

哈佛

蓝星双语名著导读

Today's Most Popular Study Guides

推销员之死 Death of a Salesman

〔美〕 Arthur Miller 原著

Selena Ward 导读

Brendan Greaves

刘凡群 翻译

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致读者

亲爱的读者，在这个多元文化的世界里，渴望知识，钟情文学，热爱英语的你是否想过站在巨人的肩膀上摘星呢？

你手上这本蓝色小册子正是风行全美的哈佛蓝星笔记，是哈佛学生们将名著阅读与文学学习融会贯通，编写而成的名著导读本。它们以经典性和流行性并存的名著为素材，以明晰的风格和地道的语言而著称。每一本都包括著作的创作背景，人物分析，主题解析，篇章讲解，重要引文释义，作品档案，并且附有相关的思考题，推荐的论文题，阅读后的小测验，要点注释，以及推荐阅读篇目。

这样的编排使你不仅仅停留在对名著内容上的了解，更可迅速、全面、深入地掌握著作的全部资料，同时也满足了对文化做进一步了解和研究的需求。蓝星精辟、明晰的编写风格将“半天阅读一本名著”的想法变为现实，帮你在有限的闲暇内阅读更多的书，在地道的语言环境中迅速提高英语水平，丰富文学内涵，增加谈资。

天津科技翻译出版公司精挑细选了50本蓝星笔记，由我国外语界资深专家张滨江教授、刘品义教授主持翻译和审校工作，天津外国语学院教授、副教授以及部分优秀青年教师进行翻译，陈法春教授，阎玉敏、常子霞副教授和李晓霞讲师协助部分审校，共同合作、精心制作成为“哈佛蓝星双语名著导读”，既保留了原书特点，并对文中的知识要点做了注释，更加适合你的需要。

蓝星闪耀，照你前行！

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CONTEXT

Arthur Miller was born in New York City on October 17, 1915. His career as a playwright began while he was a student at the University of Michigan. Several of his early works won prizes, and during his senior year, the Federal Theatre Project in Detroit performed one of his works. He produced his first great success, *All My Sons*, in 1947. Two years later, Miller wrote *Death of a Salesman*, which won the Pulitzer Prize and transformed Miller into a national sensation. Many critics described *Death of a Salesman* as the first great American tragedy, and Miller gained eminence as a man who understood the deep essence of the United States. He published *The Crucible* in 1953, a searing indictment of the anti-Communist hysteria that pervaded 1950s America. He has won the New York Drama Critics Circle Award twice, and his *Broken Glass* (1993) won the Olivier Award for Best Play of the London Season.

Death of a Salesman, Miller's most famous work, addresses the painful conflicts within one family, but it also tackles larger issues regarding American national values. The play examines the cost of blind faith in the American Dream. In this respect, it offers a postwar American reading of personal tragedy in the tradition of Sophocles' *Oedipus Cycle**. Miller charges America with selling a false myth constructed around a capitalist materialism nurtured by the postwar economy, a materialism that obscured the personal truth and moral vision of the original American Dream described by the country's founders.

A half century after it was written, *Death of a Salesman*

来龙·去脉

阿瑟·米勒于1915年10月17日出生在纽约市。他的戏剧创作生涯始于在密歇根大学就读的学生时代，那时他有几部作品获了奖。在他读大四时，底特律的联邦剧院项目把他的一部作品搬上了舞台。1947年，他创作的《都是我的儿子》给他带来第一次巨大的成功。两年后，他写的《推销员之死》摘取了普利策奖，米勒成为轰动全美的剧作家。很多评论家把这部剧作看成美国的第一部杰出的悲剧，作家本人也因其对美国社会本质的深刻理解赢得了声誉。米勒在1953年出版了《考验》，这部剧对20世纪50年代横行美国的反共狂潮进行了震撼心灵的控诉。米勒两次获得纽约戏剧评论界奖，他的《碎玻璃》（1993年）获得伦敦戏剧节最佳戏剧奥立弗奖。

《推销员之死》是米勒最知名的作品。它刻画了一个家庭的各成员间令人心痛的矛盾冲突，审视了美国国民的价值观这个更宏观的问题。该剧剖析了人们因为盲目信奉美国梦所付出的代价。在这个方面，它继承了索福克勒斯的《俄狄浦斯王》的传统，对个人的悲剧提供了具有战后美国特色的解读。米勒控诉美国社会兜售的虚幻神话。这个神话是围绕战后经济所滋养的资产阶级物质主义构建起来的，物质主义遮盖了人生真相，模糊了这个国家的创建者们最初描述的美国梦所倡导的道德观念。

