

Character sketch of Sue and Kate

All My Sons is a play written by Arthur Miller. It is a social play that discusses social issues that are found in the American society after the war. Miller uses some minor characters in order to convey his themes. Sue and Kate are two minor characters who help Miller in conveying his message.

To begin with, Sue is a minor character. She is Dr. Jim's wife and a close neighbour for the Kellers. She adds humour to the play by her jealousy. She is somehow nervous and she has a strong personality. Moreover, she is very realistic and she does not believe in Chris' idealism. She tells Ann that Chris is not idealistic as they think. This is because he does not work and he takes his pocket money from his father. Moreover, he wants people to be idealistic and he is not. In addition, she believes that her husband should not give up his family for the sake of his dreams. She believes that he has to fulfil the role of a father. However, Chris encourages him to forget everything in his life in order to realize his dreams and to complete his researches. What is more, Chris is blind to the reality that achieving a dream needs money and Jim is not rich like him. In other words, Sue knows that Chris sees life easy because nothing hinders him from dreaming. Chris does not feel that others have problems who must be realistic than him. That is why Sue criticizes Chris.

Sue represents the society which is hypocritical. The society believes that Joe Keller is guilty of killing the twenty one pilots. Moreover, people accept Keller and they play cards with him simply because he has a paper in his pocket that proves that he is not guilty. In addition, people are materialistic and hypocritical. They talk to Keller because he is rich and has a good business. In other words, they admire his success in fulfilling the American dream neglecting the fact that he is the real killer. Moreover, Sue says that people see the Kellers as the "holy family". However, they are not as Joe Keller is a murderer, who has killed his son and his wife hides such a truth for years. In addition, it is clear that there is no place for idealism in this society. This is shown when Sue refuses Chris' idealism.

In fact, Kate also is a very important minor character. She is Keller's wife and a mother of two sons. Moreover, she is a typical mother who still believes in Larry's return. She needs to fulfil her necessity in life through her dreams. She believes that illusion is needed in her life in order to provide her with hope. She always relates everything with each other spiritually. She relates her dream of Larry with the broken tree. In other words, she mixes her illusion with reality in order to connect with her conclusion, which is Larry's return. Moreover, she feels guilty for not saving her son. She does not want to believe that a father could kill his own son. Consequently, she buries the truth deep in her heart. Moreover, she does not want Chris to marry Ann because if Chris lets Larry go then the war has no reality.

Miller uses Kate to highlight a major theme which is the effect of war on mothers. Kate represents all the mothers who have lost their sons in the war. She is waiting for him to come back and she fails to believe in his death. As a result, she has to mix illusion with reality. In other words, she isolates herself from the real world and she lives in her world where she can see Larry. She escapes the bitterness of real life in order to search for sweetness in her dreams. Moreover, Miller uses Kate to convey a minor theme which is love. Kate is Keller's wife, who knows that her husband has committed a crime which may have killed her son. Consequently, she hides the truth for the sake of a living father. In addition, she is a loving mother because she loves both Larry and Chris. That is why she always has conflicts within her mind about Larry's return and Chris' marriage.

In conclusion, Miller has succeeded in using both Sue and Kate as minor characters. They help him in conveying major and minor themes. They add reality to the play and they draw a picture for a real society.