

For Whom the Bell Tolls in the American Dream?

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Abstract

This paper sheds some light on how the American Dream was galvanized with the discovery of America and how it was evolved into a glimmer of hope for social, sexual, racial, economic and religious equality, democracy, wealth and freedom, which sugars the pills of negative consequences of the American Dream. Considering that dream is something which has not been achieved yet, the American Dream is nothing less than a social criticism of society and a preview of their struggle for the rights that they deserved, and yet they did not have. Although the American Dream was launched innocently and optimistically for a better life, it fell short of expectations in the end. On the contrary, it turns to a nightmare haunting American people with the fear of intolerance of difference, violence, alienation, isolation, ostracism, scapegoating, discrimination, materialism and capitalism. In this paper, the low-down of the American Dream behind its dazzling display will be analysed through two plays: Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* and Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story*. Ultimately, it will be concluded that the American Dream is a bomb programmed to exterminate itself and only human virtues such as compassion, forgiveness, love, empathy and sacrifice can bring salvation to mankind in the grip of injustice, depression, emotional breakdown, moral decline, and social collapse.

Keywords: The American dream; American drama; Capitalism; Intolerance; Freedom.



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1. Introduction

The American Dream is a myth of a country whose citizens dream of changing their fates; in other words, of rising from rags to riches. In the concept of the American Dream, one can achieve success or prosperity through hard work, courage and determination. Only few people, for example, like Bill Gates who started his career in a garage and became one of the richest people in the world, can achieve this dream, though. For the rest of the people, all hard work and efforts are not magical sticks and end up in tragedy contrary to expectations; which recalls Oedipus fighting against his fate in Greek mythology. Moreover, the American Dream has been shaped by economic, political, social and cultural changes throughout American History and it has left permanent marks on the lives of American people. With tragedy behind the disorientation of modern man and his frustration, the American Dream becomes a juicy source for playwrights and it is impossible for them to be unconcerned with these changes and their consequences in modern man's life. This paper aims to indicate that Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* and Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* are a social criticism of the American Dream and these plays do not fail to offer hope for change.

2. The American Dream

The term "The American Dream" was firstly coined by Henry Adams in his book "*History of USA*", yet it was divulged thoroughly in James Truslow Adams's *The Epic of America* (Zsanetti, 2010). Thus the American Dream was put on the record as the dream of "a better, richer, and happier life for all our citizens of every rank" and "the greatest contribution made to the thought and the welfare of the world" by Adams (Adams, preface). If these sentences are subtitled according to the conditions of the dark times when they were put forth, the American people's desperate cry "we are not rich, happy and equal in our lives" grates on our ears. In that atmosphere, The American Dream shows diversity: from religious to sexual freedom, from an owner of a house to a film star, and from racial equality to gender equality. All in all, only what we are deprived of can be our dream, can't it? Also, what else could American people do except for dreaming, the cheapest sustenance, while they were up to their necks in the Great Depression? The belief in these dreams' possibility of coming true keeps hope of change alive. However, it is wrong to say that the American Dream is a term peculiar to the 20th century since its roots go back to the discovery of America by Columbus. America was once called as New Eden, lost paradise and "the last great hope for mankind" by its first intruders, the Puritans of New England (Zsanetti, 2010). These people settled in this country for the sake of God's sovereignty over all the earth and their dream was to establish New Garden of Eden with New Adams (Cotton, 77). The Innocent American Adam who cultivated the Virgin Land was the hero of the Edenic promises, sculptor of the American character and creator of the American Dream. Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean agree with it and add, "The Columbus myths enabled white Americans to find a beginning, to declare a courageous opening to their story. It was part of the influential dream myth of origin so prevalent in America" (Zsanetti, 2010). Following the religious dream of Puritans, American people were dragged into the California Gold Rush with dreams of wealth. Eventually, the American Dream turned into an ideology with The Declaration of

Independence, the document declaring a political freedom. From Vyacheslav P. Shestakov's point of view, "The American Dream is a representation of the national democratic development that includes individual hopes for everybody in achieving success, equal opportunities, and the pursuit of happiness" (Zsanetti, 2010). The Declaration of Independence became a compass for American citizens in the pursuit of happiness in their lives and it fulfilled many dreams of women and gays as well as dream of struggling against slavery by endowing thirteen colonies independence from Great Britain in 1776 (Cullen, 2003). Whereas Abraham Lincoln dreamt of the upward mobility, "wish to success regardless of one's parents' economic status and special talent but hard work or ensure a child's greater success in life", in society during the days of The Civil War between 1861 and 1865, Martin Luther King declared his dream of ethnic and racial equality in his famous speech in 1863 "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character". Thus, a huge contribution to the freedom of African American people was made by Martin Luther King. In addition to the dream of upward mobility and of equality, Jim Cullen divided the American Dream into the following categories: the dream of house ownership via mortgage to feel safe and free, the frontier myth to go beyond boundaries for a better life like the first astronauts' travel to space, and the dream of youth and beauty (Cullen, 2003). The American Dream takes its final form as said by Robert A. Rosenbaum:

"a nebulous term, much abused by politicians, that seems to have evolved from the early immigrants' and pioneers' hopes for lives of political and religious and personal independence in the New World to a largely materialistic expectation of upward social mobility and ever-increasing affluence" (Klopsch, 2008).