在《推销员之死》创作后的半个世纪，这部剧仍



remains a powerful drama. Its indictment of fundamental American values and the American Dream of material success may seem somewhat tame in today's age of constant national and individual self-analysis and criticism, but its challenge was quite radical for its time. After World War II, the United States faced profound and irreconcilable domestic tensions and contradictions. Although the war had ostensibly engendered an unprecedented sense of American confidence, prosperity, and security, the United States became increasingly embroiled in a tense cold war with the Soviet Union. The propagation of myths of a peaceful, homogenous, and nauseatingly gleeful American golden age was tempered by constant anxiety about Communism, bitter racial conflict, and largely ignored economic and social stratification. Many Americans could not subscribe to the degree of social conformity and the ideological and cultural orthodoxy that a prosperous, booming, conservative suburban middle-class championed.

Uneasy with this American milieu of denial and discord, a new generation of artists and writers influenced by existentialist philosophy and the hypocritical postwar condition took up arms in a battle for self-realization and expression of personal meaning. Such discontented individuals railed against capitalist success as the basis of social approval, disturbed that so many American families centered their lives around material possessions (cars, appliances, and especially the just-introduced television)—often in an attempt to keep up with their equally materialistic neighbors. The climate of the American art world had likewise long been stuck in its own rut of conformity, confusion, and disorder following the prewar climax of European Modernism and the wake of assorted-isms associated with modern art and literature. The

然富有影响力。在对民族和个人的分析批判屡见不鲜的今天看来，本剧对美国最基本的价值观和追求物质成就的控诉，似乎多少显得有些温和。但是在当时，它批评的调子是非常激进的。第二次世界大战后，美国国内存在许多无法调和的矛盾冲突。虽然在表面上看，战争为美国带来从未有过的自信、繁荣和安全，但是美国日益卷入和苏联之间紧张的冷战。美国人宣传一个和平、同心同德、快乐得让人有些恶心的美国镀金时代的神话，却又要时常担忧共产主义，还要面对种族间的激烈冲突和多数情况下被人忽视的经济、社会的阶级分化的存在。很多美国人不赞同繁荣、富足、保守的中产阶级推崇的社会标准以及意识和文化方面的正统观念。


新一代的艺术家和作家对美国社会的不公和纷争感到不安。他们受存在主义哲学的影响，感触于伪善的战后社会，于是拿起武器，争取实现自我价值和表达个人思想。这些人们心怀不满，指责把资本家的成功作为获得社会认可的基础的观点。他们因看到众多美国家庭经常为了和同样属于物质主义者的邻居攀比，把占有物质（轿车、家用电器和刚刚进入人们生活的电视机）作为生活的中心而感到不安。美国的艺术界盛行同样的风气。它长期以来遵从在战前达到顶峰的欧洲现代主义的思想，步与现代艺术、文学相连的五花八门的各种主义的后尘，循规蹈矩，思想混乱，



notions of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung regarding the role of the human subconscious in defining and accepting human existence, coupled with the existentialist concern with the individual's responsibility for understanding one's existence on one's own terms, captivated the imaginations of postwar artists and writers. Perhaps the most famous and widely read dramatic work associated with existentialist philosophy is Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Miller fashioned a particularly American version of the European existentialist stance, incorporating and playing off idealistic notions of success and individuality specific to the United States.

The basis for the dramatic conflict in *Death of a Salesman* lies in Arthur Miller's conflicted relationship with his uncle, Manny Newman, also a salesman. Newman imagined a continuous competition between his son and Miller. Newman refused to accept failure and demanded the appearance of utmost confidence in his household. In his youth, Miller had written a short story about an unsuccessful salesman. His relationship with Manny revived his interest in the abandoned manuscript. He transformed the story into one of the most successful dramas in the history of the American stage. In expressing the emotions that Manny Newman inspired through the fictional character of Willy Loman, Miller managed to touch deep chords within the national psyche. ✨

充满困惑。西格蒙德·弗洛伊德和卡尔·荣格认为，人类潜意识对人类认识和接受其存在起着作用，而存在主义者认为个体按自己的想法理解其存在，这些观念激发了战后艺术家和作家的想像力。大概最有名的、人们读的最多的、与存在主义哲学相关的剧作当数塞尔·贝克特的《等待戈多》。米勒在创作中触及并嘲弄了美国独有的对成功和个人的理想化渲染，使欧洲的存在主义独具美国特色。

《推销员之死》中的戏剧冲突是基于阿瑟·米勒和他同为推销员的舅舅迈尼·纽曼的关系。纽曼料想过自己的儿子和米勒一直在相互较量。纽曼拒绝接受失败，他对自己家人要表现出十足的自信。在年少时，米勒曾经写过关于一个失败的推销员的短篇小说。他和迈尼之间的关系使他对那篇搁弃的手稿重新发生了兴趣。他把那个故事改编成美国戏剧史上最成功的作品之一。米勒通过虚构的威利·洛曼这个角色，表达了他对迈尼·纽曼的感慨，深深地触动了美国的民族心理。

