

—Magnum Photos, Inc.

The Arthur Miller Society

Newsletter

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

Volume 5

May 2002

Tribute to Ingeborg Morath

We would like to dedicate this issue of the newsletter to the memory of Ingeborg Morath.

Ingeborg Morath was born on 27 May, 1923, in Graz, Austria, near the borders of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. Somewhere beyond lay Russia. She was educated in two further countries, while marriage took her to two more. She was the daughter of two scientists and grew up under the shadow of the Third Reich. Her brother was drafted at the age of sixteen and shot down on his first mission, spending the rest of the war as a POW.

Refusing to join the Hitler Youth, she found herself doing forced labor at Templehof airport in Berlin. Escaping during a bombing raid, she made her way back to Salzburg, and her family, on foot, a journey described in Arthur Miller's *Timebends*; she came close to suicide.

After the war, she worked for the United States Informa-

tion Agency and then for a number of magazines, including *Optimiste* and *Heute*, at first as a writer and then as a picture editor. She was always a dedicated reader but had also been fascinated by painting, growing up at a time when images were controlled by the state. Her introduction to modernism came in the exhibitions of "decadent art" organized by the Nazis.

Eventually, she began to take photographs and ended up in one of the world's most famous picture agencies, Magnum. In the 1950s, she began to travel widely, one of her first projects being a shoot on the set of *Moulin Rouge*, directed by John Huston, whom she was to meet a decade later when she was one of a team of Magnum photographers on the set of Miller's *The Misfits*.

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Words from the Society's President

This will be my last opportunity to regale you all as president, as by the next newsletter my staunch ally, Stephen Marino, will have taken up the presidential reins, and it will be his turn to keep you up to date. In light of that, I would like to announce that we are still accepting nominations for the office of Vice President which will become open in the fall. Bear in mind that it is a four-year (plus) commitment as the Vice-President serves for two years, then becomes President for two years (and then is placed on the Board of Directors). I shall continue to act as webmaster, and, to momentarily wear that hat, put out an earnest plea to everyone to send me any annotated links which I can add to the website for Miller and his contemporaries. A plethora of related sites have sprung up since I first started work on this section of the site, and it needs a lot of work to enable it to be the useful research guide we had envisioned. Just send the link, and a few brief comments on its nature and usefulness to <abbotson@hotmail.com> (which is my new e-mail).

With the aid of our newest Secretary/Treasurer, George Castellitto, who has already made a mark with his evident organizational skills, we are now officially incorporated and are progressing towards gaining 501(c)3 status, which we

hope to have completed by the year's end. Keeping the ball rolling, our next conference is already being planned by Paula Langteau for the October 3-4, 2003, at Nicolet College in Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Also, Peter Hays at UC Davis, is looking into the possibility of a future Californian conference run by the combined playwright societies; keep checking the website for more details. Meanwhile, we have recently had the excitement of our first West Coast conference, with an excellent program of papers and events, organized by Jane Dominik. I would like to encourage attendance from society members at the annual ALA conference, too. We always run at least one panel and sometimes a society meeting, but these have not been as well attended as they should. The ALA is a friendly conference, far less intimidating than MLA (and cheaper), and it would be nice to see more support there for the society. This May it will be held in Long Beach (more details inside), and next year back in Boston. Check out their website for more details <www.americanliterature.org>. There is also a nearby production of *All My Sons* going on in Hollywood at the time of this year's ALA, which has offered reduced rates to society

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Arthur Miller Society

Officers

Founding President, 1995-98	Steve Centola <i>Millersville University, PA</i>
Current President, 2000-02	Susan C.W. Abbotson <i>Rhode Island College</i>
Vice President	Stephen Marino <i>St. Francis College, NY</i>
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Newsletter Editor	Jane K. Dominik <i>San Joaquin Delta College, CA</i>

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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:

The Arthur Miller Society Newsletter
c/o Jane K. Dominik
San Joaquin Delta College
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Stockton, CA 95207

Subscription Information

Membership and Subscription are available for \$20 per year for individuals in the U.S. and Canada; \$10 for students; \$25/year for joint memberships; \$25/year for overseas members; \$30/year for libraries, and \$45/year for institutions. Membership and subscription address:

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Arthur Miller Society Website
<www.biblio.org/miller/>

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Officer Vacancies

In addition to the Vice President vacancy, Jane Dominik has announced that she will step down as Newsletter Editor after the Fall 2002 issue. Those interested in submitting nominations for the position may contact Stephen Marino or Jane Dominik.

Words from the Society's President

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members should they wish to attend (again, see inside for more details).

On to this issue. We were all saddened to hear of the death of Ingeborg Morath, and the society has sent a letter of condolence to Mr. Miller; we add to that an informative and insightful tribute to her life and impact, written for us by Christopher Bigsby. We also continue to bring you in-depth reviews of a number of other recent publications related to Miller. This could become known as the "Harold Bloom" issue, as it contains reviews of three of his volumes on Miller and a reference to another of his books. Ana Lúcia Moura Novais runs through what is to be found in *Bloom's Major Dramatists: Arthur Miller* (2000), Heather Cook Callow looks at Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1996) from the Bloom's Notes series, and Jeffrey Barber asks for a reconsideration of *Willy Loman* (1991). On top of this, we have two excellent analyses of the *Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller* (1997) by Robert Combs and Carlos Campo, which allow you to consider the book from differing perspectives, a look at what is contained in the Claudia Durst Johnson and Vernon E. Johnson volume *Understanding the Crucible* (1998) from Michelle Cirulli, and detailed coverage of Miller's latest publication, *On Politics and the Art of Acting* (2001), by Jeffrey Barber.

In regard to Miller's latest publication, through his description of an appearance and speech given by Miller last March to promote this book, Lew Livesay offers us his views on the politicized response given to the original Jefferson Lecture. We also have reports on recent Miller conference society meetings and a detailed review by Karen Wilson of the *After the Fall* production mounted at San Joaquin Delta College at the time of the conference held there. Due to the kindness of Debbie Bisno, Stephen Marino was able to attend the dress rehearsal of the new Broadway revival of *The Crucible* and shares some thoughts on that, as well as giving a round up of what is happening "Millerwise" in the City. We also get a less positive review of that same production of *The Crucible* from Peter Hays, from later in its run.

In addition to all of this, there is a useful article from Allan Chavkin which compares the two CBS television versions of *Death of a Salesman* (both now available on video) from 1966 and 1985 and offers some great teaching strategies; a selection of extracts from both the Felician and Stockton conferences to give you an idea of some of the interesting views which were raised; and the usual round up of notices, announcements, and information. We have also added in a few photographs and a thank you. Our pool of contributors seems to be growing, and once again, I thank everyone who has contributed their words and thoughts to this bumper issue.

Meanwhile, Mr. Miller has arranged for his newest play, the intriguingly titled, *Resurrection Blues*, to open the sea-

son at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota, this August. More details are up on the website (and inside), and Paula Langteau is willing to organize a group excursion if there are those of you interested in attending—contact her directly at plangteau@hotmail.com or call 715-362-6877 before July 8th. And so the beat goes on....

—Susan C. W. Abbotson

Tribute to Ingeborg Morath (Continued from page 1)

When she and Miller met again, in New York, they both had failed marriages behind them, she to a British journalist, he to Mary Slattery and Marilyn Monroe. Neither was sure s/he should take the risk again. In the end, they did so, when Inge was already pregnant with what would turn out to be Rebecca. The marriage was to last almost forty years. They respected each other's careers and learned from their different but complementary skills.

They traveled together and produced a series of books. Both were fascinated by the power of history, both committed to capturing individual lives. It is a rare Inge Morath landscape or cityscape without the human figure. For her, "man is the measure . . . people are always there."

Whenever she was to go on a shoot in another country, she prepared by reading its literature, familiarizing herself with its art, and, most astonishingly of all, learning its language. "How" she asked, "could one understand Russia (a favorite subject) without understanding its language?" She felt the same about China, Spain, and half a dozen other countries.

Inge was a vital, immensely energetic woman to the end. Each day began with exercises and, in summer, a swim in the spring-fed pond at Roxbury. She was a talented cook, able and willing to feed the steady flow of guests who made their way to rural Connecticut to interview her or her husband. Meanwhile, exhibitions of her work proliferated. She received the Grand Austrian State Award for Photography and the Honorary Gold Medal of the Federal Capital of Vienna, along with a clutch of honorary degrees. Yet, she was modest about her achievements.

She genuinely believed that part of her function as an artist lay in recording the lives of people she met around the world, "so that there might be better understanding." She was an interpreter who made other people's lives and other ways of life available and understandable.

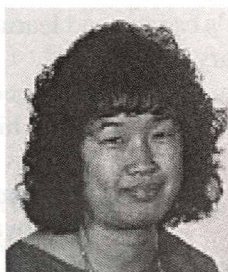
In the context of a publication dedicated to Arthur Miller, it should also be noted that she changed his life and the direction of his work. Their relationship may have begun tentatively on both sides, as they feared replicating past mistakes. It quickly grew, however, into a genuine love affair that lasted to the moment of her death from a cancer which she had fought for some time and about which I never heard her complain.

Inge Morath did not just photograph the world, she changed it, as she did the lives of all those she met.

— Christopher Bigsby

Delta College Staff

The Arthur Miller Society Newsletter has been made possible through the staff work and support at San Joaquin Delta College. Their readiness to lay out each issue, print it, collate and bind it, and mail it, often within a few days' notice, is greatly appreciated. It is rare that those behind the scenes are properly recognized. Toward that end, the Society would like to thank the following for their valuable contributions to our endeavors:



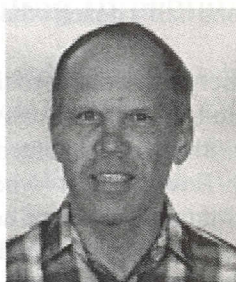
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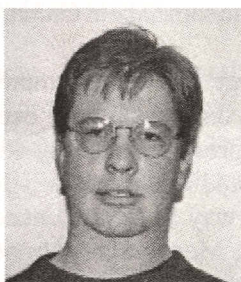
Patrick Stapelburg



Dana Pratt



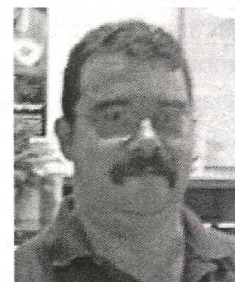
Larry Sackerson



Greg Greenwood



Josie Sanchez



David Ordez

Siv Taing does most of the layout, design, and typesetting while Patrick Stapelburg and Susan Lovotti have also helped with layout and typesetting. Dana Pratt, Robert Wall, and Larry Sackerson have printed, bound, and delivered the newsletter to the mailroom on campus. As Supervisor of the Publications Center, Greg Greenwood has enabled his staff to produce it. Finally, Josie Sanchez and David Ordez have made labels, folded and stapled, and mailed the newsletters, again, often with little notice when time is of the essence. Everyone has been most helpful and cooperative even amidst their several other responsibilities. Thank you.

— Jane K. Dominik

The Arthur Miller Society Fall Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Arthur Miller Society, held at Felician College in Lodi, New Jersey, Saturday, October 13, 2001.

Members Present: Sue Abbotson, George Castellitto, Jane Dominik, Paula Langteau, Lew Livesay, Steve Marino, Terry Otten, Herb Goldstein, Robert Combs

Society President Sue Abbotson called the meeting to order. The agenda items included amending some of the current by-laws to reflect the state of the current society, filling the vacant position of vice-president, and discussing future sites for conferences.

Sue officially congratulated George Castellitto for holding a great conference at Felician College. Sue also expressed gratitude to Jane Dominik for her extraordinary accomplishment at publishing the frequent editions of the society newsletter. Jane, in turn, wants to express a special "Thank You" to the publishing staff, secretaries, and mailroom personnel at San Joaquin Delta College for their assistance with the newsletter.

Steve Marino gave the secretary/treasurer report. The current balance in the checking account as of August 30, 2001 is \$401. There are currently approximately 75 official members of the society, but we have been really considerate in not dropping members who have not paid dues from the mailing list, since we wanted to disseminate our information about Miller to as many people as possible. We agreed that Steve Marino would send notification of dues to everyone currently on the list and then drop those who do not renew their membership.

We discussed the idea of seeking a 501(c)3 status for the society. This would enable us to take advantage of any future money, such as gifts, grants, or bequests, that the society may receive. This may be especially relevant if Steve Centola is able to receive funding for an Arthur Miller Journal. Sue Abbotson will explore this option.

An amendment to the by-laws for filling vacant officer positions was proposed. The position of vice-president has been opened since Sue Abbotson assumed the position of president in September 2000. The current by-laws do not account for the interim filling of positions until an election can be held. Therefore, an amendment was proposed and unanimously approved which states that: "A vacancy in the office of the society can be filled in the interim by the vote of members of the society at an annual meeting. An interim appointment must then be voted upon by the society membership to approve the filling of the position for the remainder of the existing term. The secretary will be responsible for contacting the members, tabulating the results, and reporting them to the officers for certification."



Officers: George Castellitto, Jane Dominik, Sue Abbotson, and Steve Marino.

Steve Marino was nominated by Jane Dominik, seconded by George Castellitto, and approved unanimously to fill the position of vice-president. George Castellitto was nominated by Steve Marino, seconded by Lew Livesay, and approved unanimously to fill the positions of secretary/treasurer, which were vacated when Steve Marino was elected vice-president. Steve Marino will send out ballots along with the minutes to approve these appointments.

Sue Abbotson is maintaining and updating the Arthur Miller website. She asks that the members send items of interest about Miller for her to post. We are particularly interested in adding more links to other drama websites and filling in missing work synopses. The correct address for the site is : WWW.IBIBLIO.ORG/MILLER/

We also agreed to appoint Christopher Bigsby to the honorary board, effective immediately; we will appoint Steve Centola to the honorary board, effective September 2002.

We discussed possible sites for future Miller conferences. Steve Centola is pursuing Millersville for spring 2003; Paula will pursue Wisconsin as a future fall site; and Brenda Murphy can consider University of Connecticut as a possibility.

Jane Dominik plans to publish the next edition of the newsletter in February. Send any information, reviews, etc. about Miller to Jane. If possible, please send any items in Works format. We will also include abstracts from the Felician conference in the next newsletter.

Herb Goldstein and Terry Otten asked if the society should inform news agencies, theaters, and theatrical organizations about our existence and offer to give commentary, reviews, background materials for articles, programs, and publicity. These organizations, of course, would give credit to the society. This is a great idea, but would mean some work for the society's secretary; perhaps some members could assist with this.

—Stephen Marino

The Arthur Miller Society Spring Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Carlos Campo, Ryan Poll, Rick Tharp, Peter Hays, Lew Livesay, Susanna Rodriguez, Dave Davidson, Stephen Marino, Donald Anderson, Jane Dominik, Leslie Edman

The meeting was called to order by society vice-president Steve Marino, who presided over the meeting.

Steve offered "kudos" to Jane Dominik on organizing a fine conference at Delta College. Jane certainly expanded the form of the Miller conferences by including readings and performances from Miller's plays between panel presentations. Steve also relayed regards from society president Sue Abbotson.

Secretary/treasurer George Castellitto will be re-incorporating the society in New Jersey, and Sue is applying for the official tax-exempt status.