Technological improvements such as the discovery of electricity, telephone, plane and automobile, the Industrial Revolution in 1880s, the Motion Picture Industry, media communication, and urbanization no doubt crowned the American Dream but even so, the American Dream was nothing less than a masquerade ball with not only a variety of shiny attractive masks but also weary faces hidden behind them. It gave birth to a modern American man living in the urban and complaining of isolation, detachment, lack of communication and loneliness. Modernism and urbanism brought about capitalism, materialism, hyper-consumerism, immigration and urban-rural conflicts in 1920s. People were compelled to pay a debt for years due to mortgage. Furthermore, The Wall Street Crash between 1927 and 1929 and The Great Depression between 1929 and 1939 harshly awoke American people from their sweet dreams since whoever worked hard in big companies could not escape from being locked out. As for the frontier myth, it caused people to lose everything in the California Gold Rush and also the astronauts to die in Apollo 1 (American History, 2011). The American Dream which was launched innocently and optimistically inevitably turned to a nightmare.

2.1. Social Criticism to the Present

Arthur Miller and Edward Albee present a social criticism of the American Dream with different techniques in their plays *The Crucible* and *The Zoo Story*. However, both plays touch on the free will, the conservative idealized American lifestyles and intolerance to the difference. While Arthur Miller satirizes the American Dream's social forces operating on people to menace their free will within a theocratic society by analogy to The Salem Witch Trials, Albee criticizes the capitalist society of The American Dream which alienates its people from each other with artificial values. That's why Edward Albee directly targets America of the 1950s by setting his play *The Zoo Story* in Central Park in the present and narrating it from the polarity of two characters, Jerry and Peter, without needing a periphrastic writing style of recounting a historical period.

The Crucible takes place in Salem, Massachusetts, in the springtime of the year 1692 and portrays The Salem Witch trials. Arthur Miller puts into words his intention to choose this setting and plot at the beginning of the play as expressed:

I believe that the reader will discover here the essential nature of one of the strangest and most awful chapters in human history. The fate of each character is exactly that of his historical model, and there is no one in the drama who did not play a similar - and in some cases exactly the same - role in history (Miller, 1982).

It also shows the play's historical accuracy and validity in today's world. Before the flashback to The Salem Witch Trials, it is better to get to the bottom of this mass hysteria. It dates back to the colonization of America by the Puritans to fulfil their American Dream. Exploration myths of America as a mysterious place, especially the lost Garden of Eden, aroused a Christian desire to convert pagans. This desire for conversion intensified after the Catholic Church was besieged by Protestant reformers following the lead of Martin Luther. In 1534, after Henry VIII's separation from the church, religious and political turmoil fuelled a migration of English settlers to the eastern coast of America and formed a religious group: the Puritans, who believed that the church could be purified of its Catholic elements. So America became the New World where the Puritans established their communities and imposed their strict doctrines without fear of repercussion from the conflicting ideologies, but with freedom of religion (American History, 2011). In 1630, Massachusetts Bay was colonized with divine purposes for the sake of a theocratic state by John Winthrop, a Puritan who imagined it "as a city upon a hill where the eyes of all people are upon them" (46). Although it got off the ground with the religious freedom as a part of the American Dream, the Puritans were not tolerant of any different beliefs and enforced a religious conformity. In The Puritan Doctrine, sense of community, civil consciousness, faith in authority and church, hard work and commercial success are equated with salvation, to the exclusion of individual freedom to change status and religion. The atmosphere dominated by the Puritan doctrine in Salem are pictured vividly by Arthur Miller as written in *The Crucible*:

They had no novelists - and would not have permitted anyone to read a novel if one were handy. Their creed forbade anything resembling a theatre or "vain enjoyment." They did not celebrate Christmas, and a holiday from

work meant only that they must concentrate even more upon prayer. Which is not to say that nothing broke into this strict and somber way of life (Miller, 1982).