PLOT OVERVIEW

As a flute melody plays, Willy Loman returns to his home in Brooklyn one night, exhausted from a failed sales trip. His wife, Linda, tries to persuade him to ask his boss, Howard Wagner, to let him work in New York so that he won't have to travel. Willy says that he will talk to Howard the next day. Willy complains that Biff, his older son who has come back home to visit, has yet to make something of himself. Linda scolds Willy for being so critical, and Willy goes to the kitchen for a snack.

As Willy talks to himself in the kitchen, Biff and his younger brother, Happy, who is also visiting, reminisce about their adolescence and discuss their father's babbling, which often includes criticism of Biff's failure to live up to Willy's expectations. As Biff and Happy, dissatisfied with their lives, fantasize about buying a ranch out West, Willy becomes immersed in a daydream. He praises his sons, now younger, who are washing his car. The young Biff, a high school football star, and the young Happy appear. They interact affectionately with their father, who has just returned from a business trip. Willy confides in Biff and Happy that he is going to open his own business one day, bigger than that owned by his neighbor, Charley. Charley's son, Bernard, enters looking for Biff, who must study for math class in order to avoid failing. Willy points out to his sons that although Bernard is smart, he is not "well liked," which will hurt him in the long run.

A younger Linda enters, and the boys leave to do some chores. Willy boasts of a phenomenally successful sales trip, but

情节·览

晚上，伴随着笛声响起，威利·洛曼刚刚结束一次失败的推销旅程，精疲力竭地回到他在布鲁克林的家中。他的妻子琳达试图劝他向老板霍华德·瓦格纳申请在纽约工作，这样就可以不出差了。威利抱怨说，他回家探亲的大儿子比夫应该成就事业。琳达埋怨威利太苛刻，于是威利去厨房吃点心。

威利在厨房里自言自语时，比夫和也来探家的弟弟哈比回忆起他们的青少年时代，他们说起父亲经常唠叨着批评比夫，因为他辜负了父亲对他的期望。比夫和哈比对各自的生活感到不满意，他们幻想在西部买一个农场。威利沉浸在白日梦中：那时，他赞扬着年少时的儿子们，他们正在擦洗他的汽车。年少的比夫是高中的足球明星，年少的哈比也在场，他们和刚结束商业旅行的父亲亲热地交流着。威利向儿子们吐露说，有一天他要开自己的买卖，要比他邻居查理的业务还大。查理的儿子伯纳德进来找比夫，说比夫必须要上数学课才能考试及格。威利告诉儿子们，虽然伯纳德很聪明，但是他“不太招人喜欢”，这对他将来没好处。

年轻时的琳达上场了，孩子们便走开去做家务。威利夸耀起他极其成功的推销旅程，但是在琳达的巧



Linda coaxes him into revealing that his trip was actually only meagerly successful. Willy complains that he soon won't be able to make all of the payments on their appliances and car. He complains that people don't like him and that he's not good at his job. As Linda consoles him, he hears the laughter of his mistress. He approaches The Woman, who is still laughing, and engages in another reminiscent daydream. Willy and The Woman flirt, and she thanks him for giving him stockings.

The Woman disappears, and Willy fades back into his prior daydream, in the kitchen. Linda, now mending stockings, reassures him. He scolds her mending and orders her to throw the stockings out. Bernard bursts in, again looking for Biff. Linda reminds Willy that Biff has to return a football that he stole, and she adds that Biff is too rough with the neighborhood girls. Willy hears The Woman laugh and explodes at Bernard and Linda. Both leave, and though the daydream ends, Willy continues to mutter to himself. The older Happy comes downstairs and tries to quiet Willy. Agitated, Willy shouts his regret about not going to Alaska with his brother, Ben, who eventually found a diamond mine in Africa and became rich. Charley, having heard the commotion, enters. Happy goes off to bed, and Willy and Charley begin to play cards. Charley offers Willy a job, but Willy, insulted, refuses it. As they argue, Willy imagines that Ben enters. Willy accidentally calls Charley Ben. Ben inspects Willy's house and tells him that he has to catch a train soon to look at properties in Alaska. As Willy talks to Ben about the prospect of going to Alaska, Charley, seeing no one there, gets confused and questions Willy. Willy yells at Charley, who leaves. The younger Linda enters and Ben meets her. Willy asks Ben impatiently about his life. Ben recounts his travels and talks about their father. As Ben