaluable commentary on the development of literary dramatic theory throughout the several decades from World War II to the end of the millennium. Bigsby meticulously outlines how the plays and their authors reflect the several "isms" that arose throughout the latter part of the twentieth century: socialism, surrealism, abstractionism, cubism, and feminism, as well as considering the influence of such theorists as Bakhtin and Derrida on the linguistic machinations that the plays and their characters represent.

Though the chapters on O'Neill, Williams, and Miller are indeed informative and comprehensive in their deliberation on the works of these major figures, the chapters on Shepard and Mamet are particularly engaging in their investigation of the dramatic incidents and language that become paradigms for the desolation and possible emancipation of the American landscape and the American psyche. Through an investigation of Shepard's *Fool for Love*, *A Lie of the Mind*, and *True West* and of Mamet's *American Buffalo* and *Oleanna*, Bigsby ultimately discusses the enigmatic nature of the changing American family, the unreliability of the American idiom, and the particular elements of realism that characterize so many of the plays throughout these decades. Chapter Ten ("Redefining the Centre: Politics, Race, Gender") offers an elucidating and scholarly examination of how specific plays and their authors reveal examples of sociological, cultural, and political stratification and the anomalous nature of contemporary issues relating to gender, race, and class.

The final new chapter "Beyond Broadway" is a precise and constructive discussion of the most recent plays that dominate the end of the millennium; Bigsby not only carefully outlines the dramatic contributions of Terrence McNally, David Rabe, Wallace Shawn, and Paula Vogel, but he correlates their works and dramatic concerns with the playwrights that preceded them. *Modern American Drama: 1945-2000* is an invaluable tool for the scholar of American drama as well as for the individual who is fascinated by the influence that modern American drama has had on the national consciousness.

— George P. Castellitto

Gerald Weales. *Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman: Text and Criticism*. New York: Viking Critical Library, 1996.

The critical edition, similar to those issued by Norton, was probably a good choice for the instructor or student who needed help seeing the issues involved in Miller's masterpiece when the book was published in 1967. Now, it's quite dated. In addition to the text of the play, Weales includes Miller's own essays on the play, a section of Jo Mielziner's book recounting how he designed the set (which tells us that Howard Wagner was originally named Mr. Heiser), a sampling of original reviews, critical articles devoted solely to the play, essays dealing with it in conjunction to Miller's other plays up to *A View from the Bridge* (despite the date of the volume, no essay discusses *After the Fall*), analogues (Welty's "Death of a Salesman," Williams' "The Last of My Solid Gold Watches," Irwin Shaw's "The Eighty Yard Run," and an excerpt from a text on selling), a chronology, bibliography, and topics for discussion.

The initial reviews are interesting primarily from an historical point of view: they add nothing to our understanding of the play other than to point out flaws (as do the later essays) and even condemn the play, which had not yet become an institution. Whether the play is or is not a tragedy is much discussed. Dr. Daniel E. Schneider reads the play psychoanalytically, and Raymond Williams reads it through Marxist lenses, but other than those two essays, there is nothing approaching contemporary theory. These early essays are essentially close readings which still provide a basis for discussion of the play and, despite their lack of theory, still provide some insights. Schneider reads the play not only in conventional Oedipal terms—Happy's and Biff's affection for their mother and disrespect for their father—but also in terms of a younger, unpreferred son, not only Happy, but especially Willy himself. Although Schneider does not say so, could not when he wrote his essay, the pattern continues from *All My Sons*, through *The Price*; since then, others have commented on its relevance to playwright Miller and his elder brother Kermit.

Because of the book's date of publication, the essay writers in the text view Miller primarily as a social dramatist, with Ibsen as his mentor (there is brief mention of Miller's adaptation of *Enemy of the People*). Thus the essays give us little to go on to connect *Salesman* with the moral ambiguities of *After the Fall*, *Danger: Memory*, *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan*, or *Mr. Peter's Connections*. Rather than recognizing ambiguity in *Salesman*, the essayists see only Miller's lack of clarity. What Penguin (which now publishes Viking) needs to do is to update this once-useful book as a companion to the *The Penguin Portable Arthur Miller*.