As understood, the social order is based on exclusion, repression and prohibition. This parochial perspective does not allow them to convert the majority of Indians, but take land from the ‘‘ heathens’’ (4). Therefore, the belief that the virgin forest called as The Devil’s last preserve is the last place on earth that is not paying homage to God begins to spread among the Salem folk (4). Salem’s theocratic power keeps the community together and prevents any kind of disunity. The first American Dream is the illusion of a religious, unitary and disciplined social order and its sovereignty is provided by the post-colonial gaze as Edward Said claims. According to Said, post-colonial gaze is a theory to see whether Western perspectives change when colonies gain freedom and subsequently develop power mechanisms over the other cultures. These power mechanisms can be categorized as homogenization of ‘‘the other’’ destroying the individuality, correctness of Western values and Orientalism of non-Western cultures which can be exemplified with the girls’ dancing in ecstasy in the woods with Tituba like the native people in *The Crucible* (Willette, 2018). Hence the post-colonial gaze establishes the subject and the object relationship; in other words, master and slave relationship.

To come closer to the present, *The Zoo Story* is set in the 1950s, which was The Golden Age for America in terms of prosperity and technological developments. Television captured each house and became the main entertainment in the daily lives of the American people. Capitalism and television imposed an illusion of an idealized American family model and set its framework. It was depicted with the indispensable materials such as a proper house, a television and a pet. Thus the American Dream was dramatized with this idealized family model as another destination in the pursuit of happiness and New Adams of America felt compelled to obey this illusion to survive in the society. The persistence of this The American Dream and the dominance of social forces can be explained with Foucault’s system of power and gaze. People control or modify their behaviours in surveillance and in the belief that they are constantly watched by an anonymous power, God, society, etc. Although who or what is watching them cannot be seen directly, they obey the rules with fear and suspense. As a result, it creates a self-disciplined society and fear of punishment. The technological improvements like observational tools are required for the panopticism to eliminate the freewill and the individuality, and control the community. Indeed, knowledge itself is the source of power as Foucault says (Willette, 2013). Whoever has knowledge and technological advancement sits on the throne of power. In harmony with Lacan’s gaze theory, the individual accepts the American Dream with the society’s laws, doctrines, restrictions controlling his desire so that he can get a permission of entering into the community of others, the social world. Television is the best way to programme people’s minds subconsciously and spread the society’s doctrines in a hypnotic state by decreasing people’s critical analysis ability. It plays into the capitalism’s hands with its marketing, advertising and persuasion tricks. Consequently, the American Dream becomes a tactic of power with the delusion of technological improvements, especially mass media, in spite of its initially innocent purpose. This The American Dream is personalized in the character of Peter by Edward Albee. Peter is blindfolded with this illusion and he struggles to restore his place by fitting into the American family model with two kids, two parakeets, two cats and two televisions in his home. Two televisions, one for the children and one for the parents, and two parakeets for each daughter are obvious and bitter evidences of not only hyper consumerism and materialism but also a breakdown of family relationship. Two parakeets and two televisions eliminate the sense of sharing among family members which reinforces a family emotionally and lack of a sense of sharing makes family members too alienated from each other to do a family activity together. The modern American man deprived of satisfying his spiritual needs finds happiness in artificial values now. The desire of isolation in the family comes to the peak with Peter’s intention for an individual activity. He goes to the park to read in a quiet place instead of spending time together with his family on Sunday.

In both *The Crucible* and *The Zoo Story*, these idealized conservative lifestyles inspired by the American Dream advocate sexual repression on the excuse that it is against the moral values but for the Devil. In *The Crucible*, John Proctor cannot confess his adultery with Abigail till the end of the play at all costs due to his anxiety about facing the society’s insult and contempt. Also the girls’ sporting in the woods with Barbados song and dance of Tituba, and a girl’s nakedness among them are thought as an abomination by Parris (1.10). The girls prefer to be accused of the witchcraft rather than being whipped because of dancing. In *The Zoo Story*, it is perceived from Peter’s reaction to Jerry’s provoking speeches about sexual desire of a lady living at the same rooming house in these lines: ‘‘ That’s disgusting. That’s... horrible ’’ (Albee, 2004). Once Jerry goes on telling about his affair with this lady, Peter says ‘‘ It’s so... unthinkable. I find it hard to believe that people such as really *are*’’ (26). ‘‘ Are’’ is written italics as it is hinted that the sexual tendencies are not the trait of the civilized world but peculiar to the old world. In addition to sexual repression, reputation and dignity play a common and important role in this idealized life. In *The Crucible*, the dialogue below between Abigail and Parris about Mrs. Proctor’s gossips explains the importance of reputation:

PARRIS. [...] Your name in the town - it is entirely white, is it not?

ABIGAIL. With an edge of resentment: Why, I am sure it is, sir. There be no blush about my name.

[...]

ABIGAIL. In a temper: My name is good in the village! I will not have it said my name is soiled! Goody Proctor is a gossiping liar! (12)

Considering this, reputation is holy and blackening a name is enough to ruin a life in Salem. Although Proctor has a chance to put a stop to the girls’ accusations from the beginning of the play, he avoids testifying against Abigail to preserve his reputation. Also, John Proctor’s words at the trial verbalise the importance of reputation very well:

JOHN PROCTOR. Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life! Because I lie and sign myself to lies! Because I am not worth the dust on the feet of them that hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name! (4.143)

He does not sign the confession not to blush his name, although he confesses that he has an adulterous affair with Abigail. He realizes that saving one's reputation can be achieved by telling the truth after confession.

