



CHAPTER III

ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSION: SELF AND SOCIETY

An individual needs not just intimate attachment figures but also a community which he can call his own to feel secure and non-stigmatized. An individual self is structured according to the attitudes and concerns of the social order within which it functions. The impact of the social order over its constituent selves has been seen to bring about a “sociological version of the structure of the self” (Goffman *Asylums* 1). For such a socially structured self, social isolation can be disturbing and enervating. At the same time, a society’s attitudes towards social isolation determine the amount of pain (or gratification) with which a self experiences its loneliness. Further, the attitudes regarding social isolation can influence a self’s presentation of its loneliness. That is, if a society considers loneliness as stigmatic, the presentation of it by its member selves may be consciously self-suppressed and in a society where a lonely self is idealized, selves may even affect a loneliness which they need not necessarily feel.

Tom Stoppard, born to Czechoslovakian Jewish parents, came to England at the age of eight with his mother, brother, and English step-father and was unaware of his Jewish lineage till his middle age. He assumed his step-father’s name and lived on as an Englishman. In his interviews he casually relegates the influence which his early life in Czechoslovakia has on him and asserts his “Englishness.” In his 1991 interview with Paul Allen he states that he came to England when he was eight and “I don’t know why, I don’t particularly wish to understand why but I just seized England and it seized me” (Delaney, *Tom Stoppard* 246). His love for the English way of life and ideals could be traced from his early plays, *Enter a Free Man* and *R&G* to his more recent *Arcadia* and *Rock n’ Roll*. At the same time he was also deeply concerned with the issues of liberty and human rights in the

formerly totalitarian regimes, especially in Eastern Europe. His plays like *Professional Foul* (1977), and *Every Good Boy* (1977) deal directly with this concern. At present, he lives in England as one of the most revered Englishmen. He was knighted in 1997 and is now Sir Tom Stoppard.

David Mamet, on the other hand, is a born American, descended from European Jewish émigré grandparents. As he details in many of his essays (*Some Freaks* etc.), his Jewish identity was at best covered up and assimilated with the American mainstream culture in his early life. His parents' generation as second generation Jews strove to be American than Jewish. Neither his early plays nor their critical treatment emphasized his Jewish heritage. Yet it is to be noted that theatrical directors mentioned George and Emil, the characters of one of his earliest plays, *DV*, as "Jewish gentlemen" in their playbill (Kitts 14). A closer look at even the earlier plays of Mamet, like *DV* and *SP* could reveal Jewish experiences and pathos at their core. As quoted in the previous chapter, Mamet himself acknowledges his inspiration for *DV* from the conversations of his grandfather and his friends.

The theme of the play too deals with companionship of two gentlemen marginalized from the mainstream. Even though such marginalization can be universalized based on any cause or stigma ranging from belonging to the wrong community, class, gender, race, religion, nationality, or even age, it is significant that Mamet has chosen such a subject even at the beginning of his dramatic career. *SP* too could be, looking back three decades later, a story of the difficulties faced by the third generation Jewish youth in assimilating themselves with the American mainstream culture. A Jewish reading of the play can interpret Danny's affair with Deborah as the Jewish community's affair with the American mainstream.

But most of the early critical studies on Mamet categorized his work as a critique on American success myth and materialism and its ensuing loss of values. Mamet's successful plays like *Glengarry* (1984) and *American Buffalo* (1975), along with his remarks regarding Thorstein Veblen's influence on him canalized scholarly interpretation of his plays to this direction. But, as he aged, Mamet's writing began to deal directly with many Jewish issues and themes. The "con artist" seen in many of his plays and movies can be regarded as a prototype Jew in the minds of the westerners. And, as a playwright, his fictional output and many of his non-fictional writings definitely merit the adjective, Jewish. Recently, he has joined a Jewish church and has accepted a rabbi as his spiritual guide.

Thus, as individuals, Stoppard and Mamet differ in their basic relationships with the society around them. This chapter intends to analyze selves in *R&G* and *Rock n' Roll* of Stoppard and *Speed the Plow* and *Glengarry* of Mamet and see how their communities influence their self presentations. Their attitudes towards social isolation too are analyzed here.

The name of Stoppard as a playwright is closely associated with his 1966 play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, despite his monumental contribution to the world of English theatre for more than four decades since its first performance. The play, as its early recognitions, the coveted Tony Award, and its frequent revivals justify, has established a secure place in the English theatrical canon. Stoppard brushed off early critical enquiries concerning its thematic messages by statements like "to me *R & G* is a play about two Elizabethan courtiers in a castle, wondering what's going on. That's what it's about" (Kuurman 50). At the same time he did not deny the infiltration of unconscious socio-cultural biases within its framework. Thus, he tells Paul Delaney that the play does not "embody any particular philosophy," but "one is a victim and beneficiary of one's

subconscious all the time” (*Tom Stoppard* 58). Whether conscious or not, *R & G* is a work which clearly indicates the direction in which Stoppard’s attitudes towards self, identity, loneliness and the presentation of self are to take shape.

The dramatic genre of absurd theatre which reigned popular in the 1950s urged critical and popular valuations of *R & G* according to Absurdist criteria. Its similarities as well as dissimilarities with Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* were immediately spotted and commented upon. Many found the Absurdist concerns of identity or its lack, the powerlessness of language, and the meaninglessness of action in the play. One of the major themes of absurdist plays being the essential loneliness of human beings, it is no wonder that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were dubbed as lonely selves thrown into a world over which they have no control.

Further, Guil’s lament on their lack of direction at the beginning of the play, “we are entitled to some direction...” might have aided such a view (14). But as Joseph E. Duncan points out in his comparison of Stoppard to Beckett, though Ros and Guil are “generally lonely and frustrated ... the words [concerning lack of direction] are ironic in their dramatic context, for their lives will not be without direction” (79). Stoppard’s statement that *R & G* was not written in response to anything about alienation in our times...” (Prideaux 76), too can lead one to an understanding of loneliness presented in the play as distinct from the sense of alienation experienced by absurdist characters.

The play centers on Ros and Guil, the two minor characters of William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. The zooming in and projection of minor characters from classical texts along with the presentation of un-heroic or anti-heroic heroes in prominent light were common theatrical techniques by the mid-twentieth century. Still, Stoppard’s rendering of Ros and Guil cannot be seen as a “theatrical parasite” (Brustein, “Something Voguish” 93), or an

iconoclastic re-working of the *Hamlet* story. It may exist along with *Hamlet*, as, in the words of William E. Gruber, “a colloidal suspension” (86). Stoppard’s adaptations and omissions from the Shakespearean themes in *Hamlet* may be said to indicate the major preoccupations of the mid-twentieth century theatre, namely obsession with life and death, failure to communicate, and a search for home, roots and security. It also embodies the basic concerns in *Hamlet*, namely, relationship and intimacy among human beings and, an analysis of the art of theatre. But the choice between action and inaction dealt with in *Hamlet* has been drained out in the parody. Hamlet’s dilemma involved in having to choose between the possession of complete control over his surroundings, that is, “to be,” and the deprivation of it, “not to be.” Rosencrantz and Guildenstern have no such options. Their options are related to connectivity more than anything else. And those options present no dilemmas to them. They make automatic choices without spending any thoughts over them as though those options were compulsively inevitable. But at the same time, obviously, they are not so. Three prominent choices can be traced in the play where they are offered options for choice. The choices they make at each occasion indicate their attitudes relating to social isolation and their need for social connections.

First, they reminisce that before the actual starting of the play, a messenger had come to call them to the court of Elsinore, that is, into the plot of *Hamlet*. Till then they had lived a very ordinary life. “The sun came up about as often as it went down, in the long run, and a coin showed heads about as often as it showed tails. Then a messenger arrived. We had been sent for” (12). According to Duncan one of the most important distinctions between *Waiting for Godot* and *R&G* is that in Stoppard’s play “Godot comes” (76). But this need not suggest that their lives before that event were identical with Vladimir’s and Estragon’s in *Waiting for Godot*. Guil’s words quoted above suggest the opposite. Their lack of memory

concerning the past too suggests not a lack of the past, but their lack of regard for it. Thus when the messenger arrived they had a clear choice between obedience and disobedience. But they hardly considered the option and “outstripped” their guides in “breakneck pursuit of [our] duty” (13). For it was duty that gave them identity through connection with power. Their unremembered past was unremarkable in that it was alienated from power. Therefore, the “breakneck pursuit” of their duty was actually a breakneck escape from the isolation of the powerful. It was a craving to belong which forced them to enter into the treacherous mesh of the Hamlet plot.

Their second option is a symbolic gesture – the tossing of the coin which engages them at the opening of the play. At any time they could have willingly suspended the game thus proving Guil’s conjecture “that each individual coin spun individually” should come down “heads as tails” and “therefore should cause no surprise” (11). But their urgency to make connection forces them to continue the game till it scales to frightening proportions. The tossing of the coins then becomes symbolic of the tossing of their lives – from one source of power to the other. They do not pause to think whether they need do it, for, making connections and establishing their identity through those connections, are their ways of defending themselves against the isolation and the helplessness they otherwise might feel.

The third option closes before them when they opt to board the boat. By then their control over the power of refusal has become minimal. Guil can only regret “where we went wrong was getting on a boat” without doing anything about it (89). But, at a time when they have no use for it, they come to possess greater knowledge about their destiny to be, and, they receive greater insights about themselves. “There must have been a moment, at the beginning, where we could have said – no. But somehow we missed it” (91). Guil realizes that they had options – options for asserting their individuality, options for accepting their

separation and isolation from power, options for understanding and submitting to their loneliness as an inevitable expediency in life. Trying to escape from this painful acceptance, they had allowed their life to become tragic – albeit the fact that their tragedy is registered as only a minor and almost unnoticed accompaniment to the greater tragedy of individualized selves like *Hamlet*.

