



“Exploring Inequity in Galsworthy’s The Silver Box”

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Abstract

British writer John Galsworthy is an enthusiastic reformer who focuses on composition. His plays, which are referred to as "Tragi-Comedy," focus on current societal topics and anticipate possible agreements from the viewers. His social awareness and combative attitude toward the injustices that were prevalent in his time made him a craftsman with significant humanity, and his fundamental character toward prejudice, ignorance, oppression, strange idea, and the other social variations in his plays confirms his status as an ethical craftsman with humanistic concerns. Therefore, this essay tries to follow the humanistic concerns of Galsworthy's sensitive works. His attack is organized against the court system's optical deficiencies, prejudices against people of color and those who are proud of their heritage, illusions, and several indecencies that influence the necessities of our lives.

A humorous tale about unfair societal prejudice may be found in *The Silver Box*. The play is a plea for pity and sympathy for the constantly suffering poor. It criticizes society for how two guys, Jack, and Jones, one from the wealthy area and the other from the vertically opposite, were treated differently. Law that is equal for all people is cruel and unjust to the poor and weak. This essay aims to present both characters in all their actions. Despite knowing that both characters are judged guilty in the play, the role of wealth and social standing in the court comes into play, deeming Jack a respectable gentleman and the pitifully destitute Jones guilty.

Keywords: John Galsworthy, Humanistic, *The Silver Box*, Societal prejudice

Introduction

Galsworthy was particularly taken with Synge's work and soon after the initial playwright had finished it, he made an appearance on the London stage. Therefore, it is not unexpected that Synge's influence may be seen in Galsworthy's after plays, both artistically and conceptually. 'The Cigarette Box' is the silver box's initial title, according to Jhon Galsworthy. Both expressions essentially refer to a pricey cigarette case. It is an integral part of the story. It is the center of the whole narrative. We can observe that the cigarette box controls every aspect of the proceedings. It is where all strife and misery originate. The term "silver" lends the title a color of a fight between the affluent and the impoverished between classes. Silver is a representation of wealth.

He tried to create a deception of real life on stages rather than doing to celebrate as well as embellish the horrible realities of an uninteresting being with deceptive shades of sentiment in order to make the audience experience their own experiences and think, make, and compose with the people he saw thinking, talking, and moving before them. His writings are grounded in modern life and provide a unique and remarkably accurate picture of the state of the society at the time he lived.

John Galsworthy, an Edwardian dramatist, and writer, was both a realistic dramatist & a complete social optimist. He originally composed plays to teach, and subsequently plays to amuse. According to him, "My dramatic invasion and the form of it, was dictated by revolt at the artificial nature of

English play at the time, and by a resolute intention to present real life on the stage." His writing demonstrates his temperamental obsession with enacting societal change. Galsworthy chooses societal situations, applies his powerful and ferocious imaginative handicraft to them, and turns them into forces that are more powerful than the individuals in his plays.

The society and the legal system might be seen as the culprit and the villain in the drama *The Silver Box*. Thus, the play makes our sympathy flow on towards the miserable character of Jones who becomes helpless before the prejudiced legal system that profits the mighty and rich politician. Here, we can see the preoccupation of the social themes and problems in English life within Galsworthy. The play's central issue is the legal system and the way it affects both the rich and the poor. The wealthy Barthwick and his dissolute and wayward son Jack, who takes great care that their social image and status are not jeopardized & ruined, symbolize two piercingly in odds groups that the dramatist contrasts. They go to great lengths to safeguard it and they will use whatever is necessary to protect it. On the other side, is the wretched and destitute Jones whose hardship is the product of cruel social and legal system. In his speeches, he plays a mediator & critic of modern English society. We had a great chat about marriage, sex, labor, organizational structure, the cruelty of solitary imprisonment, rank predilection, and class prejudice in his plays. He handles the problems with judges and the brutal operation of legal machinery in the plays *The Silver Box* & *Justice*.

Galsworthy was confident in the success of his play *Loyalties* and asserted that it is social prejudice to assume that if you are well-known and socioeconomically successful, you cannot commit mistakes or steal stuff. One of the earliest plays to confront the problem of anti-Semitism honestly and openly is *Loyalties*. Galsworthy, however, is going to abandon his own theory despite all his attempts to present all sides of the argument honestly. Captain Dancy, often known as Ronny, a man of action attempting to fit into a static society and find outlets for his antisocial behavior, is arguably the most completely realized character. Galsworthy helps us to comprehend Dancy's behavior even though he does not want us to approve of it.

