

# "the fever" by wallace shawn essay sample

[Literature](#), [Play](#)



1) The controversial reaction of critics and general public to Wallace Shawn's *The Fever* is understandable. The play evokes indignation mixed with rapture. It touches upon a painful topic, although the idea itself isn't new. The author uses an interesting literary device by making the main (and the only) character look as disgusting as possible. He's middle-aged, vomiting and at a loss. Still, the character communicates important and worthy ideas. Some may think that the play lacks action, but the advantage of "*The Fever*" is that the author goes deep into human psychology. It's not the best play I've ever read; still, it's a valuable piece and is of interest.

2) I believe that this play is typically off-Broadway. Its peculiarity is explained by the simple fact that *The Fever* is a monologue. I deem it can best be performed in front of a small audience. The play is intended for every American or another representative of a capitalistic state. I must admit that *The Fever* had a powerful and lasting effect on me since the book provides much food for thought. It was hard to associate myself with the protagonist but I had to do that. *Dolce vita* led by wealthy and prosperous citizens of developed countries is appalling as compared to impoverished and poor lives of people from the third world. A single man cannot change the World Order, but doing small things like charity can make a difference.

3) I believe that the play has a dual purpose, but its two purposes are closely interrelated. First of all, Shawn wants to express his criticisms of the capitalistic society, its inhumanity and cruelty. Contemporary business world has no mercy for the weak. Another ultimate message behind the play is connected with the psychological portrayal of the protagonist. He finds his life meaningless and empty, he blames himself of being mean. But gradually we

discover that he's also hypocritical and not always sincere. He comes to blame everybody but himself, namely the government and the church. This psychological portrayal shows how the contemporary business world corrupts.

References:

Shawn, W. 1991. *The Fever*, Faber and Faber.