In their yearnings for connection, in their inability to understand their situation, or to say no to it, Ros and Guil are shown as two lonely children – two innocents. Stoppard here parodies the biblical/romantic theme of the exultation of childhood innocence. Ros and Guil are shown as children or rather, adults who have been granted the prize of childhood, “even without the innocence” (29). And that childhood is given, maybe, as “a prize for being good” or as a “compensation for never having had” a childhood (29). It could be read in another way where we could naturally assume that they never had a childhood or the security of a home or a base for their identity, selfhood. In their continual cross talk, at one point, when they are playing the question game Guil asks Ros what his name is. In due course of the game he qualifies the question as “what is your name at home?” Ros reverts the question.

GUIL. What home?

ROS. Haven't you got one?

GUIL. Why do you ask?

ROS. What are you driving at? (31).

Ros is afraid whether Guil is “driving at” truth – that they never had a home and so could not remember anything concerning it. The “home” is symbolic here. Home is the symbol of their identity, their individuality, and their separateness. It is a place where they might grow strong to confront their alienation or isolation. Or, they might have willingly forgotten it so

that even the memory of it is unbearable.

Homeless and lost, these two child-like adults are pushed on to the Shakespearean world. Stoppard also makes it clear that they are adults without the experiences or memories of childhood. A person without childhood and a home is a person who lacks intimacy in human relationships and the security from loneliness it would have provided. Without any attachment figures, he could be termed as, in Weiss's term, "emotionally isolated" (4). He becomes an essentially lonely person. But at the same time, these two characters are not alone and separated, but always together and are even in the danger of slipping off their identity to each other. Further, the loss of identity is comparatively easier for they do not have much of it to be lost. They themselves are not sure of their names or identities and do not show any resentment when they are mistaken for the other person by the people in power, Claudius, Gertrude and Hamlet. It is also significant that only they and these people in power mistake their names. The "Player," who, with his troop of actors who assist Hamlet in the play-within-the-play, could distinguish between them and their characters even from the first meeting. He tells Guil that he was "quicker than his friend," Ros (18). Thus their lack of identity becomes something related to power. They are the representatives of the common expendable mass for the controllers of power and thus indistinguishable from one another on the basis of their powerlessness.

Ros and Guil consider themselves to be actors who perform their roles as given to them by the powerful. "We don't question, we don't doubt. We perform" (78). Earlier in the play, though, when the Player says that he recognized them as "fellow artists," Ros denies it saying that he thought of themselves as gentlemen (16). Yet they are actors and, as actors, their roles change according to the audiences before whom they perform. Thus, in the first scene, in a place "without any visible character" (7), they do not remember their names.

When the players come and try to give them identities they make mild protests trying to assume superior roles to hide their helplessness and loneliness. When they reach the court they gladly respond to any name with which they are addressed to. Earlier when the Player details his repertoire, Guil asks, “Is that what people want?” (23). The Player has an identity, (that of a “Player”), and so he asserts that, that was what they did. But for Ros and Guil there was no such identity based on past experiences or memories and their identity could be established only through their connections. So Guil has to violently assert “I have influence!” (18). To present their selves as lonely or as not having connections is frightful for them as that will make them nullities, without any identity of their own. They are like “sponges,” as Hamlet rightfully called them (66), drawing from the countenances of power, and any severance thereof is frightening to them even if the continuation of such connections might result in their own extermination.

When we view either Ros or Guil on stage, what we get is not a scene with a lonely individual without sympathetic companionship. For one thing, they are never alone to feel sufficiently lonely. Moreover, Guil’s acting as a nursemaid to Ros makes this companionship one of compassion. But at the same time, these companions are isolated from society, and, feel a powerlessness to affect any social change. Further, between their interchangeable personalities they are depersonalized inside and outside by the large, powerful and bureaucratic courts of Elsinore and England. The fact that there are two of them, kept almost as twins, implies that everyone, one or the other, among the common human mass is lonely and isolated. The loneliness as experienced by the characters is doubled and doubly universalized by this technique.

In the play, Ros and Guil are projected as two characters with whom the audience is expected to identify. For the Players on stage, they are chance-begotten audience, suggesting

to the audience who watch the play that they are representatives of themselves. They are the symbols of the isolated ones who are incapable of affecting any change in the construction of their world. They are also depersonalized by that very world from which they are alienated. The opening scene of the play itself underlines this depersonalization when Stoppard insists on a place “without any visible character” where the two attendant lords are situated (7). Guil and Ros are given “character notes,” the very traits which keep them passive and depersonalize them till they reach a stage where they could be expended without further comments. As the scene opens the play starts its game of chance. Ros keeps winning incredibly but feels no surprise. Only, he is a little embarrassed at taking “so much money off his friend” and he is “nice enough” to feel so. That is his “character note” (7). He is the passive winner unable to understand the implications of chance and is thus deprived of the power to determine and control his destiny. “Guil is well aware of the oddity of it” but is “not going to panic about it” (7). Thus he too steps out of the realm of action to turn into a passive philosopher who too could be expended with in a world where evaluation is based on control and action.

Analyzing the incredible “run of heads” during the coin tossing Guil asks Ros what he would have thought if chance had brought about the opposite result – if he were the loser instead of Guil. Ros answers jocularly that then he would have had “a good look at his coins for a start.” Guil is relieved that at least they could “still count on self interest as a predictable factor” (9). But the play goes on to prove that, self interest is not a reliable criterion and it will not preserve them from their deaths. The reason can be that they have no selves of their own to be interested in.

Since they lack proper individuated selves of their own, they are forced to create appropriate selves as the occasion demands. They manufacture and present selves as and

when demanded by the “audience,” that is, the powerful selves with whom they desire connection. Thus even for the illogical occurrences of chance Guil tries to find a set of possible, “acceptable” explanations – psychological (“I’m willing it”), metaphysical (“time has stopped dead”), and, theological (“divine intervention”) (10-11). Or it could be “a spectacular vindication of the principle that each individual coin spun individually (he spins one) is likely to come down heads as tails and therefore should cause no surprise each individual time it does” (11).

By separating the fate of the individual coin spun individually Guil is trying to see separately the fates of himself and Ros and the countless individual members of the audience even though fates similar to that of Guil’s are awaiting them. They are all united in their alienation and not distinguished in their loneliness. The separation of individuals and the assertion of individuality is meaningless when these individuals are depersonalized to such an extent that they have either interchangeable personalities or no personality at all. And so there is “nothing to write home about” (11), meaning there is no further improvement in their personalities as to inform their “home,” their roots, or their sense of essentiality. They do not even remember their homes. They have no first memories and lack all connection and roots. The point at which their hazy memory begins is with the messenger summoning them. A knowledge that they were sent for comes along with it. Guil asks himself in the first scene what they were doing there. “We have not been picked out...simply to be abandoned...set loose to find our own way. We are entitled to some direction...I would have thought” (14). Not having any home or memories of their own, their individuality is burdensome to them. The sense of loneliness plays a pretty trick on these characters for it is not because of loneliness that they suffer, but because of the fear of being lonely and isolated, which make them crave for connection. What they want is

“connection,” which will protect them against loneliness, a connection either through “influence” (18), where they can have some control, or, through “direction” (19), where they will be controlled. Either way they will be defended against isolation.

The greatest fear of the depersonalized self is lack of connection – the fear of having to be lonely. They need their “daily masks” (28), their “daily rounds” (68), their “daily cues” (74). They need to be called by their “daily tunes” (82), and be given their “daily weeks” (33), as against the immortality of their personalized selves. The fear of loneliness makes them forgo even the slightest remnants of individuality they might have possessed. Thus, in this play, we find the characters disintegrate not due to their being lonely, but because of their fear towards loneliness.

Ros and Guil are never separated in the play, as they cannot afford the responsibilities of being alone. The calmness of solitude or the grandeur of standing alone are denied to them and they become compasses turning only to the direction of what they conceive to be power. But at their depersonalized, passive levels, their conceptions have greater chance – a continual run of heads – for failure. At times we find Guil making faint attempts at preserving his individuality. He is the one who yearns for the unicorn, for a mystical encounter. But he knows that there is no scope for such experiences as the singular witness would merge into the crowd and the unicorn would be given the name “we give to common experience” (15).

The players who enter the stage too do not have a different plight, though later in the play, the Player asserts, “we’re actors – we’re the opposite of people” (45). The players and the attendant lords, called the “on-stage audience” by Roger Sales (21), are the “two sides of the same coin” (*R & G* 16). The only difference between them is that the players have their different roles, which they don in full consciousness to suit the occasions. But Ros and Guil

need to be given their daily masks – into which they attempt to fit themselves without the conscious awareness of presenting a role.

At the same time the theatrical self-consciousness within the play forces the audience who are watching it too to be aware of their roles of passivity. Just as the player who says, “we have no control” (18), Ros and Guil, and the audience, too, have no control over what is to happen. That is controlled by the wielders of power and personality. The characters of *R & G*, can be divided based on the two polarities of power and personality on one side and its lack on the other. There are the ones who have personality and power with them and those who have neither. The individualized ones are Claudius, Hamlet and Horatio. The depersonalized ones consist of three groups. One, Ros and Guil, two, the players, and, three, the courtiers, Gertrude, Polonius, and Ophelia.

By individualized selves, we understand persons with their individuality and innate selves who know and control their fields of activity. Claudius belongs to this category, as he is capable of controlling the events around him to a great extent. Unlike Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Stoppard’s Hamlet is not a vacillating hero who juggles with the choices of being and not being for a prolonged time. He is the centre of the opposing field of power to Claudius and controls it alone. Unlike the depersonalized selves he is not afraid of being alone and schemes his plot to victory, even though it is a tragic victory. Horatio too stands apart from the rest in his assertion of control in the last speech of the play. In that first, last and only appearance in the play he takes control over the narration. “and let me speak to the yet unknowing world/ ...all this can I truly deliver.” And what the “yet unknowing world” will know is his version of the events and the rest would be overtaken by “dark and music” as suggested by Stoppard’s closing stage directions (92).

