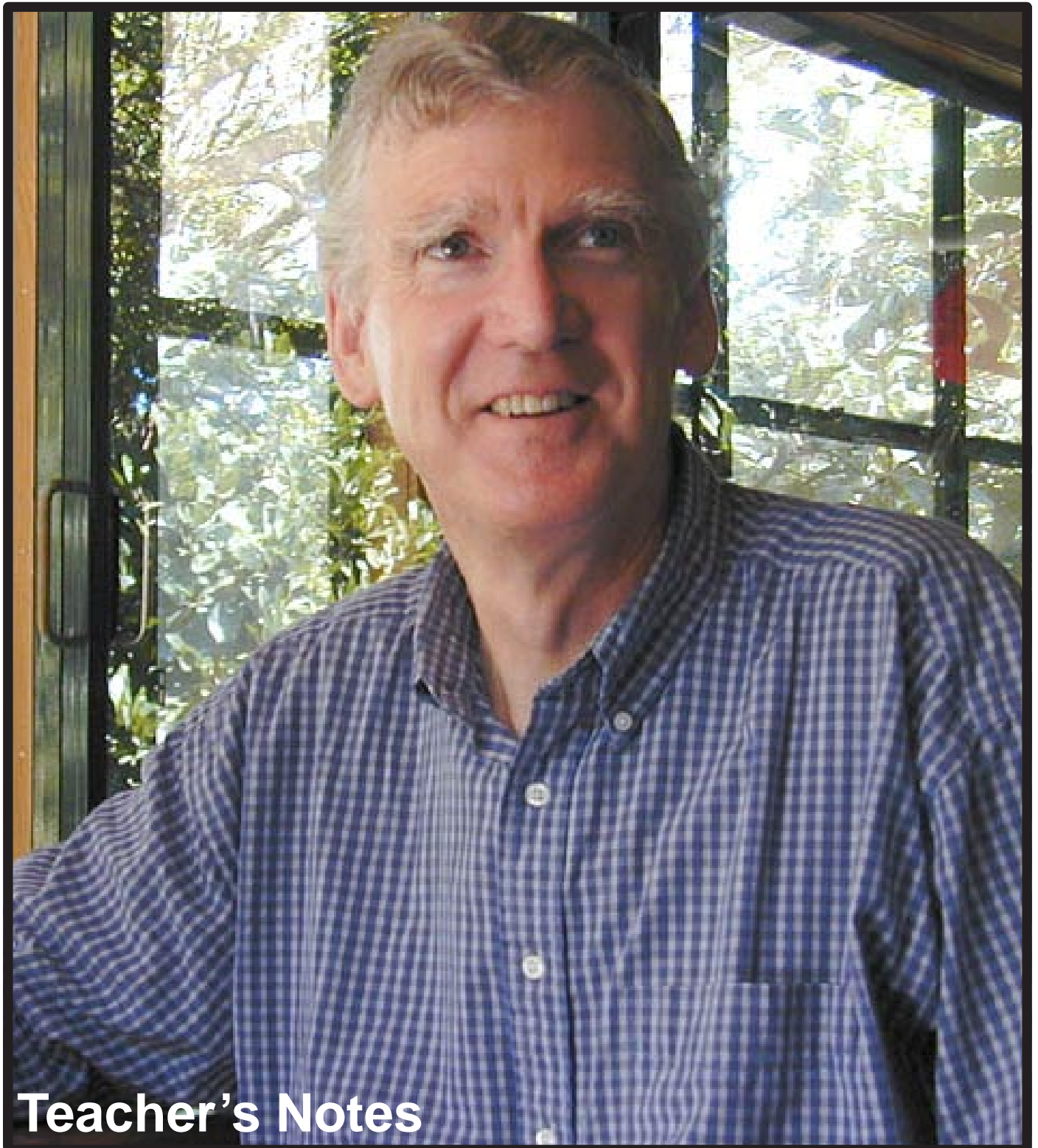


What I Wrote

David Williamson



Teacher's Notes

Introduction

This study guide to accompany *What I Wrote: David Williamson* has been written for senior secondary students. It provides information and suggestions for learning activities in English, Literature, Theatre Studies and Drama.