Paula Langteau will be chairing the next Miller conference in the fall of 2003 at Nicolette College in Wisconsin. We are searching for a site for the 2004 conference.

Sue Abbotson continues to ask for information to post on the Miller website.

A major portion of the meeting was devoted to our continued concern in expanding membership. We revisited an idea we previously discussed at the Brooklyn conference about holding a larger American drama conference with other societies. Peter Hays agreed to pursue hosting this at UC Davis. Steve Marino will contact the other societies and gauge their interest in participating.

—Stephen Marino

ALA Conference

On May 30-June 2, 2002, the American Literature Association, a coalition of societies devoted to the study of American authors, will be holding its 13th Annual Conference on American Literature at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach, 200 South Pine Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90802 (562 491 1234). There will be both a scheduled meeting of the Arthur Miller Society and a panel on Arthur Miller hosted by the society, and we encourage all of you to attend. The ALA is a very friendly conference and well worth the effort if you are free to go. Check out their website at www.americanliterature.org for more details, including a full conference program and instructions on how to register, or try the conference organizer, Jeanne Reesman, at jreesman@utsa.edu; 210 458 4332. The fees are very modest at \$50, and it is only \$10 for graduate students, independent scholars, and retired faculty. This includes no meals, but there will be some drinks and snacks available.

At session XXIII: H on Saturday, June 1, 3:30-4:50 p.m., the Arthur Miller Society Business Meeting will take place in Shoreline A. And at session XXV: B on Sunday, June 2, 8:30-9:50 a.m. there will be a panel in Seaview B, titled "Arthur Miller's Ethical Engagement: A Humanist's Response." This will be chaired by J. Chris Westgate of University of California, Davis, and papers will be as follows: "Arthur Miller's Diasporist Engagements in Incident at Vichy" by Neamat Imam, Aristotle University; "The Dehumanization of the Salesmen: Willy Loman and Gregor Samsa" by Carlos Campo, Community College of Southern Nevada; and "Negotiating an Ethics between Remembering and Forgetting: A Reading of After the Fall" by Ryan Poll, University of California, Davis.

— Susan C. W. Abbotson

Special Offers for Members

We have received a few notices which might be of interest to you.

The co-producer of *All My Sons* at the Actors Co-op in Hollywood, Lisa Turco, is offering a special rate for Arthur Miller Society members who would like to attend the play while in town for the ALA conference or to any members who live in the Los Angeles area and may want to come sooner. *All My Sons* opened April 12, 2002 and runs through June 2, 2002 in the Crossley Theatre. Performances are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$18.00 for adults, with a special rate of \$14.00 per person for groups of ten or more.

For Arthur Miller Society members, two-fers (two tickets for the price of one) are available for Thursday performances, and special discounted tickets of \$14.00 are available for any other performances. Please mention that you are a member of the Arthur Miller Society when you call for reservations.

The Crossley Theatre is located on the beautiful grounds of the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood at 1760 N. Gower, immediately south of the 101 Hollywood Freeway.

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Abstracts from the Sixth Arthur Miller Conference

The Sixth Arthur Miller Conference was held at Felician College in Lodi, New Jersey, October 12-13. Steve Centola delivered the keynote address and was followed by the presentation of thirteen papers, as well as nine high school students' papers.

Following are abstracts from the papers.

Steve Centola

Millersville University

“Arthur Miller and the Art of the Possible”

Despite the fact that his work emphasizes the tragic conditions of life and oftentimes depicts frustration, anguish, and failure as prevailing conditions of human existence, Arthur Miller's theater can justifiably be called the art of the possible. Miller's humanist values and postmodernist perspective provide audiences worldwide with a vision of humanity that is uplifting and life-affirming. His plays show the possibility for redemption, transcendence, and even triumph in the face of seemingly overpowering odds and adversity most inimical to human enterprise and achievement. While Miller's theater is not escapist, neither is it fatalistic, pessimistic, or nihilistic. It is a drama of hope, not despair, transcendence not reduction, and, above all else, the limitless potentialities and possibilities of the human will and spirit. By discussing *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Crucible*, *Playing for Time*, and *Mr. Peters' Connections*, the paper shows how, in Miller's plays, his characters have the ability to choose the course of action that determines and defines their values and behavior. Arthur Miller's plays show the human will as inexhaustible and irrepressible. It is this special attribute of human existence that both curses and blesses humanity because it invariably sets us off on a life-long journey to attain an impossible dream—a more-than-American dream of the total perfectibility of humankind. Miller suggests in his plays, that even though conflict, frustration, and failure are likely to result from this pursuit, it remains a noble pursuit because as long as we wrestle with our givens, resist the forces of entropy and chaos, and struggle to impose order on the natural world and our mental landscape, we will maintain the possibility that we can endow our lives with meaning.

Stephen Marino

St. Francis College

“Territoriality in Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge*”

This paper examines Arthur Miller's *A View From the Bridge* as a play about “territoriality.” It argues that the con-

flict between Eddie Carbone and Rodolpho, the Sicilian illegal immigrant, over Eddie's niece, Catherine, is not wholly sexual, but also territorial. The discussion partly grounds its argument on Robert Ardrey's *The Territorial Imperative* in which he discusses humans as a territorial species who guard as its exclusive possession an area of space and defends it against all members of its kind. Thus, Eddie's defense of Catherine and assault on Rodolpho can be seen as Eddie exerting his evolutionary instinct to defend his territory, which includes his house and his women. Therefore, the tension of the play is generated as much by the territorial instinct as the sexual instinct, which is the usual focus of discussion.

Brenda Murphy

University of Connecticut

“Hannah Arendt, Julia Kristeva, and Arthur Miller: Forgiveness and Promise in *After the Fall*”

This paper is a reading of *After the Fall* in the context of Arendt's conjunction of the two concepts of forgiveness and promise in *The Human Condition* (1958) and Kristeva's commentary on it. Miller suggests that it is only by embracing the totality of human nature, including the capacity for evil, that it is possible to find one's way to the “wager on rebirth” that is the promise. Before one can forgive, one must give up the false claim to innocence and acknowledge one's guilt. Only by embracing the truth of our culpability can we enact the freedom that Arendt recognizes in the act of forgiveness and the hope for a light on the “darkness of human affairs” that she sees enacted in the promise.

Robert McParland

Felician College

“Arthur Miller: Bridge to the Ancient Greek Theatre”

Excerpts from St. Francis Prep Seniors' *Death of a Salesman* Conference Papers

Nicole Ferraro: Willy Loman's journeys to the past are his ways of not facing the present, or the future, which also promises to hold nothing for him. He never achieves the status of a successful, loved salesman that he so desperately tries to work for...Proper attention is not paid to this man.

Addie Marino: In attempting to achieve the “American Dream” for himself and for his sons, Willy passes down lies, distortions, disillusion, self-deceptions, and deceit to Biff and Happy, which dooms them all.

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David Doerr: Willy Loman is first and foremost an American. This means that he dreams and he hopes. It means that he is a believer in the green light, "the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us."

Nina Kalinkos: The conflict existing between Biff and Willy is used in *Death of a Salesman* to represent its main theme: the conflict between illusion and reality in American society. Willy represents the dreamy aspect of society, one in which anything and everything is possible. Biff represents reality, the ever-present truth in the world.

Christine Gottlieb: Willy Loman is a fatal victim of the American Dream, a slave to the phony desire "to come out number one man."

Patricia Mincone: Willy's dream led to his death. The business world, with all its fakes and phonies who ate the orange and threw away the peel, killed Willy Loman.

Kenneth Feeley: The conflict between Biff and Willy is the main cause for Willy's dreaming of the past. The resentment that is felt between the two men causes Willy to reach for the past, to a time before the conflict when his life was not a disaster.

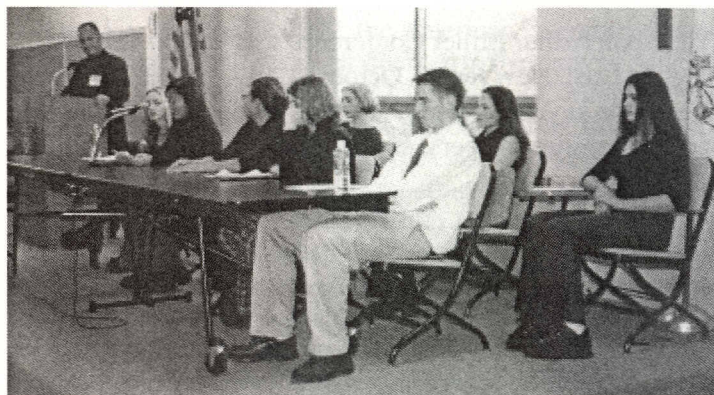
Rheanna Tsakonias: In Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, the American business system, its values and traditions, as well as the desire for success that comes with the American Dream, are confronted and challenged by the truth and reality that actually exist.

Jennifer Park: Willy wasn't the best salesman, and he wasn't famous; he was an average, ordinary person, but there's a sense of nobility in the way he fought back. "Attention, attention must be paid to such person."

Jane K. Dominik
San Joaquin Delta College

"Aging in Miller's Drama"

Among the challenges Arthur Miller presents his characters with are those predicated upon man's denial or acknowledgment of aging and death. An examination of Miller's creation of these characters and their responses to their own changing times and loss of youth and power reveals Miller's focus on the effect of the realization of mortality upon one's attitude and actions. Those aging in Miller's dramas face a sense of purposelessness and redundancy. They lose their work, they lose their minds. They attempt to comprehend



St. Francis Preparatory School students presented papers at the Miller Conference.

their lives and reconcile with their failed dreams. They attempt to atone for their sins. They make one last excruciatingly desperate attempt to create an immortal imprint upon their progeny.

A perspective of Miller's work over fifty-four years of professional playwriting reveals Miller's own changing concerns and perspective on aging and death reflected through his characters. In early plays, the men search for immortality by their increased, incessant, urgent, and desperate desire to leave a mark, whether it be a business for their sons, lingering respect, or an accumulation of symbolic gestures, proof of success in a capitalistic world. In Miller's later plays to date, the aging protagonists have a less incessant cry for recognition. Rather, theirs is a more stream-of-conscious refrain through which they search the metaphorical gray of their lives for meaning and sense. If they no longer reach for mastery and immortality, they do long for comprehension. They attempt also to understand the relation between the disconnection of their social and emotional worlds and their physical and spiritual deaths.

Susan C. W. Abbotson
Rhode Island College

"Miller's Children: *Jane's Blanket* and the Art of Parenting"

In 1963 Arthur Miller witnessed the birth of his third child, Rebecca, and published his only children's book to date, *Jane's Blanket*. Surprisingly, this book was not dedicated to his new arrival but actually named after and dedicated to his first child, Jane, who was now nearing twenty years of age. Always closely private about his relationship with his own offspring, he has said little about *Jane's Blanket*, yet an analysis of this tale of a little girl whose egocentric reliance on her comforting "bata," as she calls her blanket, is transformed

Abstracts from the Sixth Arthur Miller Conference (Continued from page 8)

into an acceptance and embrace of the needs of others, and the mode by which her father leads her into an understanding of the power of memory, clearly lies at the heart of much of Miller's work.

After a consideration of Miller's own experiences as son and father, this paper looks at *Jane's Blanket* and other presentations of the young child in Miller's work—characters often held on the periphery or even notably absent/missing—and considers how *Jane's Blanket* marks a positive turning point in the way Miller portrays children in his plays, especially in their parental relationships. In *Jane's Blanket*, Miller recognizes the child/parent relationship as an ongoing process, as children necessarily grow beyond their need for the parent (though not beyond love). Indeed, the child has to grow in this way if s/he is to be content—one reason the Lomans, Kellers, and Deevers are so messed up is either because their fathers cannot let go or they cannot let go of their fathers. Miller's successful children are those who have been allowed more measure of independence, and they are those who have learned to embrace the needs of others, to accept certain elements of fate, and who understand the power of memory and the transient nature of possession.

Kevin Beary
Mercy College

“Birth of a Farmhand: Jewish-Gentile Contrasts in *Death of a Salesman*”

A subtext in the play concerning the conflict between Jews and Gentiles over resource and status acquisition is asserted and analyzed. The two families in the play, Willy's and Charley's, are seen as representing Christian-American and Jewish-American families, respectively. Biff represents the “shaygets,” the wild Christian youth destined to fail at intellectual pursuits, while Bernard represents the studious, young Jew, destined to succeed in the professions. Bernard's upward social mobility and reproductive success, and Biff's lack of career and family are contrasted and attributed to a world-view that Miller absorbed in his youth.

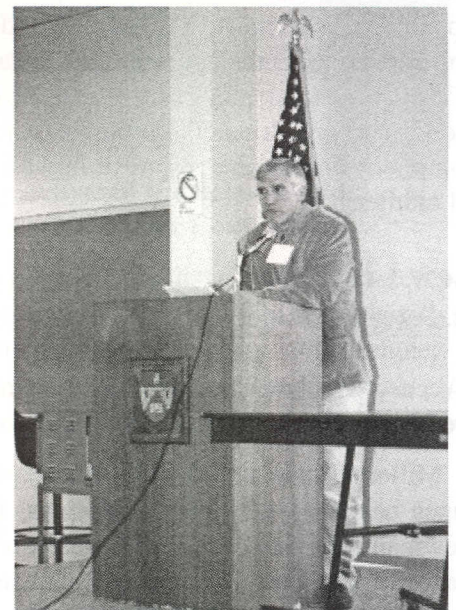
Mark Clendaniel
Enola, Pennsylvania

“Comfort in Distance: ‘Elegy for a Lady’ ”

Michelle Cirulli
Temple, Pennsylvania

“The Search for Definition in *Mr. Peters' Connections*”

Arthur Miller wrote *Mr. Peters' Connections* in the late 1990s, in a period of retrospection and anticipation; it was a period in which many people searched to find their place as we turned toward the next millennium. In essence, the main character of Miller's latest play, Mr. Peters, is doing just this, finding his place. *Mr. Peters' Connections* can be seen as an answer to a long-standing question in Miller's writing: “How much control do we have in this world?” As Mr. Peters searches to find his place, he also searches for a grasp on life, and even for a definition of life's purpose and meaning. Through this play, the question seems to shift away from a focus on control and toward a slow realization that to truly live, we must lose sight of control. Our human nature is to



Steven Centola delivered the keynote address at the Sixth Arthur Miller Conference.

arrange; from the hierarchical world order of the Middle Ages to the zeros and ones, we digitally break everything down in today's society; we arrange. Must we always know the subject, as Mr. Peters often asks, and if we know the subject, the question then arises, can we ever truly know or understand the meaning we like to believe is inherent in the subject?

Mr. Peters slowly arrives at an understanding of life's lack of order and the meaning of it as the play progresses and he comes into contact with a variety of characters from his life as they flit in and out of his consciousness. It takes a combination of these characters to force Mr. Peters to change his perspective, and, one by one, they slowly help him to come to terms with the broad scope of experiences that is his life. The characters each represent elements that Mr. Peters lacks comprehension of the main element that Miller focuses on is

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passion. Mr. Peters is so occupied with definition that he fails to enjoy the content of life. It is only with the death of passion, personified in Cathy-May, that Mr. Peters reaches epiphany and can re-think his perception of life.