The individualized selves, as they appear in the play, seem to have all the causes to

be lonely. They are all alone in their actions and decisions. Claudius might be accompanied by his courtiers and Gertrude, but his actions and intentions belong to him alone. Horatio is Hamlet's confidante and friend, yet he appears in this play only in the end, able to give companionship to Hamlet's corpse alone. But none of them exhibit any real sense of loneliness in Stoppard's play.

The depersonalized selves, on the other hand, appear to have all the causes not to be lonely. They are never seen alone. The Player has his group, Gertrude and Ophelia are with the lords whom they try to placate, Ros and Guil are always together. But in spite of these companionships, they are innately lonely as they do not have well-formed individuated selves within themselves. They are the ones always in need of connection. Loneliness is the frightful nightmare from which they try to escape. So, even towards the end, Ros and Guil forgo their option to stay and wait alone. Ros realizes that they have the option, "couldn't we stay put? I mean no one is going to come on and drag us off.... They'll just have to wait" (91). But they will not, cannot, wait. They have to be connected, even if that leads to their deaths. "All right, then. I don't care. I've had enough" (91). Ros resigns to his fate without further protest.

Thus loneliness is conspicuous in the play by its absence. Unlike Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which deals with the agonies of the individual soul singularly in confrontation with the choices of revenge, *R & G* deals with the agonies of human souls enmasse trying to escape those agonies by clinging on to others, by negating the sense of individuality, by defending against loneliness through any means available, even at the cost of their lives. Stoppard, the dramatist who was, later, to write plays like *Every Good Boy*, *Arcadia* and the panoramic trilogy *The Coast of Utopia*, is, even in this early play making claims for individuality and exposing the dangers of fearing loneliness.

The relevance of an artwork through time depends on its capacity for multi-signification. Many of Mamet's works seem to possess this facility. Mamet's 1988 play, *Speed the Plow*, was hailed, especially in performance reviews, as an indictment against the greed, avarice and soul-less materialism of the Hollywood business world and "a dark expose of the mediocrity that rules Hollywood" (Barber).

The plot of the play is apparently very simple as in most of Mamet's works. Bobby Gould is newly promoted as head of production in a Hollywood studio. He has the power to choose a story, which the studio will film. At the outset of his new position, people trying to "promote" to him their ideas for making films beset him. The main conflict in this antiseptically classic, or rather, neoclassic plot structure (strictly adhering to the unities of time, place, and action), is between two persons, Fox and Karen, trying to win Gould's approval for their film ideas. Fox is a loyal adherent of Gould for eleven years and has come with a sure-to-make-money film and a famous actor Doug Brown already tagged in. Karen is a temporary secretary who is asked by Gould to remark upon a novel, *The Bridge*, thrust on him by his superior as a "courtesy read" (24). A "courtesy read" is a work which has to be read and commented upon solely because it has been recommended by someone in a powerful position with connections. But, ultimately, it will not be filmed as the studio considers it to be not financially viable. He asks her to come home at night to give her report with an intention to seduce her. He even bets five hundred bucks with Fox, "a gentleman's bet" that he will succeed in the seduction (38).

Karen has her own intentions in coming to Gould with her report. Though she is an inefficient secretary she is smart enough to read the seduction script behind her official assignment at Gould's house. Once with Gould, she promotes her agenda. She wants him to film the story given to her as a "courtesy read." Earlier, Fox's confidence in getting his story

accepted was based on three reasons; all three being part of the rules of the game by which they survive. One, he was with Gould for eleven years, “since the mailroom,” two, he “could have gone Across the street” (sic) (15), but he does not and instead brings the script to Gould. Thirdly, and most significantly, it is a film which will bring them financial prosperity and that is for what the studio has put Gould in the job.

Karen’s method was different in that she had to take him out from his past and present companions to make him do what she wanted. This was possible only by separating Gould as an individual self apart from his external garb of official position. She reads from the book she promotes: “what was coming was a return to the self, which is to say, a return to God” (58). Only by separating Gould as a self and reminding him that he was lonely could she proceed in her intention. Gould’s promotion and the resultant separation of his self to a relatively elevated position from his companions have provided her the right setting to launch her attack. She wants him to make into film an unconventional story that may lead to his professional suicide.

Gould is presented at the opening of the play as reading from *The Bridge*, “when the gods would make us mad, they answer our prayers” (3). To Fox, who enters, he complains that he was “in the midst of the wilderness” (3). Gould here is presenting himself as a lone figure on top surrounded by worthless supplicants imploring for his attention. As the scene progresses, Fox proposes to him a “buddy picture” with a famous actor Dough Brown offering himself to act in it. The self as presented by Gould is, then, no more lonely. Fox and Gould are in a celebratory mood with Gould praising Fox for his “loyalty,” his not going “across the street,” and his having “stuck with the Home Store,” with his “friends.” Fox replies that “it’s only common sense” and it was his “relationship with” Gould that made him bring the Dough Brown film to him and not to anyone else (14-15). The truth,

that Fox would not be given credit for the film if he had given it to any other producer without Gould's "protection" (68), is knowingly camouflaged in their exuberance at the oncoming prosperity.

Gould is no more the lone figure at the top and even if he is, at this juncture, he can positively deal with the situation. When Fox suggests that "It's lonely at the top" he gleefully retorts that "but it ain't crowded" (24). Gould has not only intimate companions but also a community of "people" to counter his sense of social isolation. Gould reminds Fox that they can "fuck money" but could not "fuck people". This was because people "are what it's All About" (21), and "it's a People Business" (22).

Contrary to a poignantly satirical representation of Hollywood rapaciousness what is presented here is a celebration of human gregariousness. Gould has a loyal companion in Fox and vice versa and they have a promoter in Ross, the Boss. Fox's earlier question to Gould "How close are you to Ross" too is also a question on intimacy though the resultant relativity of power does matter. When alone with Karen, Gould explains the business world to her. He thinks his job to be a good job "'cause it's a job of responsibility" and he considers it a reward that "someone was loyal to me, and I'm talking about Charlie Fox, stick with me..." (41). Gould describes his job as one which "all the bullshit aside, deals with people" (42). Karen's presence slowly leads him to separate his self from business and from a work, which he enjoys "very much" (44). He tells her that he "prayed to be pure" and asked God to give him "a platform to be 'good'" (43). But, instead, he has become "a Big Fat Whore," meaning, he has become someone who caters to the taste of others in return for money. The conversation brings out the basic assumptions of the play. Gould loves his job. It is a "people job" (22), and it is a job where loyalty counts and together they are working to cater to the wishes of the people without worrying too much about the so

called principles. Catering to the wishes of others like that to earn a living is what “whores” too do and so he is a “whore.” But he is happy with his job, its financial security, the riches it was about to bring him, and, more than everything else, its “reward” (41), of having someone loyal to him.

To call the play a critique of Hollywood “in which the playwright pokes fun at Tinseltown’s avarice and hypocrisy” (Trbic), is, then, confining it to too narrow a mark while its aim is far deeper and broader. Gould is more of a representative of Riesman, Glazer, and Denney’s other-directed society. Moreover, he is successful and happy in such a society. “I am a whore and I’m proud of it. But I’m a secure whore” (26). What troubles him is a remnant of a lost conscience which he has inherited from an inner-directed generation. It is this trace of inner-directed conscience which makes him pray to be “good” and associate goodness with purity, i.e. being uncontaminated by others. It also causes him to succumb momentarily to Karen’s seduction. Fox is his long time friend (eleven years) who has brought him a plan to survive and succeed in this world. They are to make a prison movie with a popular star, Dough Brown, in the main cast. Karen has dubbed the prison film as “just degradation, that’s the same old...it’s despicable, it’s...it’s degrading to the human spirit” and says that people “don’t want” it as it is “killing people, meaningless... the sex, the titillation, violence...people don’t want” (55).

Many reviewers have followed suit in immediately dubbing the prison movie in Karen’s terms. One notable exception is Robert Brustein who asserted that the play “is not as some critics have misconstrued it, a satire on movie huskers. Mamet finds Fox’s cynical commercialism infinitely more acceptable than Karen’s fake idealism” (“Last Refuge” 30). John Stewart Kitts, who, in his dissertation on Mamet’s masculinity construction actually analyses the movie for what it is as given in the play, says that the plot of the movie "as Fox

has described it does not involve blood, action or – as Karen will suggest – sexual titillation, but instead is a patriarchal fable” (106). Kitts calls it “an affirmation of patriarchal power” and “not sex and violence” (107).

The power of patriarchy in Mamet is also the power of male companionship. The presence of the female takes a man away from his companions and gives him a separate self. It is a separate self from the self which functioned amidst the male companions because among his male companions, the male self is one among the group, “where,” in Mamet’s words, “one is not judged, where one is not expected to perform” (*Some Freaks* 88). The presence of a female then does something just the opposite. In such a company the male gets “judged” as a singular entity for his “performance” in his specific gender role of socially, or in this case, femininely, constructed masculinity.

Karen reads from the book, *The Bridge*, “what was coming was a return of the self, which is to say, a return to God. It was round. He saw all things were round” (58). This well-rounded self requires of a person a singular responsibility which is what an individual from an inner-directed society would have willingly taken. If Gould had accepted the “Bridge” movie, it would have meant that he dared to stand alone from his companions. The prison movie states absolutely the opposite moral. In it Doug Brown enters the prison, and through clever negotiations wins over the other convicts to his side and they are one group of companions, naturally with Doug Brown as leader-companion. The lonely self of the hero is thus eliminated and companionship reigns supreme. Gould is just in the same position in the world of Hollywood business. He has won over the “other prisoners” of the business world (which itself is a prison of sorts where one does not have much freedom to do many things). Gould, though, gloats over the capacity of his position “to make decisions” (24).

Gould’s world is a prison in another sense in that no individuality is allowed there.

