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The Concept of Anarchy in *Both Your Houses*

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Abstract:

During the 1930s, due to the Great Depression and First World War, American people witnessed poverty, diseases, bad economic and political aspects. Americans way of living turned into utter confusion. These events led to anarchy and oppression.

American playwrights revealed the miserable reality in their plays. Committed playwrights conveyed a real picture where people suffered due to corruption. James Maxwell Anderson (1888-1959) dealt with the recurrent theme of anarchy in most of his plays. In his play Both Your Houses (1933) Anderson won the 1933 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for this work which represents the struggle of a heroic individual who confronts a corrupt system.

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1.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maxwell Anderson was born on 15 December 1888 in a small town of Atlantic, Pennsylvania. His father, William Lincoln Anderson was a preacher. His mother Charlotte Perrimela Stephenson, was Irish. They moved to Andover, Ohio where his father became a minister.[3] Growing up by religious father, Anderson recalled: "we got to know the Bible well."[4] His father's attitude at home was abrupt which made Anderson dislike religion: "I think his eloquence oppressed us a little, because he wasn't so eloquent at home, and perhaps we rather resented the salesmanship that went into his evangelism."[5]At the age of eight, Maxwell refused to be baptized.[6] The family lived in thirteen different places across Pennsylvania, Ohio, and North Dakota.[7]

The father brought books for his children to read. Anderson admired Robert Lewis Stevenson, James Fenimore Cooper, and Arthur Canon Doyle.[8] He graduated from the university of North Dakota in 1908. He married Margaret Haskett and they had three sons, Quentin, Alan, and Terence. They set up a house in the rural community of Minnewaukan, North Dakota. Anderson worked as a teacher at the local high school.[9] He sent a letter to a former professor dated 15 September 1912, and he said that he and his wife had become socialists.[10]

They moved to California in 1913 where Anderson had a master degree in English from Stanford University.[11] He taught at Whittier College in California. In 1917, Anderson defended a student and he was put in jail. The student Arthur Camp, attempted to publish a letter in the college newspaper clarifying his reasons for refusing the draft, but the campus editors

refused to publish it. Anderson wanted to show that the young student had the right to speak without being oppressed. The letter was a critique of American institutions:

> I have talked with Arthur Camp very little, but in doing so have formed a high opinion of his ability and his motives. It takes a brave and high-spirited man to take the stand which he has taken. He deserves to be heard on the subject which seems important enough for him so that he is willing to sacrifice reputation, friends, and future to uphold his views. And where can he be heard more naturally, where should he be more welcome, than in the columns of the paper in his college? If there is criticism of the government in this college it should be represented in the paper. It is a weak and shaky government that cannot stand criticism, and it is a weak and shaky intellect that never has any criticism to offer. If our very colleges are to stifle thought , where is the thinking to be done?...There is always something to run from if you are cowared enough to run. Whatever may be thought of the opinions of Camp, he has proved himself no cowared.[12]

Anderson resigned from the college, and he worked as a journalist. He wrote an editorial for the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin* criticizing the allies for putting a large war debt on Germany. The editor refused his criticism and fired him.[13] At the invitation of Alvin Johnson, co-editor of the *New Republic*, Anderson moved to New York.[14] He left the *Globe* when he was offered more money to work in the *World*.[15]

In the early 1920s, the Andersons were invited one evening to hear a reading of *Roger Bloomer* , a play written by John Howard Lawson. Lawson sold the play for five hundred dollars and that amount of money made Anderson interested in writing plays.[16]

Anderson's first wife Margret Haskett, died in a car accident in 1931, and in the fall of 1933 he married Gertrude Anthony. Their daughter Hesper was born in 1937. In 1953 she committed suicide. His third marriage to Gilda Oakleaf in 1954 proved to be a happy one. Maxwell died in February 28, 1959.[17]

Maxwell Anderson was a very difficult man to understand, his friend and business partner John F. Wharton characterized the playwright as "mercurial" due to his mysterious personality.[18] Anderson rejected during his life to share personal information. He wrote to Burns Mantle in the late 1920s: "when a man starts peddling personal stuff about himself…they should send a squad of strong-arm worms after him, because he's dead."[19]

In 1939, he published a group of essays, entitled *The Essence of Tragedy and Other Footnotes and Papers*. He explained his reason for avoiding statements that showed his purpose and his thoughts. He discussed the artist's place in the universe and his relation to the national culture:

> There is always something slightly embarrassing about the public statements of writers and artists, for they should be able to say whatever they have to say in their work, and let it go at that, However, the writer or artist who brings a message of any importance to his generation will find it impossible to reduce that message to a bald statement, or even clearly scientific statement.[20]

Anderson believed that a person must be free to enjoy a sense of individualism:

> Each man and woman among us, with a short and harried life to live, must decide for himself what attitude he will take toward the shifting patterns of government, justice, religion, business, morals, and personal conduct. …, but no man's life is ready made for him. Whether he chooses to confirm or not to confirm, every man's religion is his own, every man's politics is his own, every man's vice or virtue is his own, for he alone makes decisions for himself. Every other freedom in this world is restricted, but the individual mind is free according to its strength and desire, The mind has no master save the master it chooses.[21]

Anderson believed that a noble man was the man who became a better citizen. He believed that a man who sought perfection, was a man who believed in justice and truth:

> The concepts of truth and justice are variables approaching an imaginary limit which we shall never see; nevertheless those who have lost their belief in truth and justice and no longer try for them, are traitors to the race, traitors to themselves, advocates of the dust. To my mind a love of truth and justice is bound up in men with a belief in their destiny.[22]

Anderson was continually changing his views. Vincent Wall defined Anderson as an individualist, and an anarchist.[23] In his book *Drama and Commitment*, Gerald Rabkin called Anderson a "political paradox,"[24] who tried to be non-political, but his plays carried a political theme. Rabkin said:

> Anderson was always a confirmed rugged individualist; he never felt comfortable within the confines of a specific political ideology. He distrusted and inveighed against all political organization, whether Communist, Fascist, Democratic, or Republican. The political man … is invariably a scoundrel and opportunist. …, it is significant that Anderson never avoided political issues. … most of his plays are involved with the problem of man in conflict with social and political forces. The persistent dichotomy which rings throughout them is a political one: the lust for power in conflict with the desire for freedom.[25]

Anderson discussed governmental corruption and social injustice in his plays, such as *Gods of the Lightening* (1928)*, Both Your Houses* (1933)*, Valley Forge* (1934), *Winterset* (1935), *The Wingless Victory* (1936), and *Joan of Lorraine* (1946).