In the end, we find that Miller leaves us with a definition: all that stands is love. To fully live, we must fully feel. To see love, and to fully experience it, is the greatest connection, and the greatest definition life has to truly offer.

Terry Otten

Wittenberg University

“Clara”—A One-act Tragedy in the Shadow of Postmodernism”

Like the other one-act plays Miller wrote in the 1980s (“Elegy for a Lady,” “Some Kind of Love Story,” “I Can’t Remember Anything”), “Clara” incorporates many of the elements of postmodernism—“a heap of broken images,” elliptical dialogue, musical fragments, and intermittent screen projections. Nonetheless, it retains the tragic rhythm of many of Miller’s earlier plays as the past moves inexorably into the present and drives the protagonist to confront his own complicity and assume responsibility for his daughter’s brutal murder.

Lew Livesay

St. Peter’s College

“Accuser Becomes Scapegoat: Irony at the Heart of Hatred in Arthur Miller’s *Focus* and *Broken Glass*”

Miller’s *Focus* and *Broken Glass* explore how no one escapes the terrible taint of the Holocaust. In *Focus*, Lawrence Newman follows two interchangeable ego-ideals: his boss Gargan and his neighbor Fred. Both hate Jews. Newman’s unconscious fixates on a question: Does lust have a face? The answer is Gertrude Hart, but Newman cannot respond. At his WASP corporation, Newman’s job is to staff the secretarial pool while keeping out Jews. Gertrude looks Jewish. When Gargan orders Newman to overcome his vanity and don glasses, Newman is shocked to see his visage assume Jewish features. His two ego-ideals ostracize him; ironically, accuser becomes scapegoat. Newman suffers but fights for his life, ultimately grasping that responsibility connects people. This same lesson operates in *Broken Glass* as Sylvia Gellburg realizes how her bourgeois existence cannot shelter one from Nazi atrocities against defenseless Jews. When Sylvia and her dying husband reach toward each other, begging forgiveness, they overcome the egoism and accusations that turned their marriage passionless. For Miller, we are each connected and must accept responsibility for others by defusing all forms of intolerance.

Terry McAteer

Felician College

“Cinematic Text versus Dramatic Text in Arthur Miller and Nicholas Hytner’s *The Crucible*”

The paper examines the thesis that the selection and composition of shots in Nicholas Hytner’s film of *The Crucible* so fully alter the viewer’s perceptions of certain scenes and certain characters as to substantially undermine Arthur Miller’s intentions for those scenes and characters.

Robert Combs

George Washington University

“Internalizing Terror: Reflections of Arthur Miller’s *Broken Glass* in Pinter and Williams”

Arthur Miller’s *Broken Glass* (1994) can be illuminated by comparing it to Harold Pinter’s *Ashes to Ashes* (1996), which it resembles, and to Tennessee Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie* (1945), which in some ways anticipates both plays. All three works examine the ways that external political terrors are internalized as psychological symptoms by some people while being unconsciously identified with by others. In *Broken Glass*, Sylvia Gellburg suffers from hysterical paralysis as a result of learning about the horrors of Kristallnacht, while her husband Phillip continues to insist upon his solidarity with American business as he looks for a quick medical fix for Sylvia’s condition. In *Ashes to Ashes*, Rebecca painfully reports to her husband the sadistic brutalities of her former lover, who worked in a Nazi labor factory, while her present husband becomes erotically fascinated by, and attracted to her memories. In *The Glass Menagerie* (1945), Laura Wingfield, like Miller’s Sylvia, is crippled. Her physical condition and her morbid shyness mirror the powerlessness of her mother, Amanda, and her brother, Tom, who both stubbornly cling to their proud, domineering personalities although they are caught in the Depression of the 1930s. All three works are haunted by the hopes of earlier times that live on because they are being preserved by women who have internalized them painfully within their own bodies.

Herb Goldstein

Forest Hills, New York

“Arthur Miller’s *The Price* and William Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*”

Abstracts from the Seventh Arthur Miller Conference

The Seventh Arthur Miller Conference was held at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, California, March 7-9. Christopher Bigsby delivered the keynote address, In addition, there was an introduction to Miller's life and works, a film shown, thirteen papers offered, four scenes from Miller's plays, a production of *After the Fall*, and a panel discussion of the production.

Following are abstracts from the papers.

Christopher Bigsby University of East Anglia

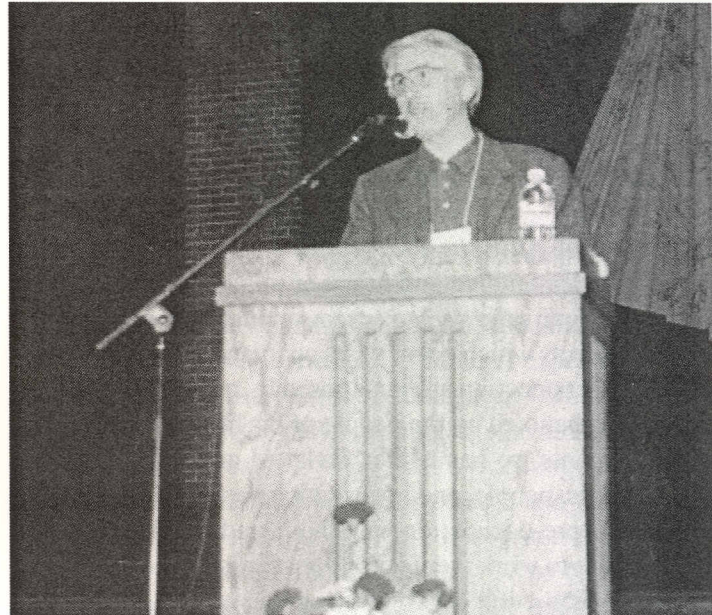
"Arthur Miller as a Jewish Writer"

The paper is concerned with Miller's equivocal relationship to his Jewishness. He abandoned it as a religious faith but in terms of his writing it remained central, from his first play, *No Villain* through to the unpublished *The Half-Bridge* and *Boro Hall Nocturne* to *Focus*, *After the Fall*, *Incident at Vichy*, and *Playing for Time* to *Broken Glass*. Accused by some of denying his ethnicity, he has in fact made aspects of his Jewish experience central and in particular addressed the issue raised by the Holocaust earlier and more completely than any other American playwright, indeed more than most other playwrights in the world. He has had a complex and shifting relationship to the state of Israel, attending rallies to celebrate its establishment but subsequently expressing increasing alarm at the actions of its politicians. Never seen as a part of that liberal Jewish intellectual group which seemingly commandeered American culture in the postwar world, indeed at odds with part of it as the liberal left splintered in the 1940s and '50s, he is nonetheless a writer to be understood in part in terms of his equivocal relationship to his Jewish identity.

Carlos Campo Community College of South Nevada

"Cornering Hope: Quentin as Sisyphian Hero."

The paper details that Miller's debt in *After The Fall* to Albert Camus may go beyond the oft-quoted connection to *The Fall*. A close analysis of *After The Fall* reveals that Quentin, like Camus' Sisyphus from his lauded "The Myth of Sisyphus," feels trapped in an existence that is both repetitive and empty. Just as Sisyphus searches for meaning within the constraints of his eternal curse, Quentin attempts to find meaning in his life despite his repeated failure and feelings of hopelessness. Miller is responding to the Theatre of the Absurd's existential anguish by writing about an "anti-hero" of his own who struggles against his "rock" of the past. If Sisyphus is ultimately "happy," as Camus sug-



Christopher Bigsby delivered the keynote address at the Seventh Arthur Miller Conference.

gests, Miller seems to portray Quentin as "happy," however tenuously, as his play comes to a close. While Miller clearly believes that Absurdism is limited by its cynicism, he understands the forces that Sisyphus must face are Quentin's as well.

Stephen Marino St. Francis College

"Language and Metaphor in *After the Fall*"

One aspect of *After the Fall* that has been largely ignored is its sophisticated use of language. A language study of *After the Fall* shows how this play possesses a poetic power which has remained largely overlooked by scant critical attention to its language. A few critics have examined the play's language. John D. Engle, in particular in a piece in *Notes on Contemporary Literature* examines the important metaphor of law used by Quentin. But close textual analysis reveals that other metaphors and images are imbedded in the text of *After the Fall*, and Miller uses them to support the themes of guilt and responsibility, innocence, religion, power, and psychological awareness. Metaphors of childhood blatantly support the play's concern with Quentin's psychological

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search. Images of mirrors, blindness, and wings bolster Quentin's self-examination and longing for hope. Moreover, there are extended religious and Jesus metaphors that connect to Quentin's quest for redemption for himself and mankind.

Jane K. Dominik
San Joaquin Delta College

"Before and After the Fall"

The form of *After the Fall* reflects Miller's unceasing search for understanding and peace of mind, and his artistic attempts to capture the stream-of-conscious workings of our minds. Moments which occur years apart and have no seemingly logical connection are juxtaposed by memory, and just as Quentin is haunted by the people of his life and their poignant statements, so has Miller revisited and re-examined specific events, people, and ideas which permeate his work, reflecting his pre-occupation with them, and his intense and lifetime desire to work them out to satisfaction. The play can be seen as a microcosm of Miller's writing journey. Although Arthur Miller penned his autobiography *Timebends, A Life*, published in 1987, it can be asserted that he had, in fact, written another autobiography in dramatic form in *After the Fall* 23 years earlier. It is not so much that some characters in the play can be fairly readily aligned with people in his life that makes *After the Fall* his dramatic autobiography, but rather that, like a pebble dropped in still water, the resulting ripples—his main thematic concerns in so many of his writings, archetypal characters who reappear however modified or developed, his dramatic structure, his approaches to staging, and even specific moments and lines—reverberate in both works before and after *After the Fall*. Its place in time, its form, and its content make this play a perfect prismatic lens through which to view his work, offering keys to understand and analyze his other works.

Matthew Roudané
Georgia State University

"Arthur Miller and the Modern Stage"

The paper centers on Miller's exploration of the nature of the Real, which led him away from the realistic tradition in American theater and, beginning with *Salesman*, toward a non-realistic and non-linear theatre. His language became increasingly poetic and original, his plays more richly challenging in their exploration of the public issues of the nation and reflected through the private anxieties of the individual.

Lew Livesay
St. Peter's College

"The Retrospective Future in Miller's Later Works"

Miller characters in the '90s examine their lives to make a final accounting. Tom O'Toole (1990 screenplay *Everybody Wins*) is the first to fall short. His obsession with a corrupt DA blinds him to the whole town's corruption. In *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan*, Lyman Felt is the libido unbound. This bigamist's wives confront each other over his hospital bed. Lyman must justify his excesses to them and himself, but his life contains too many divergences to cohere. The same excesses, toned down, are found in Harry Peters (*Mr. Peters' Connections*). With *The Last Yankee*, we travel to the other end of the spectrum with characters who have felt too little to form a resonant pattern. In *Broken Glass*, Miller explores the extremes of excess with Harry Hyman and lack with Phillip Gellburg. Ultimately, only Sylvia Gellburg achieves a redeeming vision of love and forgiveness forming an embraceable pattern. In "Homely Girl," Janice Sessions attains a comparable recognition. Thus, redemption is gendered in late Miller: the men fail; only several women succeed in retrospectively fashioning final narrative identities.

Leslie Edman
Stockton, California

"'I want Swiss cheese': Resistance to Change in Arthur Miller's Drama"

For over half a century, perhaps no other author has explored the issue of change and its effect on humanity, and presented such rich, memorable characters that wrestle with it as Arthur Miller. And judging by the flood of non-fiction books addressing change in recent years, including author Spencer Johnson's *Who Moved My Cheese?*, this topic remains a "hot" one with the reading public. Yet, in modern literature, few would argue that no other character personifies our collective struggle, our resistance to change better than Miller's Willy Loman of *Death of a Salesman*. And it is Loman who best articulates this sentiment to wife Linda, "... I don't want a change! I want Swiss cheese..." As such, it is Willy Loman's refusal to partake in American cheese, his inability to embrace change that serves as a microcosm for our own struggle to keep pace with constant innovation and the ensuing chaos.

In Miller's drama, we encounter his characters' resistance to change as manifested by emotional numbness, non-commitment, inertia, and even physical immobility. Miller ex-

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amines change and its effects in the marital, professional, psychological, and spiritual arenas. Further, Miller explores common issues that arise from resisting change when humans pursue the wrong dreams in life, resulting in frustration, resentment, and helplessness. His characters face profound disappointments, personal failures, and, in some instances, moments of self-awareness and personal growth. His characters, regardless of age, gender, race, and religious or social affiliations, all wrestle with change. It is their individual responses, reflective of parts of ourselves that cause us, the audience, to respond, to be moved. That in itself is change and a result of Arthur Miller's mastery to seize on a basic theme that defines our commonality across borders and time.

And, no doubt Miller's plays will continue to resonate a half century from now and spur new generations to pause in self-reflection, even motivate real-life Willy Lomans to try a new cheese.

Chris Westgate

University of California, Davis

"The Semiotics of Salem: Witches, 'the Old Boy,' and Giles Corey in *The Crucible*"

Giles Corey has garnered little scholarly attention, largely because he is, on the surface, little more than an irascible, old man—perhaps even to Miller. But, Corey's eccentricity and foolishness is, to a degree, a means of covering, and thereby enabling, a critique of the witch-trials themselves through the "queer questions" he poses to Hale. These questions parallel and parody the witch-hunt itself, reducing what is deadly serious to parody by exposing the false assumptions upon which Puritan theocracy is founded. His questions, which deal mainly with his wife's reading habits, essentially deconstruct the ideological assumptions that underlie both the witch-hunt and Puritan Salem.

Richard K. Tharp

University of Maryland, College Park

"Arthur Miller in Commercial Radio, 1939 - 1946: The Apprenticeship of a Playwright"

To the educated public, Arthur Miller's career as a dramatist began in 1947 with the success of *All My Sons* on Broadway. However, Miller's career as a professional dramatist began nearly a decade earlier. From 1939 until 1946, Arthur Miller wrote half-hour and hour-long radio plays for three of the most prestigious programs on American radio, *The Columbia Workshop*, *The Cavalcade of America*, and *The Theatre Guild on the Air*. Although Miller later dis-

missed his efforts as inconsequential, this corpus of dramatic writing at an incipient period in his development deserves further study.

