The Concept Of American Dream In Death Of A Salesman

Death of a salesman has conveyed a deeper meaning of the American Dream by presenting Willy Lomans American dream to he be his ultimate goal in life in order to be liked and above all. Physiologically speaking Willy is seen as narcissistic because of how he was brought up in his childhood, his defensive self esteem, his need to be well liked by everyone, and most importantly the need to be successful falls into line. Willy has a strong Desire to be the provider of the family he's carries so much wait on his shoulders that it can be understood why he is the way he is. In many ways he can be seen as narcissistic

One of the key characteristics found in the beginning is the ?ute playing and its describing the images of the West by saying 'telling of the grass, trees, and the horizon" (Miller11). This is the start that hints to us The American Dream, which is Freedom, potential, and success, all of which correlate to the ideal landscape that the nineteenth century gave pride to. Willy dreamily imagines how beautiful it is in the West which indicate his desire to be the provider and to attain the freedom and success that he perceives the American Dream will give him. The American Dream is the ultimate Desire every man wants and uses it as a motivation and drive for the people of society. When interpreting the American Dream I interpret it as being a privilege to be able to come into this country and having the power to do whatever you want. You can even become whoever you want. This is where Willy falls into his depression because Willy was very capable of achieving his goals although he felt he couldn't because every time he attempted he would fail. Willy would constantly compare himself to his brother Ben who has become successful. Let's be honest here of course you can be happy for family but Willy being the younger brother would look up to Ben wanting to be like him. Which is why Willy has many insecurities like when Ben offered Willy a job after Howard doesn't allow Willy to work with him, "I appreciate that, 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"(Miller 80). Willy didn't take rejection lightly we can tell from the play how much Willy is begging even goes into his past trying to convince himself this is what he's meant to do by saying "business is definitely business, but just listen for a minute. You don't understand this. When I was a boy—eighteen, nineteen—I was already on the road. And there was a question in my mind as to whether selling had a future for me"(Miller 80). This was the true start of Willy depression which eventually leads to his death. From this we can configure how easy of a childhood Ben had in comparison to Willy who is constantly fighting to be better even as children Ben was seen as that favorite child which plays a crucial part in Willy's personality and thoughts.

Throughout the play, Willy increasingly becomes more consumed with his identity and seeks refuge from this uncertainty through his sons. It started since Happy and Biff we're children which they continue to be influenced. Biff and Happy have been influenced their whole lives by the outlook of the American Dream and the values and beliefs. Although Linda solemnly states that 'we're free,'(Miller 139) it is an ironic statement because even though Willy's death freed his family physically in the sense that they are no longer bound to a mortgage, Willy was not able to achieve the freedom that he desired. However, throughout the play, Arthur Miller magnifies the need to acknowledge that the American Dream is identi?ed by hard work, not the super?cial ideas of being well liked and that in order for an individual to attain virtue and happiness. Happy who is apparently successful is uncertain about himself stating to Biff that

'Sometimes I sit in my apartment - all alone. And I think of the rent I'm paying. And it's crazy. But then, it's what I always wanted. My own apartment, a car, and plenty of women. And still, goddammit, I'm lonely, ”(Miller 23) as much as he is successful he doesn’t feel fully accomplished. This is because Happy still views the value of life similar to that of his father a life that focuses on the ideas of the American Dream such as being liked and being attractive. Happy and Willy both live under the false pretense of these ideas which ultimately leads them to an unhappy life and they both ?nd refuge from their discontentment in women who appraise them for being successful businessman. As for Happy's name its known in this play to be ironic because his name literally means content and displaying positivity when in reality he is not happy at all. Happy is the embodiment of the super?cial ideas of the American Dream. On the other hand, Biff is compelled to seek the truth in himself and evolves away from the perceived ideals of his father. Biff is aware of the falseness of his father’s dreams and by the end of the play. Biff was able to reconcile the con?ict between the falseness of his father’s dreams as well by understanding that the American Dream is one that identi?es hard work as success. Willy's father and brother were lucky enough to find success in Alaska and Africa, which affects willy emotionally and metally by trapping himself in an unpleasant outlook on his life.Although willy believes, “He explicitly views himself in an idealmanner as a successful father and salesman, but his suicide attempts, which occur when he is in a semicon- scious dream-state, suggest the presence of deep-seated feelings of self-doubt,”(57) which ultimetly leads himself down a deeper whole because he feels all theses emotions, even if it is his father and brother who bring theses emotions out on him.

When it comes down to Willy’s personality he continues to deceive himself as he boasts himself saying he’s “'known up and down in New England,' (Miller 31) when in reality he has never met the mayor and is not known by everyone which are the quali?es that he aimlessly attempts to achieve. The wire recorder that Howard plays is such an important symbol because of Willy's perception of himself because is what draws Howard, Willy is unable to do the same. This further amplifies the imbalance in his mind which causes him to perceive himself falsely. From the scholarly article one point that is brought up that Willy never admitted but we can tell from reading is his shame by discussing “implicit negative self-representation, Willy self aggrandised, and self promotes, striving desperation to attain success that promotes feeling of hubris”() this amplifies his shame and rings out his true narcissistic side of himself.

Overall a big part of the American Dream has to do with modern times because it’s still such a major desire that everybody wants dating back from the nineteenth century till now till modern times. Willy was on the verge of trying to find his goals and achieve them as for his sons Biff finally realized his beliefs are far better of without the mindset of his father overcrowding his thoughts of needing popularity and needing to be the most successful. Happy was the fine example of this because he was successful and pulled girls and even than it wasn't enough. As for Willy he never quite got what he wanted. Everyone interprets their American dream differently. Overall one should just be happy and be surrounded by family. In this case, Willy Loman is the ultimate definition of a man who will stop at nothing to be seen as a hero even if it means ending his life to be able to provide for his family through the insurance. Willy thinks he’s being a hero in his eyes but seen as a narcissistic person in others.