The theme of the individual fighting to get his free will against authority and government was a recurrent one. For Anderson there were three types of anarchism:[26] firstly, transcendental which is a belief in the inherent goodness of people to believe in themselves, that society and its institutions have corrupted the purity of the individual, but Anderson have faith that people are at their best when truly rely on themselves and be independent. Secondly, individualistic anarchism in which one individual stands directly in the face of

corruption, and thirdly, violent anarchism in which violent acts are used to gain freedom from all kinds of authority in which Anderson refuse. He was against the suppression of the individual, and he supported the individual freedom.[27]

Anderson's poem, "Sic Semper," (1917) showed admiration of the Russian Revolution.[28] Yet the events which followed the Russian Revolution made Anderson believe that revolutionaries were deceptive, and that a tyrant was always the ruling force who took the place of the previous king:

> So that is now experimentally, historically proved what the 'damn fool anarchist' [*sic*] are saying from [*sic*] a half a century at least: The proletariat cannot become a ruling class; it can dethrone the actual ruler and place its leaders in their place, but in so doing the revolution would be in vain.[29]

Anderson believed that the Communist Party was a destructive Party; a conspiracy that was taking place around the world.[30] He joined the Group Theatre, which was founded by Harold Clurman, Cheryl Crawford, and Lee Strasberg during the Great Depression.[31] In 1931 Anderson contributed nearly two thousand dollars to help finance the Group Theatre's first production at Brookfield Center.[32]

The theatre, for Anderson, was "a religious institution devoted to the exultation of the spirit of man."[33] The play must deal with the conflict of good and evil inside the heart and mind of the character. Anderson said that:

> The story of a play must be a conflict, and specially, a conflict between the forces of good and evil within a single person. The good and evil to be defined, of course, as the audience wants to see them. The protagonist of a play must represent the forces of good and must win, or, if he has been evil, must yield to the forces of the good and know himself defeated. The protagonist of the play cannot be a perfect person. If he were he could not improve, and he must come out at the end of the play a more admirable human being than he went in. The protagonist of a play must be an exceptional person.[34]

The hero must change into the better, which is the demand of the audience. Anderson believed that the audience would not approve an evil man: "those who will not fight evil are rejected on both sides of the footlights."[35] The plot of the play was interwoven with the character. The development of the character was the plot. Anderson depended in writing plays on Aristotle as the source of his theory:

> In discussing construction he [Aristotle] made a point of the recognition scene as essential to tragedy. The recognition scene, as Aristotle isolated it in the tragedies of the Greeks, was generally an artificial device, a central scene in which the leading character saw through a disguise, recognized as a friend or as an enemy, perhaps as a lover or a member of his own family, some person whose identity had been hidden.[36]

The only element of plot that Anderson saw was the recognition scene. He framed a rule to guide him, he said:

> A play should lead up to and away from a central crisis, and this crisis should consist in the discovery by the leading character which has an indelible effect on his thought and emotion and completely alters his course of action. The leading character, let me say again, must make the discovery; it must affect him emotionally; and it must alter his direction in the play.[37]

He wanted to revive the poetic drama. Anderson believed that a society with too much assertion on rationalism and scientific advancement was doomed without the use of metaphor, fantasy, and philosophy. He believed that language needed poetic thoughts. In *The Essence of Tragedy* he wrote, "the best prose in the world is inferior on the stage to the best poetry."[38] Anderson concluded that the best modern plays should be written in verse. That was considered America's first dramatic poet turned from the lyricist's art to write plays in verse. He said that "verse was once the accepted convention of stage."[39]

Anderson used poetry in the theatre. He did what everybody thought impossible: a revival of the use of poetry in the popular dramatic theatre, he stated that, "I have a strong and chronic hope that the theatre of this country will outgrow the phase of journalistic social comment and reach occasionally into the upper air of poetic tragedy."[40] He believed that poetry was the best way to communicate the emotions and the dreams of a culture. Anderson said: ;;The great poetry of Greece, of Italy and of England is nearly all as mystic in concept and as prophetic in tone as the Old Testament itself. Prophetic with the eye on the distant horizon, not on the excavation in the foreground."[41]

Anderson faced an audience who did not appreciate and understand poetic drama, still, he believed that the audience would love the poetic drama, he said: "But that it will involve a desire for poetry after our starvation diet of prose I have no doubt. … It is incumbent on the dramatist to be a poet, and incumbent on the poet to be prophet, dreamer, and interpreter of the racial dream."[42]He had the faith that a better man was the one who had a goal to achieve his dream.

Anderson's plays varied in their style. He was a talented playwright. He wrote historical plays, verse dramas, comedies, musicals, prose plays and adaptations of novels. He admired classics, especially Shakespeare. He tried to modernize the Elizabethan style and made it more appealing to American play admirers. Many critics encouraged the dramatist's efforts in that respect. Otis Ferguson, described *Winterset* as "East River Hamlet"[43] Anderson obviously relied on Shakespeare's style in several of his plays.

