

The Rise And Fall Of The Well Made Play

Routledge Revivals

Have you ever wondered about the fascinating journey of the well-made play in the world of theatre? In this article, we will delve deep into the rise and fall of the well-made play, focusing on its significance and impact on the theatrical landscape. Join us as we explore the roots, evolution, and demise of this once-popular genre with Routledge Revivals.

The Origin of the Well-Made Play

The well-made play, or "pièce bien faite" as it is known in French, emerged in the 19th century under the influence of French playwrights like Eugène Scribe and Victorien Sardou. This dramatic form aimed to engage audiences through carefully constructed plots, suspenseful twists, and satisfying resolutions. The structure of the well-made play became a template for many theatrical productions during its heyday.

The Key Characteristics of a Well-Made Play

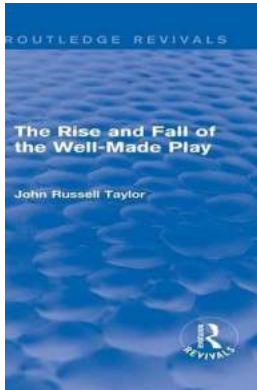
Characteristics of a well-made play include a highly structured plot, built around a central secret or deception, with a series of escalating complications leading to a climactic revelation. Each act ends with a cliffhanger, enticing the audience to eagerly anticipate the next act. This formulaic structure became popular due to its ability to keep audiences engaged and entertained.

The Rise and Fall of the Well-Made Play (Routledge Revivals)

by John Russell Taylor (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 543 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 176 pages



Well-Made Plays in Practice

During the peak of popularity, well-made plays dominated the theatrical scene. Renowned playwrights like Henrik Ibsen, Arthur Pinero, and Oscar Wilde embraced this style, creating memorable productions that captivated audiences worldwide. Plays like Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" and Ibsen's "A Doll's House" exemplified the flawless execution of the well-made play.

The Influence of Well-Made Plays on Theatre

Well-made plays revolutionized theatre in many ways. The emphasis on tightly woven plots with logical cause-and-effect chains set new standards for dramatic structure. Additionally, the popularity of well-made plays boosted ticket sales, attracting a broader audience and increasing the profitability of theatre productions. The influence of this genre on subsequent theatrical movements cannot be overlooked.

The Decline of the Well-Made Play

Like many artistic movements, the well-made play suffered a decline in popularity. As the 20th century progressed, new theatrical styles emerged, challenging the formulaic structure and predictable resolutions of well-made plays. Avant-garde

movements like surrealism, expressionism, and absurdist theatre pushed boundaries and broke away from the rigid conventions of the well-made play.

The Legacy of the Well-Made Play

Despite its decline, the well-made play left an indelible mark on theatre. Its influence can be seen in subsequent forms of entertainment such as television dramas and films, which still employ elements of the well-made play structure. Additionally, the study and revival of well-made plays, as facilitated by Routledge Revivals, helps preserve this important piece of theatrical history.

Routledge Revivals and the Rediscovery of Well-Made Plays

Routledge Revivals has played a significant role in reviving interest in well-made plays. This publishing initiative aims to bring forgotten and out-of-print works back into circulation. By providing access to rare and significant plays, Routledge Revivals facilitates academic research, theatrical productions, and a broader understanding of the well-made play genre.

The rise and fall of the well-made play is an intriguing journey through the evolution of theatre. It started as a groundbreaking form, captivating audiences with its clever plotting and satisfying resolutions. However, as new theatrical movements emerged, the well-made play lost its luster. Nevertheless, its legacy lives on, and with Routledge Revivals working towards its revival, the well-made play may once again find a place on the contemporary theatrical stage.

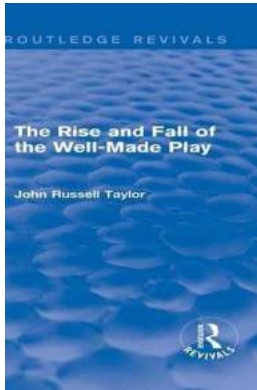
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First published in 1967, this title considers the idea of the ‘well-made play’ in the context of how and why it has been devalued and how far, in allowing it to be devalued, we have lost sight of certain important elements of the theatre. The focus of the book is largely on the development of British theatre and those who have been instrumental to it. This is an indispensable for any student with an interest in the history and development of the British theatre.



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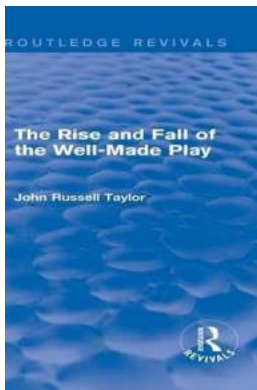
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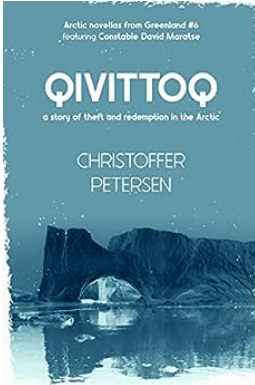
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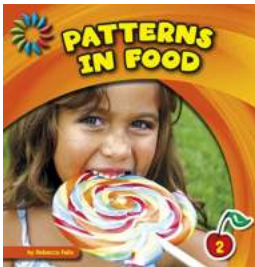
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