What Foucault remarks, in *Discipline and Punish*, concerning modern disciplinary societies, is equally applicable to this center of liberal capitalism. “A key aspect of the disciplinary society,” Foucault observes, is the “reversal of the political axis of individualization.” According to him, in feudal society, the more power and privilege a person possessed, the more the person was regarded as an individual. On the contrary, in modern disciplinary regimes, however, “as power becomes more anonymous and more functional, those on whom it is exercised tend to be more strongly individualized” (192-193). Individuality is stigmatized in such environment. Any one who exhibits individuality is subtly curbed at the very outset with the threat of having to be “back on the streets” (41), as Gould explains to Karen. For movie business is a “people business” (22, 81), which “deals with people” (42). And, the film advocated by Karen is one which might not get people in and thereby might lose money which will be dangerous for Gould. But more hazardous will be the fact that he will have lost touch with his group and with the people at large with whom he can contact only through the bonding with his group.

GOULD. For me 'cause if the films I make lose money, then I'm back on the streets with a sweet and silly smile on my face, they lost money 'cause nobody saw them, it's my fault. (41)

In the world of the prison one's survival is linked to one's being part of the group; to one's catering to the taste of the others and to one's capacity to negotiate, compromise and bargain. One should always be able to think (but not feel) from the other person's point of view to the extent of losing one's self and identity. That is why Gould considers himself “a Big Fat whore” (43), and confesses that “this job corrupts you. You start to think all the time “what do these people want from me” (43). This was exactly what Doug Brown in the prison film did by finding out what the black guys in the prison wanted. He talks to them in

their terms to be made a friend and part of the group.

There is little space for the presentation of lonely self within a group in such conditions. But at certain shifting stages of assimilation when a person gains more power to decide and gets to enjoy more comforts than others, his lonely self may be allowed a slight space to be presented. At the beginning of the play, Gould is in such a juncture. He has got a promotion as head of production and he thinks of it as a divine intervention because he had prayed for it. “I said God give me the job as Head of Production. Give me a platform to be “good,” and I’ll be good. They gave me the job...” (43). Gould’s idea of what constitutes of goodness delineates his attitude towards individuality and self. Gould associates goodness with purity. “Can we keep ourselves pure? Hey I prayed to be pure” (43), he tells Karen as a prelude to his description of how he prayed to God to give him the job. According to him, purity and goodness seem to be different from what he is doing. But then, Mametian dialogue usually subverts one set of words with another so that finally meaning itself becomes slippery.

Language, for Mamet, “has become,” as William Demastes observes, “an unwilling unintentional means of self-deceit” (71). Thus, we find, a little later, Gould denying all his claims of prayer as mere “joking” (59). This play with language is a typical Mametian characteristic starting from the early plays like *DV* and *SP*. In *SP* Deborah is seen asking Danny “it’s only words. I don’t think you should be frightened of words” (74).

While talking about *SP*, Mamet himself remarks that *SP* was his attempt to show that character came out of language: “that’s what the play is about, how what we say influences what we think” (Bigsby, C.W.E. 261). Thus, it was because Gould indulged in the usage of words like “purity,” “prayer” and “goodness” (43, 44), that he was seduced into a world of fake spiritualizing and bogus philanthropy. Fox’s words in scene III too hints at this

interaction between reality and language. When Gould warns Fox to be careful about what he says about Karen, Fox replies, "It's only words, unless they're true" (71). Fox, but, through words, creates an ambience where his words about Karen apparently cannot but be true. Gould thus escapes from his illusions of purity and goodness which are traits that could have separated him from his community – the world of Hollywood business. Thus the play reaches its stasis in the end as any good play should according to Mametian norm of good theatre as he considers peace to be what "you and I want from art," and, not social change (*Three Uses* 31). The presentation of Gould's lonely self is thus suppressed as a dangerous vulnerability which Gould should eschew in order to realize his existence.

Speed-the-Plow, as a play, thus puts forth, not a critique of Hollywood plutocracy or of American capitalism, nor is it a pointer at the spiritual aridity of western commercialism. It is an assertion that human beings are the same in spite of their differences, words and approaches. In this world, (which can be likened to the prison of Fox's script), everyone aims the same, whether male or female, emotional or intellectual, spiritual or materialistic. As Gould explains to Karen – "we all, as I said, everyone has feelings, everyone would like 'to make a difference', Everyone says 'I'm a Maverick' but we're, you know that, just one part of the whole, nobody's a Maverick" (sic) (56). Fox points to this when he pulls in Karen too into their world of similarity. "Everyone wants power. How do we get it? Work. How do they get it? Sex. The end. She's different? Nobody's different. You aren't, I'm not, why should she?" (71). Even the presentation of the lonely self is a common syndrome so that Fox could infallibly recreate Gould's private expression of it before Karen along with her response. "...how *lonely* you must be. How hard the world is. You complain to her. 'no one understands me...' 'I understand you'...she says" (sic) (71).

Gould's business, the play informs, is to "make the thing everyone made last year.

Make that image people want to see. That is what they, it's more than what they want. It is what they require" (56). Even his personal pleasures, like having "fun" is judged by what others will say.

GOULD. You got to have fun. You know why?

FOX . Okay: Why?

GOULD. Because, or else you'll die, and people will say "he never had any fun." (4-5)

Speed-the-Plow thus elucidates Mamet's advocacy of an other-directed society where the expression of loneliness and the separation of a self as such is not desirable. The lonely self, if at all presented, is to be presented as a means of getting connection from one's community. The play thus, is Mamet's paean to other-directedness and its celebration of companionship.

Glengarry Glen Ross is one of the most popular plays of Mamet to date. The pre-fabrications, the presentations and the desperate pretensions in concealing lonely selves constitute its innate theme. Premiered at the National Theatre in London in 1983, it opened on Broadway the next year at the Golden Theatre, winning for Mamet the Pulitzer Prize. It was translated and performed in many languages in the following years and Mamet himself wrote the screenplay for the film version released in 1992. In 2005, it was revived in Broadway and won the Tony Award for the year's Best Play Revival.

Mamet calls *Glengarry* a "Gang Comedy" (Kane, *Mamet in Conversation* 256) The term is defined by him as "a play about a group of people who are laboring in a given set of circumstances that affects them all, and it's a play about how that circumstance affects them all in their interactions with each other" (Harriott 94). Mamet claims that "drama" is:

“really about conflicting impulses in the individual... And with the birth of the antagonist you get two people on the stage. In the gang comedy, what you are doing is again splitting one individual with many, many more parts. Because it is a comedy as opposed to a tragedy, or even a drama, the confrontation is between individuals and their environment much more than between individuals opposed to each other. (Schvey 92)

He emphasizes the environment which confronts Glengarry’s individuals further by calling the play a “‘Gang Comedy’ about men, work, and unbridled competition” (Kane, *Mamet in Conversation* 256). Reviewers call it a play which “gives an unpleasing picture of entrepreneurial capitalism, in which the Scavengers themselves are picked clean by their superior’s rapacity” (Brook 218), and where “the nastily amoral world of unreal real estate is described with passionless objectivity” (Barnes 219). Apart from Riesman, Glazer, and Denney’s tradition-directed, inner-directed and other-directed types of societies, Mamet presents through *Glengarry*, a new variation of social constitution – an environment-directed community.

The environment that encircles the characters here is that of a rapacious real estate office selling “unreal” real estate in the sense that they are selling worthless undeveloped land in Florida to gullible Chicagoans. This environment which induces compulsory fallacious and fabricated behavior enervates the very soul of its inhabitants. Though grouped on the grounds of their profession, they are never actually welded into a community. As Christopher Bigsby noted, “the characters in *American Buffalo* and *Glengarry Glen Ross* meet in the semblance of a community, acknowledging a need, yet they never connect, being driven by other imperatives, imperatives which are the product of a society whose myths and social virtues have to do with the self” (*Cambridge Companion* 13). Their

success depends on how effectively they present their fabricated selves. For “the salesman’s top of the line product is always himself” and his motto is ‘listen to me, like me, buy me’” (Corliss 105). This compulsory requirement to incite another’s listening converts their language from a means of self-expression to what Ben Brantley called “a camouflage or subterfuge, used in the lonely, nasty mission of staying afloat.”

The play is structured into two Acts. The first Act comprises of three scenes, each being a self presentation bent upon persuading the listener to undertake an action. As Mamet stated once, “all of us are trying all the time to create the best setting and the best expression we can, not to communicate our wishes to each other, but to *achieve* our wishes *from* each other” (Savran137). Mamet does not provide much intimate information about the personal lives of these interlocutors. In the typical Mametian fashion he does not even bother to give an exposition but takes us immediately into the core of the conflict. The three scenes of Act I are illustrations on how these salesmen try and fail “to achieve” their “wishes from each other” in an ascending order of efficacy.

In the first scene Levene, an elderly salesman in his fifties, is seen in conversation with Williamson, the manager in charge of the real estate agency’s office. Through their conversation vignettes of Levene’s professional and personal life is revealed. He has a daughter, whom he is supporting. There is no mention of a wife and he seems to be staying in a hotel. It may be that he is a lonely divorcee with no attachment figures to turn to. The resultant emotional isolation is to be compensated by the reassurance of being in a community, albeit a predatory one of real estate business. But he is on the verge of being expelled from even there because of his failure to “close” a business deal (3). This impending social isolation and the consequent destruction of his sense of identity turn Levene desperate. The immediate provocation for his desperate plight is a sales promotion

announced by Mitch and Murray, the owners of the real estate firm. Mamet explains this situation in the author's note to the published play. "We are in a real estate office. There is a sales contest near its end. The four salesmen have only several more days to establish their position on the sales graph, the board. The top man wins a Cadillac, the second man wins a set of steel knives, the bottom two men get fired." Levene pleads with Williamson the manager, to give him some premium leads. The "leads" are the names, addresses and phone numbers of individuals who have responded to the agency's advertising. According to the rule, the premium leads are to be given only to the top salesman and those who are lagging behind will get only the useless ones. On the face of Williamson's refusal, Levene uses all his experienced salesman's persuasive powers and bribes but fails in achieving his purpose because he does not have money enough for the bribe demanded by Williamson.