— Peter L. Hays

In his introduction to the critical edition to the play *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller, Gerald Weales states that “*The Crucible* belongs on the stage.” One can say it is an intriguing comment regarding a play, which indirectly suggests the specificity of this play, in the attitude of reading it and watching it on the stage. One of the reasons is the predominant social and political point of view along *The Crucible*’s plot.

Taking into consideration the circumstances in which *The Crucible* was created, Gerald Weales organized the essays in two groups. First, there are those that concern the play in production, not only in the United States but in England and France as well. The second group of essays presents a collection of documents relating to the Salem trials (examinations and testimonies) and excerpts from contemporary books on witchcraft episodes providing the play’s historical setting. There is also a set of texts suggesting the play’s immediate background, that is, the political situation in America in the early 1950s.

There are basically two dilemmas that generally surround the structure of *The Crucible*. One is related to the ability of this play in portraying accurately or not the Salem witch trials. The other one is the possibility or not in recovering such historical events which occurred in Salem in the seventeenth century as a viable analogy to criticize the American political situation in the early 1950s. Such questionings open the second part of Weales’ introduction, where the editor implies that such doubts are bound together. According to Weales, the circumstances that propelled Arthur Miller create *The Crucible* go beyond the events of McCarthyism, since there have been “other Senator McCarthys since 1953 and of a different character” (xiv). He implies that the absence of precision in interpreting the Salem trials along with the hearings of the 1950s is a conscious procedure adopted by Arthur Miller in his effort to create a play that could outlast the moment. In order to reinforce such argument, Weales quotes a statement from an interview with Arthur Miller, where the playwright said, “McCarthyism may have been the historical occasion of the play, not its theme” (xvi).

The first articles in this volume were written by Arthur Miller: “Miller on *The Crucible*,” from *The New York Times*, August 10, 1952; “Introduction to *Collected Plays*,” from *Collected Plays* by Arthur Miller (1957) and “Brewed in *The Crucible*,” published in *The New York Times*, March 9, 1958. In these three texts, Arthur Miller exposes his reaction against the way American society let itself be easily influenced by McCarthyism, something unconceivable by him. According to Miller, a sense of guilt is predominant in both episodes, which is a result of a growing necessity to take part in the discovery of the enemies of the power. In his introduction to the *Collected Plays*, Miller declares what he indeed intended

when he wrote *The Crucible*: “I wished for a way to write a play that would be sharp, that would lift out of the morass of subjectivism the squirming, single, defined process which would show that the sin of public terror is that it divests man of conscience, of himself” (163).

From this statement by Miller, one can deduce that beyond the historically-possible approach in comparing the circumstances involving the rise of the witch hunt hysteria both in the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, there is the author’s preoccupation in discussing the process of losing one’s conscience in drifting from one’s self. The importance of not losing a sense of consciousness is what underlies the three articles of Arthur Miller on his play *The Crucible*.

Throughout the book are many articles from different authors about the production of *The Crucible* and the printed editions of the play. For this review, texts have been selected that suggest an association between the play’s structure and the process of its elaboration, to elucidate some of the remarkable elements in the play and the procedures adopted by Arthur Miller to create certain effects.

One of the texts that refers to the idea of guilt in Miller plays infers that Arthur Miller is often looking for innocence. This is the predominant position defended by Eric Bentley in his essay “The Innocence of Arthur Miller.” According to Bentley, Arthur Miller is one of the writers who has a double innocence: he not only creates innocent characters, but he writes on the viewpoint of innocence. This is the usual attitude of a dramatist of indignation like Miller. This notion of innocence is present in another essay, written by Robert Warshow, although in a different perspective.