Ryan Poll

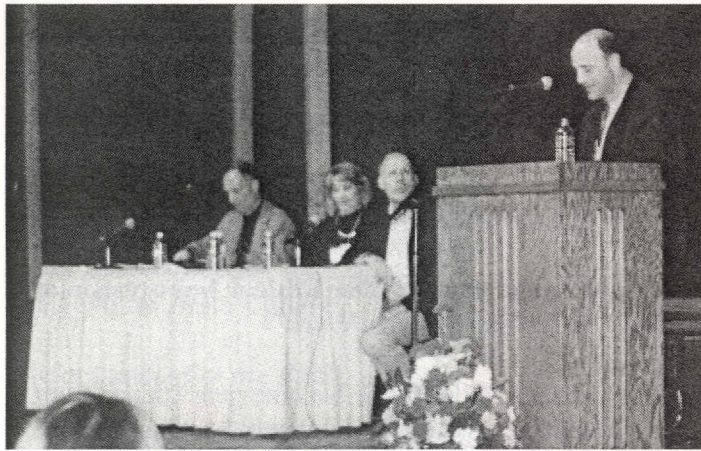
University of California, Davis

"'And what's the cure?': The Ethical Importance of Neighbors in Arthur Miller's Work"

In 1963, Arthur Miller broke his nine-year silence from the American stage with a play in which the "dominating" feature is a "stone tower of a concentration camp." The principal character of *After the Fall*, Quentin, articulates throughout the play that he "understands" the concentration camp. Quentin provocatively ruminates, "I think I expected it to be more unfamiliar. I never thought the stones would look so ordinary." Later in the play, Quentin says, again referring to the concentration camp, "Why does something in me bow its head like an accomplice in this place!" and finally, perhaps in the most ambiguous and complicated lines in the drama, Quentin asks at the conclusion, "Who can be innocent again on this mountain of skulls? I tell you I know! My brothers died here . . . but my brothers built this place: our hearts have cut these stones! And what's the cure?" This quotation raises a series of interrelated questions that motivates this paper. First, what is the innocence that the Shoah destroyed? By asking such a question, the Shoah is posited as a modern type of fall from innocence, structurally parallel to Adam and Eve's fall from Eden rendered in the book of Genesis. Second, what does it mean that Quentin's brothers simultaneously died in the concentration camps and built the concentration camps? How can one be both the perpetrator and the victim of a crime? Such a blurring of distinctions has recently been lambasted by such critical thinkers as Dominick LaCapra, who insists, for ethical and political reasons, that categories such as "perpetrator" and "victim" must remain separate and distinct. And finally, Quentin's question, which points directly to the heart of this paper: "What's the cure?" How, in other words, can we create a landscape where the image of a concentration camp does not dominate?

The paper argues that the cure for the landscape of the Shoah—which Miller believes to be a logical extension of our modern, atomized lives—can be located at the site of neighborly relations. Neighbors are the bridge that leads one away from the atomization of the home to the greater socio-political world, and it is by means of our neighbors that we realize that we are all responsible for one another. To dramatize this concept, Miller begins many of his best creative works with characters who overvalue the domestic

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Carlos Campo presented one of thirteen papers at the conference.

space at the exclusion of the greater world, but by the work's conclusion, such characters conceptually understand the danger of such an overvaluation.

Susanna Rodriguez

University of California, Berkeley

"Ther'mom'meter: Mothers as Reflections of Their Families in Arthur Miller's Drama"

Several of Arthur Miller's plays contain mother figures who play diverse and vital roles within the family structure and the plot line. These women serve three key functions: they protect their sons, they mediate between fathers and sons, and they reflect the happenings and emotions within the family. Miller uses the mothers as representations of the family unit. Their moods reflect the crises that these families are going through, and their actions are often expressions of the overall behavior patterns of the family as a group.

Karen Wilson

University of California, Davis

"Linda Loman: Miller's Yiddishe Mama"

Since *Death of a Salesman's* first production in 1949, the character of Linda Loman has been variously interpreted. But, at the heart of that characterization, there is inconsistency, so that in a sense all the critical assessments of Linda have been at least partially right. She is good and bad, strong and weak, the perfect foil for Willy Loman, who is himself a bundle of contradictions. Contradiction is, in fact, central to Miller's conception of the play, both stylistically and thematically (146). As is clear from his autobiography, *Timebends*, incestuous feelings for both mother and sister also inform the work. With this context in mind, the key to understanding the characterization of Linda Loman lies in

an offhand comment that Arthur Miller made to Christopher Bigsby (*Theatre Essays*, 501). Miller points out that when he wrote *Death of a Salesman*, he was the age of Biff, not Willy's age. Linda is not so much a wife as she is the perfect Yiddishe mama (substitute any immigrant group of the period), Portnoy's *bubeluh*, a sublime mixture of the terrifying, the guilt-inspiring, the blatantly self-sacrificing, and the infinitely loving mother. This paper looks at Linda Loman from the perspective of the sons, filtering out Willy's possibly distorted memories, in an attempt to see her as conceived by a 34-year-old Arthur Miller.

Bruce Gilman

La Sierra University

"Attention Must Be Paid": The Postmodern Fate of Willy Loman"

Willy Loman's personal drama articulates the philosophic quandary raised by the conjunction of the modern and the postmodern. Arthur Miller's salesman is the embodiment of the alienated, disheartened American of mid-century. So, too, he is the "sign" of our contemporary crisis — what Jean Lyotard calls the divisive, concurrent challenges of "complexity" and "survival." In Loman are lodged our collective trepidations, provoked by increasingly discomfiting societal and technological forces, manifested in psychic disenfranchisement. Today, as much as 50 years ago, witnessing the struggle of Willy Loman may help us to better understand what his creator has called that "terrible thing . . . being torn away from our chosen image of what and who we are in this world."

Samuel Bernstein

Northeastern University

"The Motif of Boasting in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*"

In Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, the motif of boasting is one of the principal strategies through which Miller projects his vision. That vision is primarily embodied in the destruction of the play's central character, Willy Loman. Willy's fall and demise are due, in large measure, to his inability to function effectively in an environment that places the value of self-aggrandizement above a sense of community, competition above camaraderie. Since boasting involves the exaltation of the self above the group, as well as a process that diminishes personal and social awareness, it is readily understandable that Miller would place dramatic and linguistic emphasis upon that behavior. Willy; Happy, his son; Ben, his brother; and Howard, his employer, are the primary boasters. By contrast, Linda, Willy's wife; Biff, Willie's other son; Charley, Willy's kindly neighbor; and Bernard, Charley's son, are not boasters. This contrast is vital to projecting the boasting motif and, thus, to projecting Miller's social and existential vision.

Miller Sighting

Arthur Miller stood tall in robust fashion before an impressive audience, on the evening of October 16, when he appeared at one of the Barnes and Noble superstores (33 East 17th St.) in Greenwich Village. The love that New Yorkers feel toward this man was palpable as the vast room brimmed to capacity. The occasion for Mr. Miller's appearance involved publicizing *On Politics and the Art of Acting* (New York: Viking, 2001). This work has traveled through three manifestations:

- (1) On March 26, 2001, at the invitation of William R. Ferris, Jr., then Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Arthur Miller presented the 30th Jefferson Lecture in the Humanities at the John F. Kennedy Center in our nation's capitol. This annual lecture, featuring a distinguished contributor to American culture, ranks as the highest honor that the government bestows on those working in the humanities. This Miller lecture is available on line at a site created by the NEH to mark this occasion: www.neh.fed.us/whowere/miller/ This site also includes appreciative essays from Christopher Bigsby and James Houghton.
- (2) In June 2001, Lewis Lapham published the text of the lecture in *Harper's*.
- (3) Viking has now published the lecture in book format.

Mr. Lapham accompanied Mr. Miller to this presentation, presumably to engage him in a dialogue. Initially, they were seated in front of the vast crowd on the stage overseeing the top floor, the fourth, of the Barnes and Noble store at Union Square; however, when technical difficulties with the microphones occurred, Mr. Miller stepped to the podium where the microphone did work. Mr. Miller virtually held court, on his own, for the entire hour. He began with an introduction into how the media has taken over the political arena and ended this extended explanation by saying, "Gee, I didn't intend to make a speech." No one in the admiring audience much minded. Three main points have stayed in mind these five months later.

First, Mr. Miller touched on the political wrangling at NEH. Some background may help. George Will had written a typically self-righteous, right-tilting article decrying the choice of Miller for the Jefferson Lecture. You may examine for yourself this diatribe about "Miller's Self-absorption: Enduring Arthur Miller: Oh, the Humanities." A copy remains available for a while longer at: www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/opinion/columns/willgeorge/ In his piece, George Will attacks both Miller and Ferris because Mr. Will cannot envision anyone to the left of Attila the Hun deserving to be called a contributor to American culture. Of course, Mr. Will is not alone.

The National Review also lamented the NEH choice of Arthur Miller, noting "it must be said here, because it won't be said elsewhere, that Miller is a man of the Left" [John J. Miller and Ramesh Ponnuru – "Ferris's State: Time to Dump the NEH Chairman" (26 March 2001)]. As for Will, his tack was to complain about how Miller could have been considered for this honor when, after all, "Miller is not a scholar." Will goes on to acknowledge that former lecturers have included such esteemed scholarly types as Walker Percy and Saul Bellow. Has George Will lost all grip? The award is announced as recognizing artists or scholars. Of course, Mr. Will does not mention that Gwendolyn Brooks and Toni Morrison have also delivered the Jefferson Lecture. This award presumably exists, in his mind, just for the people he likes.

At no point in Mr. Will's column is there any indication that he has read or thought much about Mr. Miller's lecture. Scholarship was never the point; this entire brouhaha is about politics. Mr. Will simply does not like the idea of Mr. Miller being feted; however, his real target is Mr. Ferris, whose invitation to Mr. Miller reveals tolerance of divergent persuasions, and Mr. Will has no room for such democracy in his America. Mr. Will scoffs at Mr. Ferris's declared occupation as a folklorist, proclaiming who isn't? Hang on; things get even more inane. Mr. Will goes on to say that he wants Mr. Ferris out of his post. Mr. Will says that George W. Bush will do a good job with naming a replacement since Mr. Bush knows so much about culture, as evidenced by the fact that Mr. Bush never quite cared for the political climate at Yale in the sixties! And it continues. Mr. Will wants a Yale as new NEH chairman, presumably one of his friends, one Donald Kagan, who is now at work on a distillation of his multi-volume history of the Peloponnesian Wars. Presumably this short version is for us stupid people who are working to foster cultural inclusion and never had time to learn how that war turned out. Thanks, George.

For the record, the Bush administration has looked beyond Grecian conflicts, because, after all, a sound study of the aforementioned Peloponnesian Wars would convince anyone of sound mind to swear off demagoguery (since it was the witless squabblers who caused the fall of mighty Athens), and what would we all do if we could not take potshots at political rivals? Instead of looking to Mr. Kagan, the current administration has turned to Bruce Cole, a scholar in the Italian Renaissance. Possibly the plan is to have Mr. Cole educate those in the administration who slept through college by preparing a distillation of that sprawling tome known as *The Prince*.

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Mr. Miller talked for a while about the absurdities of Washington politics and the backstabbing involved when dealing with closed and humorless minds. Mr. Miller pointed out that Mr. Ferris is a close friend of Trent Lott, but even that connection with a fellow good ole boy, obviously, could not help him keep his job. Why the President would have been risking the rancor of the then Senate Majority leader over this not exactly politically influential appointment is anyone's guess. Possibly Mr. Will wields more power than we dare imagine? Could there be someone in high places who reads his stuff? Nah! As for Mr. Miller, he appeared less than aghast at the rancor surrounding his lecture. Possibly years of maintaining stoical sanity after dealing with Broadway critics has made Mr. Will appear almost rational and even somewhat curmudgeonly.

The second major motif that Mr. Miller developed was his generous praise for former President Clinton, indicating that many people in our nation were inclined to embrace this man because rarely have we had a political figure who was so humane in the commission of sins with which people could identify so vicariously. Mr. Miller said it is rare to find such endearing human foibles in a leader. Mr. Miller then asked rhetorically if anyone could possibly envision Mr. Bush committing any of our more humane sins?

Last, Mr. Miller praised Washington, Lincoln, and FDR as presidential leaders who attained greatness. The historical condition that allows presidents to reach great heights, according to Mr. Miller, is war. No thinking person seeks it; yet, when our country has been faced with it, our leaders have always shown an uncanny ability to triumph. Mr. Miller went on to identify Mr. Bush as now positioned to garner mythic status, if he can steel himself to follow through with his announced agenda to obliterate terrorism. Mr. Miller minced no words when asked what quality the American people expect to see in a wartime leader. Mr. Miller asserted that we need and should want our commander-in-chief to be "a killer." He must look and act the part. Strength is determined by military prowess on the battlefield; this takes "a killer," insisted Mr. Miller. Fortuitously, the entertaining and informative hour was taped by C-Span, and it has already been broadcast over C-Span 2 on 27 January 2002. The next time that someone with TV, VCR, and cable sees this show listed, please tape it for the Miller Society's videotape archives.

— Lew Livesay

Arthur Miller was awarded Spain's prestigious *Principe de Asturias* Prize for Literature on May 8. He was hailed by the jury as "the undisputed master of modern drama." He will receive a monetary prize and a statuette designed by Spanish artist Joan Miró. "I am especially pleased to receive this award from Spain where my works have always been appreciated," Miller said in a letter in Spanish sent to Spain's consul-general in New York. The award is one of eight prizes given annually by Spain's Crown Prince Felipe de Borbon to recognize outstanding achievement in the arts, literature, science, communications, peace, international relations, sports, and social sciences. Miller is due to receive the prize this autumn in the northern Spanish city of Oviedo, in Asturias.

On November 14, 2001, the National Book Foundation bestowed its Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters on Arthur Miller. The 2001 National Book Awards Dinner, which took place in New York City, included an address by Miller, the thirteenth recipient of the medal. Miller delivered an address.

Notes From New York

This season continues the incredible string of revivals of Miller plays that have appeared on the Broadway stage in the last five years. The revival of *The Crucible* with Liam Neeson as John Proctor and Laura Linney as Elizabeth Proctor is playing for what has been announced as one hundred performances only. The production, directed by Richard Eyre, has received strong reviews, especially for Linney's and Neeson's performances. Don't be surprised for an extended run after the Tony nominations and awards.

The opening of the first Broadway revival of Miller's first play, *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, since it closed after four performances in 1944, is scheduled for May 1. This is the same production which had a critically acclaimed run at the Williamstown Theatre Festival in the summer 2001. Chris O'Donnell is reprising his stage debut role as David Beeves. It is playing at the American Airlines Theater.

The Crucible has garnered six Tony nominations: Best Revival of a Play, Liam Neeson for Best Performance by a Leading Actor in a Play, Laura Linney for Best Performance by a Leading Actress in a Play, Brian Murray for Best Performance by a Featured Actor in a Play, Paul Gallo for Best Lighting Designer, and Richard Eyre for Best Direction of a Play.

The Man Who Had All the Luck produced one nomination: Sam Robards for Best Featured Actor.

—Stephen Marino

The Crucible Still Burns True

I had the pleasure of attending the final dress rehearsal of the current Broadway revival of the *The Crucible* before the show went into previews. That night offered a glimpse into a production which has now opened at the Virginia Theater and received plaudits from New York critics.

The Crucible has not played on Broadway in over ten years, since the National Actors Theater production that starred Martin Sheen and Michael York. This new production has been eagerly anticipated since it unites stars with significant stage and film credits. Liam Neeson is cast as John Proctor, while Laura Linney portrays Elizabeth Proctor. The show also has been well advertised as a strictly limited run, so the “buzz” predicted that this would be a hot ticket this season.

The relatively informality of a dress rehearsal was evident by the late start and the public service health announcement from director Richard Eyre, who warned the audience about possible excessive noise in the theater during the production. The Virginia Theatre is located adjacent to the famous New York ballroom, “Roseland,” and that night the heavy metal band, “Anthrax,” which has been enjoying a macabre renaissance since the September terror attacks, was playing to a packed crowd. Eyre was unsure how much the music would resonate in the theater.