The first scene itself incorporates several aspects of the expression of loneliness frequently seen in Mamet's work. Firstly, the self and its loneliness are captured in a specific manner by the ubiquitous usage of obscene language. As Sauer and Sauer note, "in Mamet's postmodern view, language constructs reality, rather than describing some existent reality, and the descriptions used form the way the characters interact with the world and each other" (227). The four-letter words punctuating every half utterance thus "create behavior" rather than emanate from the behavior of the characters (Sauer and Sauer, 227). They reduce woman and all the sensibilities associated with her to object-hood, desecrate the most intimate union between two humans to an exploitative expletive and through the scattering of excretory words emphasizes the human waste in their enterprises. In a world created by such words love becomes not a means of expression, and not even just a means of "subterfuge" or "camouflage" as Brantley suggested, but a potential weapon to fortress oneself, and manipulate, hurt and strike anyone who comes within one's predating

boundaries. Such a self has to be essentially lonely and is forced by circumstances to conceal that loneliness. If ever such a lonely self reveals its loneliness, the revelation is only a further manipulation without any hope of empathetic communication or communion. The listener too, is not always oblivious of the intended emotional blackmailing to be easily fooled. Thus when Levene pleads, “John: My daughter...,” Williamson curtly replies “I can’t do it, Shelley” (10). The competition is in discovering who is the least gullible.

Secondly, confessional self revelation, especially that of one’s lonely self, is associated with the one who is less powerful in Mamet’s plays. In the first scene Levene is put against a listener quite used to the pranks and practices of the sales trade, the Office manager, Williamson. The burden of the revelation of self in this duologue is on Levene, the supplicant, and the audience learns about Levene’s daughter and his past successes as a salesman. He is forced by circumstances to fabricate an appreciable self before Williamson. “Now, I’m a good man - but I need a...” (6). He also has to present himself in a favorable light compared with other selves (who themselves are fabricated and re-fabricated by him). At the same time, he dares not bad-mouth anyone directly. Thus he tries to outsmart Roma, his competitor, by describing him as “a good man” to Williamson before insinuating that he is wasting the top leads. “He’s a good man. We know that he is. He’s fine. All I’m saying, you look at the board, he’s throwing.....wait, wait, wait, he’s throwing them away, he’s throwing leads away” (3), he tells Williamson.

Another aspect of the Mametian expression of loneliness is the attitude of the listener. Levene, the salesman is struggling to draw Williamson’s attention to make him listen to his sales-talk selling his “self”. “John...John...John. Okay. John. John. Look,” he beseeches, and later, “...I, if you’d listen to me” (3). This struggle to gain an audience continues till the end of the scene. Williamson gets up, leaves Levene’s bribe money on the

table, and attempts to leave. Levene tries to pacify him. “You want to do business that way...? Alright. Alright. What is there on the other list...? (10). Williamson, on the other hand, meets Levene’s desperate helplessness and readiness to resort to any means to salvage his fate by a cool composure and apparent objectivity. His self remains absolutely covered up throughout the exchange and he even uses relatively lesser number of four letter words than the salesman.

The second scene reveals another exchange of sales-talk, this time between two salesmen, Moss and Aaronow. Moss is a comparatively successful salesman in the office second only to Roma. Aaronow is the sure loser, waiting for a definite kick out. If, in the first scene, Levene has to strain to keep his audience, here Moss catches an unsuspecting audience by apparently attempting to cheer up a depressed colleague. Instead of presenting his self and fabricating it to be presentable, Moss presents a number of other selves despicable and tormenting on the one hand and worthy of emulation on the other. The people to whom they have to sell real estate all belong to undesirable racial groups. They are either “deadbeats,” like “Polacks” (11), or, Indians, who are “a supercilious race” (12). In such a world it is “absolutely right” to “rob everyone blind and go to Argentina” (13). Having casually voiced the idea of robbery thus, Moss goes on to pinpoint who is responsible for the salesman’s plight.

MOSS. Yes, it is. And you know who’s responsible?

AARONOW. Who?

MOSS. You know who it is. It’s Mitch. And Murray. Cause it doesn’t have to be this way. (14)

Contrasted to Mitch and Murray another role model is then projected in the form of Jerry Graff. He’s clean, he’s doing business for himself” (14). Slowly the plan to plunder the

office for getting the leads and selling it to Jerry Graff emerges. Moss wants Aaronow to do it. He threatens Aaronow that even if he did not do it he will be the accused because he listened to the plan.

MOSS. Well, to the law, you're an accessory. Before the fact

AARONOW. I didn't ask to be.

MOSS. Then tough luck, George, because you are.

AARONOW. Why? Why, because you only told me about it?

MOSS. That's right. (22)

And he explains why Aaronow is guilty.

AARONOW. And why is that.

MOSS. Because you listened. (23)

The sales encounter in the first scene involves an attempt at selling a "self" by Levene to Williamson. This includes a self presentation where Levene presents himself alternatively as able and lonely. Both the presentations are rejected by Williamson who makes a completely objective presentation of his self and if he was ever lonely it never is hinted at. Even though among the salesman he is alone as the manager, he succeeds in giving the impression that he is not alone, but well backed up by the owners of the firms, Mitch and Murray. Even Mitch and Murray are not alone – they have each other to prevent them from being isolated selves.

The second scene reveals another level of sales encounter. Power, apparently, is not as much polarized here as in the first scene because the selling is between two more or less equal negotiators. But as the scene develops, the power balance shifts in favor of the more glib "talker" who has an ulterior motive in the conversational exchange than mere empathetic companionship. Moss threatens Aaronow with his power to talk. His spiel presents himself as not lonely. He has the backing of an efficient role model in Jerry Graff

while Aaronow is all alone and vulnerable to being accused of any crime committed by people he happened to listen. For all his antics, Moss too does not succeed in motivating his audience to perform what he wants him to do.

Forcing another to perform is also the aim of Roma, the most successful salesman of all, in the next scene. If Moss tries to hook a familiar face, Roma is ensnaring an apparently lonely stranger into a metaphysical whirlpool. Levene, in the first scene, pleads with Williamson acknowledging the action to be done as his “need.” “I need the leads. I need them now” (5). With Moss and Aaronow, but, even though Aaronow suggests that Moss might need the money badly to plan the robbery Moss denies it.

AARONOW . You need money? In that the...

MOSS. Hey, hey, let's just keep it simple, what I need is not the... what do you need...? (23)

The need is shifted from the speaker, the one who actually “needs” it, to the one who has to act for it. Aaronow does not accept the “need” as his own and refuses to play along with Moss. The shift in the ownership of the “need” is successful finally in Roma’s encounter with Lingk. Here, the speaker’s need is presented in the guise of the audience’s need. And not just that. It is not just what the listener “needs” that is offered. Instead, a magical power which can transform anything according to one’s need is tendered. “A guy comes up to you, you make a call, you send in a brochure, it doesn’t matter, ‘There these properties I’d like for you to see.’ What does it mean? What you want it to mean?” (25). Roma suggests that everything is an “opportunity” and an “event” (25), and Lingk has to grab anything that comes before him, or anything that is presented to him, to transform it to whatever he wants. Immediately following this gospel of power he presents to Lingk a map of the Glengarry Highlands making him feel that he need just grab this “opportunity.” If Levene

and Aaronow are alone in their plight to survive, Lingk is grabbed from a world of connections to be metaphysically and materially isolated. And, so long as he stays in that state he is pliable clay in Roma's hands. The second act but shows him to be strongly connected so as to resist Roma's isolating manipulations. If the first act involves dialogues provoking action, the second act brings out the result of those conversations leaving the real action (the stealing of the leads) to take place somewhere outside the stage. It is quite appropriate that it should be so, because this is a gang comedy concentrating not on the action but on the environment working on the characters.

The environment of American business (or any commercial enterprise based on personal profit) is laid bare with its innate energy in the play. "It is not that great art reveals a great truth," Mamet says in *Three Uses*, "but that it stills a conflict – by airing rather than rationalizing it" (46). The conflict of business ethics is the very conflict the play attempts to resolve by airing it out aloud. Commercial activities are supposed to aid communal living and exist in a community idealizing co-operation. Yet, the motive of personal profit drives the commercial enterprise, and so its success at the same time dooms those individuals who succeed, by isolating them. This isolation, which is the product of over-ambition, gets ingrained in the character of the one who aims at success in business. This has been one of the major themes in most of Mamet's successful works as Myles Weber has elaborated. "Mamet's most successful works can, I believe, be fairly encapsulated thus: sex workers, pawnshop owners, pimps and "legitimate" salesman of all kinds use coercive techniques to bilk the customer. And they are willing to abandon even the thin patina of legality and resort to violence if necessary. The heartless economic system forces them to do so" (140).

But, as Mamet emphasizes in *Three Uses*, "the good play will not concern itself with cares – however much they occupy us day to day – that can be dealt with rationally" (25).

That is the duty of social workers etc. The theatre, according to him, “exists to deal with problems of the soul” (27). This might mean problems which cannot be easily dealt with rationally like the problem in *Glengarry*. The environment, “the heartless economic system” (Weber 140), may make vultures of men. But still, when each man stands up for his self even by kicking the other and consuming the other in a predatory cannibalism, there is an enticing charm in the vitality of such a self. The solitary self’s daring to continue its lonely existence by curbing its yearning (if any) for empathetic community does attract an admiration from the onlookers. May be it is so because, theatre, as Mamet claimed, is where “we can exercise our survival skills” (*Three Uses* 31).

The play, but, does not seem to have received the appreciation it deserved from the author himself. After a not very successful initial staging of the play, Mamet sent it to Harold Pinter asking him what was wrong with it. He says that if Pinter had not replied that there was nothing wrong with it, the play would have laid in his trunk for years to come (Hall 217). Even after the successful staging of it Mamet was not very satisfied with it as he remarked in an interview with Mathew C. Roudane. “Endings in tragedies are resolved. The protagonist undergoes a reversal in the situation, a recognition of the state, and we have a certain amount of cleansing. This is what Don experiences in *American Buffalo*. But this doesn’t happen in *Glengarry*. So the structure is different. It’s not as classical a play as *Buffalo*, and it’s probably not as good a play” (Weber 137). Still, *Glengarry* remains one of the best loved plays of Mamet even after twenty five years of its first performance.