It is also important to note that the society is divided into two opposite groups in both *The Crucible* and *The Zoo Story* regardless of the period: evil versus good and primitive versus civilized. This dichotomous view of the world does not accept the grey parts in the human character. Danforth says in Act III, "a person is either with this court or he must be counted against it" (3.98). Although it is believed that a man is either black or white, all cats are grey in the dark. Everyone, even the most virtuous man, can be evil in the right circumstances despite their denial of it. Moreover, Miller claims that evil is "being at large in the world" (Abbotson, 2005). In *The Crucible*, colonial forces adjust their cultural norms to intact areas of America with a mission to civilize America's native people's wild life behind the mask of religion as a so-called essential element of culture and civilization. As soon as America is invaded by good Puritans, their hypocrisy and racial discrimination emerge and the black wild man is labelled as evil and sinful due to his primitive and intimate relationship with the nature. The woods are considered as the nest of the Devil. Salem being surrounded by the woods becomes; in other words, a breeding ground allegedly for dark and evil forces. The hypocrisy of the colonizer who is fascinated by the idea that church's candles will not only light but also discipline the world is hidden in his prohibition of the colonized's culture, tradition and religion on a charge of satanic activities in spite of his initial purpose of religious freedom. To learn why her babies have died, the good Puritan, Mrs. Putnam is tempted to benefit from the evil by sending Ruth to Tituba who has the ability of conjuring the dead.

The evil is contagious and on the alert to blow out the candles of the Church and the light of God as assumed by the Puritans. It is plagued into the white people of Salem from the black people as Hale asks to Tituba: "you have sent your spirit out upon this child, have you not? Are you gathering souls for the Devil?" (1.44). This conflict and paranoia of the devil ignites the battle between good and evil as witnessed in The Salem Witch Hunt of 1692 in Salem, Massachusetts in which 19 innocent men and women were condemned to death and executed by hanging, while one was pressed to the death. Tituba, an African American woman, is firstly labelled as evil and accused of witchcraft, which is considered as a threat to Puritan society, and its authority, social norms and moral laws. With the fear of being accused of witchcraft, the girls who dance with Tituba in the woods start accusing others of bewitching them. Accordingly, Abigail cries out as follows:

ABIGAIL. I want to open myself! . . . I want the light of God, I want the sweet love of Jesus! I danced for the Devil; I saw him, I wrote in his book; I go back to Jesus; I kiss His hand. I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osborn with the Devil! I saw Bridget Bishop with the Devil! (1.48)

Thus they attempt to unburden their shame from their shoulders with the old Christian tradition of confession, which simultaneously changes the relationship of subject and object. Those who are initially accused are the town's outsiders or low status people so it is easy for the society to believe in their guilt. But the others are the rich and powerful people of Salem like Rebeca Nurse and Martha Corey. Abigail, for example, who is the servant of Elizabeth Proctor seizes power after her confession and she is regarded as a prophet as Elizabeth says:

ELIZABETH. [...] The town's gone wild, I think. She speaks of Abigail, and I thought she was a saint, to hear her. Abigail brings the other girls into the court, and where she walks the crowd will part like the sea for Israel. And folks are brought before them, and if they scream and howl and fall to the floor—the person's clapped in the jail for bewitching' them. (2.52-53)

As understood, the fate of people is obviously under the control of Abigail's single finger. Miller explains the source of The Salem tragedy as a paradox that is still valid and unsolved today. He writes that the witch-hunt was a perverse manifestation of the panic which set in among all classes when the balance began to turn toward greater individual freedom (5). Because someone's expressing his sins and guilt through confession at the trial is an individual activity against the strict autocratic theocratic Puritan society.

Likewise, *The Zoo Story* takes the lid off discrimination between the primitive and the civilized. Whereas Peter pretends to be a civilized educated man with his controlled, disciplined, restricted behaviours besides his conventional life style, Jerry has animalistic wild features because of the lack of the authority that can smooth the sharp edges in his character throughout his life. At the beginning of the play, Peter is described as a middle class American man with expressionistic materials such as horn-rimmed glasses, a pipe, tweeds and book besides the gesture of a civilized man who crosses his legs while sitting (15). On the contrary, Jerry is a divergent outsider and a primitive man whose whole property consists of a knife, two forks and spoons, a cup; which are sufficient for him to survive (22). Other primitive symbolic element in his possessions is a small strongbox without a lock and sea rocks inside it. His devotion to emotions is animated in his sea-rounded rocks which are his childhood memories. These rocks are so meaningful for him that he still keeps it. In the consideration of materialism, Jerry is not defeated by the artificial values in contrast to Peter. Jerry's primitive character is intensified as given in the following lines:

JERRY. I don't live in your block I'm not married to two parakeets, or whatever your setup is. I am a permanent transient, and my home is the sickening rooming houses on the West Side of New York City, which is the greatest city in the world. (32).