What I Wrote: David Williamson is a DVD on Australian playwright David Williamson. Dr Tess Brady interviews Williamson and provides a critical introduction to *The Removalists* (1972), *Don's Party* (1973), *The Club* (1978), *Travelling North* (1980), *Gallipoli* (1981) *Brilliant Lies* (1993), *Sanctuary* (1994), *Dead White Males* (1995), *The Great Man* (2000), *The Jack Manning Trilogy* (2002), *Soulmates* (2003), and *Influence* (2005). The DVD also includes an investigation of Williamson's approach to writing for the stage.

What I Wrote: David Williamson is one title from a series of DVDs spotlighting Australian playwrights. The series offers students information about the ideas and processes of the playwrights, as well as the opportunity to hear what the writers have to say about their work. Other titles available in the *What I Wrote* series include:

Series 1:

- + What I Wrote: Matt Cameron
- + What I Wrote: Louis Nowra
- + What I Wrote: Hannie Rayson
- + What I Wrote: Katherine Thomson

Series 2:

- + What I Wrote: Debra Oswald
- + What I Wrote: Andrew Bovell
- + What I Wrote: Joanna Murray-Smith

Find Out More Info

Further information about the series and film trailers can be found at: <http://www.whatiwrote.com.au> or on YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/pinkcat1>



How to Buy the DVDs

The DVDs are available from Ronin Films at: <http://www.roninfilms.com.au>

How to Buy the Play Scripts

The play scripts are available from Currency Press at: <http://www.currency.com.au/>

About the Filmmakers

Dr Tess Brady *Presenter*

Dr Tess Brady is a highly respected editor, researcher and teacher of writing at university level. She was the co-founding editor of the international online scholarly journal *TEXT* and has published children's picture books, adult radio drama, crime fiction, short stories and popular non-fiction. Her most recent publication is *Creative Writing: Theory beyond practice*, with Nigel Krauth.

Catherine Gough-Brady *Director*

Catherine Gough-Brady is a documentary maker. She has made works for a variety of media. This includes radio features for the ABC, educational videos, online

interactive websites and advertising. She is currently working on Series 3 of *What I Wrote*, which includes an interview with Ray Lawler. You can find out more about her by visiting <http://www.snodger.com.au/catherine/>





About David Williamson

David Williamson was born in Melbourne and brought up in Bairnsdale, a rural Victorian town. During the 1960s he studied mechanical engineering and contributed skits to the Engineers Revue which played at the Melbourne University Union Theatre to lunchtime student audiences.

David Williamson's first full-length play, *The Coming of Stork*, premiered at Melbourne's La Mama Theatre in 1970. He went on to write over thirty plays and become Australia's most successful playwright occupying a central role in the re-emergence of Australian theatre and film. His plays have been produced throughout Australia and in Britain, the United States, Canada and many European countries.

A number of his stage works have been adapted for the screen, including *The Removalists* (1975), *Don's Party* (1976), *The Club* (1980), *Travelling North* (1987), *Emerald City* (1988), *Sanctuary* (1995), and *Brilliant Lies* (1996).

He has won AFI screenplay awards for *Petersen* (1974), *Don's Party* (1976), *Gallipoli* (1981) and *Travelling North* (1987). He has also won eleven AWGIE Awards and has been awarded the Order of Australia. He lives on Queensland's Sunshine Coast.

More about David Williamson's publications can be found at his publisher's site:

<http://www.currency.com.au/search.aspx?q=david+williamson>

The Writer's Context

David Williamson's plays have been watched by more Australian audiences than any other Australian playwright. His plays speak to the people. He is a satirist who takes up a contemporary issue, populates that issue with flawed characters (who are neither all good nor all bad) and lets them chew away at the issue, teasing out the arguments for and against it. The issues are varied and nothing is too sacred to escape his satirical pen, which has focused on football, the police force, the workplace, the universities, sexual harassment, radio shock-jocks, perfectionists, post modernism, literary festivals, surrogate motherhood, the cities of Sydney and Melbourne, publishing, greed, corruption, the art world, male friendship and party politics.

Discussion

- As you view *The Voice of His Tribe – the plays of David Williamson*, compile a list of statements that describe Williamson's interest in contemporary issues and the criteria he employs to select an issue as the backdrop to a play.
- From box office returns we know that not only do more people attend a Williamson play than one by any other Australian playwright but that those same audiences do not subscribe to theatre companies and tend to *only* go to the Williamson play. What reasons can you give for this?
- Make a list of the ways Williamson uses observation of people and situations to research his plays and films.
- Use the internet, critical essays and commentaries to compile a detailed summary of the contexts that shape Williamson's work as a playwright over any decade (1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s). Discuss your findings with others in the class.
- Williamson is interested in the resolution of conflict. Working in a group, take one of his plays and trace the way he sets up the conflict, complicates the conflict and then resolves it. Map this on a chart.