Anderson was a great admirer of the classics of the Western Civilization.[44] In *Ann of the Thousand Days* (1948), he used flashbacks to represent Ann Boleyn's marriage with King Henry VIII.[45]

2 *BOTH YOUR HOUSES* (1933)

Both Your Houses was written in 1933. The play was first produced in New York by the Theatre Guild. It opened at the Royal Theatre on March 6, 1933. It was directed by Worthington Miner and it was designed by Arthur P. Segal.[46] The play ran for 120 performances, closing on May 6, 1933. It was added in Burn Mantle's *The Best Plays of 1932-1933*.[47]

Both Your Houses was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Drama.[48] It was a political satire where the dramatist emerged in the role of a furious national citizen who was against the corrupt system. It was "the first American play concerned exclusively and seriously with Federal political intrigue."[49]

The play opened two days after Franklin Delano Roosevelt took the Presidency on March 4, 1933. It was staged in a time when thirteen million people were unemployed and the country was going through "failure on a scale unprecedented in its history."[50]

Many themes are shown in the play such as individualism, religion, capitalism, greed, debauchery, selfishness, hypocrisy, centralized government, and romance.[51] The title of the play was taken from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, when Mercutio spoke before his death to the Montagues and the Capulets, wished a plague to be inflicted on both families and their political parties.[52] The setting takes place in the House Office Building, Washington, D.C. It shows life in the Congress.[53]

John Mason Brown believes that the play is a criticism of the American system. He says:

> In the writing of *Both Your Houses*, Maxwell Anderson has got the better not only of his subject and his audience but also of his fellow-dramatists who in recent years have attempted to turn the stage into a forum for the discussion of public questions. With the calm detachment usually reserved for the penning of drawing-room comedies, he has held up to the patrons of the Theatre Guild as merciless and disheartening a

> picture of governmental corruption as anyone could imagine. It is a shocking, bitter indictment, calculated to raise doubts in the hearts of even the staunchest supporters of the democratic ideal.[54]

The play narrates the story of Alan McLean, young congressman from Nevada, who discovers the horrible fact of the political life when he is chosen to the Appropriations Committee.[55] McLean notices that a number of contractors will get a huge financial benefit by completing the Nevada dam. The amount of money for the project is magnified. This leads the cost of the bill from $40- million to $465-million. The bill is fabricated with a lot of expensive and unnecessary items. He decides to reveal the whole scheme of the committee, by overloading the bill to be rejected.

3 *BOTH YOUR HOUSES*: A CORRUPT SYSTEM

Both Your Houses is a realistic play of graft in the management of national government. It contains a flaming accusation of American political approaches. It attacks corruption and hypocrisy of the American government.[56] It focuses on political fraud and scheme in the House of Representatives, with the fight over an appropriation bill. Anderson presents three main characters: Alan McClean, Simeon Gray, and Solomon Fitzmaurice(referred to as "Sol" in the play). They work as allegorical figures to deliver Anderson's anarchistic beliefs over the political system.

The protagonist of the play, Alan McClean is a newly elected congressman. He resembles Anderson himself.[57] He reads Thomas Jefferson[58] just like Anderson himself. The mail man says: " Serious. Wears mail-order clothes. Reads Thomas Jefferson."[59] The play is an allegory where Gray represents the "gray" area. This means the middle ground between the two extremes of McClean and Solomon.

McClean, is a rebel. His assistant Merton describes him as follows: "He's straight. It never enters that head not to be straight" (Act I, scene i, 21). McClean's honesty and integrity are further referred to by his last name. The cleanliness of his character brings about the downfall of corrupt politicians.

McClean comes from Nevada and he is elected to Congress after exposing financial corruption at the agricultural college. He invested his own money to have his election investigated.[60] Solomon says: "Comes from Nevada, intellectual, reads Jefferson, having his own election investigated. Simeon, call your meeting to order and for God's sake muzzle him. This is William Jennings Bryan!" (Act I, scene i, 22).

Identifying McClean with Bryan strengthens his link to morality. Bryan, who comes from Nebraska, is known as the Great Commoner and demands a platform to protect the workers.

The members of the committee expect McClean to support their decisions concerning a bill designed to provide funds for the completion of a dam in his hometown Nevada. Levering, one of the members of the committee says to him: "We knew you were a sensible, reliable young man, and we put you on the Appropriations Committee for that reason" (Act I, scene i, 30).

The bill is designed as a $40 million appropriation, but with the inflation of unimportant requests it reaches $475 million. Simeon Gray, the committee chairman, tries to cut expenses to $200 million to avoid a presidential prohibition. He cuts it $275 million. The bill must come to a vote: "Well, we're week late with this bill already, and I came back yesterday for nothing else but to get it set" (Act I, scene i,14).

Being honest, McClean is amazed due to the shameless dishonesty of the members of the committee. The interests of the representatives are linked to the bill, and they must vote through compromise and full agreement to pass the bill to their own personal advantages. They will fight any one who stands

against their financial greed. Solomon demands to get the money as he wants to benefit from naval patronage:

> The Atlantic Fleet's got to spend its summer somewhere, hasn't it? It might just as well be at Rocky Point as at Hampton Roads, and they'd have a damn sight better time, too. Even the navy likes good liquor, and the girls are a hell of a lot fresher on Long Island than down there at the naval base where the gobs have been chasing them since 1812. We owe something to our navy, Simeon; let 'em ashore once in a while in a neighborhood where they won't need prophylactics.
>
> (Act I, scene i, 18)

Gray wants to pass the bill and it reaches $475 million. This reveals the greedy souls of the politician men of the committee. McClean believes that the bill will be rejected because it is overloaded, but his expectations fail as the bill passes with enough votes to support. He vows to quit from Congress to take his case directly to the voters.

Anderson stresses the capitalist system, that does not think of the welfare of the people. Each member tries to get what he wants. Laurence G. Avery points:

> Everyone in the play agree on two points about the bill: 1) that each item in it represents the personal interest of individual legislators; and 2) that it is only these personal considerations, not consideration for the nation's welfare, which lead to passage of the bill. In these two respects the bill is taken as typical of all legislation. Self-interest, therefore, is offered by the play as the motive force in the legislative process.[61]

People suffer due to high taxes, lack of money, and hunger. McClean says to Gray:

> I come from an agricultural district, Mr. Chairman, where the farmers haven't got any money, and they're taxed beyond what they can stand already. Not only that but in the town I come from there used to be thirty-eight stores on the main street. There are now fifteen----because people have no money to buy. When stores get judgments against the farmers and

> put up their cattle and machinery at auction, nothing is sold. And the whole country's like that. Nobody can buy anything, at any price. Now, I was elected and sent here because I told my people I'd do what I could to reduce taxes and cut down even necessary expenditures. And there's nothing in this bill that can't be done without. So I'm against it.
>
> (Act I, scene i, 49)

The greedy government thinks only of profit. Henry David Thoreau[62] believes that " absolutely speaking, the more money, the less virtue."[63] Dell, one of the committee members, wants to defend the northwestern territory form Japanese beetles invading from Canada despite the fact that these insects are harmless to the northern region: "Establishing a patrol of the Canadian border for the Japanese beetle" (Act I, scene ii, 40).