He names himself as "a permanent transient" since he has no bond to anybody. The cultural gap between people, the prejudgements, and the discrepancy between social classes bring along a lack of communication and misunderstanding. Because the other is considered as a threat and the interaction of these opposite groups exhibits

subject and object relationship as seen in *The Crucible*. Subject and object relationship is a power game between Jerry and Peter as written below:

PETER. Was I patronising? I believe I as; I'm sorry. But, you see your question about the classes bewildered me.

JERRY. And when you're bewildered you become patronising?

PETER. I... I don't express myself too well, sometimes. (*He attempts a joke on himself*) I'm in publishing, not writing.

JERRY. (Amused, but not at the humour) So be it. The truth is: I was being patronising (20).

This verbal battle aims to gain authority and to suppress the other. In this situation, it can be said that Jerry, the primitive, is the superior one. Moreover, Peter uses his book as a shield at Jerry's each attempt to make a conversation and gets "anxious to turn to his reading" at the beginning of the play (15). Peter's discomfort and annoyance about Jerry's presence can be perceived in their dialogue:

JERRY. (*Watches as PETER, anxious to dismiss him, prepares his pipe*) Well, boy; you're not going to get lung cancer, are you?

PETER. (*Looks up, a little annoyed, then smiles*) No, sir. Not from this. (16)

These lines manifest the difference of social class between Jerry and Peter by the means of different usage of language. While Peter addresses Jerry as "Sir" with a civilized middle class American man's solemnity and seriousness, Jerry starts the conversation with "Boy" to make a closer contact. Peter's answers are passive and defensive in addition to the empty politeness of a civilized man. Taking into account the way of speech of an uneducated man, Jerry's dialogues are written intentionally with numerous spelling mistakes, slangs, and profanity. The lack of communication is strengthened with incoherent speeches, fragmented language, repetitions in addition to devaluation of language and its usage as a camouflage for actions in the play. Jerry's long monologues about the dog and the zoo story and Peter's complaint about Jerry's persistence of asking questions rather than carrying a conversation are resulted from people's failure of communication and urban alienation (20). Jerry admits "I do not talk to many people-except to say like: give me a beer, or where's the john, or what time does the feature go on, or keep your hands to yourself, buddy" (17-18). He is so lonely that his need of communication is expressed with his sentence: "I like to talk to somebody, really *talk*; like to get to know somebody, know all about him" (19). He is afraid of being alone so he needs to contact with a stranger and a dog even as stated:

JERRY. It's just that if you can't deal with people, you have to make a start WITH ANIMALS! Don't you see? A person has to have some way of dealing with SOMETHING. If not with people [...] with a bed, with a cockroach, with a mirror [...] with a carpet, a roll of toilet paper. (30)

He emphasizes that alienated people find various ways to decrease their isolation and also intimacy and a short conversation are enough to lessen their sufferings.

This dichotomous view of the world causes intolerance to difference; which is the main issue of both plays. Apart from the theocratic society's intolerance to freewill and individuality, *The Zoo Story* deals with intolerance to alternative sexuality. Yet, the same actor plays his role on the stage in both plays: firstly a communist witch hunter and secondly a homosexual witch hunter. Intolerance to difference was fostered by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy in the glare of publicity. Communist paranoia broke out in the 1950s when The Soviet Union became powerful and Americans felt they were surrounded by a Communist threat. HUAC which stands for The House Un-American Activities Committee commenced the communist hunt within America under the leadership of McCarthy and employed similar tactics to that of the witch hunt, which involved everlasting investigations, interrogations, accusations, naming names, subpoena of artists, actors, writers, and government employees to prove that they were not affiliated with the Communist Party, trials without any proof in order to root Communist sympathies out of government positions. Simultaneously, the society was shaken by Lavender Scare which refers to fear and persecution of gays and lesbians in 1950s in The U.S. after the Red Scare. Homosexuality was counted as one of the mental illnesses and security risks after World War II; which was an official justification for this witch hunt against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals, also abbreviated as LGBT (Wiley and Burke, 2008). In fact, Lavender Scare originated from the term of lavender lads used as a dysphemism for homosexuals by Senator Everett Dirksen who was in favour of purge of homosexuals from State Departments (Hulsey and Byron Dirksen, 2000). If Hemingway was alive, he would ask his famous question to the American society of the 1950s: "for whom the bell tolls?" and the answer would come sharply: for not only communists but also homosexuals. The wildest dual massacre was witnessed in American history in the 1950s. Federal employees were fired with allegations of homosexuality as much as it was the case with the accusations of communists under the government of McCarthy because gays and lesbians were assumed to form a threat to the "traditional values" and "the American way of life". Moreover, sexual perverts were more dangerous than communists according to McCarthy since the homosexual federals in the Democratic Truman administration were easy targets to be blackmailed by the foreign enemy agents and they give away top secret information in order to keep their sexual orientation from being exposed. In May 1950, 3750 homosexuals labelled as "subversive" were recruited from federal jobs and a month later, the Senate authorized an official investigation called as "pervert inquiry", which is a precursor in U.S. history (Feinberg, 2005). However, Out Magazine puts forth this breathtaking claim:

In fact, in the 1930s and 40s, there was a vibrant and very open gay community in Washington. A large number of new government jobs were created after the Great Depression, and many of the people who came to Washington to fill those jobs were gay men and lesbians. They were eager to make a new life in the growing city, and the government was eager to hire them. Same sex couples could be seen kissing on the grounds of the Washington Monument. (2013)

As soon as the capitalist system of America took advantage of the homosexuals' American Dream, it hypocritically throws these unwanted citizens' rights away as stated in the sentences above. The society keeps a tight rein on homosexuals working in the national government; which results in The U.S. government's ruthless campaign against homophobia and homosexuals' discharge from official and military works. The discrimination and accusations on the basis of individuals' sexual orientation, abuse, 'don't-ask-don't tell' policy, red-listing and 'publicly outing of people who didn't fit the straight-jacketed classification of straight' ruined and suppressed the lives of homosexuals (Feinberg, 2005). The critical tenor of sexuality is given to the audience through the character of Jerry in *The Zoo Story*:

JERRY: [...] I've never been able to have sex with, or, how is it put? Make love to anybody more than once. Once; that's it. .. Oh, wait; for a week and a half, when I was fifteen and I hang my head in shame that puberty was late...I was a h-o-m-o-s-e-x-u-a-l. I mean, I was queer [...] with bells ringing, banners snapping in the wind. (24)

As comprehended from Jerry's lines, being a homosexual is associated with being queer since homosexuality is marginalized and misperceived as something to be ashamed of in this conservative society. Jerry accepts that he is excluded from the majority by saying that he was queer. He endeavours to suppress it due to unacceptable condition of homosexuals, the society's contempt and repulsion towards homosexuals by adding that ' and now; do I love the little ladies; really, I love them. For about an hour'' (24). Thus the society achieves to depersonalize this different individual and makes him a stranger to himself rather than to the society with the threat of dismissal from the society.

In *The Crucible*, John Proctor exhibits his individuality by rejecting the church and not carrying out the religious practice as much as the other members of the community. Like the communist interrogations of McCarthy, Hale interrogates Proctor and his wife to learn whether they are good Christians or not and also why he is absent on the Sabbath day at the church.

HALE. Twenty-six time in seventeen month, sir. I must call that rare. Will you tell me why you are so absent?

PROCTOR. Mr. Hale, I never knew I must account to that man for I come to church or stay at home. My wife was sick this winter.

HALE. So I am told. But you, Mister, why could you not come alone?

PROCTOR I surely did come when I could, and when I could not I prayed in this house.

HALE. Mr. Proctor, your house is not a church; your theology must tell you that (2.64-65)

The free will is judged and suppressed by the church. Moreover, the individuality is despised with these words:

HALE. How comes it that only two are baptized?

PROCTOR, starts to speak, then stops, then, as though unable to restrain this: I like it not that Mr. Parris should lay his hand upon my baby. I see no light of God in that man. I'll not conceal it.

HALE. I must say it, Mr. Proctor; that is not for you to decide. The man's ordained, therefore the light of God is in him. (2.66)

His religious duties are harshly viewed by others and his free will clashes with the expectations of the community. But the essence of the matter is that he questions the church unlike the other members of the society. Another example of free will is that the wife of Giles is accused of reading books; which is unusual among Puritans.

The anti-campaign against communists turn to a national hysteria with McCarthy's claim about 250 "card-carrying Communists in the state Department" in front of cameras on February 9, 1950. Thus, this hysteria was transmitted to the society via television and those named people were purged from the society due to stereotypes about them and were exposed to the violence (Feinberg, 2005). Intolerance to difference turns to a hysteria with which the repressed dark sides of humans are expressed in *The Crucible*. The Salem Witch trials are abstract form of this mass hysteria that could lead to violence and death. The fear of the devil and accusation causes hallucinations and hysteria. For example; it is believed that Betty flies out of the window thanks to the witchcraft and this hallucination is supported with so-called witnesses. As long as these people are engrossed in these hallucinations and seek the devil in each bad situation in their lives, they cannot separate the real from the imaginary and think logically. Every citizen blames each other to get power, take a revenge and avoid persecution because they are left with two choices: either confess the devil's partisans and sentenced to jail or deny and be hanged. For instance, Abigail blames Elizabeth Proctor for the witchcraft since she is jealous of John Proctor and wants to have an affair with him by harming Elizabeth. Reverend Parris strengthens his position within the village by making scapegoats of people who questions his authority like Proctor. The wealthy, ambitious Thomas Putnam gains revenge on Francis Nurse by getting his wife convicted of the supernatural murders of Ann Putnam's babies. As witnessed in the 1950s, the innocent people are exposed to interrogations, accusations, and miscarriage of justice. Without any proofs, a little suspense is enough to hang someone for exercising witchcraft.