More than a play about American business, which is only its background, the play actually deals with the tensions involved in the individual strife for excellence at any cost and the community’s necessity for co-operative co-existence. In this sense, the second act is actually a replica of the first act in a more intensified environment. The second act

delineates how the talkers of the first act respond to the results of this talk. All the three actions motivated by the talks of the first act fail in the second act. However, it is significant to note the response of each “talker” to his failure. Levene failed miserably to get premium leads from Williamson but is not low spirited. Instead he listens to Moss and robs the office stealing the premium leads to sell it off to Jerry Graff. Moreover, he goes out and makes a big sale of eight units to make him worthy of the grand prize – the Cadillac. Though, later, his theft is discovered and his sale is revealed to be hollow, the buyers being mere paupers who do not have the means to pay for the land. Moss corners Aaronow in the first act for having “listened” to the planning of a crime but by the second act Aaronow slips past the threat. Moss too does not accept failure but goes on to persuade Levene to do the stealing. In the end, Moss does not gain in this as Levene does reveal his name as an accomplice. In the case of Roma, Lingk is ensnared completely by his spiel but Lingk’s wife has stronger sense and control to save him from Roma’s clutches. Roma’s presence of mind and his ingenuity at acquiring Levene’s help to solve the problem are nullified by Williamson’s unsought for remarks. Roma too loses his sale.

In spite of all these failures none of these salesmen lose heart. Even when he is discovered as the culprit, Levene attempts a negotiation with Williamson offering him whatever pathetic bribes he could tender. Moss feels humiliated by the police questioning and also by Roma’s suggestion that he may not care for the theft of the contracts. What Roma implies is that since he had not “closed a good one in a month,” Moss is sure to be chucked out of the office as an ineffective salesman and so he need not care whether the contracts are stolen or not. Moss unleashes a vituperative onslaught against Roma ending with an “I never liked you.” Roma questions him whether it was his farewell speech and Moss replies that he was going home. Roma teases him again by asking whether his speech

was his “farewell to the troops?.” Moss corrects himself. “I’m not going. I’m going to Wisconsin” (41). The seasoned salesman in him will never accept defeat. The essential breaking of his sale does not dampen Roma’s spirits too. Roma’s words assert the continuing vitality of his spirit. Just as Aaronow exhaustedly exclaims, “Oh, God I hate this job,” Roma utters his passing line which is also the last line of the play: “I’ll be at the restaurant” (64). He is off to the restaurant, waiting for the next victim. His spirit is unquenchable and every failure only gives him greater vibrancy to pursue his predatory aims. Even Aaronow shows no indication of leaving the job and Roma’s words that he will be “at the restaurant” emphasize the continuity of their world than its temporality.

Glengarry Glen Ross is a play which keeps a fine balance on contrasting values. Through *DV*, *SP* and *American Buffalo*, Mamet has established his ethical values concerning human co-operation. *DV* advocates the strong bond of companionship as capable of giving courage even in the face of death. *SP* and *Buffalo* emphasize the comfort and security involved in male homo social binding. *Glengarry*, on the other hand, illustrates the plight of selves when the system they inhabit makes such a bonding impossible. Every one is rendered absolutely lonely and pressurized to hide that loneliness. The least show of vulnerability will whet the others’ cannibalistic instincts to make survival difficult. The need to have a pal and be a pal has to be immediately thwarted. At the same time manipulation of the others can only take place based on the assumption of a promise of companionship. Thus Roma befriends Levene in order to cheat Lingk. Levene, helps Roma in an exuberant show of generosity, may be, because of his happiness over having made the biggest sale of the month, but also because he needs Roma’s companionship. He is happy that he will not be chucked out for being one of the “last two” salesmen and is thus saved from social isolation.

The need for a community, a group which will protect him from social isolation is apparent in Levene. He is in the beginning scared of being chucked out of the community of salesmen by losing his job. Later when he could not find any means to get the premium leads (and thus continued membership and social role in the community) he breaks into the very heart of that community; its sanctum sanctorum, the office. When he makes a big sale he does not keep his success to himself. Actually, the difference between the first sales prize, a Cadillac and the second, a set of steak knives is supposed to keep the top salesman isolated, though at the top. Levene cannot stay alone there. He comes to the office to announce his sale publicly, he offers to buy lunch to others: “who wants to go to lunch? Who wants to go to lunch? I’m buying” (36). He goes out of his way to impersonate D. Ray Morton to save Roma a sale. Moreover, his nemesis comes out of his being over-helpful. He assaults Williamson for having ruined Roma’s sale by quoting the high values of loyalty. But in his berating volley Levene inadvertently spills out a secret only Williamson and the thief would know. Thus he is caught.

Glengarry stands apart from Mamet’s other plays in its attitude towards the presentation of the lonely self. Mamet’s plays in general advocate the values of companionship whether in good or in evil. His stories ranging from those of the elderly gentlemen of *DV*, thugs and crooks of *Buffalo*, elegantly wit spouting knife-sharp ladies in *Boston Marriage*, and profit motivated Hollywood moguls of *Speed-the-Plow*, all preach this principle of holding on to one’s pals. *Glengarry*, but, gives no consolation in friendship and gives the warning that by going out of one’s way to help another can bring in one’s doom. Especially so, in an environment where everyone tries to take advantage of the other. Mamet himself wrote to a director, “this is not a play about love... This is a play about guys, who when one guy is down, the other guy doesn’t extend a hand to help him back up. This

is a play where the guy who's up then kicks the other guy in the balls to make sure that he stays down" (Kane, "Interview" 239). More than an indictment against American Business or any business at all, *Glengarry* is a paean for selves in their sustained struggle to survive in a nasty world. At the same time it also implies Mamet's sustained concern over the self's need for community. *Glengarry* is rendered a tragedy because its isolating environment prevents the existence of a personal community and subsequently its collaborative victories.

Rock n' Roll was first presented at the Royal Court Theatre, London, on 3 June 2006, later to be produced on large scale at the West End in London and then on Broadway. The play spans the period from 1968 to 1990, dealing with the years after the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia to the period immediately succeeding the resignation of the Czech communist government. The title, along with the generous spread of eclectic music from various rock n' roll bands within the play, symbolizes a resistance movement against the mechanically organized communist regime. And more generally, it can also stand for the spontaneous uncontrollability of human nature. The political history of Czechoslovakia and that of the rock n' roll band, "The Plastic People of the Universe" form a volatile background that carve out emotionally charged interactions within the play.

The story relates to the life of Jan, a rock n' roll aficionado, who is a Czech doctoral student at Cambridge. Jan is the favorite student of the Cambridge don, Max Morrow, who is an ardent supporter of Marxism and the October revolution. The play opens with Jan preparing to leave for Czechoslovakia and the "soviet troops have moved to the Czech border, alarmed by the liberalization of Czechoslovakia under the Communist leader, Alexander Dubcek" (*Rock' n' Roll* 111). Max is angry that Jan is going, especially, because he knows that Jan is unhappy over the Soviet occupation of his country. According to Max, the ideology of communism should obscure regional differences. "Being Czech, being

Russian – German, Polish – fine, vive la difference, but going it alone is going against the alliance, you know this” (5).

Jan is conciliatory in his approach as, may be, he does not want an argument with his teacher at the time of their separation. Along with this linear narrative we also encounter other narratives. One is the dream-like vision with which the play opens – a piper playing with his pipe “squatting on his heels up on the garden wall, his wild dark hair catching some light, as though giving off light” (3). The piper was recognized, later in the play, as Syd Barrett, a rock star who, after an early success, chose to live the life of a recluse in Cambridge. Another narrative is that from a poem of Sappho, which Max’s wife Eleanor is teaching. If the piper narrative gives off an image of yearning for love, the Sappho poem is a description of the agony of unrequited love, its fears and jealousies. And both equally encapsulate the unpredictability of human nature, the uncontrollability of passion and the uniqueness of each human experience.

Eleanor discusses a passage from Sappho with her student, Lenka. In the poem, Sappho describes her agony at seeing a man “leaning in to listen to her girl’s sweet speaking and lovely laughing” (44). The loneliness of Sappho at being rejected by the loved one gets replicated in the many relationships of the play. Immediately following this tutorial, Eleanor, the cancer-stricken wife of Max, warns Lenka not to flirt with her husband. “Try to shag my husband till I’m dead, or I’ll stick the *Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* up your rancid cunt, there’s a dear” (49), she tells her. In the play, Eleanor’s self presentation takes place in the home front. Though a successful career woman and a beloved wife, awareness of her impending mortality in the form of her fatal disease has made her lonely and alone.

Hers is not a loneliness of emotional isolation or social isolation, but, a metaphysical one which renders her personal and social self presentation meaningless. She appears on

stage wearing “a tea cosy for a hat” (40), and she herself relates how she appeared before Milan wearing her false breast (7). Before mortality, her self is bereft of its presentations and has to face its fate alone. Her loneliness is all the more accentuated by the fact that her husband Max does not believe in the survival of the soul. The mind is for him an “amazing biological machine” and Eleanor cannot accept this. “I don’t want your ‘mind’ which you can make out of beer cans” (51), she tells Max. The play brings her out as someone presenting her lonely self openly, pathetically in its utter helplessness, yet strong and admirable in its naked courage and blunt realism.

Later in the play, Max and Eleanor’s daughter, Esme, is seen as being placed in a situation similar to that of Sappho’s. Her love for Jan is quite obvious from the first scene, but Jan seems oblivious of it. She even expresses her desire to go to Prague, “I’d like to go to Prague, poke flowers into the ends of their gun barrels” (5). While Jan is in Czechoslovakia she sends him albums of rock n’ roll music and she was the one who caused Jan’s release from prison by pleading to Max. Max reveals to Jan that he “would have let you stew if Esme had given me any peace” (99), meaning that he would not have bothered to help Jan get out of the jail but for Esme’s pleadings. And when Jan finally comes to Cambridge she misunderstands his relationship with Lenka and is dejected till Jan returns to ask her to accompany him to Prague.