The name "Solomon," Anderson uses as an allegory to refer to the biblical king known for his great practical wisdom.[64] Solomon represents Long Island. He curses a lot , and he saves liquor in his office. He always believes that life was better in the past: "In the old days, when government was government, a couple of men could sit down over a jug of whiskey and decide something----" (Act I, scene ii, 10).

Many critics see Solomon as the most important character in the play. Brooks Atkinson says that, "Sol is the most engaging character in the play. His blind cynicism, his captivating dishonesty, his fulsome roguery result in comedy of the most enjoyable brand."[65]

Solomon clarifies how the American political institution works, "the sole business of government is graft, special privilege, and corruption----with a by-product of order. They have to keep order or they can't make collections" (Act II, scene i, 103). Solomon tells McClean about himself reflecting a severe social fact:

> I'm just an old man soaked in tobacco and fusel oil, and no help to anybody. No if it's up to me to stop the bill, it'll pass.

> You never get anywhere by taking things away from people, Alan. You've got to give them something.
>
> (Act II, scene i, 103)

The government gains power by keeping people together. Fredrick Jackson Turner, thinks that individualism is dangerous when it is taken to the extreme: "Individualism in America has allowed a laxity in regard to governmental affairs which has rendered possible the spoils system and all the manifest evils that follows from the lack of a highly developed civic spirit."[66] Gray affirms that the American political incantation is "every man for himself----and the nation be damned" (Act III, scene ii, 176). Solomon approves the individualistic character of the establishment:

> Do you want me to point you the road to prosperity? Loot the treasury, loot the national resources, ...Brigands built up this nation from the beginning, brigands of a gigantic Silurian breed that don't grow in a piddling age like ours! They stole billions and gutted whole states and empires, …built everything we've got and invented prosperity as they went along! Let'em go back to work! We can't have an honest government, so let'em steal plenty and get us started again. Let the behemoths plunder so the rest of us can eat!
>
> (Act III, scene ii, 176)

Solomon argues in favor of individual competition in a free society, which shows the basics of government.

Reinhold Niebuhr pointes to the idea that Americans have a trust in competitive individualism. They believe that competition can save the economy even though "power and privilege are centralized in the hands of a few more consistently in our economy than anywhere else in the world."[67]

Solomon is a Machiavellian[68] character who is the most bold and realistic character in the play. Anderson uses the character of Solomon to draw a picture of how the political machine turns an honest citizen into a corrupt politician.

Solomon's illustration of innocent, honest people who become corrupt by the government mirrors Ralph Waldo Emerson's affirmation that "the fairest names in this country in literature, in law, have gone into Congress and come out dishonored."[69] So Solomon tries to enlighten McClean by explaining, how the American political institution works:

> Everybody wants something, everybody's trying to put something over for his voters, or his friends, or the folk he's working for. So they all get together, and they put all those things in bills, and everybody votes for'em. All except the opposition. They don't vote for'em because they don't get anything. That's all there is to it. That's the whole government. Is that crooked?
>
> (Act I, scene ii, 54)

McClean replies to him with affirmation, Solomon, shocks his hearers by agreeing with the young idealist. He says:

> Yes, and it happened to me too, and I was shocked and started making radical remarks. Why, before I knew where I was I was an outsider. I couldn't get anything for my district, I couldn't get recognized to make a speech----I couldn't even get into a poker game. My constituents complained and I wasn't going to be re-elected. So I began to play ball, just to pacify the folks back home. And it worked. They've been re-electing me ever since.
>
> (Act I, scene ii, 55)

In such speech by Solomon, Anderson pinpoints holiness with the tradition of the American republic. He refers to President John Calvin Coolidge Jr. (1872-1933) who considered the factories to be holy temples of worship during the 1920s: "The man who builds a factory builds a temple. The man who works there worships there."[70]Money changers controlled the temple, so the religion of democracy becomes a contaminated concept. But the atrocity comes from the money changers, not the temple and the concept. Democracy fails when it falls under the influence of greed.

Solomon explains to him: "Don't you know about the government of the United States?... You can't do anything in Congress without arranging matters" (Act II, scene ii, 54). This first act statement shows the whole theme of the play. At the end, Solomon explains that the political institution is an institution of loot: "We can't have an honest government, so let'em steal plenty and get us started again" (Act III, scene ii, 176).

Anderson, again refers to paradox in the system; the members need to secure re-election to do their work. The re-election, means securing graft, which causes suffering to the country. Thoreau observes that, the rich members of society are "always sold to the institution which makes them rich."[71] Anderson reveals that once the members become corrupt, they can no longer break the cycle of graft that makes them wealthy. McClean attempts to win Solomon over to his case, the latter rejects him:

> You're counting on me! I'd better tell you about myself, boy, before you say any more! Long ago when I was slim and eagle-eyed, I had a good angel. You wouldn't believe it to look at me now, but old Sol had a good angel by his side back there in the morning of time. And when a question like this came up this angel of light would come shouldering round him, arguing for righteousness, arguing against evil courses and the selling of his soul. If I was going to do wrong I had a wrestle with that angel. Like Jacob of old I wrestled with him in the night , and like Jacob of old I often came out ahead.
>
> (Act II, scene i, 102)

Anderson humanizes the corrupt congressman to reflect the insistence of the capitalist system upon the individual.

Solomon represents an essential part of Anderson's message. He shows that the cooperation between capitalism and government affects not only the existence of the individual, but leads to the corruption of the human spirit.

Gray represents the most conflicting character in the play. He lives in his district Culver, but he does not identify the state he comes from. He works as a chairman of the committee for fifteen years. Solomon points to him as "the watch-dog of the Treasury" (Act I, scene ii, 41). Gray works on the board of directors of the last working bank in his district. The bank benefits from the completion of a penitentiary included in the appropriations bill. Its failure would result in a huge scandal that would lead to his imprisonment.