Warshow criticizes Miller’s option in his efforts to attribute similarities of the witch hunt in Salem to the witch hunt in the 1950s because the Salem trials had to be distorted in order to be fitted into the framework, suggesting such allegorical interpretation. Warshow emphasizes the major difference between the two witch hunt phenomena. In the Salem trials, those accused of witchcraft did not die for a cause or an idea, once they were accused of a crime that did not even exist. On the other hand, Sacco and Vanzetti were able to interpret what was happening to them because they knew that they actually stood for certain ideas that were considered abhorrent to the ones who sent them to death. In the final part of his essay, Warshow concludes that the aspects that underlie both historical moments along the play is the notion of “dissent,” manifested in both moments, either in the Puritan context or in the liberal one.

Innocence is also the leading topic on the essay “Salem Witchcraft in Recent Fiction and Drama” by David Lean. According to Lean, Miller shows in *The Crucible* how help-

less an innocent defendant can be, and, in his attempts to show the dilemma suffered by John Proctor (an innocent man who must confess falsely if he wants to live but has courage to insist on his innocence), he oversimplifies history to accomplish dramatic necessities.

In this critical edition to the play *The Crucible* are some essays focusing the characteristics of Arthur Miller as a playwright written by William Wiegand, Richard H. Rovere, Lee Baxandall, and Gerald Weales, the editor of this book.

“Arthur Miller and the Man Who Knows” by William Wiegand compares the similarities between John Proctor and certain characters in other Miller plays, as a conscious attitude of the author who struggles to show to his audience some archetypes of social behavior. The essay continues with references on Miller’s *Death of a Salesman* and his adaptation on Ibsen’s play *An Enemy of the People* to reveal the ramifications in terms of Miller’s own tradition, that is, in Miller’s process of describing a cycle.

“Arthur Miller’s Conscience” by Richard H. Rovere starts with the statement of Arthur Miller’s in the House Committee on Un-American Activities: “I will protect my sense of myself” (315). According to Rovere, Miller’s sense of himself is to be projected as well as protected. Miller’s sense of himself renders him the ability of dealing with the criticism toward a society that undergoes the ideal sense of ethic or principles. Along with references taken from *The Crucible*, Rovere emphasizes the attitude assumed by Miller before the HUAC inquiries, which implied the determined position of the playwright to admit only his own “sins” and not to judge the others.

“Arthur Miller: Still the Innocent” by Lee Baxandall draws considerations about another play by Miller, *After the Fall*, as a way to emphasize how Arthur Miller projected his own experience in his plays. In the essay, the critic tries to defend the position of how similar the attitudes of the protagonist in *After the Fall* is with the positions of Miller himself.

“Arthur Miller: Man and His Image” by Gerald Weales presents an overview on Miller’s works, basically on what concerns the playwright’s position in revealing in most of his plays the relationship between a man’s identity and the image that society demands of him, and how Miller has been able and successful enough to present this with a great deal of emotion.

The essays and other texts in *The Crucible: Text and Criticism* edited by Gerald Weales contain many other relevant aspects in addition to the few selected for this review. Through the brief considerations of some of the articles, it is evident that this book provides a significant variety of texts to anyone who is interested in obtaining further information on *The Crucible* as well as the importance of this play in Miller’s work as a whole.

Christopher Bigsby, ed. *The Portable Arthur Miller*. New York: Penguin Books, 1995.

The new *Portable Arthur Miller* is a welcome re-introduction of this world-class playwright for our times. Christopher Bigsby updates Harold Clurman’s 1971 *Portable Miller*, reaching back to the 1930s and forward to the 1990s, showing the full arc of Miller’s grasp of the American century. The Miller which emerges from 41 pages of substantial critical commentary and 575 pages of dramatic texts is a playwright focused on the world stage expressing its agony as personal moral struggle. Miller’s plays travel and translate well. Their universality defies easy characterization, but clearly transcends debates about tragedy and the American Dream. Countless playgoers from all over the world, viewing *Death of a Salesman*, have said with David Mamet, this is simply, “our story that we did not know until we heard it” (xi). The later plays, especially, bear out Miller’s consistent decision to reject a dramaturgy of absurdist victimization in favor of the hard road of self-knowledge. His plays preserve a sense of what is inescapably human in all its terror and wonder.