The conflict between the high and the poor appears in the drama "Silver Box," but no resolution is suggested. However, thinking individuals in a playhouse and literate viewers in a study realize how realistic the topics portrayed are and how cruel, ruthless, or dark individuals might be, as well as how different and passively irresponsible others may be. They then ponder what may be done to improve the quality of life in the globe. John Barthwick & Mrs. Barthwick are more than simply a husband and wife in the comedy. They belong to the so-called upper classes additionally, and when faced with a crisis, their instincts are to look good. Any guilt or compunction they may feel toward those who are being treated unfairly as individuals will be put to rest in the name of maintaining their class's prestige. As for Jack, his behavior is typical of the only son of a wealthy family; he is careless, reckless, and he has never given much consideration to servants except to state that Marlowe was an ideal person. Their typical impression is that the lower classes are working to conspire for them. Irresponsible because he still obeys his parents and would comply with any request if it meant staying out of trouble. We can understand how the Barthwicks may be prepared for a confrontation with people of lesser social standing. Here, affluent parents and unskilled maids, as well as opulent and run-down homes, mix and criticize individuals.

Galsworthy handles life's problems in a general manner. He is a skilled artisan who approaches the problems from a detached standpoint; when we probe deeply, we may sense his sympathy for either one side or the other. However, when in doubt, he carefully considers all sides of the argument before presenting them without taking a position. Galsworthy conveys a sense of general excellence in his writing by attempting to remove any biases & see the situation objectively, much like an umpire, who is free from most prejudices, interests, and preferences of humanity. In 1808, a German educationalist applied the term "humanism" to describe a curriculum based on Latin and Greek authors, following an educational blueprint developed by humanists of the Italian Renaissance. Their educational curriculum included instruction in moral philosophy, history, writing, communication, and punctuation; as time passed, it has grown to include other areas as well. Ultimately, the term "humanism" developed to signify a certain point of view, approach, attitude, and dream emphasizing the value of human interactions, boundaries, motivations, and successes.

The issue that Galsworthy raises in his play is why the higher classes, who have wealth, influence, and strong moral and legal standards, compromise these values when dealing with the weaker sections of society. The working class when they experience difficulties? Can they be permitted to have their own laws? What part should the

government & parliament play to tackle the issues of unemployment, inebriation, and poverty? Early in this present century, Galsworthy created the drama. The fact that this trouble has made some progress demonstrates the impact that plays like Galsworthy's have had on all rational minds.

The play compares the conduct of the son of a successful politician with that of an unemployed guy and exposes the mindsets of different communities as a result of the loss of a cigarette box (the silver box). The *Silver Box*, Galsworthy's first produced play, quickly established the author as a leading dramatist in Britain. The *Silver Box*, known as *The Cigarette Box*, exaggerates the injustices in the UK legal system. Two males are needed to enter. After spending the night with a prostitute, Jack Barthwick, the son of a wealthy liberal congressman, freely accepts a backpack retaining a purse from her. The retired cleaning lady's husband in Barthwick, Jim Jones, brings back a stolen school bag & a pack of smokes. The whore disproves the charge, and Senior Barthwick decides to pay her so that the business stays out of the newspapers. Additionally, he fears Ms. Jones will be taken away. Poor women are in serious difficulty. A London police tribunal quickly determines who stole the silver box when the matter is brought before it. Under the help of an expensive attorney, adolescents Barthwick managed to flee without being charged while Jones is sent to prison. When The Elder Barthwick's self-interest is threatened, his extremism is only surface-level. At the play's conclusion, when a jobless cleaner woman swings beseechingly at her prior boss, she simply leaves with a faked homage.

Jack does not often leave a favorable impression. Despite having engaged in major misbehavior, he escapes punishment from the court. He has a laid-back and fun-loving personality. His attitude reflects his haughtiness and laziness. He is "rotten". Jones, though, is deserving of sympathy and compassion. His degradation and wrongdoing are essentially the result of the current societal structure. He is an unjustly treated innocent victim. He is never shown by Galsworthy as a brilliant hero nor as a blatant evil. He presents a fair picture of his strengths & virtues along with his flaws and shortcomings. Galsworthy depicts the court system in which the criminal Jack is given no punishment & innocent Jones is sentenced to a month of hard labor as his wife and children suffer. Thus, the contentious societal issue of the disparate treatment of the affluent and the poor is dramatized in the play *The Silver Box*.

The broad river of genuine humanity that runs through the core of every one of Galsworthy's plays saves his writings from the actions of temporal retribution. Conflict is certainly not a meaningless giveaway; rather, it is an exploration of the hardcore, which deprives men of their caution.

Twists their perception, resulting in violent conflicts and misery. The legal system's vision impairment is managed by morality; it was also an issue for the Greeks and Romans, so there is no reason to believe it will not be a problem in the future.

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