Gray appears to be a politician yielding to the temptations of demoralization and corruption. Still Anderson justifies him by making the situation beyond his control. The arrangements are made while he is away. The penitentiary is linked with many other projects. Therefore, Gray becomes a victim of the political system. His character shows how honest people are destroyed by the political institutions.[72]

With the committee arguing over who gets what pieces of graft, Gray continues to beat the proposal to fund the Japanese beetle patrol. This request is put forth by farm-labor unions to create jobs for peasants. Gray thinks that he has enough votes to pass the bill without their support.[73] The farmers are the only losers.

The conflict between Gray and McClean, shows the struggle between the needs of individual districts against the needs of the whole nation:

> **Gray**. …I grew up in Culver and I know the people there----the storekeepers and the professional men and the people in the street. I know them by their first names----and I know what they've been through. They've lost nearly everything they had. Business is gone and two banks have failed. The third one's mine, and people think it's sound, and what money is left is in it. But the bank isn't sound; and if the bill's defeated and the penitentiary doesn't go to Culver, the bank will fail, and a lot of people will lose their life savings and their jobs.

> **Alan** [**McClean**].[74] But, Mr. Gray, isn't it a little unfair to support Culver by taxing other places which are just as badly off?
>
> **Gray**. Yes, it is unfair! But I'm here to represent a certain district, McClean, and they need what I can do for them as they've never needed it before.
>
> (Act II, scene ii, 134-135)

Gray tries to find a way to correspond selfish personal needs with republican values. Turner assumes that American democracy is "strong in selfishness" and that it leads "individual liberty beyond its proper bounds."[75]

Anderson makes the character of McClean stand for Everyman. Levering, the party member, is eager to meet McClean to coach him. McClean, however, rejects Levering's advice and complains to Marjorie about him: "I could bring myself to dislike him. I don't like taking orders and I don't like his face" (Act I, scene i, 33). This assurance is similar to Emerson's argument, "[W]hoso would be a man must be a nonconformist."[76]

McClean does not embrace anarchistic and anti-American ideology. When Marjorie asks him if he is "a wild radical," (Act I, scene i, 35) he replies: "No, just a farmer" (Act I, scene i, 35). A farmer rebels in December 1932. He serves to link farmers with radicalism. Two hundred farmers representing twenty-six states respond to uncontrolled property with an organized protest in Washington. Dorothy Day observes , that these farmers are not socialist radicals, but patriots who identify their cause with the American revolutionary cause. One of the commissioners says that:

> We are going to demand aid, and if we do not get it, we are going to resort to united and direct action. We are drawing up a declaration of independence just as was done back in 1776.Now we are fighting not one king, but many. We have to fight the banks, the lumber trusts, the insurance companies, the food trusts, the railroads and the milk trusts. The old

> American army fought without uniforms and without proper arms, and they were finally victorious. We are going to fight too.[77]

Anthony Rosenberg, the leader of the protest, announces: "We aim to avoid bloodshed. We come here to seek emergency legislation. But if nothing is done for us we will act on the conviction that the rights of the individual are above all man-made laws."[78] Rosenberg's words, resemble Jefferson's composition in the Declaration of Independence. Like Jefferson, Anderson identifies the farmer as the inheritor of the American tradition.[79]

McClean soon finds himself in a dilemma due to his position on the bill. Solomon and Gray clarify that the system works by virtue of individual members quarrelling with each other. McClean believes that the American political system is a difficult one:

> It puts me in a sort of hyphenated position, because I realize I owe it to the people who elected me to put the dam through. But I also ran on an economy platform, and that concerns the whole country. I've been thinking about it a good deal and the two things just don't go together. But I guess I'll just have to decide that for myself
>
> (Act I, scene i, 31)

According to the religious foundation of the play, Anderson visualizes McClean as Christ. He symbolizes the messenger that will save the hearts of sinners. McClean starts a crusade against the political institution. His efforts lead one of the representatives, Wingblatt to call him "little Jesus McClean" (Act III, scene i, 146). McClean gives a sermon to the cheaters in hope of turning them back towards the path of righteousness.[80] He says to Solomon:

> **Sol [Solomon]**.[81] There's a simple formula for deciding what's right and wrong in politics, lad. It comes down to one rule! God's always in the money. He don't lose.
> **Alan** [**McClean**]. But suppose God's changed sides! The thing you'd better start worrying about is that you're going to wake up some morning and find yourself an old man----and not only old, but out----down and out.
>
> (Act II, scene i, 100)

Solomon's idea of connecting God with money reflects the governmental power encouraged by Alexander Hamilton: '['M]oney is with propriety considered as the vital principle of the body politic."[82] On the other hand, McClean's effort to turn the old money changer represents an attempt to invent a new order.

McClean shocks everyone at the committee meeting by suggesting that the whole appropriation bill should be dropped. He says that spending no money is better than leaving the country without money to support unimportant projects. McClean chooses to reduce taxes. McClean discovers that to secure the votes he must get himself in the same brand of deal-making. He attacks a system that will not permit an honest compromise, " [T]he world he enters is wholly corrupt and he finds it impossible to operate without dirtying his own hands-a fact which leaves Anderson in a curious ideological position at the end of the play."[83]

McClean's last speeches foreshadow the problem. The tone of his announcement suggests decision; but what it really includes is a confession of a conflict between himself and his environment; he is unable to confront the contradiction in his mind. What reliefs McClean is that a hundred million of people are as sickened as he is, and are ready to change their world.[84] McClean shows his faith in people:

> More people are open-minded nowadays than you'd believe. A lot of them aren't so sure we found the final answer a hundred and fifty years ago. Who knows what's the best kind of

> government? Maybe they all get rotten after a while and have to be replaced. It doesn't matter about you or me. We had a little set-to here over a minor matter, and you've won, but I want to tell you that I'm not even a premonition of what you're going to hear crashing around you if the voters who elect you ever find out what you're like and what you do to them. The best I can do is just to help them find out.
>
> (Act III, scene ii, 177)