Critical Perspectives

- Dr Johnson in his 1755 *Dictionary* defines satire as: 'a poem in which wickedness or folly is censured.' The tools of a satirist are humour, barbs and characters that are flawed enough to evoke the empathy of the audience. Using the play you are studying, discuss Williamson as a satirical playwright.
- After attending a live performance of a play write, in point form, the kind of review you think would be helpful to other students. Discuss what you would include and leave out of the review if you were only allowed 3 points.
- Use the internet, critical commentaries and reviews to arrive at a detailed knowledge and understanding of the critical reception of William's playwriting. What viewpoints do you support? What viewpoints do you refute?
- David Williamson played a critical role in the resurgence of Australian theatre in the 1970's. Discuss.

Views and Values

- Drawing on *The Voice of His Tribe* – the plays of David Williamson and your knowledge of the play you are studying, make a list of the arguments for and against the issue Williamson has brought to audiences' attention. Does the play come down on one side or the other of the issue?
- Do you think Williamson's plays or films have the power to move the audience into a deeper understanding of themselves and others? Do we identify with the characters or is it the situation which captures our imagination, or both? Discuss in class.
- Williamson speaks openly of his belief in a shared humanity. He claims that no matter what our culture or our historical period we all feel the same human emotions which make it possible for us to sympathise, understand and relate across cultural and historical boundaries. Do you agree? Discuss this in class.
- A recurring theme in Williamson's work is youth *v* age; idealism *v* pragmatism. Form teams and debate: *The world could do without the hot idealism of youth.*
- All plays are about change. Is Williamson more interested in personal rather than political change? Discuss.
- Complete a detailed analysis of one of Williamson's flawed characters. Turn your analysis into a monologue in which the character articulates his or her views and values.



Analytical Responses

The following topics could be used for written text responses, debates, panel discussions and online forums.

- Williamson has been writing plays for over 30 years and has become the voice of his tribe. Discuss.
- We all share human emotions, they are universal. Discuss.
- The young idealist in conflict with the older pragmatists is the core conflict in much of Williamson's work. Discuss.
- Satire does not need to take sides, it simply needs to highlight. Discuss.



The Writing Process

- 'The source of conflict has always been an interest.' Drawing on Williamson's statements in *What I Wrote: David Williamson*, discuss how he explores conflict in his plays.
- For Williamson, his characters are developed and moulded from people he knows. From viewing the interview *Script to Stage* (DVD 2), discuss how he shapes his characters.
- Williamson shows his first rough draft to a director but then goes on to write another ten or more drafts. Take a scene from a piece you are writing and show it to a class mate who is 'your director'. Listen to the comments and re-write the scene. Continue doing this for five drafts. Then discuss with the class the merits of such fine-tuning.
- Form teams and debate: *Human emotions cross time and cultural boundaries*.
- Williamson researched his plays in various ways. Make a list of methods he has used. Note how

his research can be both personal and intellectual. Discuss your findings in class.

- What is Williamson's cure for writers block? Do you agree?



From Script to Stage

- Create and present a short solo performance from one of Williamson's plays. Submit a short written report that describes and analyses the processes used to create and present the performance.
- Why does Williamson think it is a miracle that any new Australian plays make it to the stage? How is the process changing?
- For Williamson, what is the relationship between the playwright and the director. Show both roles.
- Take one act of the play you are studying and adapt it for either UK or USA audiences. Discuss what you have changed and why.
- Explore the relationship between the audience, the actors and the play. Is it a static or fluid relationship? On what does it depend?



DAVID WILLIAMSON'S THE REMOVALISTS



The Removalists & Sanctuary

The Removalists

Sergeant Simmonds is training up a fresh recruit, Constable Ross. Two sisters, Kate and Fiona call for help. Fiona's husband has been hitting her and the girls want a police report to help in any divorce proceedings. The two cops think they have a chance of having sex with the sisters so they agree to help them.

