Irwin Shaw

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Irwin Shaw** | |
| [Irwin Shaw.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Irwin_Shaw.jpg)  Irwin Shaw in his CUNY years. | |
| **Born** | Irwin Gilbert Shamforoff February 27, 1913 [Bronx, New York City](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronx,_New_York_City), United States |
| **Died** | May 16, 1984 (aged 71) [Davos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davos), Switzerland |
| **Occupation** | Playwright, Screenwriter, Novelist |
| **Nationality** | American |
| **Notable works** | [*Bury the Dead*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bury_the_Dead) (1936) [*The Young Lions*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Young_Lions) (1948) [*Rich Man, Poor Man*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Man,_Poor_Man_(novel)) (1969) [*Beggarman, Thief*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beggarman,_Thief) (1977) |
| **Notable awards** | [O. Henry Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O._Henry_Award) (1944, 1945) [National Institute of Arts and Letters Grant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Academy_of_Arts_and_Letters) (1946) [Playboy Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Playboy) (1964, 1970, 1979) [Honorary Doctorate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honorary_Doctorate), [Brooklyn College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn_College) |
| **Spouse** | Marian Edwards (1916-1996) |
| **Website** | |
| [www.irwinshaw.org](http://www.irwinshaw.org/) | |

**Irwin Shaw** (February 27, 1913 – May 16, 1984) was an American playwright, screenwriter, novelist, and short-story author whose written works have sold more than 14 million copies. He is best known for two of his novels: [*The Young Lions*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Young_Lions) (1948), about the fate of three soldiers during [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II), made into [a film of the same name](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Young_Lions_(film)) starring [Marlon Brando](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marlon_Brando) and [Montgomery Clift](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montgomery_Clift), and [*Rich Man, Poor Man*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Man,_Poor_Man_(novel)) (1970), about the fate of three siblings after World War II, that was made into [a popular miniseries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Man,_Poor_Man_(miniseries)) starring [Nick Nolte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nick_Nolte). Though Shaw's work received widespread critical acclaim, the success of his commercial fiction ultimately diminished his literary reputation.[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

**Contents**

  [hide]

* [1Personal life](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Personal_life)
* [2Career](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Career)
  + [2.1Drama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Drama)
  + [2.2Novels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Novels)
  + [2.3Short stories](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Short_stories)
  + [2.4Awards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Awards)
* [3Works](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Works)
  + [3.1Novels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Novels_2)
  + [3.2Short-story collections](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Short-story_collections)
  + [3.3Nonfiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Nonfiction)
  + [3.4Plays](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Plays)
  + [3.5Screenplays](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Screenplays)
* [4Further reading](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#Further_reading)
* [5References](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#References)
* [6External links](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#External_links)

Personal life[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=1" \o "Edit section: Personal life)]

Shaw was born **Irwin Gilbert Shamforoff** in the [South Bronx](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Bronx), New York City, to [Russian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russians) [Jewish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jew) [immigrants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigrant).[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_note-1) His parents were Rose and Will. His younger brother, David Shaw, became a noted Hollywood producer and writer.[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_note-davidshaw-2) Shortly after Irwin's birth, the Shamforoffs moved to [Brooklyn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn). Irwin changed his surname upon entering college. He spent most of his youth in Brooklyn, where he graduated from [Brooklyn College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brooklyn_College) with a [Bachelor of Arts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bachelor_of_Arts) degree in 1934.

During World War II Shaw was approached by [William Wyler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wyler) to join his film unit. Unable to be commissioned due to his age and 1-A draft status[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw" \l "cite_note-3), Shaw decided up entering the regular army. Noting his background the Army sent to him to [George Stevens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Stevens) film unit[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw" \l "cite_note-4), one of four writers attached to Stevens' command where he was commissioned a [warrant officer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warrant_officer_(United_States)).

