Billennium

*Plot summary*

The story explores the life of Ward, a man who is struggling to find enough space in a world destroyed by over-population. The story is a post-apocalyptic tale set in the not so distant future in which the earth’s population has continued to expand exponentially since the 1950’s. The story revolves around Ward and Rossiter's combined discovery of a secret, larger-than-average room adjacent to their rented cubicle. As the two bask in the extra personal space that they have never known, things become complicated when they allow two other close friends to share the space, and the ensuing snowball effect of their invitees bringing family to live in the room. In the end, the "luxurious" space comes to be the same type of crowded cubicle that they were trying to escape from in the first place.

*Themes*

Lack of social responsibility/Overpopulation –

* There is a moral message going through the piece about what happens when population & people are not ‘controlled’/’restricted’ in which case – as the story suggests – the population rise spirals out of control.

Destruction of Beauty –

* The story explores how beauty has been lost through overpopulation in the form of the destruction of cathedrals and town halls.
* The theme is repeated in the microcosm of the apartment when due to the amount of people that enter the apartment. Therefore, they had to remove the wardrobe – the symbol of beauty – from the apartment.

*Tone*

The tone of the piece can be described pessimistic verging on nihilistic due to the cycle of overpopulation that the story professes. It could be argued that this is due to the passive attitude of the characters.

*Characters*

**Ward:** He is an educated character with an interest in the past and literature.

**Rossiter:** He is a kind man who is willing to give others help in any way that he can.