The Portable Miller contains Clurman’s original biographical notes as well as his excellent introduction to the plays up through *The Price* (1968). Clurman has a wonderful feeling for the meaning of human connectedness and responsibility in Miller, the way Miller as a moralist is also a profoundly philosophical thinker. And Clurman argues convincingly for the significance of Miller’s sense of community, not the faceless “society,” but the family and neighborhood where personal honor must look in the mirror and struggle with the merciless practicality of the marketplace. For Clurman, Miller’s vision is “a dream rising out of reality,” (xxi) poetic moral parable beyond naturalism. His representation of the working class is factually accurate, respectful, and good-humored. And Miller possesses something quite unique on the stage, a feeling for the “outdoors” which gives his characters a special animal warmth and depth.

Bigsby’s biographical notes and critical introduction follow Clurman’s. Now we find Miller in the company not only of O’Neill, Hellman, Odets, and Williams, but also Pinter, Albee, and Mamet. 1929 is crucial for Bigsby’s reading of Miller. Not everyone remembers—but Arthur Miller does—how absolute physical need and fear of humiliation underlie and undermine feelings of self worth in “respectable” people. According to Bigsby, Miller has kept a sure footing on the shifting grounds of American life and politics because he has always seen the inevitable defining human experience as a confrontation with the past, “now grappling with then” (xxxviii). America is part of history, not simply a product of its own dream of itself. And reflective people, playgoers, want to know how that is so. Miller tells them.

Bigsby begins his anthology with a brief excerpt from *The Golden Years*, an historical drama of the Aztecs (and an allegory of contemporary Europe), written in 1939-40. The play impressively casts the metaphor for so much of Miller's dramatic thinking about tragedy and history. Montezuma watches in paralyzed fascination as Cortez marches forward to destroy the Aztec civilization. Again and again throughout his career, Miller holds up a character who does not know what to do when evil confronts him. The hope implicit in the courage of this admission is the hope upon which Miller builds his theater, a theater of communal awareness.

Bigsby has chosen to include six plays in their entirety: *Death of a Salesman* (1949), *The Crucible* (1953), *After the Fall* (1964), *The American Clock* (1980), *The Last Yankee* (1993), and *Broken Glass* (1994). The reader can also seek out other plays, radio plays, a screenplay, fiction and reportage, articles, and interviews via the extensive bibliography. The plays included demonstrate Miller's originality of form

and characterization. And the wealth of quotes from Miller's journals and interviews included in Bigsby's introduction make for some of the best reading on drama and theater one is likely ever to come across. Bigsby's own recollections of his working association with Miller over the years is very enlightening, especially for readers who know Miller only through American productions or literature classes. Bigsby brings American readers up to date about the full range of Miller's plays produced in England since 1968. In spite of the vexations of Broadway, the theater is a big place. And Miller's important role in it is richly celebrated in this handsome, useful book. Bigsby has framed the plays with meditations from Miller's autobiographical *Timebends*: on being young, being old, and being always interested in and connected to the world we all inhabit.

— Robert Combs

Steven R. Centola, ed. *The Achievement of Arthur Miller: New Essays*. Dallas: Contemporary Research Press, 1995.