Shaw died in [Davos, Switzerland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Davos,_Switzerland) on May 16, 1984, aged 71, after undergoing treatment for [prostate cancer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostate_cancer).[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_note-5)

Career[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=2" \o "Edit section: Career)]

**Drama**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=3" \o "Edit section: Drama)]

Shaw began screenwriting in 1935 at the age of 21, and scripted for several [radio shows](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old-time_radio), including [*Dick Tracy*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dick_Tracy), [*The Gumps*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Gumps_(radio)) and *Studio One*. He recaptured this period of his life in his short story "Main Currents of American Thought," about a hack radio writer grinding out one script after another while calculating the number of words equal to the rent money:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **“** | Furniture, and a hundred and thirty-seven dollars. His mother had always wanted a good dining-room table. She didn't have a maid, she said, so he ought to get her a dining room table. How many words for a dining-room table? | **”** |

Shaw's first play, [*Bury the Dead*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bury_the_Dead) ([1936](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1936_in_literature#New_drama)) was an [expressionist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expressionism) drama about a group of soldiers killed in a battle who refuse to be buried. His play [*Quiet City*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quiet_City_(play)), directed by [Elia Kazan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elia_Kazan" \o "Elia Kazan)and with incidental music by [Aaron Copland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aaron_Copland), closed after two Sunday performances.

During the 1940s, Shaw wrote for a number of films, including [*The Talk of the Town*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Talk_of_the_Town_(1942_film)) (a comedy about civil liberties), *The Commandos Strike at Dawn* (based on a [C.S. Forester](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C.S._Forester) story about commandos in occupied Norway) and [*Easy Living*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easy_Living_(1949_film)) (about a football player unable to enter the game due to a medical condition). Shaw married Marian Edwards (daughter of well-known screen actor [Snitz Edwards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snitz_Edwards" \o "Snitz Edwards)). They had one son, Adam Shaw, born in 1950, himself a writer of magazine articles and non-fiction.

Shaw summered at the [Pine Brook Country Club](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pine_Brook_Country_Club), located in the countryside of [Nichols, Connecticut](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nichols,_Connecticut), which became the 1936 summer home of the [Group Theatre (New York)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_Theatre_(New_York)), whose roster included [Elia Kazan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elia_Kazan" \o "Elia Kazan), [Harold Clurman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_Clurman), [Harry Morgan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Morgan), [John Garfield](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Garfield), [Frances Farmer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frances_Farmer), [Will Geer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_Geer), [Clifford Odets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clifford_Odets) and [Lee J. Cobb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lee_J._Cobb).[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_note-6)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_note-7)

**Novels**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=4" \o "Edit section: Novels)]

[*The Young Lions*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Young_Lions), Shaw's first novel, was published in [1948](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1948_in_literature). Based on his experiences in Europe during the war, the novel was very successful and was adapted into a 1958 [film](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Young_Lions_(film)). Shaw was not happy with the film.

Shaw's second novel, [*The Troubled Air*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Troubled_Air), chronicling the rise of [McCarthyism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McCarthyism), was published in [1951](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1951_in_literature). He was among those who signed a petition asking the [U.S. Supreme Court](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Supreme_Court) to review the [John Howard Lawson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Howard_Lawson) and [Dalton Trumbo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalton_Trumbo) convictions for [contempt of Congress](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contempt_of_Congress), resulting from hearings by the [House Committee on Un-American Activities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_Committee_on_Un-American_Activities). Accused of being a [communist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist) by the [Red Channels](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Channels) publication, Shaw was placed on the [Hollywood blacklist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollywood_blacklist) by the movie studio bosses. In 1951 he left the United States and went to Europe, where he lived for 25 years, mostly in Paris and Switzerland. He later claimed that the blacklist "only glancingly bruised" his career. During the 1950s he wrote several more screenplays, including [*Desire Under the Elms*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desire_Under_the_Elms_(film)) (based on [Eugene O'Neill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugene_O%27Neill)'s play) and *Fire Down Below* (about a tramp boat in the [Caribbean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caribbean)).