Anderson's play is a warning to people, whom Solomon considers indifferent and passive, to wake up and rebel against the corrupt government. In McClean's parting speech, he suggests that a second revolution is expected after fifty years. Anderson suggests that any corrupt system maybe impenetrable to change without revolution.[85] McClean words reflect his anarchistic character:

> I'm not the person to give you a warning. I'm not a politician. I'm a Nevada school-teacher. I don't know your tricks—you showed me that tonight, and I won't forget it. But I didn't lose because I was wrong. I lost because I tried to beat you at your own game----and you can always win at that. You think you're good and secure in this charlatan's sanctuary you've built for yourselves. You think the sacred and senseless poured into the people of this country from childhood will protect you. It won't. It takes about a hundred years to tire this country of trickery—and we're fifty years overdue right now. That's my warning. And I'd feel pretty damn pitiful and lonely saying it to you, if I didn't believe there are a hundred million people who are with me, a hundred million people who are disgusted enough to turn from you to something else. Anything else but this.
>
> (Act III, scene ii, 178)

Choosing adequate government officials was necessary to assert the capability of people to rule. McClean wants to improve the corrupt system.[86] Anderson compares the American Congress to Hitler's tyranny at the time and links this oppression to

capitalist avarice, which shows how Napoleon stands for a class that seeks wealth above all other things. He uses royal images that distinguish European from American ideas.

Bus compares Congressional members to old tyrannical leaders like Napoleon and Alexander the Great,[87] telling McClean that "you're up against a gang of professional empire wreckers. If you added up the conquerors of all time, from Alexander to Napoleon, the lump of what they got wouldn't touch what's dragged down annually by this gang out of our treasury" (Act I, scene ii, 67).

McClean does not desert American ideals. Being accused of communism, he says: "I'm not a red! I don't like communism or fascism or any other political patent medicine!" (Act III, scene ii, 175). Anderson does not adopt a new system. Rather, the play criticizes moral defect that has corrupted a possibly respected system. Morgan Y. Himelstein argues that the play does not include the communist reviewers because of the dramatist's "anarchistic point of view."[88]

Anderson also presents a glimpse of criticism of gender ideology which is a social realism during the 1930s. There are only two women in the play who are secretaries, which strengthen the condition of women employment. He also creates one female politician member: Bes McMurtry. McMurtry's reason in the committee is the financing for nurses to assist in the "dissemination of birth control information and contraceptives" (Act I, scene ii, 38). She discusses this matter because men are obligated to stay at home due to unemployment with women who don't know any way to provide protection for themselves. This heightens the country's poverty by creating "even more mouths to feed" (Act I, scene ii, 39). McMurtry's insistence upon the urgency for birth control is general social issue. Her character stands and shows support for feminine causes. She reflects how a female is treated in a male dominated society.

Anderson's personal political thinking reached to a level that he believed that all kinds of governments are the same ; corrupted, as Tench, a character in his play *Valley Forge* said: "Well, when it comes to governments you'll have to let me out. They're all alike, and have one business, governments, and it's to plunder."[89] Stark Young was among the few critics who acknowledged the importance of the play, assuring that *Both Your Houses* was "perennially apropos in the case of our government."[90]

Anderson criticizes democracy because it is based on the decisions of the ignorant majority whose lack of wisdom and knowledge can make a democratic institution an unbalanced and unreasonable chaos. He scowls upon the political system of the United States of America that arbitrates a system of representatives elected by the ignorant majority.[91] Anderson fights with the equilibrium between mass governance, individual liberty, and selfish interests within the inherent restraints of the capitalist economy.

The most distinctive statement by Anderson on the relationship between government and people they govern came into sight in his preface of his play *Kinckerbocker Holiday* (1938):

> The gravest and most constant danger to a man's life, liberty and happiness is the government under which he lives.... I believe now, that a civilization is a balance of selfish interests, and that a government is necessary as an arbiter among these interests, but that the government must never be trusted, must be constantly watched, and must be drastically limited in its scope, because it, too, is a selfish interest and will automatically become a monopoly in crime and devour the civilization over which it presides unless there are definite and positive checks on its activities.[92]

Anderson considered the government as the natural enemy of the people. He believed only in the power of the individual, he declared a skeptical mistrust of all kinds of governments; even

democratic ones which is inherently exposed to corruption by power. But in fighting dictatorial force that itself abolish freedom, but Anderson defended democracy as the best form of government, he revealed that if any harm appears then it is from the men who run the government.[93] Anderson concludes that honesty has no place in the American system.

CONCLUSION

The term "anarchy" refers to a world of chaos, hostility, riot, and turmoil. Anarchy is a form of social life which provides liberation of the individual's mind and heart from the control of religion, property, and government. It portrays a social aspect based on free social norms.

Anarchists refuse any dominion which deprives them of their freedom. They are against oppression, tyranny, and exploitation. Americans question the validity of all forms of state power. Their aims are to create self-managed society, achieve human rights, and social injustice.

Maxwell Anderson (1888-1959) wants to delete the consciousness of oppression to replace it by a free one. He did not support war as an anarchistic tool. His plays comment on contemporary social problems. Anderson attacks the oppression of the government such as the New Deal.

His plays focus on governmental corruption and social injustice. They represent his belief in individualism, the freedom of people as well as his opposition to authority and revenge. They depict the corrupt nature of powerful individuals such as judges and monarchs. Anderson distrusts any authority. He defends individual integrity. His rebellious nature appears from his childhood in his refusal of baptism.

Anderson's play, *Both Your Houses* deals with rebellious individual fighting corrupt people, and system. He seeks justice and freedom of self and society. Anderson believes that

every man must have a goal to achieve. In *Both Your Houses*, a congressman fights a corrupt system.

In *Both Your Houses*, though McClean is a free man, he does not prevent the bill from passing. *Both Your Houses* reveals the effect of human greed upon the American republic. It shows an individual who fights against a corrupt system of congressmen.

Like Anderson, Alan McClean refuses the exploitation of people. He believes that the future will be better in the hands of men whose opinions are like his own. Solomon Fitzmaurice represents the higher quality of human change. He is the only character who speaks and acts in terms of social reality. He reflects realistic social life. Simeon Gray is corrupted due to harsh reality. In *Both Your Houses*, there is individual anarchy in which one person stands in the face of a whole corrupt system.