Fiona goes home to finish packing and her husband, Kenny unexpectedly comes home. The removalists and the police arrive. After the girls leave, the young cop, Ross, snaps and beats Kenny unconscious. Ross panics thinking he has killed the man when Kenny comes crawling back in - they sit down and share a beer - Simmonds bribes Kenny's silence about the beating by offering him call girls. Just when it all looks fine, Kenny keels over and dies.

The play is a black comedy around the issue of police violence which was a particular problem when the play was written in the 1970s.

Sanctuary

Many of the themes we see in *The Removalists* are revisited in *Sanctuary*, but written twelve years later the themes have developed. Williamson has added a debate around the relative merits of old pragmatist as opposed to the young idealist.

John is young, poor and idealistic. Robert 'Bob' King is a top journalist who has reported various wars and worked for CNN. John is a PhD student writing Bob's story in the hope of exposing him as a journalist who deliberately kept secret from the world genocides and atrocities.

The play is complex and asks who is the better person, the young idealist or the old pragmatist? They are both flawed.

Discussion

- In *The Removalists* Williamson considers the character of Ross to be as much a victim as Kenny. Discuss.
- In the video interview Williamson refers to the work of his friend John Pilger. Visit his website <http://www.johnpilger.com/> Form teams and drawing on the play you are studying and Pilger's work debate: *The world is brutal, power driven and expedient.*
- In class do a reading of scenes from both plays. What were your favourite scenes? Why?
- Williamson comments that moral outrage can be close to violence. Drawing on newspaper reports take a pertinent incident and write the outline of a scene which illustrates this. Do not be afraid to employ black humour.
- In both plays the young men are portrayed as innocents, idealists who have their values crushed by the ugliness of the world. Are these plays pessimistic? Discuss.
- Using a storyboard, design either the set or the program for either play. Explain how your designs enhance the themes of the play.
- In the video interview Williamson speaks of humanity containing a beast within. He uses physical violence to portray that beast. In groups discuss other ways the emergence of the beast could be portrayed on stage. Improvise from the best ideas and show a rehearsed performance to the rest of the class.

Don's Party

 David Williamson



Don's Party & The Great Man

Don's Party

Don and Kath hold an election party. They are hoping for a Labor victory.

Labor loses the election and the party gradually comes unstuck as the characters become drunk and begin to expose each other's failed dreams. Don who was to become a great novelist is now a teacher who hasn't written a book. Mal who dreamt of becoming the next Australian Prime Minister now works as a psychologist and is a long way from being elected to parliament.

The character driven play is about the failed dreams of youth.

At the time, setting this play at an election party was a radical notion because it was a deeply Australian backdrop. The televised tally room and the election party is an iconic Australian phenomena. The play was later made into a film.

The Great Man

The play is set at the funeral preparations for Jack, an old time Labour politician. As his family and friends arrive to mourn him they are confronted with the harsh reality of their own failed lives and of Jack's tainted and corrupt nature.

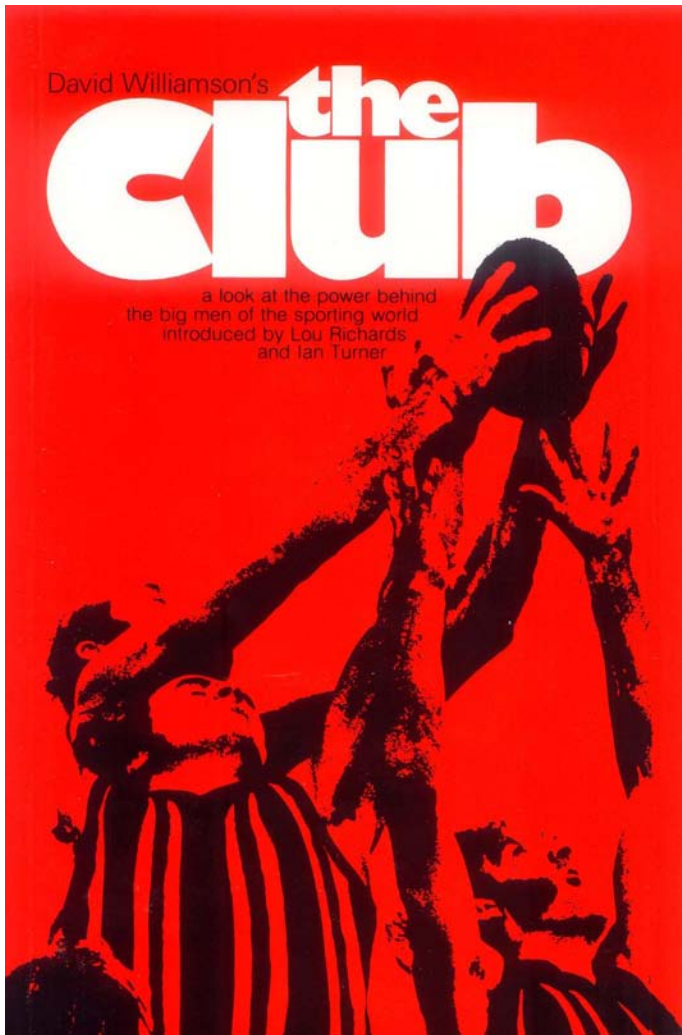
When it is revealed that there are secret bank accounts holding the fruits of his corruption they all realise Jack was far from the great man.

