

Definition Of Capitalism

an economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state.

The Ethos of Capitalism Benjamin Franklin

"Remember, that time is money. He that can earn ten shillings a day by his labor, and goes abroad, or sits idle, one half of that day, though he spends but sixpence during his diversion or idleness, ought not to reckon that the only expense; he has really spent, or rather thrown away, five shillings besides."

Remember, that money is the prolific, generating nature.

The more there is of it, the more it produces every turning, so that the profits rise quicker and quicker.

Key motif - The refrigerator

QUOTE EXPLANATION

there is a kitchen table with three chairs, and a refrigerator. The few items of furniture means that the audiences attention is on what little stage properties there are. The emphasis on the fridge is another reminder of the American dream and Capitalism. By having it constantly on stage it serves as a constant reminder.

"WILLY: The refrigerator consumes belts like a goddam maniac.

EXTRA

Key motif - The refrigerator (cont)

The fridge, just like most of Willy's possessions, constantly breaks. This depicts the failure of Capitalism; you buy something that breaks meaning you have to buy another one. Then the new one breaks and you buy another. Thus, Capitalism becomes a cycle that you can never escape. Moreover, by breaking and then buying large firms constantly make profit as there is a constant demand.

Miller could have chosen any good to represent the ethos of Capitalism, but he chose a fridge. Perhaps because it is not a pointless good, as a microwave maybe, it is used to store food which is essential to survival. Thus, it is as though ones live is stuck inside of Capitalism, without it you could survive but perhaps not as easily as you could with it.

Key motif - the Chevy

PAGE QUOTE EXPLANATION

P.10. WILLY: (...) when I had that Chevy The Chevy, especially a red one, is a stereotypical depiction of the American dream.

P. 24. WILLY: Chevrolet, Linda, is the greatest car ever built. Although Chevrolet's have never been made in America, the US and Canada are the biggest buyers of this make of car. Thus, it becomes interesting that a symbol of the American dream is not even American.

Key motif - the Chevy (cont)

P. 26 WILLY: That goddam Chevrolet, they ought to prohibit the manufacture of that car! This quote clearly contradicts the previous one, showing Willy's inability to believe in something for long periods of time.

Quotes from the Commentary

PAGE QUOTE

xxxix dream is likely to become nightmare for individuals caught in-between the dualities of an encroaching materialism and the rampant consumerism it implies.

xxxix Happiness is equated with material success; anything less than being 'rich' signifies failure.

