

INSPECTOR CALLS AND 'MAGIC NUMBERS'

There is a repeated conflict between two specific characters. Mr Birling and the inspector, reflecting the ideas of Binary opposites. Mr Birling is symbolic and representative of the ideology of capitalism. By Priestly opposing this ideology he chooses to present him as the personification of the deadly sins' greed, gluttony and wrath. To directly counteract this, Priestly uses the inspector not only as a mouth piece for his political views on socialism but also to highlight the faults in capitalism by choosing to have the Inspector being the personification of the four daughters of God. He does this to deliberately highlight Capitalism as evil and socialism as good and therefore this demonstrates the binary choice as being Socialism vs Capitalism which could be argued as Good vs Evil.

To begin with, the Birling residence was presented as a patriarchal household supporting the ideology of capitalism, however we see the household come into conflict and tensions arise from the arrival of the inspector. Once the truth has been recovered, we then see the binary opposite of the younger generation vs older generation whereby Shelia and Eric come to embody the aspects of socialism. This is representative to the Birlings (and Gerald's) lives being inverted by the Inspectors 'magic'. Transforming (as Priestly would see) the Evil (being capitalism and the selfishness of the upper classes) to Good (being the ideology of socialism and equality between the classes).

Furthermore, Priestly uses 7 characters throughout the play: Shelia, Eva, Eric, Gerald, The inspector, Mr Birling and Ms Birling. Due to An Inspector Calls being a morality play, Priestly perhaps has chosen the magic number of 7 to allude to a religious allegory, that being of the seven deadly sins (Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath and Sloth). Whereby, Eva Smith is representative of mankind, the Birlings and Gerald are representative of the deadly sins and The Inspector is representative of the four daughters of God.

To conclude, Priestly has chosen to have to use the magic numbers of 2 and 7 in an attempt to demonstrate to his audience that socialism is the ideology that will protect people from a future of "fire and blood and anguish".