The final dress rehearsal mostly lived up to the predictions for this production. Eyre has directed a cast which successfully portrays the troubled Salemites during the parlous times in 1692. Christopher Evan Welch as Reverend Parris avoids the sanctimonious shrillness that often infects actors playing the embattled minister. He convincingly conveys the range of emotions that Parris experiences during the months of the witchcraft hysteria. Jeanne Paulsen and Paul O’Brien as Ann and Thomas Putnam effectively depict their self-righteousness. John Benjamin Hickey as Reverend Hale clearly shows his awakening to the hypocrisy of the witch-hunts. A weak performance by Patrice Johnson as Tituba, whose voice strained to affect the slave’s hysteria, marred the climax in Act 1. Angela Bettis was a disappointment as Abigail Williams; she did not convey both the sexuality and vengeance necessary for the siren at the center of the conflicts.

The standout performances of the production clearly are from Liam Neeson, Laura Linney, and Brian Bedford as Judge Danforth. Neeson seems born to play John Proctor. He captures Proctor’s range of emotions as he moves through the

action as passionate lover, estranged husband, defiant spouse, accused lecher, political and religious dissident to martyred hero. Neeson is particularly effective in Act 4 when he shrivels his huge frame to show Proctor’s physical, emotional, and spiritual collapse. Laura Linney’s portrayal of Elizabeth Proctor is masterful, equally as re-defining as Elizabeth Franz’s Linda Loman in the 1999 Broadway revival of *Death of a Salesman*. Linney’s Elizabeth is a woman of restrained intensity whose passion for her husband is tempered by her Puritan stoicism and moral intensity. Brian Bedford, last seen on the New York stage in Edward Albee’s *The Play about the Baby*, is perfectly cast as Judge Danforth, the magistrate who personifies the law in the Salem theocracy. Bedford’s depiction of Danforth’s iron control over the court proceedings in Act 3 makes the play’s parallels with McCarthyism particularly effective.

The Crucible’s clear connection with the Communist Witch Hunts of the 1950s is still striking as the play approaches its fiftieth anniversary. However, as I sat in the theater, the drama’s relevance to our current political world climate leaped at me. Bedford’s portrayal of Danforth’s enforcement of religious dogma is markedly similar to the Taliban’s in Afghanistan. Contradictorily, his delivery of Danforth’s speech in Act 3 about when “evil mixed itself with good and befuddled the world” clearly echoes President Bush’s “axis of evil” speech delivered only a few weeks before. Similarly, Danforth’s line: “A person is either with this court or he must be counted against it,” eerily parallels the President’s assertion that the world is either with the United States or against us in the war on terror. Miller’s great play has once again proven its timelessness and universality.

Tim Hatley has designed a striking set for this new production. Composed mostly of wood timbers and frame, the set alternately shrinks and expands into the spaces of the Parris attic, the Proctor farmhouse, the anteroom of the courthouse, and the cell of the Salem jail. The hanging of Proctor and Rebecca Nurse climaxes in the dramatic collapse of the wooden framework.

At Tony time, there should be plenty of nominations for this production, which is appropriately dedicated to Inge Morath. By the way, no signs of Anthrax were evident in the theater.

Less Crucible than Stew Pot

I saw Miller's *The Crucible* at a matinee at the Virginia Theatre Wednesday afternoon, March 20th. The house was packed; unhappily, a large segment of the audience were students, seemingly high school, extremely noisy before the performance, but attentive during it.

The proscenium was screened by a large metal grid over a scrim, suggesting both the rigidity of the Puritans and foreshadowing the jail cells of the fourth act. As the play began, the grid pulled up to reveal an A-frame upper story of Parris's house, suggesting through the A, the novel about the Puritans by Judge Hathorne's grandson, *The Scarlet Letter*.

Unfortunately, the first act played poorly. The staging was static; Christopher Evan Welch as Parris was violent in most of his movements, at one point slapping Tituba and knocking her down—there was no shading to his performance. Director Richard Eyre started at a high pitch, which the rest of the act could not sustain. It was melodrama, not drama, and there was no chemistry between Angela Bettis as Abigail and Liam Neeson as John Proctor. (Here in California, 3,000 miles from Broadway, I have often wondered whether road shows have dumbed down, broadened performances for what they might perceive to be less sophisticated audiences. This production inclines me to believe that directors broaden even Broadway performances for audiences they perceive to have been shaped by television melodrama.) One nice touch, however, was the introduction of revival fervor to Hale's scene with Tituba, he thumping on his book that cataloged devils as he led her through call and response.

The second act opened the A-frame to become the Proctor house, with Elizabeth visible above a cradle in a loft. John enters from the fields, tastes and seasons the stew, then takes his shirt off to wash for dinner. Bare-chested Liam Neeson was applauded, and female viewers were entirely won over. Two who saw the show with me, although of different generations, felt thereafter that Neeson could do no wrong.

The scene between John and Laura Linney as Elizabeth played well, better than the first act's histrionics, as did the following scenes with John Benjamin Hickey as Hale and Jennifer Carpenter as Mary Warren. But again, Eyre's direction was offputting. When Elizabeth is arrested and taken away, John never embraces, never touches her in an attempt to protect her or comfort her; that is, Eyre insists that their estrangement overshadow their underlying love and devotion. Their relationship is diminished.

Mary Warren grows in the third act out of the weak-voiced sniveler she had been. Brian Murray as Danforth is commanding. (There's an interesting stew of accents, as well: Murray, English; Neeson and Bettis, Irish; Patrice Johnson as Tituba affecting a Jamaican accent; and the rest varieties of American.) Bettis as Abbie verbally challenges Danforth, but her words and physical actions never threaten. But again, the scene builds to a highly effective climax.

The comedy that should open the fourth act is muted. Neeson is brought from his cell wearing a close-cropped wig to hide his flowing locks, appearing and made up like a shorn criminal (but clean shaven despite three months in jail, where, with his hands chained to the wall, shaving would have been impossible). Laura Linney finally has an opportunity to express Elizabeth and herself in the Proctors' final scene.; it was then that we finally saw not only Elizabeth as a woman but Linney as an excellent actress. It is a powerful and moving scene, the best thing in the play.

There is a series of steel plates in a grid above the rear playing area of the jail scene, echoing the grid used as curtain. As the drum roll announces the hanging of Proctor and Rebecca Nurse, these plates come crashing down noisily. Are they meant to represent the collapse of reason and morality, the soon-to-come collapse of Massachusetts's theocracy, reminding us of the proletarian uprising that ended Jean Paul Sartre's film script for his version of the play, *The Witches of Salem*? It's anyone's guess, but it's also another loud, unnecessary touch, taking away from the human drama.

The melodramatic emphasis is interesting. *The Crucible* comes closer to Aristotle's definition of tragedy than does *Death of a Salesman*: *hamartia*, *peripetia*, and—missing in Willy—*anagnorisis*. Yet, *The Crucible* is often regarded critically as melodrama, not tragedy, perhaps because of productions such as this.

Neeson dominates the stage. He infuses the part with energy, pacing like a caged beast through most of the play, which suggest his tormented emotions but also distracts from the rest of the action. He received a standing ovation, and he and Linney played well together. Most of the audience was taken with the play throughout, although I did notice watch dials light up occasionally among the high school students around me. This is a triumph for Neeson, but not for *The Crucible*, for Richard Eyre has directed an unbalanced play, one which focuses on high emotion and noise rather than on intricate human interactions and questions of morality and government.

—Peter Hays

After The Fall

When *After The Fall* was first produced in 1964, it caused a furor. Despite playwright Arthur Miller's protestations that the character, Maggie, was not his former wife, Marilyn Monroe, many of her admirers were outraged at the portrayal of the star as "a drug-addicted neurotic whose insecurity has extinguished love." While others saw that the play was Miller's attempt "to understand, not to judge," many people still felt "uncomfortably voyeuristic" watching what they took to be the intimate details of the couple's marriage. This response continued to bedevil the play for years. Writing in 1979, the critic, Dennis Welland, suggested that "in the future, when the raw mass of feeling about Marilyn Monroe has tempered more with the passing of time, a revival may be able to do [*After The Fall*] more justice on the stage." This March 1-9, San Joaquin Delta College's Fine Arts Division mounted a production under the direction of Jeff Wentworth that demonstrated the wisdom of these words. For over three hours, the talented cast and crew sustained the interest of an enthusiastic audience, many of whose members were born well after Marilyn's death.

After The Fall works on a several levels: Clearly there is an autobiographical basis for the story: Quentin (like Miller) begins with an overpowering, ambitious mother and moves through two unsatisfactory marriages based on dependency—the first with a sort of standard fifties housewife, the second with the glamorous Maggie—until he finally finds hope in a relationship with the autonomous Holga, modeled on his late wife, the photographer, Inge Morath. There are also political and philosophical dimensions to the play. Influenced by Albert Camus' novel, *The Fall*, and full of Biblical imagery recalling Adam and Eve's Fall from Paradise, *After The Fall* uses the McCarthy hearings and the Holocaust as symbols of evil. What Quentin has to learn is the danger of certainty; a stubborn adherence to abstract principles is misguided, and he turns to Holga for her humility based on personal experience with evil.

A production of *After The Fall* has many difficulties to overcome. The form of the play is essentially a dramatic monologue interspersed with representations of Quentin's memories; time flows forward and backward, and there is no real dramatic action. *The Inside of His Head*—the original title for *Death of a Salesman*—describes Miller's concept. Thus, playing Quentin is an incredible challenge for any actor; he is onstage, speaking, for three solid hours—a bigger part than Hamlet. In this virtuoso role, David Hamilton was absolutely outstanding. He had an easy-going, somewhat self-deprecating manner which made for a sympathetic, likeable Quentin; one can imagine that, in other hands, Quentin could have seemed arrogant and unfeeling. Mr. Hamilton was particularly adept at bringing out the humor in his role, for example when he draped his arms over two imaginary wall fixtures in his hotel room in imitation of

Christ. Also impressive in a substantial role was Sara Crua as Maggie. She brought an ingenuous quality to the earlier scenes, managing to seem like an amusing waif and believably transformed herself into the needy pill-popper of the second act.

The more minor characters (and there are many of them) come and go as they do in Quentin's thoughts, making it hard to keep them straight. Here, the skillful lighting helped a great deal, as did the costumes. Costume Designer Barbara Crocker gave each character signature clothing appropriate to the role and time period. Among the more minor characters who deserve to be singled out for incredible performances is William J. Wolak, who was perfectly convincing as the Father. He looked the part, and his portrayal was flawless, including an absolutely authentic accent. Also especially noteworthy were Tracey Weeden, who succeeded in conveying the pent-up frustration of Quentin's first wife, Louise; Katherine Old, who turned in a commendable performance as Holga despite her accent slipping a bit from time to time; and Alejandra Navarro, who managed to do a plausible intimation of nudity as Elsie. Allesandra Edwards was less convincing as Quentin's mother; despite marvelous costuming, she looked much too young, and her accent was off throughout. The stage directions call for a bare set with no trappings or color to provide interest, certainly a challenge to any crew. Here again, Delta did itself proud: Scenery/Lighting Designer John White used a multi-level set with a canvas hanging behind the prominent façade of a tower, varying the lighting as the scenes and mood changed.

The Delta College company gambled that *After The Fall* need not depend on knowing about Arthur Miller's biography or the details of the McCarthy hearings—nowhere in the program notes are these matters discussed—and they were right. This production proved that the play can stand on its own without Marilyn Monroe or McCarthy. The play, itself, is far from perfect: it reads better than it plays, and, at times, it verges on the facile. Still, *After The Fall's* message is irresistible; Quentin is Everyman searching for love and meaning after the loss of innocence. As Quentin says so eloquently in what are nearly the last words of the play, "What burning cities taught her and the death of love taught me . . . that's why I woke each morning like a boy . . . To know, and even happily, that we meet unblest; not in some garden of wax fruit and painted trees, that lie of Eden, but after, after the Fall . . . Is the knowing all? And the wish to kill is never killed, but with some gift of courage one may look into its face when it appears, and with a stroke of love—as to an idiot in the house—forgive it; again and again . . . forever? . . . No, it's not certainty, I don't feel that. But it does seem feasible . . . not to be afraid. Perhaps it's all one has."

—Karen Wilson

Source: Welland, Dennis. "The Drama of Forgiveness". In *Modern Critical Views—Arthur Miller*, Ed. Harold Bloom. New York & Philadelphia: Chelsea House, 1987.

Arthur Miller. *On Politics and the Art of Acting*. New York: Viking Penguin, 2001.

An encounter with the words of any Arthur Miller manuscript produces a wealth of insight and perception revealed only because he has loaned the reader his perspective. Miller's newest work, *On Politics and the Art of Acting*, is no different.

Within the work, Miller declares that a new foundation of political rhetoric exists in America; the art of acting. During a presidential campaign in the 1950s, Miller saw Dwight Eisenhower, the epitome of manly leadership, putting on makeup prior to a televised debate. He recalls, "[seeing Eisenhower like this] was almost as though he were getting ready to go on in the role of General Eisenhower instead of simply *being* him" (13). From that point forward, the realm of politics has shifted from notions of reality and sincerity to notions of palatable performances. The erosion of authenticity is troubling but seemingly justified by Miller: "The more one approaches any kind of power the more acting is required" (26). Further thought suggested to Miller that the transformation from "man" into "leader" is not new; the act can be traced to the similar power evoked from the gods by primitives using masks. "Men transform how they look and talk in order to draw down powers upon themselves which their ordinary behavior cannot possess" (26). Similarly, men of power hide behind metaphorical masks of knowledge or authority in order to promote and accomplish their respective goals. Miller's lack of condemnation toward insincerity is troubling; contemporary society has hopefully grown past the techniques of the primitive.

Line by line, Miller unfolds a chronological telling of political performance, identifying a cast from Huey Long to Franklin Roosevelt to George W. Bush. The insight is particularly direct and comes from a man who has made a life of observing and constructing believable personalities. Reading the book, one quickly realizes that Miller no longer needs his ideas to be approved by the masses; the book contains no flattery. Perhaps the most poignant aspect of Miller's work is the timely attack on the procedural debacle known as the 2000 presidential election. "The amount of acting required of both President Bush and the Democrats is awesome now, given the fractured election and the donation by the Supreme Court. . . . Bush has to act as though he were elected, the Supreme Court has to act as though it were the Supreme Court, Gore has to act as though he were practically overjoyed at his own defeat, and so on" (63). The reality of the action of the election is far more difficult to imagine than any fictional event. On stage, an audience would never believe a mob of "partisans yelling to stop the count and in the same breath accusing the other side of trying to steal the election" (64). Miller is correct; a theatrical audience never would accept the implausibility of a democratically elected group trying to stop an election recount. However, truth makes the best

fiction. Comparing the election to a play, Miller concludes, "When the form dissolves and chaos reigns, what is left behind – no differently than in the theater – is a sense in the audience of having been cheated and even mocked. After this last, most hallucinatory of elections, it was said that in the end the system worked, when clearly it hadn't at all" (67). Sincerity and expectation were replaced by maskless men attempting to be gods in their own right. Once the mask is gone, the image of the actor without a scene is too much to bear.