The characters' world is one where the Old Labor Party of fairness and equality is crumbling as the New Labor Party of economic rationalism is emerging.

The play couples with *Don's Party* because it too is about failed dreams.

Discussion

- In the video interview Williamson says that *Don's Party* is about the reality check that happens to people in their thirties when all their dreams are facing the cold hard test of time. Take one of the characters in the play and map how they confront their own reality. How would you show this change in their costume?
- Williamson reveals that he bases his characters on himself and his friends, taking attributes and then altering them to build his character. Construct a character as a composite from people you know, (not in the class). Use powerpoint to show the layering and building of your character.
- Read either *Don's Party* or *The Great Man*. What are your favourite scenes? Take one scene and in a small group perform a rehearsed reading.
- The 1970s was a time of short lived but great idealism where many thought the world could become a better place. Using music, fashion, art and other sources show the class one aspect of this idealism. Why do you think it failed?
- *The Great Man* shows characters who have embraced pragmatism and rejected the idealism of youth. Discuss
- In *The Great Man* the character of Terry is loosely based on the artist Clifton Pugh. Research Pugh's portraiture and using his work as an influence design either a set or a program for *The Great Man*. Illustrate how your design ideas help to enhance the plays themes and concerns.



The Club

A top football club with a long history and tradition haven't won a premiership for some time.

They elect a new president - Ted, who appoints an administrator, Gerry. In doing so Ted alienates Jock, the club hero. Jock's solution to problems is to punch someone, the president Ted's is to write a cheque and the administrator, Gerry, sits back and waits to see how it all plays out, aligning with the winning side.

In the meantime the coach and players are facing their own battles. The play begins with the coach, Laurie's, resignation and the players threatening to go on strike. The star player, Geoff, is disillusioned with football.

The action is set in the clubrooms with the photos of great club players looking down on them all. At the end of the play the team go out to play the game of their lives. But the photos of the old timers have been taken from the walls. The club has changed, the times have changed.

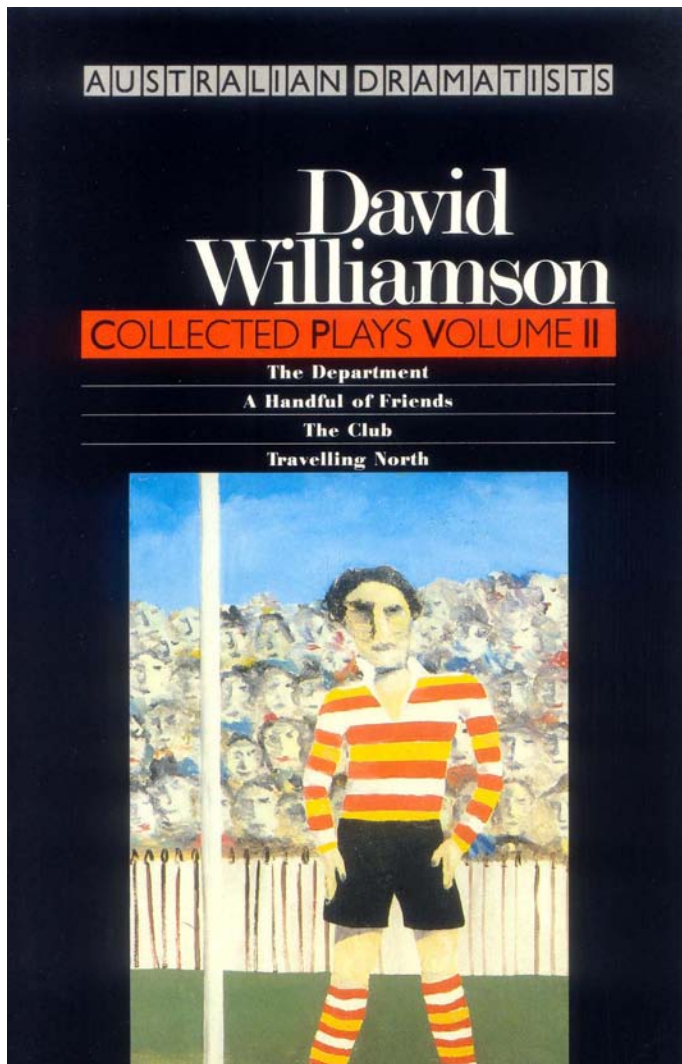
The play pitches tradition and loyalty against money