Through out the play Esme’s lonely self reveals itself only indirectly. Many a time, her self-presentations are actually self-concealments through which her lonely self half reveals and half conceals itself. Her gifts of records to Jan, her habit of smoking at the time of tension, confusion or any frustrating memory, all amount to that. At times, but, her frustrations get expressed as in her quarrel with Max where she blurts out, “I’m sick of trying to please everyone and getting patronized for my pains” (63). She is the true romantic

living in utopian dreams of harmony and union. Her vision of the piper as the great god Pan, half-goat and half-god, singing to her to “lean out of your window” is a call she obeys throughout the play (3). Leaning out of the window of her self, she tries to reach out to other selves, making whatever possible compromises. As a teenager, she tries out life in a commune, and, then later, she marries Nigel and lives in “a grotty flat in the Milton Road Estate cooking Nigel’s dinner with Alice at my breast” (63). Later, when Nigel goes for another woman, her life is devoted to her daughter, Alice, and her father, Max. In the end, Jan’s invitation comes to her when Alice has her boyfriend, Stephen, and Max has Lenka.

The vignette of her life at Prague shows her to be the incorrigible romantic that she is. She is happy with life’s small pleasures in the newly free Czechoslovakia where future is still something to be dreamt about as opposed to England, where the “great Pan is dead” (107), and where things have changed for the worse. As Lenka opines, the England which encourages free thought is no more. She advises Jan not to come back to England as the “place has lost its nerve. They put something in the water since you were here. It’s a democracy of obedience. They’re frightened to use their minds...they apologize for difference” (102-103).

According to Riesman, Glazer, and Denney’s categories of societies, Esme may be labeled a member of the generation of conformation. She is the child of inner-directed parents who are strong, self-sufficient and in possession of internally imbibed value systems. They take loneliness at its stride and do not bother to please and conform. Stoppard introduces Max as a “bruiser” and he is seen as someone who never relents at anything (5). Eleanor too is no different. She has no qualms at hurting her students by her razor-sharp realism and has no inhibitions in openly acknowledging to Max her need for him and her fear of losing her life.

But, for Esme, life is a continuous conformity, caring for others and being sensitive to other's feelings to the extent of self-effacement. Her emotional nature makes her respond to the Piper's song and later, she even confesses to having once danced with him. Her love for Jan is expressed by giving him material presents. Later, when she decides to care for her father Max, her decision is easily changed by the counter arguments of her daughter Alice. When Alice herself rescinds her decision, she is greatly relieved.

Later, with Jan in Prague, she is very happy to have her loneliness abated. She orders dishes from a menu in Czech not knowing what she is going to get from the restaurant. Her attitude towards her future too seems to be the same. She does not seem to care what the future has in store for her so long as she is not alone and lonely. "I don't care. I don't care. I don't care" (108), she repeats exuberantly at the end of the play. She is satisfied that she has an intimate companion in Jan, a friend in Ferdinand and a society in the mass which throng to listen to the Rolling Stones live album. Esme, thus, stands to represent the thousands who flock to the rock n' roll, the average people, for whom, like Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, emotional and social isolation are best avoided at any cost than encountered and lived through.

Esme's father, Max, but thinks the contrary. Though he believes that "to be human is to be joined together" (50), in practice he does not try to "please" anybody. He is the true inner-directed soul with a romantic heart. He is fascinated by the revolution and its ideal as offered by communism, "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" (25). Exactly "as old as the October Revolution," he "grew up with the fight against fascism. In the slums, in Spain, the Artic Convoys..." (24). And, he says that when "the revolution was young and I was young, we were all made from a single piece of timber" (50). As he grows older, he regrets the loss of the single spiritedness of the past age. "What

remains of those bright days of certainty? Where do I belong?" (50). But he is not ready for any compromise just to "belong." From the beginning he has his reasons and justifications for his actions. Even in 1968 he is not completely satisfied with what happens in Soviet Russia. He states that he speaks "as one who's kicked in the guts any nine-tenths of anything you can tell" him "about Soviet Russia" (6). As years pass, at Cambridge, he is asked the question a number of times. He elects to be a loner at Cambridge by continuing his party membership. "More and more now that I'm getting to be half-famous for not leaving the Communist Party...I'm like the last white rhino" (25), he declares. And when he finally leaves the party, he does not care to announce it publicly and gain social approbation as he tells Jan, "when I left the Party, I didn't go public, you know" (55).

Yet he is human enough to care deeply for his wife, daughter, granddaughter and his student, Jan. He even traded a "briefing paper on the British left" to the Czech government in order to win Jan's release from jail. But even for this considerable sacrifice on his part, he does not expect compensation or gratitude. He is sure of his conscience, as his imbibed ideals are the values of an inner-directed person interiorized by him during his growing up stage. He does things not to please others, but according to his inner values and justifications. "I've done nothing I'm not prepared to defend" (92), he asserts.

True to Riesman, Glazer, and Denney's illustration of an inner-directed person, Max does not bother about his lonely self or its presentation. Nor can he exhibit his "inside stories" "of political deal making and horse racing" (McClay 40). He can never be "the inside-dopester" of Riesman, Glazer, and Denney, meaning, a "savvy figure," as Wilfred M. McClay has succinctly summarized Riesman, Glazer, and Denney's description of the term, "who delights in knowing, and talking about the 'inside story' of political deal making and horse racing, but who does so strictly as an amoral observer, and only for the social status

that his 'knowingness' confers upon him (McClay 38). It is seen that "such a role would never appeal to the inner-directed type, with his super ego-driven sense of moral obligation" (McClay 38). Thus Max can never boast about his knowledge concerning the "inside story" of Jan's release from jail. And when Esme talks about her life at the commune, he is interested not as an "amoral observer" of Riesman, Glazer, and Denney but as one with a moral responsibility in that knowledge. Max's immediate interest in her experiences at the commune irritates Esme to angrily blurt out, "stop making everything about your thing" (64). What she means by this is that Max is trying to learn about the commune life as a dutiful communist who was obliged to rectify any faults within the system (though by then he had resigned from the party). His sense of moral responsibility makes Max stand as a man capable of facing social isolation. He is able to present his lonely self as something not to be ashamed of. He has the "driven, impersonal, workaholic obsessiveness" of the "inner-directed ideal," though not gaining "the more genuinely liberatory ideal of a truly autonomous person" (McClay 41).

Max's student Jan epitomizes the plight of the common man in a totalitarian regime. In his very insistence on being "normal" Jan parallels Alexander Ivanov in Stoppard's 1977 play, *Every Good Boy*. *Every Good Boy* is the only play by Stoppard other than *Rock n' Roll* to have used music extensively throughout the play. Both the plays deal with totalitarian regimes and Alexander is put in prison for almost the same reason as Jan. If Jan was imprisoned for signing a petition to free certain politically undesirable prisoners, Alexander was put in prison for "writing to various people" about a friend of his who was in prison (*Every Good Boy* 199). But unlike Jan, Alexander tends more to the inner-directed ideal asserting his internally imbibed values and daring to go against the tide. When his son Sacha urges him to submit to the government in order to get his freedom, he has his own reasons to

defy it. “Dear Sacha, try to see,” he tells his son, “what they call their liberty/ is just freedom to agree/ that one and one is sometimes three” (206). His is the heroic resistance against an unjust regime which is in conflict with his imbibed, absolute, moral values.

The music in the play, but, serves an entirely different purpose in *Every Good Boy* compared to that in *Rock and Roll*. Stoppard says in his author’s introduction to the play, that the play, *Every Good Boy*, had its initial inspiration from Andre Previn who invited him to “write something which had the need of a live full-size orchestra on stage” (*Every Good Boy* 178). The play was first performed with a full-time orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, on stage, conducted by Previn. The presence of the orchestra is justified as it is the imaginary orchestra within the mind of Alexander’s fellow prisoner, a lunatic who too is named, by a strange coincidence, Alexander. Alexander, the sane, acts as a foil to Alexander, the lunatic. Normalcy is defined in *Every Good Boy* as heroic resistance against a mechanized totalitarian regime or an orchestrated production of stipulated music. Such a view of normalcy is acceptable for inner-directed personalities. Alexander but, is not merely confined to the inner-directed personality type as defined by Riesman, Glazer, and Denney. He does not have the “driven, impersonal, workaholic obsessiveness” of Riesman, Glazer, and Denney’s typical member of an inner-directed society (McClay 41). Instead, he could be nearer to, what Riesman, Glazer, and Denney termed, an “autonomous person” (276).

Jan, in *Rock n’ Roll*, is no hero. His idea of normalcy excludes heroes and heroic sacrifices. According to him, “normal people don’t do things that might send them to prison...Heroism isn’t honest work, the kind that keeps the world going round. It offends normal people and frightens them” (38). Yet he is capable of the freedom ascribed by Riesman, Glazer, and Denney to the autonomous self. As explained in the *Lonely Crowd*, “the autonomous are not to be equated with the heroes. Heroism may or may not bespeak

autonomy” (150). Here the autonomous is defined as referring “to those who are in their character capable of freedom, whether or not they are able to, or care to, take the risks of overt deviation” (150).

In his introduction to the printed version of *Rock n’ Roll*, Stoppard tells us that in the first draft of the play Jan was called “Tomas, my given name” (ix). His place of birth, Czechoslovakia, and his school boy years in England are both Stoppard’s too, along with his love for England and the English ways. Having said this much, Stoppard brings forth his disclaimer and asserts that “this is not to say that the parallels between Jan’s life and mine go very far” (ix). Jan, when contrasted with the driven and obsessively heroic Alexander, is a representative of the conformist generation of the fifties and sixties of the twentieth century. His love for rock n’ roll places him, more than anywhere else, among the crowd, among the masses, and not with the solitary hero. Being alone and being lonely are painful to him and prison is a fearful place. “It’s normal to be afraid of prison” (38), he asserts. Yet he is forced by circumstances to sign the charter, is sent to prison, and becomes subject to an accusation of being not normal in Husak’s “government of normalization” (ix). When Max pleads for Jan with Milan, a Party member of Czechoslovakia, Milan contemptuously remarks: “chartists! Normal people don’t like chartists, they like a quiet life, nice flat, a car, a bigger TV...All this ‘human rights’ is foreigners thinking they’re better than us. Well, they’re not better than us” (56).