To compare the level of violence between these two plays, violence towards homosexuals is not as fatal as either The Salem Witch hunt or communist hunt; nevertheless, it is as disruptive and destructive as the others. The society's prejudgement about homosexuals is underlined in the conversation between Jerry and Peter about Jerry's neighbours as written below:

JERRY. [...] the room beyond my beaverboard Wall is occupied by a colored queen who always keep his door open; well, not always but *always* when he's plucking his eyebrows, which he does with Buddhist concentration.[...] All he does is pluck his eyebrows, wear kimono and go to the john. [...] There's a Puerto Rican Family in one of them, a husband, a wife and some kids; I don't know how many. These people entertain a lot. (22)

PETER. Why... why do you live there?

JERRY. (*From a distance again*) I don't know.

PETER. It doesn't sound like a very nice place... where you live. (22-23)

Apart from hatred towards homosexuals, ethnic discrimination strikes our eyes in this dialogue. On the other hand, Jerry may attempt to prove his existence in his interaction with Peter since he feels that he is kept at the bay because of homosexuality. He tells stories about himself and desires to be listened and get a reaction from Peter. For example; he repeats his statement " I have been to the zoo" when he is not noticed by Peter and this time his statement is written in capital letters "MISTER, I'VE BEEN TO THE ZOO" 'at the beginning of the play; which refers to desire of being heard and noticed (15). Moreover, the Story of Jerry and the dog narrates this desire in a bitter way. In his story, Jerry feels offended and wants to poison the dog because it lets him go away after eating the hamburgers given by Jerry.

Dark sides of human nature are exhibited by the means of violence. Violence takes another form in *The Crucible* as an opportunity for the individuality and in *The Zoo Story* as a communication instrument apart from a torture instrument. In *The Crucible*, the society breathes a sigh of relief after years passed in repression and absolute moralism and they feel freedom of exhibiting their sinful parts as Miller writes that the witch-hunt is also, and also importantly, a long overdue opportunity for every-one so inclined to express publicly his guilt and sins, under the cover of accusations against the victims (6). In *The Zoo Story*, violence is only opportunity either to communicate with someone or to get to know someone according to Jerry. Violence is applied verbally and physically to Peter by him. Jerry disturbs Peter's peace by forcing Peter to listen to him and humiliates him with harsh words such as "you're a vegetable! Go lie down on the ground", "I am crazy, you bastard" and "Imbecile! You're slow-witted" (35). The physical violence breaks out at time of fight for possessing the bench at the park. Jerry pokes Peter to have more space on the bench and asks Peter to "MOVE OVER" (34). He punches Peter's arm hard and provokes him by slapping him and spitting in his face to urge him for a fight. (38). Also, the story of Jerry and dog indicates that violence is an indication of love and way of comforting the other. Failure to gain love from the dog by giving bribe like a hamburger alludes to a materialistic world, as well.

In *The Crucible* and *The Zoo Story*, the social criticism of the American Dream is displayed by the protagonists " John Proctor" and " Jerry". Both John Proctor and Jerry are the free thinkers and outcasts since they are against the conventional norms shaped by the American Dream and uncover the disillusionment of the American Dream. Like his wife, John Proctor never believes in witchcraft in Salem and always cries out for the proof. He questions the justice of the court with these sentences:

PROCTOR: I falter nothing, but I may wonder if my story will be credited in such a court. I do wonder on it, when such a steady-minded minister as you will suspicion such a woman that never lied, and cannot, and the world knows she cannot! I may falter somewhat, Mister; I am no fool. (2.69)

As a rebel against the court, Proctor utters that he will not give his wife to vengeance and he struggles to change Hale's perspective by asking these questions: "why do you never wonder if Parris be innocent, or Abigail? Is the accuser always holy now? Were they born this morning as clean as God's fingers?" (2.77). He does not allow the court to use him. Besides John Proctor, Giles Corey protests the court by standing mute; which does not allow the court to auction out his prosperity and defame his name. He is killed by the court without being hanged but being pressed to death. On the other hand, Jerry pushes Peter to question the society and realize his entrapped condition at the time of their fight for the bench:

JERRY. Why? You have everything in the world you want; you've told me about your home, and your family, and *your own* little zoo. You have everything, and you want this bench. Are these the things men fight for? Tell me, Peter, is this bench, this iron and this wood, is this your honor? Is this the thing in the world you'd fight for? Can't you see anything more absurd? (37)

Jerry's all efforts are in vain in front of the modern man's materialistic lust, greediness and degenerated values. Jerry's question illuminates the modern man's indifference to others "don't you have any idea, not even the slightest, what the other people *need*?" (37). The outsiders like Jerry and John Proctor are ostracised, scapegoated and considered as a stain or a blemish on the landscape because they question the authority and make waves in the modern men's calm seas. They are just considered as the divergent pieces of the puzzle of the social world

2.2. Hope for Change

Although both plays criticize hypocrisy of the American Dream with bold barrels, they do not have a pessimistic viewpoint of future. Not only *The Zoo Story* but also *The Crucible* carries hope for change and suggest solutions for the 1950s' problems. *The Crucible* ends with a change of fate. At the end of the play, Salem gets rid of the hysteria; the government awards compensation to the victims and to the families of the dead; the jury begs to be pardoned by of all those who have suffered, and the power of theocracy fades. The play stresses that the cure of hysteria can be gained through human virtues like compassion, forgiveness and sacrifice; which is the only way of salvation. John Proctor sacrifices his name by confessing his adultery with Abigail to save the others in addition to his wife like Jesus and he judges himself rather than pointing a finger at someone " I speak my own sins; I cannot judge another. I have no tongue for it."(4.127). Elizabeth Proctor forgives his husband and begs John's pardon with these words "Forgive me, forgive me, John- I never knew such goodness in the world!" (4.124). Also she lies about John's affair with Abigail to save his name. Another element symbolizing hope is Elizabeth's pregnancy because she is released from being handed thanks to it. Similarly, *The Zoo Story* shows empathy, love and sacrifice as the cure of hysteria of The American Dream. Jerry puts it into words in his dog story, "where better to communicate one single, simple minded idea than in an entrance hall? Where? It would be A START! Where better to make a beginning... to understand...a beginning of an understanding (30). That's why he chooses the dog, man's best friend, to communicate at first. The dog story implies that people walk by each other; regard each other with sadness and

suspicion and feign indifference. It is just for safely passage but a communication and understanding as clarified by Jerry:

JERRY. [...] We neither love nor hurt each other because we do not try to reach each other. And, as trying to feed the dog an act of love? And, perhaps, was the dog's attempt to bite me not an act of love? If we can so misunderstood, we then, why have we invented the word love in the first place? (31)

The modern man pretending as if he is not alone builds up barriers made out of ideas, gender, culture, religion, beliefs, race, and classes and he distances himself from others. When he notices his restrictions and condition, he is driven to prove his kinship with the other things and defend himself. The only way of breaking the walls of isolation and alienation is an act of love and sacrifice devoted to hope for salvation. Jerry's urging Peter to fight and impaling himself on the knife are efforts to be understood and loved. After stabbed with a knife, Jerry thanks to Peter since Peter has comforted him (39). Peter is nothing less than a lion escaping from his cage of civilization now. Like Jesus, Jerry sacrifices himself to save the humankind including Peter. In addition, he tells stories about his life as Jesus does in his preaches with the hope that his footprints will be traced by others and they will take them to salvation.

3. Conclusion

To sum up, the American Dream comes to the stage with the discovery of America and plays its role as the illusionist even in the 1950s. It is denounced by Arthur Miller and Edward Albee in their plays *The Crucible* and *The Zoo Story*. *The Crucible* narrates the illusion of the theocratic state of Puritans and its negative effects on the society with an imaginary motif of the Devil while *The Zoo Story* underlines the idealized American family model, capitalism imposed to the society and its negative consequences. Regardless of the period, both plays target the opposing groups in the society and intolerance of difference, and give their message to the audience through their titles. The title of *The Crucible* points out the narrow-minded society converting and melting the opposing views with the high heat of violence and then creating a so-called purified community. As for *The Zoo Story*, it refers to the world in which everybody is separated from each other and also their animalistic features within the bars of civilization, materialism, and discrimination. The society uses a post-colonial gaze, knowledge, power, and technological improvement to preserve its idealized way of life and doctrines, and also it suppresses the outsiders with the threat of alienation, isolation, ostracism, and scapegoating. Thus this hysterical and unjust atmosphere is created by the society. The American Dream is nonetheless uncloaked and compelled to take its hands off the people with the power of compassion, forgiveness, love, empathy and sacrifice in the end. The salvation can be achieved only with those real virtues within mankind. As a result, it can be said that the American Dream is a bomb programmed to exterminate itself.

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