Early in his introduction to *The Achievement of Arthur Miller*, editor Steven Centola decries the fact that in the United States, Miller's reputation rests mainly on his early commercial successes, with his later work generally ignored or "seriously undervalued" (11). One of the most interesting essays in the collection, Christopher W. E. Bigsby's "A British View of an American Playwright," contrasts this view with the eager reception Miller continues to receive from the British. Bigsby takes issue with American theatre historians and critics, from editors of *The Oxford Companion to the American Theatre* to Robert Brustein, whom he sees as wrongly dismissive of Miller and his work. Bigsby's conclusion must resonate with those of us who struggle to keep dramatic literature alive in undergraduate curricula: "America has always disregarded its drama in particular" (23).

Bigsby discusses reasons for Britain's positive assessment of Miller in tandem with his thoughtful evaluation of *The Ride Down Mount Morgan*, which Miller chose to open in London's East End in 1991. He concludes that perhaps the British respond positively to Miller for a simple reason: "He writes outstanding plays" (29).

Several other essays in the collection deal with Miller's "undervalued" plays. Robert A. Martin considers critical reaction to *After the Fall*, with its focus on the autobiographical elements of the play. Gerald Weales ("Watching the Clock") looks at the history of the script(s) and productions,

including vaudeville, of *The American Clock*. Steven R. Centola examines the two plays in *Danger: Memory! (I Can't Remember Anything and Clara)* from a Sartrean perspective. June Schlueter focuses on "the elusiveness of the real" (149) in *The Ride Down Mount Morgan*. And James Robinson looks at the early play, *They Too Arise*, but from a familiar perspective—Miller's view of the father-son relationship.

The other essays—nine in the collection of fifteen—either focus exclusively on Miller's "masterpieces," *Death of a Salesman* and *The Crucible*, or devote substantial discussion time to them. Some offer fresh material or perspectives—e.g., Brenda Murphy's use of unpublished manuscripts in discussing the development of Biff Loman's character and Milton scholar Timothy Miller's examination of Arthur Miller's accurate portrayal of seventeenth-century attitudes in *The Crucible*. But, as Centola acknowledges at the end of his introduction, this collection is not the "final word" on Miller's art.

While I was impressed by a number of the essays in this volume, I am more intrigued by the question of what a collection devoted entirely to Miller's "most severely undervalued plays" would look like. Perhaps some Miller scholar will accept Centola's invitation to join the continuing conversation about Miller's drama and give us such a work.

—Elsie Galbreath Haley

Contributors

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Joseph Kane is a reading teacher at Jerstad-Agerholm Middle School in Racine, Wisconsin. His Bachelor's thesis is titled "Arrested Development: The Search for a Father in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*," and is available from the University of Wisconsin - Parkside on Interlibrary loan. In July 2001, he received a Master's degree in Education, for research on reading students who read novels on the World Wide Web.

Stephen Marino teaches at Saint Francis College in Brooklyn and at Saint Francis Preparatory School in Fresh Meadows in New York, where he is chairperson of the English Department. His work has appeared in *Modern Drama* and *The Journal of Imagism*. He recently edited a book titled "*The Salesman Has a Birthday*": *Essays Celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman*," published this year by University Press of America.

Ana Lúcia Moura Novais is Professor of Brazilian Literature, English Literature, and American Literature at UniSant'Anna, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. She holds an MS in Brazilian Literature. At the present time, she is writing her doctoral thesis about the transit of memory and experience in *After the Fall*.

June Schlueter is provost and Charles A. Dana Professor of English at Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania. Among her books are *Metafictional Characters in Modern Drama* (1977), *The Plays and Novels of Peter Handke* (1981), *Arthur Miller* (1987), *Feminist Rereadings of Modern American Drama* (1989), *Modern American Drama: The Female Canon* (1990), and *Approaches to Teaching Beckett's "Waiting for Godot"* (1991).

Jeanette Senior is currently training to be a psychologist and is this year's British Psychological Society's student writer of the year. Prior to her career in psychology, she was a speech and drama teacher, and a professional actor in the UK. She has written a full-length play, won a Shakespeare award, and written and directed several amateur and junior theatre productions. She has also trained professional actors to appear in corporate role-plays for training videos.

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