NOTES

[3] Alfred S. Shivers, *Maxwell Anderson*, ed. Sylvia E. Bowman (Boston: Twayne, 1976), 18.
[4] Laurence G. Avery, ed., "Anderson Memoir," in *Dramatist in America: Letters of Maxwell Anderson, 1912-1958* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), 304.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Alfred S. Shivers, *The Life of Maxwell Anderson* (New York: Stein and Day, 1983), 7.
[7] Shivers, *Maxwell Anderson*, 19.
[8] Avery, 304.
[9] Shivers, *Maxwell Anderson*, 23.
[10] Avery, 3.
[11] Shivers, *Maxwell Anderson*, 24.
[12] Shivers, *The Life of Maxwell Anderson*, 55.

[13]Maxine Block and E. Mary Trow, eds., *Current Biography: Who's News and Why, 1942* (New York: Hw Wilson, 1942), 18.
[14]Avery, 13.
[15] Bruce Bliven, *Five Million Words Later: An Autobiography* (New York: John Day, 1970), 120.
[16] Maxwell Anderson, "A Confession," *New York Times*, December 5, 1954.
[17] Avery, 322.
[18] John F. Wharton, *Life Among the Playwrights: Being Mostly the Story of the Playwrights Producing Company* (New York: Quadrangle, 1974), 27.
[19] Burns Mantle, *American Playwrights of Today* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1929), 71.
[20] Maxwell Anderson, *The Essence of Tragedy and Other Footnotes and Papers* (Washington, D.C.: Anderson House, 1939), 17.
[21] Ibid., 19.
[22] Ibid., 22.
[23] Ibid., 24.
[24] Vincent Wall, "Maxwell Anderson: The Last Anarchist," *Sewanee Review* 49, no. 3 (July-September 1941): 339.
[25] Gerald Rabkin, *Drama and Commitment: Politics in the American Theatr of the Thirties* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), 280.
[26] These types of anarchy appeared in the following plays: *The Buccaneer* (1925), *First Flight* (1925), *Outside Looking In* (1925), *Gods of the Lightening* (1928), *Both Your Houses* (1933), *Valley Forge* (1934), *High Tor* (1936), *Kinckerbocker Holiday* (1938), and *Journey to Jerusalem* (1940), *Barefoot in Athens* (1951).
[27] Herbert Brutus Ehrmann, *The Case That Will Not Die: Commonwealth vs. Sacco and Vanzetti* (Boston: Little Brown, 1969), 342.
[28] Shivers, *The Life of Maxwell Anderson*, 50.

[29] Brian Jackson, *The Black Flag: A Look Back at the Strange Case of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti* (New York: Routledge, 1981), 214.
[30] Elia Kazan, *Mi Vida: Memorias de un testigo excepcional de los tiempos dorados de Broadway y Hollywood* (My Life: Memoirs of an exceptional witness to the golden times of Broadway and Hollywood) (Madrid: Temas de Hoy, 1990), 503.
[31] Harold Clurman, "The Theatre of the Thirties," *Tulane Drama Review* 4, no. 2 (December 1959): 3.
[32] Nancy J. Doran Hazelton and Kenneth Krauss, eds., *Maxwell Anderson and the New York Stage* (New York: Library Research Associates, 1991), 28.
[33] Maxwell Anderson, *Off Broadway: Essays About the Theatre* (New York: William Sloane, 1947), 28.
[34] Ibid., 25-26.
[35] Ibid., 34.
[36] Anderson, *The Essence of Tragedy and Other Footnotes and Papers*, 13.
[37] Ibid., 7.
[38] Ibid., 34.
[39] Quoted in Oscar Cargill et al., *New Highways in College Composition*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1955), 589.
[40] Anderson, *Off Broadway: Essays About the Theatre*,48.
[41] Anderson, *The Essence of Tragedy and Other Footnotes and Papers*, 51.
[42] Ibid., 35-36.
[43] Otis C. Ferguson, "East River *Hamlet* II," *New Republic* 89, no. 1154 (January 1937): 386.
[44] Mary M. Colum, "Life and Literature: Revival in the Theatre," *The Forum* 95, no. 6 (June 1936): 345.
[45] Allan Lewis, *American Plays and Playwrights of the Contemporary Theatre*, Rev. ed. (New York: Crown, 1970), 141.

[46] Emory Lewis, *Stages: The Fifty Year Childhood of the American Theatre* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 70.

[47]Heinz-Dietrich Fischer and Erika J. Fischer, eds., *Drama / Comedy Awards, 1917-1996: From Eugene O'Neill and Tennessee Williams to Richard Rodgers and Edward Albee* (New York: K. G. Saur, 1998), 12:1.

[48]Anne Spiselman, review of *Both Your Houses*, by Maxwell Anderson, Greenhouse Theatre Center, Lincoln Ave., *Hyde Park Herald*, November 5, 2014, http:// hpherald.com/2014/11/05/review-both-your-houses-2/ (accessed September 14, 2015).

[49] Frank Cullen, Florence Hackman, and Donald McNeilly, *Vaudeville Old and New: An Encyclopedia of Variety Performers in America* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 1:629.

[50] Barrett Harper Clark, *Maxwell Anderson : The Man and His* Plays (New York: Samuel French, 1933), 28.

[51] Winthrop D. Jordan, *The United States*: *Brief Edition*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985), 362.

[52] Barbara Lee Horn, *Maxwell Anderson: A Research Production Sourcebook* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), 20.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Drama For Students, "*Both Your Houses*," Encyclopedia.com, http://www.encyclopedia.com/article-1G2-2694100015/both-your-houses.html (accessed October 3, 2015).

[55] John Mason Brown, *Two on the Aisle* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1938), 210.

[56] Stanley Hochman, ed., *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984), 141.

[57] Gholmerza Sami, *Ragged Individualism: America in the Political Drama of the 1930s* (Bloomington: Arthur House, 2011), 27.