and ambition. In 1977 a new form of management was sweeping through, not just sports clubs, but business and industry. Williamson took the sports club as a microcosm of our workplace, society and politics. He shows us that bullies such as Jock can thrive in an environment where loyalty is seen as a conservative and outmoded value.

Discussion

- In the video interview Williamson suggests that all the characters in *The Club* have their flaws. Select one character and trace their development in the play. Show the moment they are tempted. Do they succumb? Do they recover?
- Form teams and debate: *The players of the past have a role to play in the future of the game.*
- Williamson looked for dramatic ideas in the headline of the newspapers. Scan the headlines for the last month and in small groups devise an outline of a short play which arose from a headline. Share your outline with the class and discuss the merits of headlines as a source of inspiration.
- Select a scene from the play and give a rehearsed reading of it. Explain why you chose that scene. Use a storyboard to show possible staging, design and lighting for the scene.
- *The Club* was first performed in 1977 and yet is still popular today. Discuss.
- In groups, and making use of interviews and research, trace the changes over the last 40 years to football and its culture. Create a series of monologues illustrating these changes.





Travelling North

Frances (55) and Frank (70s) fall in love and decide to travel north to Queensland. They leave their children in Melbourne. They settle on a property at Tweed Heads on a lagoon. Frank spends all his money on a boat and they scrape through, but only with the help of cheques from Frances' daughters. Their neighbour, Freddy, and Saul, the local doctor, are their friends.

Frank's health begins to fail and he dies towards the end of the play. As his health fails Frances has her love for him tested.

There is also the story of the daughters. Frances' daughter are unhappy about their mother leaving with Frank. Frank's daughter, on the other hand, is more pragmatic and supportive of the relationship.

We care deeply about the characters as they struggle with their own faults - the daughters are too possessing; Frances doubts; Frank ponders his life and mistakes. It is their openness about their faults that endears the characters to us.

We are constantly asking, whose journey is at the centre of this play? The answer is they are all on a journey of self discovery.

Discussion

- After watching the video interview and reading the play *Travelling North* do you agree with Williamson that in the end it is Frances' journey? Discuss.
- Were you surprised that the play had its beginning in the call to write a play for the actor Frank Wilson? Research the actor's work and his contribution to Australian theatre, television and film. Using powerpoint share your research with the class.
- Williamson says the play is about responsibility in relationships and the inevitable end we all face. Discuss.
- Courage and hope are two strong emotions in the play. Using a storyboard map either of these emotions over the development of the play. Do we see these emotions in more than one actor?
- Williamson uses the stories of his family and friends. *Travelling North* is loosely based on his mother-in-law and her partner. Write a short scene dealing with the theme of responsibility in relationships loosely based on people you know. Does this method make writing the characters easier or harder?
- Take a scene from the play and give a rehearsed reading to the class. Explain why you selected that scene.
- In 1987 *Travelling North* was made into a film directed by Carl Schultz. Watch the film and read the play. Map the changes between the play and the film adaptation. Do you think the story lends itself better to the stage or film? Argue your case.





Gallipoli

Sometimes viewed as the greatest Australian film, *Gallipoli* depicts the iconic Australian story of the Anzac and was directed by Peter Weir.

Frank Dunne, (played by Mel Gibson) and Archy Hamilton (played by Mark Lee) are two Western Australian sprinters from very different walks of life. They enlist to fight in the Great War. The first third of the film is set in Australia which allows the characters to build.