Political performance is most effective when the roles are reflective of the "actor's" position. Miller hopes that politicians believe what they say, but who, aside from the politician, can truly know? Miller carries the acting analogy further, indicating that the politician is simply responding to what the "audience" desires from the players. The political play is nothing more than a directed sequence of actions that attempts to create a single, unified notion out of a thousand individual ones whose interactions are mysterious. "I can't imagine how to prove this but it seems to me that when one is surrounded by such a rolling mass of consciously contrived performances, it gets harder and harder for a lot of people to locate reality any more" (3-4).

Miller culminates his discussion by noting that "we can only turn to the release of art . . . the theater—theater where you can tell the truth without killing anybody and may even illuminate the awesomely durable dilemma of how to lead without lying too much" (82). Art functions as teacher, critic, and historian for the actions of any society. More important, art is the only fragment of society that remains after the demise of the leaders and the destruction of the society. Shards of broken pottery and images on cave walls cryptically reveal the dramatic action, which functions as the essence of societies passed away. "Artists are not particularly famous for their conformity with majority *mores*, but whatever is not turned into art disappears forever. . . . Tolstoy once remarked that what we look for in a work of art is the revelation of the artist's soul, a glimpse of God. You can't act that" (85).

Sadly, this book will not pass through time as a classic like Miller's plays. Too much of the information is anchored to a detailed understanding of contemporary news, but longevity was not the goal. The text is a formal publication of the 30th Annual Jefferson Lecture given by Miller, March 26th, 2001, at the Kennedy Center. As such, readers should accept this work as the advice of an incredibly articulate man to a politically alert audience. Acceptance or rejection of any performance depends on the audience's understanding of the script. Acceptance of Miller's interpretation is inconsequential.

—Jeffrey A. Barber

Competing Salesmen

Broadway Theatre Archives' recent release on video of the 1966 CBS television production of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* provides not only an opportunity for instructors to illustrate their lectures with examples from this important production but also provides an opportunity to prompt class discussion on a variety of key topics crucial to an understanding of the play.¹ This 1966 CBS television adaptation can be discussed in conjunction with the 1985 CBS television production of the play, also available on video.² While both productions are excellent in their own ways and both had Miller's approval, they are fundamentally different in their approaches to the play, and there are significant differences in the settings, the costumes, the music, the color symbolism, the acting, the cinematic techniques, the camera angles, and the conceptions of the characters. In fact, these two productions might be considered competing versions of the play. Using these two television adaptations of the play in the classroom will enable the instructor to not only illuminate the play but also provide an opportunity to teach students about theoretical issues involving drama, film, and literature. For example, students usually assume there is only one authoritative version of a work even when multiple versions exist. In 1993 Louise Erdrich revised and expanded her most well-known novel, *Love Medicine*. Most people assume that this 1993 version is the authoritative one, yet some respected critics argue that the original version published in 1984 is better. Erdrich refuses to deem either version as the authoritative one. So which one is authoritative? It is a complex matter with no obvious answers. In his book-length study of the problem of multiple versions, Jack Stillingner has argued that a work should be regarded as constituted by all known versions of the work and not a single most authoritative version. (Stillingner 132) This tolerant attitude toward multiple versions of a work would seem to be especially important when approaching a play, which is realized only when the text is performed on stage or adapted for the screen. The transposition of a play onto the stage or onto the screen will be influenced not only by the ideas of the directors, actors, and screenwriters but also by cultural, political, and social values during the time period the play is adapted for performance. A useful way to examine *Death of a Salesman* is, then, to compare and contrast the directorial and acting approaches evident in the two versions available on video, and also analyze and evaluate the influences of the different time periods on these two adaptations.

David Susskind produced, and Alex Segal directed the 1966 CBS television production, which "was essentially a leaner, more pointed version of the Broadway play," according to Brenda Murphy. (Murphy 148)⁴ The cast included Lee J. Cobb as Willy, Mildred Dunnock as Linda, and George Segal as Biff. Arthur Miller is credited with the teleplay, but, in an interview, he suggested he merely approved the "cuts" in the dialogue that Alex Segal made, about 18% of the text. On the other hand, the 1985 CBS television version produced by Dustin Hoffman and Arthur Miller, and directed

by Volker Schlöndorff, includes the entire text, with only minor changes in the play. This production was based on the 1984 Broadway revival of the play, which starred Dustin Hoffman as Willy, Kate Reid as Linda, and John Malkovich as Biff. The casts in the Broadway revival and the one in the television production were essentially the same, with the only significant change being that in this 1985 adaptation, Charles Durning replaced David Huddleston in the role of Charley. Miller selected Volker Schlöndorff, who had directed *The Tin Drum*, at least partially because he was familiar with the German expressionism that Miller desired for this production of the play.

The impact of German expressionism can be seen in the interpretation of the play's theme. This is the story of the little man ("the low man"), who is a victim of a flawed social system and oppressed by forces beyond his abilities to cope with and to understand. Hoffman's Willy lacks the tragic stature that Lee J. Cobb's Willy achieves at times, and, in general, is a less sympathetic character than Cobb, who becomes in the course of the play a kind of twentieth-century tragic hero. The 1985 production presents Willy as a small man who "dreamed big" but is full of illusions and doomed to fail. Having inculcated by example shallow values in his two sons, he is a deeply flawed individual who bears much responsibility for his dysfunctional family.

Cobb's Willy is portrayed more sympathetically; he has not had the negative influence on his family that Hoffman's Willy has. In the opening of the 1966 adaptation, the weary Cobb returns home to his docile wife Linda, who even kneels at his feet and helps the tired man take off his shoes. One feels that she would do absolutely anything for her husband. In contrast, the Linda in the 1985 production does not help her husband remove his shoes. In fact, she is a stronger and a more independent Linda than the wife in the 1966 production is. Even their physical appearances underscore the different conceptions of the character. In the 1966 production, one sees a thin, small grey-haired woman, while in the 1985 production, one views a more robust younger-looking Linda, whose brown hair has only a few strands of grey. Her stronger character is all the more noticeable because Hoffman is a much more difficult Willy than Cobb is—more self-absorbed, more intolerant, and angrier.

One way the 1985 production reveals a less sympathetic Willy is in its different presentation of his attitude toward adultery, which is evident in the scene in which Biff discovers his father with the Woman. In the 1966 production, the adultery is portrayed as corrupt, and Cobb seems to feel guilty for his sexual transgressions. In her black slip, the red-haired Woman acts sluttish. In contrast, Hoffman does not seem to feel guilty at all; in fact, he is surprised at the vehemence of Biff's disgust with him for his adultery. Hoffman believes his son is simply naive and doesn't understand the ways of the world. In contrast to Cobb's perfunctory patting of the

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Competing Salesmen (Continued from page 21)

Woman's buttocks as he says "Well, bottoms up!" and sends her away, Hoffman's actions are much more suggestive at this point in the play, for he exuberantly picks up the Woman and tilts her back on the bed, her head pointed down and her bottom pointed up. The blond Woman, dressed in a white slip, laughs with gusto. In Hoffman's recollection of this affair, *the sex is casual, natural, and guilt-free*. In another part of the play, Hoffman's guilt-free attitude toward extra-marital sex is also suggested. In Act Two, after Howard fires Willy, the distraught salesman, arguing with phantoms in his mind, goes to Charley's office where sees Charley's secretary Jenny, who is typing at her desk with her back to him. Having returned now to the real world, Hoffman lustily embraces Jenny from behind and fondles her in inappropriate places. Her lack of surprise and her tolerance of Willy's sexual touching suggest that this kind of sexual harassment is habitual with Willy. Willy's "groping" of Jenny is not in the 1966 production. Instead, when Cobb arrives, Jenny looks at him as though this man who has been talking to himself might go completely berserk and require her to call for help.

The encounter between Willy and Bernard that follows the brief encounter between Willy and Jenny is interpreted differently in the two productions and, again, presents a less sympathetic Willy in the 1985 production. In the 1966 adaptation, Gene Wilder plays Bernard as a reticent "nephew" who must be deferential to his "Uncle Willy." Cobb, at times melancholy and introspective, seems to know the answers to the questions about Biff he poses to Bernard and the questions Bernard poses to him, even if he won't respond sincerely. In contrast, Hoffman confronts a Bernard who has abandoned deference for blunt talk. He is a successful and a confident man, whose questions about a possible transforming event that Biff experienced when he flunked math and went to see his father Hoffman finds very threatening. He cannot be honest with Bernard or himself and admit to any responsibility for Biff's failures. At one point, he becomes distraught and yells at Bernard, shaking his finger in his face.

Another character interpreted differently in the two productions is Biff. John Malkovich plays the character as a more disillusioned, introspective, and angrier Biff than the

one played by George Segal in the 1966 adaptation. When Linda, in her attempt to make Biff sympathize with his father, reveals Willy's suicidal inclinations and breaks down crying, Segal embraces her as he tries to comfort her. But Malkovich's dislike of his father is so intense that he is unable to comfort the distraught Linda. Later, near the end of *the play*, Malkovich's reaction to the discovery of his father's adultery in the hotel room is stronger than Segal's. Guilt-ridden Cobb observes Segal crying over the discovery of the philandering. Malkovich is as shocked as Segal, but he responds in an angrier manner, even physically attacking his father. When he throws Hoffman down on the bed, he makes it brutally clear that he has lost all respect for his father and will no longer obey him.

The ways the two productions embody their different interpretations of the play are complex and subtle, and, in this brief article, I have suggested only a few of the many provocative issues that can be explored. Of the approximately fifty productions of the play that are important in its history, these two adaptations are the most significant. The availability of these landmark productions on video is cause for celebration.

Notes

1. The video is available at The Broadway Theatre Archive, P.O. Box 2284, South Burlington, VT 05407 (phone: 1-800-422-2827; www.BroadwayArchive.com).
2. The 1986 production is distributed by Karl-Lorimar Home Video, Inc. 17942 Cowan, Irvine, CA 92714.
3. *Coleridge and Textual Instability: The Multiple Versions of the Major Poems*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
4. *Miller: Death of a Salesman* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 148. For the information in this paragraph, I am indebted to Murphy's excellent discussion of these two productions.

—Allan Chavkin

Special Offers for Members (Continued from page 6)

The entrance is on Carlos Street, a block east of Gower. Please call the Actors Co-op office at (323) 462-8460 for tickets or further information.

Howard Blue has written a new book about radio in the World War II era, which is slated for publication this fall by Scarecrow Press. After interviewing Arthur Miller, Norman Corwin, Art Carney, Jackson Beck, Pete Seeger, Arthur Laurents and many others, and doing extensive archival research, Howard Blue has written *Words at War: World War II Era Radio Drama and the Postwar Broadcasting Industry Blacklist*. The publisher will retail the book for \$34.95. How-

ever, Howard has made a prepublication bulk purchase so that he can offer it at \$29.95.

For a pre-publication order or a fuller description of the book, please send a message with a. your home address b. the number of copies desired, to Khovard@Juno.com or Howard Blue, 1951 Valentines Rd., Westbury, NY 11590. No payment is required at this time.

Gay Berratt would like to sell a first edition of *Death of a Salesman*, complete with dust jacket to someone who would appreciate the book. The asking price is \$999.99 U.S. plus insured shipping costs. Interested parties may email easyreader7@hotmail.com

Christopher Bigsby, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

In the fifteen chapters collected here—plus chronology and illustrations, Christopher Bigsby has contextualized Miller in several interconnected ways. These essays examine Miller's lifetime achievement chronologically, decade by decade, illuminating, in addition to the big Miller themes, many of the biographical, historical, and political pressures to which the plays are, in part, responses. Some of the pieces explore the moral consciousness central to everything Miller wrote, while others catalogue the motifs and images constituting the language of Miller's moral vision. Thirty to forty other literary artists, such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, T. S. Eliot, Norman Mailer, and Ralph Ellison, are mentioned in these essays to clarify Miller's relation to his times. And Miller's work as a contemporary activist is noted, along with that of Harold Pinter, Edward Albee, and others. The book's back cover refers to this collection as an "introduction," but it is actually an impressively sophisticated and complete report on state of the art Miller scholarship, immensely useful for teaching and research. For a collection of essays on a single author, it is remarkably free of repetition. And since Miller's own *Timebends* is as near as we can come now to a biography, this book sketches an outline of issues and topics we look forward to understanding more fully at some later time.

Brenda Murphy's "The tradition of social drama: Miller and his forebears" is a trustworthy account of Miller's devotion to the Greek conception of theatre and how he used Ibsen to modernize himself. Like many of these essays, Murphy makes good use of Miller's own marvelous articulations from *Timebends*, including the following: "My mind was taken over by the basic Greek structural concept of a past stretching so far back that its origins were lost in myth, surfacing in the present and donating a dilemma to the persons on the stage, who were astounded and awestruck by the wonderful train of seeming accidents that unveiled their connections to that past" (10). The Greeks and Ibsen confirmed in Miller the determination to see man as a whole. When Christopher Bigsby speaks of "The early plays," he does not mean *All My Sons* (1947), but theatrical pieces little, if ever, talked about, written even before the disastrous Broadway production of *The Man Who Had All the Luck* (1944). *No Villain*, *They Too Arise*, *Honors at Dawn*, *The Great Disobedience*, and *The Golden Years* all reveal important patterns in Miller's thinking. In these apprentice works, Miller already had discovered "the dramatic energy to be generated by familial relationships in which loyalty clashes with belief, moral value with social theory, and personal commitment with public form" (24). In other words, Miller was already struggling with the subject matter of *Death of a Salesman*.

Several essays seem particularly useful for the classroom. Steven R. Centola's analysis of *All My Sons* is a lucid and subtle unpacking of the moral logic of Miller, something stu-

dents have trouble with in an age when "everything is relative." For Miller, all drama is about "how the birds c[o]me home to roost" (49), so a discussion of how Chris Keller is also responsible for his father's downfall, for example, can be particularly clarifying. Matthew C. Roudané discusses Miller's poetics, including the images, motifs, stage sets, and language that make up a Miller play. Close textual readings that discover patterns of "death-saturated" dialogue (76) and fire imagery (77) in *Death of a Salesman*, as well as the many images of "the fall, falling, and the fallen" (66) can be revelatory for students and teachers alike, as can the discovery that Willy Loman's name comes not from the obvious "low man," but from a character named Lohman in Fritz Lang's *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*. Roudané makes the case that it was Tennessee Williams that freed Miller, when he saw *Streetcar*, to explore theatrical language in greater depth. Thomas P. Adler reads Miller somewhat against the grain in "Conscience and community in *An Enemy of the People* and *The Crucible*." In this intelligent and finely balanced essay, Adler shows how a play which interrogates society can, in turn, be interrogated: "Although one impetus behind both *An Enemy of the People* and *The Crucible* would seem to be a challenge to a hegemonic world order that demonizes the other, the outsider who rebels, some recent criticism cogently demonstrates that, in his handling of the women characters in the later play, Miller falls prey, however unwittingly, to some of the very same patriarchal attitudes he appears to be criticizing" (95).