[58] **Thomas Jefferson** (born April 13, 1743, Shadwell, Virginia; died July 4, 1826, Monticello) Author of the Declaration of Independence and the Statue of Virginia for Religious Freedom,

third president of the United States, and founder of the Universi5ty of Virginia, unleashed the aspirations of a new America as no other individual of his era. As public official, historian, philosopher, and plantation owner, he served his country for over five decades. He inherited a big estate from his father, he began building Monticello when he was twenty-six years old. Three years later he married Martha Wayles Skelton. Jefferson inherited slaves from both his father and his father-in-law. In a typical year, he owned about 200 slaves, almost half of them under the age of sixteen. He freed two slaves in his lifetime and five in his will and chose not to chase two others who ran away. All were members of the Hemings family; the seven he eventually freed were tradesmen.
Terri DeGezelle, *American Symbols: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial* (Mankato: Capstone Press, 2004), 4-8.
[59] Maxwell Anderson, *Both Your Houses* (New York: Samuel French, 1933), Act I, Scene i, Page 21…… All subsequent references to this play are taken from this edition.
[60] Mabel Driscoll Bailey, *Maxwell Anderson: The Playwright as Prophet* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1957), 60.
[61] Laurence G. Avery, "Maxwell Anderson and *Both Your Houses*," *North Dakota Quarterly* 38, no.1 (Winter 1970): 8.
[62] **Henry David Thoreau** was born on his grandmother's farm, on Virginia Road, in Massachusetts, on July 12, 1817, the third child of John and Cynthia Dunbar Thoreau. He studied Latin and Greek grammar for three of his four years in college. He also took courses in mathematics, English, history, and intellectual philosophy. He knew himself to be a writer from the time he graduated from Harvard. He had begun keeping a journal in 1837 and had started writing essays, reviews, and poetry. Thoreau expressed his belief in the obligation of the individual to determine right from wrong. He encouraged people to assert their individuality, each in his or her own way. He also believed that independent, well-considered action comes naturally from a questioning attitude of mind. He was an

explorer, of both the world around him and the world within him.

Elizabeth Witherell and Elizabeth Dubrulle, "Life and Times of HenryDavidThoreau,"Library.ucsb,http://thoreau.library.ucsb.edu/thoreau_life.html (accessed October 10, 2015).

[63] Henry David Thoreau, *The Essays of Henry David Thoreau*, ed. Richard Dillman (Albany, NY: NCUP, 1990), 25.

[64] Brooks Atkinson, "Sins of *Both Your Houses*," *New York Times*, March 12, 1933.

[65] Brooks Atkinson, "Maxwell Anderson Attacking Politics in Both Your Houses—Revival of 'The Cherry Orchad'," *New York Times*, March 7, 1933.

[66] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967), 32.

[67] Reinhold Niebbuhr, "Catastrophe or Social Control? The Alternatives for America،," *Harper's Monthly*, June 1932, 114-115.

[68] **Machiavellian** is a conduct or philosophy describes a person, based on the cynical beliefs of Niccolò Machiavelli 91469-1527) whose name is synonyms with deception and duplicity in management, statecraft, and conspiracies. Born in Florence, Italy, Machiavelli was its second chancellor and in 1513 wrote the book *The Prince* that discusses ways in which the rulers of a nation state can gain control and power. Although *The Prince* contains some keen and practical insights into human behavior. Debra L. Nelson and James Campbell Quick, *Organizational Behavior: Science, The Real World, and You*, 8th ed. (Mason, Ohio: South-Western Cengage Learning, 2013), 144.

[69] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Selected Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Ronald A. Bosco and Joel Myerson (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 224.

[70] Quoted in David R. Farber, *Sloan Rules: Alfred P. Sloan and the Triumph of General Motors* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 94.

[71]Thoreau, 25.

[72] Shivers, 97.
[73]Burns Mantle et al., *The Best Plays of 1932-33 and the Yearbook of the Drama in America* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1933), 14:5.
[74] McClean is the name used throughout the analysis of the play *Both Your Houses*. Alan is the first name that is used in the play's dialogue.
[75] Turner, 32.
[76] Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance," in *Essays and English Traits: Emerson*, ed. Charles W. Eliot, vol. 5 of *The Five Foot Shelf of Classics* (New York: Cosimo, 2009), 66.
[77] Dorothy Day, *Writing from Commonweal*, ed. Patrick Jordan (New York: Liturgical Press, 2002), 39.
[78] Ibid., 41.
[79] Bailey, 59.
[80] Maxwell Bloomfield, *Peaceful Revolution: Constitutional Change and American Culture from Progressivism to the New Deal* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 109.
[81] Solomon is the name used throughout the analysis of the play *Both Your Houses*. Sol is his nickname which is used throughout the play's dialogue.
[82]Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, "Concerning the General Power of Taxation," in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Jim Miller (New York: Dover Publications, 2014), 137.
[83] C. W. E. Bigsby, *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth-Century American Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 1:147.
[84] Jackson R. Bryer and Mary C. Hartig, eds., *The Facts on File Companion to American Drama*, 2nd ed. (New York: Infobase, 2010), 75.
[85] Edmond M. Gagey, *Revolution in American Drama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), 155.
[86] Robert Thomas Wilson, *Narrative of Events during the Invasion of Russia by Napoleon Bonaparte and the Retreat of*

the French Army, 1812, ed. Herbert Randolph (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 116.
[87] Morgan Y. Himelstein, *Drama was a Weapon: The Left-Wing Theatre in New York, 1929-1941* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 225.
[88] Maxwell Anderson, "*Valley Forge*," in *Three Plays by Maxwell Anderson: Joan of Larraine, Valley Forge, and Journey to Jerusalem*, ed. George Freedley (New York: Washington Square Press, 1962), Act I, scene iii, Page 136.
[89] Stark Young, review of *Both Your Houses*, by Maxwell Anderson, *New Republic* 74, no. 956 (March 1933): 188.
[90] John Howard Lawson, *Theory and Technique of Playwriting* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1960), 148.
[91] Sami, 35.
[92] Nancy J. Doran Hazelton and Kenneth Krauss, eds., *Maxwell Anderson and the New York Stage* (New York: Library Research Associates, 1991), 41.
[93] Ibid., 47.

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