Our heroes are dispatched to Egypt and then to Gallipoli and engage in the disastrous attack at the Nek.

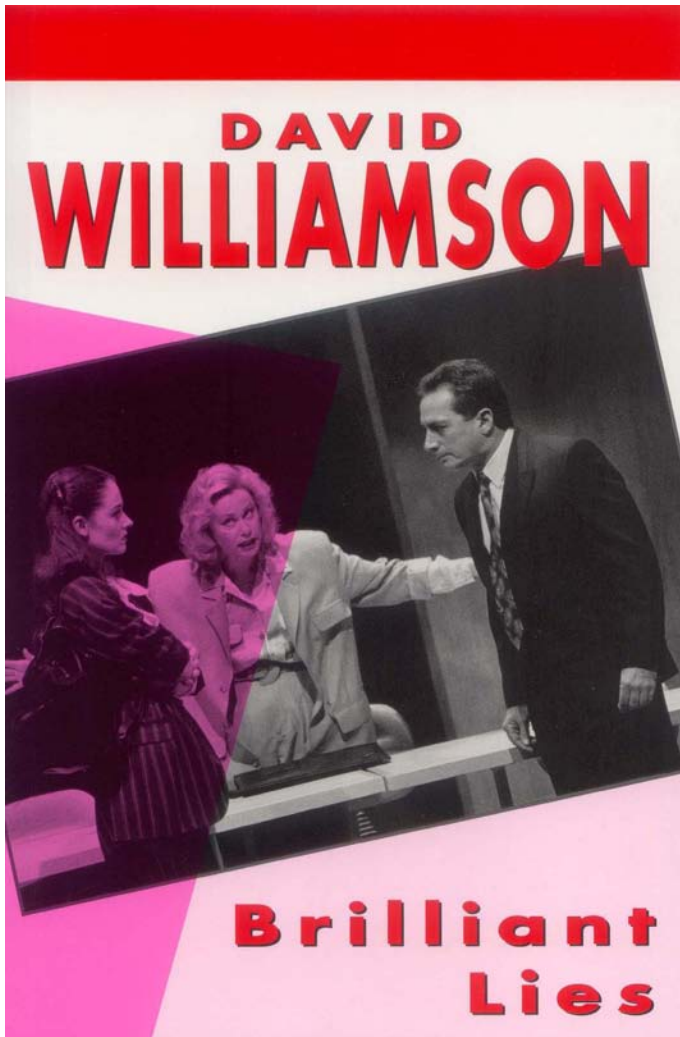
A miss-managed firing schedule and communications breakdown has Frank desperately sprinting to get the message through to stop the attack while Archy obeys orders and goes over the top of the trenches to a certain death.

The film depicts the blind obedience generated by the commands of war and its dreadful waste and destruction.

Discussion

- Mel Gibson described the film as: "Not really a war movie. That's just the backdrop. It's really the story of two young men." Discuss.
- From the video interview were you surprised to hear that David Williamson, as a school boy, would make fun of the war veterans, but later, as a playwright, when he heard their stories, changed his mind? Interview members of your local RSL, ask them why they fought, was it for Queen and Country or as Williamson discovered, *to not let their mates down*? Make a powerpoint presentation highlighting one story you have heard.
- Williamson describes writing film and theatre as two different languages. From watching the interview list the main attributes of writing film. What others are you aware of? Share your work with the class.
- Williamson explains that the laws of narrative don't neatly follow the laws of history. Discuss the implications of this to an historical narrative made into a film.
- Were you surprised to learn that it was the film *Gallipoli* which helped to generate Australia's interest in Anzac Cove as a holiday destination? In groups research the issues tourism has created at Anzac Cove and using it as background information write a short scene between two young tourists visiting the Cove on Anzac Day.





Brilliant Lies

The play opens with Susy accusing her boss, Gary, of sexual harassment. Marion is their mediator. Gary wants the owner of the business Vince to back him, but Vince isn't so sure about Gary's behaviour. Sexuality in the workplace is changing and Gary hasn't kept up-to-date.

Susy is no innocent. She is young and fed up with the way Gary treats her, but she is also scheming and wants to get what she can out of the situation. We know Susy lies.

Susy's father Brian, a drunk and one-time molester of his daughters, needs a heart operation and it will cost almost exactly the amount Susy will receive in compensation payout. Susy is torn in a love-hate relationship with her father.