The development of Jan’s personality makes an interesting study in the evolution of an other-directed person to an autonomous one. At the beginning of the play, Jan is seen as bidding goodbye to Max. He plans to leave all his things at Cambridge except his rock n’ roll records. The Soviet troops had moved to “the Czech border, alarmed by the liberalization of Czechoslovakia under the communist leader, Alexander Dubcek” (111). In

the first scene Jan, the conformist, is seen as someone who allows everyone else to have their opinions without indulging in any communicative interaction of difference. When Esme tells him she saw the Greek god Pan and wonders whether he doubts her, he conforms by telling her, “who said I don’t believe you?” (4). With Max, Jan is the born pacifier, and, in the first five exchanges between them Jan is seen replying with an “okay” for four times. Max is provoked and blurts out, “no, it’s not okay, you little squirt” (6). Max realizes Jan’s preference for Dubcek, Prague Spring and “reform communism” – all of which might keep him socially isolated from Max’s (and Soviet Russia’s) mainstream communism. “...But going it alone is going against the alliance, you know this” (5), Max tells him. But Jan seems to have little choice other than “going it alone.”

In the next scene, it is revealed that Jan was asked by the new Czech government to stay at Cambridge and spy on his professor, Max. At Czechoslovakia, an official interrogator questions him on the motives of his return. When with Max at Cambridge, Jan had countered Max, even though he seemed to agree with Max on every small thing, by insisting on Dubcek being a communist, inasmuch a reform communist. Likewise, with the interrogator, Jan seems to be a conformist, as far as his basic beliefs remain untouched. The interrogator exclaims in despair: “there you are. It’s amazing I can apparently make you do and say anything that I want – yet when it comes to something simple, my failure... (He lifts and lets fall the thin file) ...is complete” (14).

Riesman, Glazer, and Denney’s autonomous man reclaiming “his individual character from the pervasive demands of his social character” can be seen to emerge in Jan (276). He can be seen as a representative of “an autonomous man emerging from an era or group depending on other-direction” (Riesman, Glazer, and Denney 249). In answer to the interrogator’s query on the motive of his return, Jan replies, “to save socialism” (12). Later,

with Ferdinand he rephrases the answer, “I came back to save rock n’ roll, and my mother actually” (19). With these three motives, Jan presents himself as someone immune to a lonely existence and aspiring to the libertarian ideal of an autonomous person. His intimacy with his mother protects him from emotional isolation, and his commitment to socialism gives him a community, thereby preventing social isolation and his love for rock n’ roll gives him a space for “play” which according to Riesman, Glazer, and Denney was the only sphere in modern life “in which there is still room left for the would-be autonomous man to reclaim his individual character from the pervasive demands of his social character” (Riesman, Glazer, and Denney 276).

As contrasted with the driven and obsessive inner-directed self, even in his struggle against totalitarianism, Jan is basically a pacifist and conformist, not allowing himself to be a victim of what he terms as “moral exhibitionism” (30). He has no ambition to turn a hero. But then, as Riesman, Glazer, and Denney remarks, “the autonomous are not equated with the heroes. Heroism may or may not bespeak autonomy” (150). The autonomous are defined as those “who are in their character capable of freedom, whether or not they are able to, or care to, take the risks of overt deviation” (250). Jan takes the “risks of overt deviation” when even school children are arrested for listening to rock n’ roll and he signs the charter leading to his arrest. Finally, when soviet troops are withdrawn and Czechoslovakia is free again, he returns to Cambridge to confess to Max about his spying on him knowing fully well that without his confession Max will never come to know the fact. Jan once again presents his self as one that dares to face isolation. When, by returning to Czechoslovakia, he dared to face social isolation, by confessing to Max he exposes himself to possible emotional isolation. The play rewards Jan for his courage and the story ends happily with Jan having an intimate companion in Esme, a friend in Ferdinand, and a community in the

rock n' roll audience at Prague.

The play *Rock n' Roll* thus could be termed as a coming around in Stoppard's dramatic career. *Enter a Free Man* had brought forth a eulogistic euphoria over the individualistic culture of England where persons could dare to present their lonely selves and eccentric personalities. *Rock n' Roll*, written almost half a century later, continues this eulogy, transplanting to Czechoslovakia such a culture with its fierce individualism and space for the survival of "uncageable" gods in human minds (*Rock n' Roll* 11). It is also what Michael Billington calls a registration of "lament at the erosion of freedom in our society." Towards the end of the play Lenka cautions Jan not to come back. But all is not lost as Lenka continues "you've got your country back" (103), and Jan and Esme can immerse themselves in the Rolling Stones live album at Prague, "No Security."

Humans, as gregarious beings, require "a social role in a human community" to feel secure of one's self worth and social isolation "involves a lack of a social role in a human community" ((Anderson, Mullins, Johnson 127)). Individuals respond to social isolation in various ways. Researchers in loneliness have found that "social isolation was best predicted by lack of reassurance of personal worth" and anxiety is the related emotion of social isolation (Anderson, Mullins, Johnson 127). The present chapter has attempted an analysis of Stoppard and Mamet's plays on the basis of social isolation. The purpose has been to see how far the selves in these plays present their lonely selves in relation to their respective communities. How these characters dealt with their experience of social isolation too was enquired upon.

The second chapter has ventured to illustrate how Mamet, in his plays, created an atmosphere where loneliness is considered a stigma and its presentation inevitably require indirect means or manipulative reasons. In the plays of Mamet that have been analyzed in

the present chapter too, the same pattern prevails. *Speed-the-Plow* deals with how Bobby Gould manages with a social position which has thrust him on to a seat of prominence which also happens to be “lonely.” The moment he starts admitting that his self is lonely, even to himself, temptation arrives in the form of his temporary secretary, Karen. She tries to drag him from his homo-social community, to turn him into a lonely “do-gooder”. But the bonds of community are stronger and Gould retains his social role of assimilation having gained the strength to dismiss the yearning to present his lonely self. When Fox ironically chants the cliché “it’s lonely at the top” to him, Gould has learned to retort exuberantly “but it’s less crowded” (24).

Glengarry delineates an environment where everyone is inevitably lonely. This surrounding makes the presentation of a lonely self all the more precarious. Levene, the aging salesman, forgets this rule and has to pay a costly price. His plight drives him to a presentation of his lonely self, albeit indirectly. His pleadings to Williamson in the beginning of the play and his generous offering of friendship in the second act reveal indirectly his lonely self and its insecurities. Without missing a mark, the others kick him down for being so foolish as to appear vulnerable. The blame here, the play seems to reason with a consensus of critical approbation, should go to the environment. The world of cut-throat exploitative commercialism, it appears, has rendered human beings as self seeking boors. The play here presents an ideal of community life, mutual help and homo-social companionship all the more appealing by its very absence.

Stoppard’s plays, *R & G* and *Rock n’ Roll* bring out attitudes quite unlike those implied by Mamet’s plays. Anxiety, which is identified as “related” to “social isolation” (Anderson, Mullins, Johnson 127), can be traced as the dominant emotion of *R & G*. Worried that they may be left behind by those in power, they leave their past to follow the

messenger who beckons them to Elsinore. The probability game which they play at the beginning of the play is synonymous with the anxious waiting for a social role which they experience. Throughout the play, they seem to anxiously wait for a social role of status which probably may be conferred on them. There is also an equal probability for the negation of any social status at all for them. And like the continuous repetition of a single result in their probability game, in their life too, the same condition repeats unendingly. Their social isolation remains a stable condition than a turn of fate. Still, their anxiety prevails. Even at the end of the play, they are in a boat, neither here, nor there, in a condition of perennial anxiety. In their avarice for a social position, for connection, for a community, they have endangered their very lives. The play, as opposed to the admonition to return to one's community implied in Mamet's plays, seems to invoke a need for courage. The courage to possess and to present a lonely self, rather than crave and cringe for social acceptance.

Rock n' Roll takes this view further. One may well expect the story of a Marxist to be about community, comrades and companionship. A story of a revolutionary too should by such an assumption be one that emphasizes group activities at least within a rebel community. Even the title, *Rock n' Roll*, seems to capture the spirit of Riesman, Glazer, and Denney's other-directed generation, thronging in thousands to listen to vibrant music of togetherness. *Rock n' Roll* tells the stories of a Marxist, a revolutionary, and a rock n' roll band without satisfying any of these expectations. Stoppard manages to create another paean of individual freedom and personal dignity with these unlikely ingredients. Max the Marxist is the lone figure at Cambridge refusing to resign from the party while everyone else left it rendering him an oddity, "the last white rhino" (25). Till the end of the play he remains his solitary self, lonely most of the time, but capable of deep love, concern and significant

sacrifices. Jan, the Czech revolutionary and rock n' roll aficionado, is, on the other hand, someone who would rather live a normal life, wanting to do things "normal people" do (38). But circumstances thrust him to not so normal situations purging his other-directed attitudes of their conforming subservience. Jan could be seen as Stoppard's contribution to Riesman, Glazer, and Denney's concept of an autonomous person.

Thus, while Stoppardian selves emphasize the ideal that selves ought to have the courage to remain isolated if social norms work against their inner values, Mametian selves insist on the necessity for selves to be loyal to their personal communities. Further, Stoppardian ideal selves, (if they are not bound for tragedy, like in *R&G*), openly dare to reveal their experience of loneliness. Mametian selves, on the other hand, seem to imply the perils involved in self revelation, especially, in such vulnerable self revelation as that of a lonely self.