Two essays explore Miller's complex and often disappointing relation to film. Albert Wertheim revisits Miller's tense relations with Hollywood and Elia Kazan at the time when Miller was writing *The Hook*, a screenplay he eventually withdrew from consideration for production. Kazan's encounter with the HUAC sheds quite a bit of light on his highly praised *On the Waterfront*, while Miller went on to sort out his feelings about betrayal and human weakness in *A View from the Bridge*, one of Miller's deepest and most compassionate plays. R. Barton Palmer brings his considerable expertise on the history of cinema to bear on the various attempts to translate Miller's plays into film. He discusses *All My Sons* as a *film noir* genre piece for Burt Lancaster and Edward G. Robinson, and *The Misfits* as a complex attempt on Miller's part to allow his wife Marilyn Monroe to express her great talent in the best light. Palmer discusses the possible reasons that Miller did not have the good fortune with film that Tennessee Williams and William Inge did at the height of their powers.

Janet N. Balakian, in "The Holocaust, the Depression, and McCarthyism: Miller in the sixties," explores Miller's theme of denial as a component of tragedy in *After the Fall*

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and *Incident at Vichy*. The sixties was a decade when Miller's commitment to a drama propelled by self-accusation was sorely tested. "We must go on groping from one illusion of virtue to another" (115), he said, solidifying his difference with absurdism. William M. Demastes discusses *The Creation of the World and Other Business* and *The Archbishop's Ceiling*, plays of the seventies, that ask what it would take for a people to regain a sense of right action in a world dominated by "moral mediocrity, radical self-interest, and simple comfort" (150). June Schlueter examines the rich theatrical history of Miller productions in the eighties, his reception in England, his political activism, and the publication of *Timebends*. Christopher Bigsby discusses Miller's works of the nineties, *A Ride Down Mt. Morgan*, *The Last Yankee*, and *Broken Glass*, strong plays by a playwright who continues to assert that the state of society and the nature of human values belong to the domain of the theatre.

Malcolm Bradbury examines Miller's short stories, novel, and novella from the point of view of some fundamental questions about the nature of the various genres. Stephen Barker looks at Miller as critic and surveys some of the history of Miller's critical reception. Criticism is, after all, fun-

damental to Miller's sense of drama, but Miller ultimately believes that, "the end of drama is the creation of a higher consciousness and not merely a subjective attack upon the audience's nerves and feelings" (232). And finally, Susan Haedicke provides, in addition to her chronology, a comprehensive bibliographic essay that everyone deeply interested in Miller should possess. In addition to the usual bibliographic categories, it also includes comparative analyses, genre considerations, theatrical perspectives, gender studies, as well as interdisciplinary approaches including sociology, psychology, business and law, history, and ethnic studies, and cross-cultural perspectives.

The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller suggests that an important American playwright has emerged as a spokesman for conscience and consciousness on the world stage. Miller has taken the struggles of Americans with their governments, their myths, and their collective values, and asserted again and again in the face of changing times, "the real self is the private one, often lost in the welter of social pressures and forces" (235). These essays attest to the vitality of Miller's vision and to its resiliency.

—Robert Combs

Christopher Bigsby, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

"Arthur Miller is regarded as one of the most important playwrights of the twentieth century. His work is performed and studied around the world, and this *Companion* provides an introduction to this influential dramatist." Cambridge University Press's comments about *The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller* underscore the importance of this text to Miller studies. While few would question Miller's place in the study of drama, Cambridge's outstanding reputation confers a legitimacy that solidifies an author's place in literary studies. This text, edited by Christopher Bigsby and published in 1997, is a fine group of essays that illustrate the complex range of Miller's prolific work.

The text begins with a chronology by Susan Haedicke, which ends with the film release of *The Crucible* in 1996. The limitations of this chronology highlight the difficulty of publishing a text like this when the author is living and working as vibrantly as Miller does. The last six years have been some of Miller's busiest, and a few sections of the book seem incomplete as a result of this gap.

The book follows a chronological pattern, with Brenda Murphy beginning the discussion of Miller's dramaturgy with an analysis of "Miller and his forbears." While Murphy dedicates a fair amount of this chapter tracing the oft-made con-

nection between Miller and Ibsen, she also emphasizes Miller's debt to the Greek drama. Murphy perceptively notes that, like the ancient Greeks, "The concept of the drama of the 'whole' man—psyche and citizen, individual subject and social actor—has driven Miller's own playwriting from very early on."

Christopher Bigsby follows Murphy's solid chapter with undoubtedly the most difficult assignment of all: evaluating "The early plays," from *No Villain*, in 1936 to *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, in 1944. Bigsby diligently searches for a "silver lining" to the "clouds" of Miller's early work, but sometimes seems at a loss. His assessment of *No Villain* illustrates his dilemma: "It is, of course, a piece of rhetoric whose very vagueness is both its strength and its weakness." While Miller's early drama reflects ideas, themes, and styles that will resonate in his later work, it is difficult to justify this section being the longest in the book. While Bigsby articulates that these plays have been largely ignored, many of us are not convinced that this much "attention must be paid" to Miller's developmental struggles.

Steven Centola's cogent chapter on *All My Sons* reveals that the play is about "the paradox of denial." Centola finds

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denial in each character and even the setting, which reveals “Keller’s myopic world view” through the poplars that “hedge” the stage. Centola also points out that this theme is central to other Miller plays, most notably, *After the Fall*. Centola concludes that perhaps the ultimate denial, “to deny responsibility for others,” can “run rampant and wreak havoc on the individual, his family, and his society.”

Matthew Roudané, who has edited Cambridge Companions to both Tennessee Williams and Sam Shepard, writes a fine chapter on *Death of a Salesman*. Most college freshmen consider themselves experts on the play, but Roudané does not allow the play’s familiarity to breed the contempt of critical redundancy in his assessment of it. The section which outlines “Images of the fall, falling, and the fallen” is particularly interesting. In it, he details several passages that feature words like “sinking” and “down,” ending with the funeral, where Linda “lays down the flowers, kneels, and sits back on her heels. All stare down at the grave.” Roudané also considers the play’s “poetic language,” “the set,” and “stage directions” in his comprehensive overview of the drama.

Thomas Adler follows Roudané with an insightful chapter on *An Enemy of the People* and *The Crucible*, arguing that both deal with “a confusion of the relative with the absolute, so that ‘subjective reality’ could be foisted off as ‘objective truth.’” Adler posits that in *The Crucible*, Miller emphasizes the confusion regarding truth by employing many “Versions of the word ‘see’ . . . keeping before the audience his question of seeing the unseen, of reading, or misreading, the evidence.”

Albert Wertheim devotes a chapter to *A View from the Bridge*, detailing the biographical basis for the play, while noting that, “No work of literature has one unique point of origin.” Wertheim writes splendidly here, at one point referencing one of the many possible connections to the “bridge” of the title: “The characters and audience find themselves at an intersection of passions and motives, on a bridge between conscious and unconscious acts, between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors.” Wertheim clarifies that even Eddie does not fully understand the passions within him, passions that lead him to “break the taboo of informing to frantically closet the more terrible taboo of incest.”

The next four chapters review four decades of Miller’s work, with Janet Balakian covering the ’60s, William Demastes the ’70s, June Schleuter the ’80s, and Christopher Bigsby the ’90s. All four chapters are excellent, written confidently by critics who have studied Miller extensively.

Schleuter’s discussion of Miller’s undervalued “gem,” “Elegy for a Lady,” is especially strong. Bigsby closes out the section with an outstanding analysis of *The Ride Down Mount Morgan*, *The Last Yankee*, and *Broken Glass*. He concludes that, “If there is a central theme to Arthur Miller’s work, it is a concern for what he has called a ‘common longing for meaning.’” Bigsby notes that in these plays, Miller addresses the “state of society and the nature of human values.” Bigsby asks, “Who else is there, in this final decade of the millennium, who could say as much?” Many readers would go on to ask, “Who else is there in the field of Miller scholarship ‘who could say as much’ as Mr. Bigsby?” He writes with the authority that comes with an intimate, even passionate knowledge of his subject.

R. Barton Palmer’s essay on “Miller and the Cinema,” though interesting and well-written, suffers because two important Miller films, *The Crucible* and the newly-released *Focus* were not available to him. While we would still agree that “The commercial films made from Arthur Miller works during the period of the author’s greatest popularity in the fifties and sixties certainly did nothing to advance his reputation,” any discussion of Miller and cinema should include these two works. *The Crucible* was generally well-received both critically and commercially, while early reviews of *Focus* are somewhat mixed.

The last three chapters of the book serve their purpose, covering fiction and criticism. Malcolm Bradbury focuses on Miller’s fiction but does not have the space required to trace the important themes in Miller’s fiction. Moreover, there is little direct textual reference in his analysis. Stephen Barker does a fine job identifying the often “curious relationship Miller has had with the critics” which stems from “his own reaction to criticism in the form of altering his work.” Barker’s section on the “pulls and pulses of criticism” is especially good, as he identifies Miller as “simultaneously the loner and the gregarious man, a part of the whole but somehow apart from it.” Susan Haedicke’s bibliographic essay is certainly the most comprehensive one available in print.

This text, overall, is perhaps the best single Miller resource on the market. Few would question the qualifications of the contributors, who are among the most noted Miller scholars in the world. Christopher Bigsby’s contribution here is inescapable. His name is nearly as ubiquitous as Miller’s, and his editorial hand has crafted a document that will inform and delight Miller enthusiasts for years to come.

Harold Bloom, ed. *Bloom's Major Dramatists: Arthur Miller. Broomall: Chelsea House Publishers, 2000.*

This book can be taken as a comprehensive research and study guide on three plays created by Arthur Miller – *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *The Crucible* – through which anyone interested in Miller's work can get not only an overview of such masterpieces but also come across some critical essays on these three plays.

In this volume, biographical, critical, and bibliographical information on Arthur Miller's best-known works is presented. Following Harold Bloom's note and introduction is a detailed biography of the author, outlining major life events and his literary accomplishments. There is also a plot summary of each play, discussing significant themes and motifs in the work.

The critical essays on *All My Sons* were written by Arthur Miller himself, Samuel A. Yorks, W. Arthur Boggs, Arvin R. Wells, Leonard Moss, N. Bhaskar Pannikar, Charlotte Goodman, and Steven Centola.

Arthur Miller's essay was originally published as the "Introduction to the *Collected Plays*" (1957). The extract taken from this essay focuses on the trouble faced by Joe Keller, protagonist of the play, in his difficulties in admitting the consequences of his own acts. In one word, Miller draws considerations on the concept of morality in the specific approach of this play.

The following essay, written by Samuel A. Yorks, emphasizes the relationship between the character Joe Keller and his family. The theme of loyalty as something defended by Joe Keller is the predominant argument presented by this critic.

W. Arthur Boggs reflects on the tragedy *Oedipus* as a possibility by which to analyze the failure suffered by Joe Keller in the play. This text bases the discussion on the elements concerning the structure of *All My Sons*.

Leonard Moss writes about the narrative crudeness and the verbal obscurity that can be observed in the play.

Robert W. Corrigan compares the achievement of Arthur Miller in *All My Sons* with a number of plays written by this author between 1944 and 1957.

Barry Gross's text points out the importance of discussing the role of Chris Keller, son of Joe Keller, in *All My Sons*.

N. Bhaskara Pannikar recovers the notion of morality, often attributed to certain works by Miller, but, in this case, morality is associated with the notion of happiness in *All My Sons*.

In her critical essay, Charlotte Goodman writes about the influence of Lillian Hellman, who was a contemporary playwright of Arthur Miller, with some Miller plays.

Steven R. Centola defends the idea of a paradox of denial in *All My Sons*. Because of Miller's treatment of the theme of the paradox of denial, this play has "a resonance that transcends its contemporary society and immediate situation" (36). Centola believes that such paradox of denial is a defense mechanism adopted so as to justify the rightness of an improper act.

The critical views on *Death of a Salesman* open with Arthur Miller's comments on the first anniversary of this play. In this text, Arthur Miller exposes his impressions about how the audience reacted before this play and what he learned from this production.

The following essay is written by George Kernodle, who begins his text by making references to the preface of Arthur Miller on this play, "Tragedy and the Common Man," so as to reinforce his first statement that "*Death of a Salesman* is a tragic study of a little man and his dream. Kernodle shows in his text how Miller was able to deal with the theme of a dream from different angles but also created the interaction between the inner dream and the outer world.

This idea of tragedy is presented in two other essays on *Death of a Salesman*, one written by George de Schweinitz, "*Death of a Salesman: A Note on Epic and Tragedy*" and the other written by Alfred R. Ferguson, "The Tragedy of the American Dream in *Death of a Salesman*."

The essay written by Steven Centola discusses the family values in *Death of a Salesman*. According to Centola, there are several studies on this play that invariably focus the process of Willy Loman's self-delusion and moral confusion in relation to Miller's criticism towards the competitive, capitalistic society that is responsible for the dehumanization of the individual and the transformation of a promising American dream into a nightmare.

The last part of the book is dedicated to the play *The Crucible*. The first essay in this section is written by Eric Bentley, who points out the innocence of Arthur Miller. This article was originally published in *New Republic* on February 16, 1953, and, in the first paragraph, Bentley makes indirect comments on McCarthyism. In his words, "Above all, at a moment when we are all being 'investigated' or about to be 'investigated,' it is moving to see images of 'investigation' be-

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fore the footlights. It seems to me that there ought to be dozens of plays giving a critical account who is neither an infant, a fool, or a swindler, is enough to bring tears to the eyes" (63). The idea of innocence is developed in this essay in the sense the hero is accused of a crime he hadn't committed; once such crime is not set in reality: trafficking with the devil is something that cannot be proven for sure.

Leonard Moss analyzes the ideas of hysteria, honesty, and their consequences in the play *The Crucible*. For Moss, this play explores two contrary processes in the context of a given social order: the generation of hysteria and the achievement of moral honesty.

Gerald Weales, in his essay, defends the position that the play *The Crucible* cannot be only seen as an analogy for the American political situation in the early 1950s. He quotes a statement made by Arthur Miller, in which he says that "McCarthyism may have been the historical occasion of the play, not its theme" (70).

The last essay in this volume is from Stephen Marino, who discourses about "Weight of Truth" in *The Crucible*. In

his criticism, Marino explores Miller's use of "weight" to reinforce his perspectives on man's struggle for truth. The first example taken from the play *The Crucible* is the scene where Giles Corey refuses to confess to witchery. He is pressed with great stones, and his last words are "More weight." In Marino's words, "Miller's thematic use of weight is intimately connected to the conflicts that occur when an individual's struggle to know truth opposes society's understanding of it" (77).

The collection of essays selected by Harold Bloom on the plays *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *The Crucible* offers to anyone interested in Arthur Miller's work the possibility of being in touch with a set of themes and motifs, chosen as elements of critical analysis, as well as enabling the reader to think about criticism on these three plays. Some topics of discussion can be applied to any of those three works, showing that they are part of a process of creation and that is why some aspects are recovered and fit for the specific purposes of a play.

—Ana Lúcia Moura Novais

Johnson, Claudia Durst and Vernon E. *Understanding The Crucible: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998.

