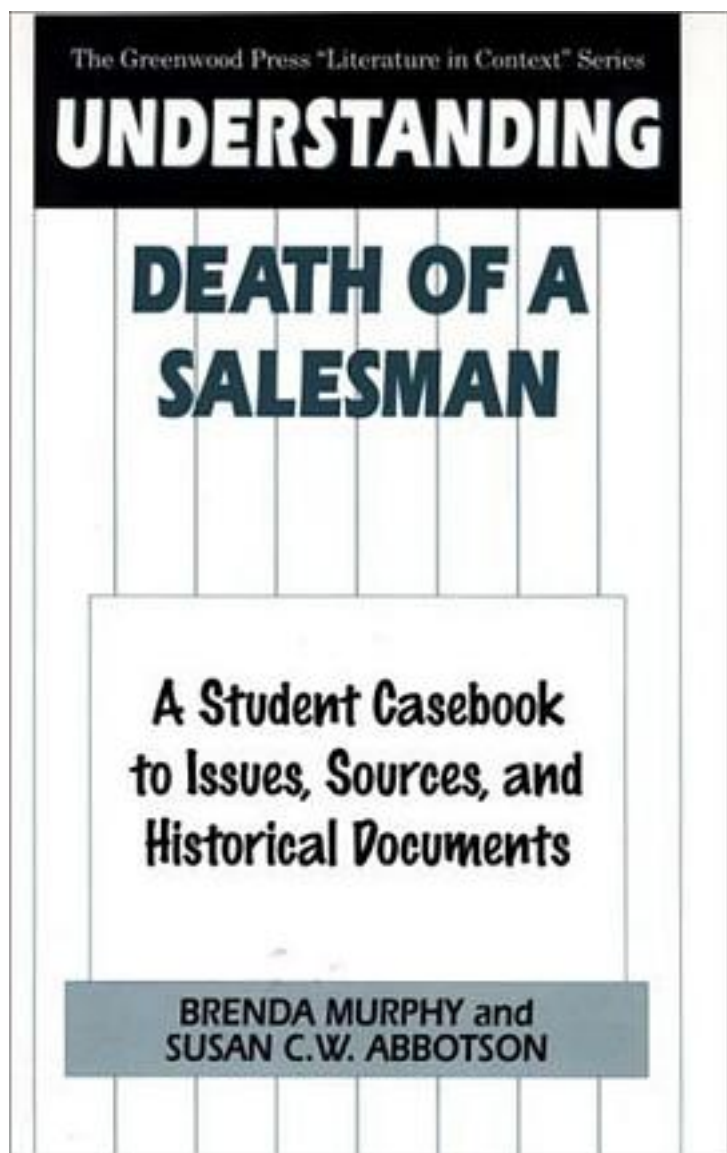


Understanding Death of a Salesman



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This collection of social, cultural and historical documents and popular materials, with linking explanations and commentary, should help the reader to study the play "Death of a Salesman" in the context of its time and cultural background. The collected materials are designed to work with the play to highlight inherent conflicts within American society which lie at the heart of "Death of a Salesman", and to explore how the play affects and is affected by social mores and beliefs. Salesmanship and the changing face of business, along with perceptions of sports, gender and families, are explored through selections drawn from a rich variety of sources that help provide forceful evidence of the play's influence. Documents include essays, articles and fiction, which have created or explored the social expectations of a typical American family in the late 1940s; unusual selections such as a self-analysis chart, an obituary and a diary, which help to trace the history of salesmanship from the 19th century to the present day; and advertisements, song lyrics, speeches, how-to books and other readings that promote an interdisciplinary study of the play. More than 70 short primary documents illustrate the cultural, social and historical milieu of the time in which the play takes place. Topics explored under "Cultural Myths and Values" include the Protestant work ethic versus myths of success, the myth of the golden West versus urban myth, and the culture of youth versus the culture of age. A chapter on economic forces provides materials on business versus morality, humanity versus technology, the haves and the have-nots, American business culture, the Depression and how to be an effective salesman. A chapter on family and gender expectations includes documents on the roles of fathers and mothers, providers versus cowboys or playboys, and homemakers versus call girls. A chapter on sports and leisure features documents on amateur football and sports and American values. A final chapter examines the impact of "Death of a Salesman" on American culture. Each chapter is followed by study questions, topics for writing and discussion, and a list of suggested reading.

作者介绍:

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标签

背景中的文学丛书, 销售员, 英文

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