While living in Europe, Shaw wrote more bestselling books, notably [*Lucy Crown*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucy_Crown) ([1956](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1956_in_literature)), *Two Weeks in Another Town* ([1960](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960_in_literature)), [*Rich Man, Poor Man*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Man,_Poor_Man_(novel)) ([1970](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1970_in_literature)) (for which he would later write a less successful sequel entitled *[Beggarman, Thief](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beggarman,_Thief" \o "Beggarman, Thief)*) and *Evening in Byzantium*[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_note-8) (made into a [1978 TV movie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evening_in_Byzantium)). *Rich Man, Poor Man* was adapted into a [highly successful ABC television miniseries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Man,_Poor_Man_(TV_miniseries)) in 1976.

His novel *The Top of the Hill* was made into a TV movie about the Winter Olympics at Lake Placid in 1980, starring [Wayne Rogers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wayne_Rogers), [Adrienne Barbeau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adrienne_Barbeau), and [Sonny Bono](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonny_Bono).[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_note-9)

His last two novels were *Bread Upon the Waters* (1981) and *Acceptable Losses* (1982).

**Short stories**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=5" \o "Edit section: Short stories)]

Shaw was highly regarded as a short story author, contributing to [Collier's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collier%27s_Weekly), Esquire, [The New Yorker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_Yorker), [Playboy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Playboy), [The Saturday Evening Post](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Saturday_Evening_Post), and other magazines; and 63 of his best stories were collected in *Short Stories: Five Decades* (Delacorte, 1978), reprinted in 2000 as a 784-page University of Chicago Press paperback. Among his noted short stories are: "Sailor Off The Bremen", "The Eighty-Yard Run", and "Tip On A Dead Jockey". Three of his stories ("The Girls in Their Summer Dresses", "The Monument", "The Man Who Married a French Wife") were dramatized for the [PBS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_Broadcasting_Service) series [*Great Performances*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Performances). Telecast on June 1, 1981. This production was released on DVD in 2002 by Kultur Video.

In 1950, Shaw wrote a book on Israel with photos by [Robert Capa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Capa) named *Report on Israel.*

**Awards**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=6" \o "Edit section: Awards)]

During his lifetime Shaw won a number of awards, including two [O. Henry Awards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O._Henry_Awards), a [National Institute of Arts and Letters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Institute_of_Arts_and_Letters) grant, and three Playboy Awards.

Works[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=7" \o "Edit section: Works)]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Novels**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=8" \o "Edit section: Novels)]   * [*The Young Lions*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Young_Lions) (1948) * [*The Troubled Air*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Troubled_Air) (1951) * [*Lucy Crown*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucy_Crown) (1956) * *Two Weeks in Another Town* (1960) * *Voices of a Summer Day* (1965) * [*Rich Man, Poor Man*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Man,_Poor_Man_(novel)) (1969/1970) (Portions of this novel first appeared in *Playboy* in a slightly different form.) * *Evening in Byzantium* (1973) * *Night Work* (1975) * [*Beggarman, Thief*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beggarman,_Thief) (1977) * *The Top of the Hill* (1979) * *Bread Upon the Waters* (1981) * *Acceptable Losses* (1982)   **Short-story collections**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=9" \o "Edit section: Short-story collections)]   * *Sailor off the Bremen and other Stories* (1939) * *Welcome to the City, and other Stories* (1942) * *Act of Faith, and other stories* (1946) * *The Girls in Their Summer Dresses* * *Mixed Company. Collected Short Stories* (1950) * *Tip on a Dead Jockey, and other stories* (1957) * *Selected Short Stories* (1961) * *Love on a Dark Street, and other stories* (1965) * *Retreat and other stories* (1970) * *God Was Here, But He Left Early* (1973) * *Short Stories: Five Decades* (1978)   **Nonfiction**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=10" \o "Edit section: Nonfiction)]   * *In the Company of Dolphins* (1964) * *Paris! Paris! (1976)* | **Plays**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=11" \o "Edit section: Plays)]   * [*Bury the Dead*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bury_the_Dead)*,* New York, Ethel Barrymore Theatre, April 1936. * *Siege, New York,* Longacre Theatre, December 1937. * *The Gentle People,* New York, Belasco Theatre, January 1939. * [*Quiet City*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quiet_City_(play)) New York, Belasco Theatre, March 1939. * *Retreat to Pleasure,* New York, Belasco Theatre, 1940. * *Sons and Soldiers,* New York, Morosco Theatre, May 1943. * *The Assassin,* New York, National Theatre, October 1945. * *The Survivors,* (with [Peter Viertel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Viertel)) New York, Playhouse Theatre, January 1948. * *Children From Their Games,* New York, Morosco Theatre, April 1963. * *A Choice of Wars, Glasgow,* Scotland, Glasgow Citizens Theatre, 1967.   **Screenplays**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=12" \o "Edit section: Screenplays)]   * [*The Big Game*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Big_Game_(1936_film)), RKO, 1936. * [*Commandos Strike at Dawn*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commandos_Strike_at_Dawn), Columbia, 1942. * [*The Hard Way*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hard_Way_(1943_film)), Warner Bros., 1942. * [*The Talk of the Town*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Talk_of_the_Town_(1942_film)), RKO, 1942. * [*Take One False Step*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Take_One_False_Step), Universal, 1949. * [*Easy Living*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easy_Living_(1949_film)), RKO, 1949. * [*I Want You*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Want_You_(1951_film)), RKO, 1951. * [*Act of Love*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Act_of_Love_(1953_film)), United Artists, 1953. * [*Ulysses*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulysses_(1954_film)), Paramount, 1954. * [*Fire Down Below*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_Down_Below_(1957_film)), Columbia, 1957. * [*Desire Under the Elms*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desire_Under_the_Elms_(film)), Paramount, 1958. * [*This Angry Age*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/This_Angry_Age), Columbia, 1958. * [*The Big Gamble*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Big_Gamble_(1961_film)), Fox, 1961. * [*In the French Style*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_the_French_Style), Columbia, 1963. * *Survival*, United Film, 1968. |