Harold Bloom offers in his book *How to Read and Why* an explanation of some of the reasons we so often turn to reading: "We read deeply for varied reasons, most of them familiar: that we cannot know enough people profoundly enough; that we need to know ourselves better; that we require knowledge, not just of self and others, but of the way things are" (29). I'd like to add to this a summary word: awareness. We read, or ask our students to read, in part to achieve awareness so that we may approach situations with a broader sense of what it means to be human. This is one of the fundamental questions Miller takes on in virtually all of his writing: What is it to be human? *The Crucible* provides a glimpse of what it can mean to be human in times of hysteria. The Johnsons provide for us, in their book *Understanding the Crucible: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents*, an invaluable resource to pursue a deeper and more profound reading of Miller's classic work. It is brilliantly written, easily followed, and constructed in a way that a reader of virtually any level may construct a vision of both Puritan society, including the psychology, motives, and times of the characters that permeate *The Crucible*; and also of the McCarthy trials, and their times which greatly helped to shape the psychology of the author as he

wrote this famed work. The Johnsons' work is broken down in the following manner.

"Literary Analysis"

"Miller's play explores how that crucible came into being, and how society and its members endured the experience. The playwright develops his theme through a tightly constructed, traditional, realistic plot and though complex, multidimensional characters who, through subject to human weakness, have the capacity to evoke our sympathy and to achieve greatness" (Johnson 3).

The authors begin their analysis with a plot summary seen with an analytical lens. They first provide for the reader the multiple readings and thus implications of the term "crucible" and focus their summary on motive and cause of action as it rises and falls. As they trace the action, they point to Miller's skillful weaving of this story to provide an intricate web of "tension and fear, fed by ambition, pride, greed, an obsession with status and land, the aftermath of adultery, and plain human evil" (4), resulting in the hysteria which breeds in Miller's Salem.

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The authors then use a close reading to provide character sketches of John Proctor, Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Proctor, The Reverend Samuel Parris, Thomas and Ann Putnam, Giles Corey, The Reverend John Hale, and Rebecca Nurse. They then turn to look at the play as a whole as tragedy, claiming it to be a “modern tragedy” with social purpose: “the author intends the viewer or reader to see certain truths about the human situation that affect all people and that, unless tended to, become destructive” (22).

The Johnsons end their analysis with “this is not just the story of a man; it is the story of an entire community that has created and is tested within the red-hot fire of the crucible”(24).

“Primed for Hysteria”

The Johnsons begin this next section by providing for the reader a comprehensive background in early Puritan life and belief, dispelling popular conceptions that surround the sect. This information provides the reader with an excellent background with which to assess the actions and motives of Miller’s play and possible reasons the action may have escalated in the manner that it did. They also provide a listing of other signs of “God’s wrath” that pervaded among the Puritan community so that the reader may gather a suspicion of what the mind-set of the times was.

What makes this work even more valuable to the student is that the Johnsons include many examples of primary historical material. These excerpts provide an invaluable scope of the Puritan mind and its motivations, which helped to prompt the hysteria that ensues during the actual, and Miller’s witch trials. They show that “God had visited punishment after punishment on New England for its sins; Satan was working overtime to convert souls to his allegiance before the coming millennium; and, to prevent further disasters, the people needed to bring all their strength to the task of ridding their community of those who had signed pacts with the devil” (65); at least in the minds of the Puritans.

At the end of this section, the Johnsons provide “Projects for Oral or Written Exploration” that can easily be implemented in the classroom or serve as ideas for possible student research papers.

“Witchcraft in Salem”

The next chapter, “Witchcraft in Salem,” focuses on the informational, detailed following of the actual trials. Included are the proceedings of the courts, key players in influencing matters, evidence admitted, and the carrying out of sentences with specific attention to the “mood” of the times. Following the Johnsons’ overview of the witchcraft trials is a very

interesting section on the psychology of the witch trials. In this section, they look at the psychological motives of the accusers and some “calculated evils” that prompted the hysteria.

After this section, the Johnsons provide for their readers primary documents in two sections, one that relates directly to characters in *The Crucible*, and another that is “made up of excerpts from documents that sought in some way to counter the damage done by the trials” (77). The characters explored include Samuel Parris, Abigail Williams, Thomas and Ann Putnam, Giles Corey (including an actual transcript from trial), Rebecca Nurse, John and Elizabeth Proctor (including a letter written by Mr. Proctor), and The Reverend John Hale.

This section is, again, followed by “Projects for Oral or Written Exploration.”

“Witch-hunts in the 1950s”

In this chapter, the Johnsons turn their exploration to the 1930s, ’40s, and ’50s, during which, the government saw “subversives”—people involved in an international conspiracy to overthrow the country. “At first the target [for this witch-hunt] was the Communist Party, but it grew to include those who expressed opinions critical of the government” (125). The authors then take on the task of exploring the parallels that exist (or may exist) between the two time periods.

They look at Communism and the Depression followed by Roosevelt’s New Deal as leading to Americans believing that their “basic liberties and the survival of their country were hanging in the balance” (130). The Johnsons then look at reactions to the “hysteria,” including the House Committee on Un-American Activities, The Smith Act, The Taft-Hartley Act, and Loyalty Review Boards, leading to the famed McCarthy Trials.

After a brief review of the climate of the ’50s in America, the Johnsons focus their attention on the relationship among the trials, Arthur Miller, and his work *The Crucible*, leading into direct analysis of the comparisons between the “witch-hunts of 1692 to those of the 1950s” (140).

Following the same basic structure as the first section, the Johnsons then go on to provide primary source information, including the Executive Order 9835, excerpts from an explanation from the House Un-American Activities Committee, President Truman’s Veto, excerpts from Red Channels, transcripts from questioning by McCarthy, case studies in personnel security who dealt with the “Red Menace,” and interviews with social activists.

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“1990s Witch-Hunts”

The Johnsons begin this section with pointing out the “issues raised by *The Crucible*” which “are very much alive in the 1990s” (203). In short, these include: The problem of the destitute and homeless (How do we treat them and by association, the insane?), the seduction of a young person by a much older person, the validity of the legal system, political and monetary influences on “investigations,” and fear and hysteria caused by natural events perceived as irrational or supernatural phenomena.

The authors then, as in earlier sections, provide for the reader linkages between the time period discussed and Miller’s play, citing actual cases and drawing parallels. In the 1990s, the Johnsons’ focus on mass accusations of child-abuse as the “witch-hunts.” They again call on primary sources, including testimonies, interviews, and cross-exami-

nations to provide additional research opportunities and “proof” if needed for the student reader.

This interdisciplinary book is invaluable as a classroom aid, a reading aid, and a research aid for anyone studying *The Crucible*.

The close analysis of the play, relevant historical documents, comprehensive historical background (of both the time period the work was set in and written in), and provocative questions for further research/study make the Johnsons’ work ideal for readers and scholars of all levels and backgrounds.

—Michelle Cirulli

Work Cited:

Bloom, Harold. *How to Read and Why*. New York: Touchstone, 2000.

Harold Bloom, ed. *Arthur Miller’s Death of a Salesman*. Broomall: Chelsea House Publishers, 1996.

This slim volume in the *Bloom’s Notes* series provides a good introduction to *Death of a Salesman* for students new to the play and the critical debates and reverberations it has engendered. The text contains a brief introduction by Bloom, a biography of Miller, a bibliography of his writings (including a complete list of all the books he has written, co-written, edited, and translated through 1994), a representative list of secondary sources on Miller and *Death of a Salesman* (again through 1994), a brief description of the main characters, a substantial (12-page) thematic and structural analysis of the play, which contains within it a thorough plot synopsis, and an index of themes and ideas to help the student negotiate the volume.

The bulk of the work consists of Bloom’s selection of eighteen critical extracts of previously published material ranging from John Mason Brown’s 1949 review of the Broadway production to David Savran’s 1992 exploration of the “Fear of Effeminacy in *Death of a Salesman*” and includes Miller’s own explanation of the genesis of the play, found in his 1957 introduction to his *Collected Plays*. The sampling introduces the student to past controversies over the tragedy of “the little man,” Loman as Everyman, the variously identified flaws of the play, Willy as victim of a deadly American Dream, ambiguities regarding the values the play espouses, and more recent explorations of the gender constructs the play may be seen to employ and challenge. Each extract

is preceded by a bio of the critic and a brief summary of the subject to be examined, so students may determine which items to read in pursuit of their interests. The brevity of the extracts, however, requires that students with research interests seek out the original longer works from which the extracts came.

Bloom’s own introduction to the play, which heads the volume, begins in typical Bloomian fashion by referring to the dangers for Miller of Ibsen’s influence, whom Bloom sees as a more “daemonic dramatist” than Miller, interested in elemental forces more than the social reformist qualities Bloom feels Miller prized in Ibsen. He sees Miller as wishing to portray Willy as “destroyed by social energies,” but claims that “something deeper than Miller’s political polemic pervades the play” and provides an aesthetic dignity to Willy that, though it depends more on *pathos* than tragic grandeur, is enough to sustain the play. Bloom characterizes the play as more the tragedy of a family rather than of an individual or a society, comparing Miller productively to Eugene O’Neill and in contrast to Ibsen and Shakespeare.

As an introduction to the play for those new to it, then, Bloom’s text provides a helpful and engaging glimpse at the controversies and explorations of powerful themes *Death of a Salesman* invites.

—Heather Cook Callow

Even though Harold Bloom's *Willy Loman* turns eleven this year, the book remains as valuable a tool for getting to know Willy Loman as when first released. The credit, of course, belongs to Arthur Miller for a character, and a play, with such resounding social validity. No play of the modern period remains as constant with regard to social understanding as *Death of a Salesman*, so there is little wonder then that a book that finds existence in the work lingers, too.

Willy Loman is an apt choice for any discussion, theatrical or literary, involving iconic American characters and is well placed in Chelsea House's Major Literary Characters series. Willy stands definitively beside Jay Gatsby and Tom Joad as truly American creations. In the words of Lorraine Hansberry, "We [the American audience] knew who Willy Loman was instantaneously" (8). Society knew, and through *Salesman* came to better understand, this man. Willy, like many other Miller characters, lives in the neighborhood. Everyone knows a Willy Loman, and Willy so typifies an American ethic that one wonders if Willy is creation or reflection.

Harold Bloom overlooks Willy's social worth and focuses his introduction, as well as several critical abstracts, on the long debated "tragic character" issue that has provided academic tenure and publication for many. Bloom's discussion includes a verbal denouncement of Miller's "Tragedy and the Common Man" as a means to justify the play as tragic: "Miller has little understanding of Classical or Shakespearean tragedy; . . . Miller is richly confused, and never more so than in his depiction of Loman" (2). Little additional insight for the character of Willy Loman or for *Salesman* is added within the introduction, and the introduction is the only portion of the book written by Bloom. Fortunately, a much broader focus exists, since Willy Loman's impact on society has been much greater than this discussion encompasses.

Structurally, the book is divided into two sections. The first is a thirty-page glossary of critical abstracts reflecting on Willy Loman and *Salesman*. This section of the book alone is a refreshing return to topics learned and forgotten over a lifetime of reading and re-reading the play. Abstracts were selected from work by Gerald Weales, John Gassner, Arthur Miller, and many others. Devoted readers of *Salesman* individually categorize important scenes, and the abstracts serve to refresh and remind how broad the scope of the work is. Even simple, almost overlooked images are revitalized for the audience's view: "Willy Loman coming through the door is a superb theatre image of our time. . . the salesman home, 'tired to death,' lugging his two heavy sample cases, rejected by the big milk-filled bosom of the country from which he had expected so much nourishment" (Stanley Kaufmann).

The second section of the book contains essays ranging in scope from the "rhythm of the play" to psychological notions of sympathy for Willy. Most of the essays date from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s, and this would represent the book's greatest weakness today if the messages still did not offer current insight.

"*Death of a Salesman: A Salesman's Illusion*" (A.D. Choudhuri) is a particularly strong essay concerning the images developed by Miller for Loman and other characters. "John Proctor cries, 'How may I live without my name?' and tears up his confession; Eddie Carbone demands, 'Gimme my name' and is destroyed; Loman cries out, 'I am not a dime a dozen. I am Willy Loman'; Joe Keller commits suicide to save his name. [All] are different expressions of [the individual] search for dignity" (68). Choudhuri's writing is direct and insightful. The essay continues, "The social relevance of this play gains in poignancy and concentration as it gradually demonstrates Loman's utter incapacity to understand himself" (70). The essay elicits questions beyond the text to ideas of creation of character and notions of social masculine development.

The book culminates in "Women and the American Dream of *Death of a Salesman*." In this lengthy essay, Kay Stanton explores the relationship of a play created by a Man that was intended to focus on the tragedy of a common Man. ". . . the American Dream as presented in *Death of a Salesman* is male oriented, but requires unacknowledged dependence upon women as well as women's subjugation and exploitation" (129). Stanton uncovers and deconstructs all the masculine property of the play, the wealth of which is considerable, and discovers Woman. Stanton is thorough and conclusive in her toil. She claims, "the audience and readers are left with a choice between Happy and Linda. . . we can continue to side with the immature masculine *mythos* in degrading and ignoring Woman. . . or we can free Woman to rise from her oppression" (152). Stanton makes the correct choice quite obvious.

Dan Vogel's, "Willy Tyrannos" is the only essay that considers the tragic hero question, and the essay defends Miller's notion of tragedy. Unlike Bloom, Vogel compares Willy to Oedipus, with "a spirit which lives on in power in the affairs of men" (64).

The broad range of topics included within *Willy Loman* produces a valuable companion to *Death of a Salesman*, offering insight undiscovered or perhaps forgotten. Although the material is dated, it is not antiquated and serves as a refreshing dive into a play that will certainly continue to inspire and activate both audiences across the spectrum.

—Jeffrey A. Barber

Contributors

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Jeffrey A. Barber is an instructor in Communication Skills at Columbus State Community College, Columbus, Ohio. He primarily teaches composition and is completing research for the Ph.D. in English at the University of Toledo. His dissertation, titled "Performing Masculinity: The Male's Role and Notions of Masculine Perception in American Drama 1945-1970," will be complete in June.

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Carlos Campo began teaching at UNLV in 1989, upon entering the doctoral program. Campo has degrees in Theatre and English (MA) from UNLV, and has an extensive background in theater and voice as a teacher and actor. In 1993, his dissertation, *Friendship in Arthur Miller*, was honored as the "Dissertation of the Year" by the UNLV Foundation. Campo taught at UNLV until 1997, when he transferred to CCSN, where he teaches English, specializing in drama and Shakespeare. Campo has published many articles on drama and film, and has specialized in the work of Arthur Miller for many years.

Allan Chavkin, Professor of English at Southwest Texas State University, teaches Arthur Miller's plays each semester in a large class of more than 200 students and in two smaller classes. His recent books include *The Chippewa Landscape of Louise Erdrich* (University of Alabama Press, 1999) and *Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony: A Casebook* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Michelle Cirulli, of Millersville University, is originally from Muhlenberg, Pennsylvania. She plans to attend graduate school to eventually earn a Ph.D. in some area of English.

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Lew Livesay has taught composition, literature, and MBA Communications in Jersey City at Saint Peter's College since the early eighties. During his decade as an adjunct, he was also a Vice-President at Smith-Barney, specializing in equity research. Lew is preparing two papers, one on Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative for Harvard in May and one on René Girard's theory of narrative for Purdue in June.

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

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Karen Wilson is a second-year graduate student in English at the University of California, Davis, focussing primarily on Early Modern Literature. She also has a major interest in 20th century American literature, especially Arthur Miller. Before turning to English, she was an administrator at the national headquarters of Social Security for many years.

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