
Major Themes Of Death Of A Salesman

To begin with, Over the years many people spend their lives living in denial. In Arthur Miller's "Death of a salesman", Miller brings attention to a man living his life in denial. The man's inability to accept change within oneself and others. This play has a combination of major themes such as denial, The American dream, betrayal and also abandonment. the main protagonist is Willy Loman, Willy Loman is a salesman living in New York City in the late 1940's. He lives with his wife Linda, in the same house for years. Willy's sale firm no longer pays him salary, Willy cannot bring home enough money to pay his bills. This combined with being a mediocre salesman and living in denial causes Willy so much stress, that he begins to hallucinate. Willy believes that hard work and innovation don't contribute to success while he believes his charming personality does, this is what caused Willy to get fired. Willy commits suicide because he feels like it's no point of living as a failure. Willy being a salesman shaped his identity and also his whole personality and view on life. His identity as being a salesman greatly influences his motive towards family and neighbors, as well as his decision to him commit suicide.

In Addition, the first major theme which is The American Dream. "Success doesn't come from just luck, popularity, or personality". All throughout the play Willy tells his two sons, Biff and Happy, that the key to success in life is to be "well liked" and that all you need is "a smile and shoeshine". According to Willy, if you come looking attractive and get people to like you, you'll make it in life. This shows what Willy believes is The American dream. Willy Loman refuses to accept the fact that he is a mediocre salesman worker. Instead of Willy acknowledging that he isn't a good worker, he strives for his own idea on what he thinks the American dream is which is being well liked. Moreover, Willy tells his sons in order to be successful you have to be well liked. For example, the play states "Bernard, enters looking for Biff, who must study for math class in order to avoid falling. Willy points out to his sons that although Bernard is smart, he is not "well liked", which will hurt him in the long run". As I have noted, this clarifies that Willy wholeheartedly believes that being well liked in business means you will be successful.

On The other hand, the second major theme in the play which is Abandonment. Willy had a life that involved abandonment from the start to finish. Started with his father a young age then followed by employers. Despite working for the company for years barley making good salary, Willy appeals to his boss Howard to give him a better raise or job but instead he gets fired. According to Act One 60-61 it states, "Howard: Willy, but there just is no spot here for you. If I had a spot, I'd slam you right in, but I just don't have a single solitary spot. Willy: Howard, all I need to set my table is fifty dollars a week. Howard: No, but it's a business, kid, and everybody's got to pull his own weight". As a result, the combinations of abandonment have left a huge impact on Willy's life leaving him with many unanswered questions and made him feel like he worked hard and has nothing to show.

Overall, the third major theme is betrayal. Throughout the play Willy betrays Linda and their marriage by cheating on her with another woman. According to Act One page 25, "Willy [slapping her bottom]: Right. Well, bottoms up! the woman [slaps him gently and laughs]: You just kill me, Willy. [He suddenly grabs her and kisses her roughly.] You kill me. And thanks for the stockings. I love a lot of stockings". Thus, Willy and his family have been struggling for

years, the fact that Willy is giving stockings to a stranger over his struggling wife shows how he betrayed her. As explained above Willy betrays his wife not only by cheating but also because he has been giving the woman new stockings mean while his wife is home sewing her old ones.

To Conclude, for the above reasons I have shown The American dream, betrayal and abandonment comprise the three major themes of Death of a Salesman. All three themes display how misery loves company. Willy was miserable and didn't want to admit it to anyone, so instead he chose to live in a fantasy of happy memories. Because he wasn't happy with his life, he had the courage to end his life in order to help the rest of his family. Sense of failure and overwhelming regret pushed Willy to commit suicide. Willy being a salesman shaped his identity and also his whole personality and view on life. His identity as being a salesman greatly influences his motive towards family and neighbors, as well as his decision to him commit suicide.

Reference:

1. <http://www.wcusd15.org/kershaw/ENG%20302/DS%20Deat>