Further reading[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=13" \o "Edit section: Further reading)]

* [Michael Shnayerson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Shnayerson). *Irwin Shaw, A Biography.* G. P. Putnam's Sons: 1989. illustrated. [ISBN](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Standard_Book_Number) [0-399-13443-3](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:BookSources/0-399-13443-3)
* *Vince Keenan (2012-01-09).*[*"Book Review: Nightwork, by Irwin Shaw (1975)"*](http://blog.vincekeenan.com/2012/01/book-nightwork-by-irwin-shaw-1975.html)*. Blog.vincekeenan.com. Retrieved 2013-12-11.*
* Irwin Shaw, "The Girls in Their Summer Dresses." <http://www.classicshorts.com/stories/dresses.html>

References[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Irwin_Shaw&action=edit&section=14)]

* 1. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-1) [*"Transport Group to Present Revival of Shaw's 'Bury the Dead' Starting 10/31"*](http://broadwayworld.com/viewcolumn.cfm?colid=33748)*. Broadwayworld.com. Retrieved 2013-12-11.*
  2. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-davidshaw_2-0) [*"Golden Era Scribe David Shaw Dies"*](http://www.emmys.com/news/golden-era-scribe-david-shaw-dies)*.*[*Emmys*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emmy_Award)*. August 20, 2007. Retrieved January 15, 2014.*
  3. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-3) Miller, Gabriel *William Wyler: The Life and Films of Hollywood's Most Celebrated Director* University Press of Kentucky, 19 Jul. 2013
  4. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-4) Harris, Mark *Five Came Back: A Story of Hollywood and the Second World War* Canongate Books, 20 Feb. 2014
  5. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-5) <http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/pages/archives/findaid/shaw/bio.html>
  6. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-6) [Pinewood Lake website retrieved on 2010-09-10](http://www.pinewoodlake.org/)
  7. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-7) Images of America, Trumbull Historical Society, 1997, p. 123
  8. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-8) <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/irwin-shaw-8/evening-in-byzantium/>
  9. [**Jump up^**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irwin_Shaw#cite_ref-9) [*""Top of the Hill"*](http://imdb.com/title/tt0081643)

PRINTED FROM : https://en.wikipedia.org