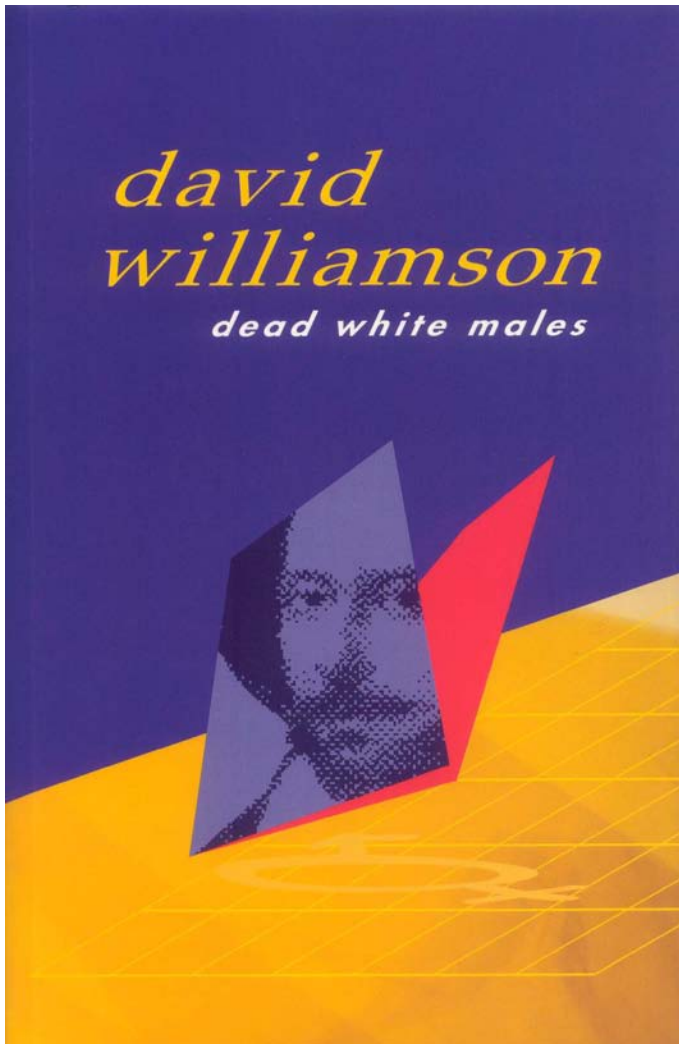
As the play moves through more and more revelations the truth turns out to be more ugly than the lies. When Susy does break down and tells *her* truth she still embellishes it because the reality is too sordid.

We are constantly asking who is telling the truth? But like many situations in the real world it is all half truths and half lies. The play portrays layers of truth and concealment, fiction on fiction, bluff on counter bluff.

Discussion

- In the video interview Williamson says: 'I'm a dramatist, I'm looking for flawed and interesting characters.' Discuss.
- Form teams and debate: *Susy doesn't lie, she just embellishes the truth a little.*
- All of the characters in *Brilliant Lies* have lives away from the play. Take one character and write a scene depicting part of that life.
- As a designer, how would you depict the layering of truth and lies in *Brilliant Lies*? Use a storyboard to illustrate this.
- Take a scene from *Brilliant Lies* and give a rehearsed reading to the class. Explain why you selected that scene.
- Williamson comments that the play is also about the complexities of family life and the resolutions of deep seated family conflicts. Discuss.
- Who has learnt more at the end of the play?





Dead White Males & Soulmates

Dead White Males

The play opens dramatically with the university lecturer, Grant Swain, shooting Shakespeare. Swain says: "Literature is *never* about wisdom" (p6) and teaches a particular jargon-filled form of post modernism.

His student Angela struggles with Swain's views and tries to apply them to her family's story. In the meantime, Shakespeare appears to her and argues his case. Into the structure of the play are woven some of Shakespeare's own scenes including the wedding in the Forest of Arden from *As You Like It*.

This is one of the few Williamson plays that shuns naturalism. It is also one of the few where he comes down heavily on one side of the argument. The structure is tight. The beginning is arresting and the play keeps up this pace.

The play ends with Swain shooting himself in the foot.

It is a goading and satirical play. In the real world, the writers and theorists were already on opposite sides of the barricades when Williamson wrote this work. The play produced outstanding box-office returns, remaining a favourite with audiences, but at the time it also generated vocal attacks from some of the academic sector.

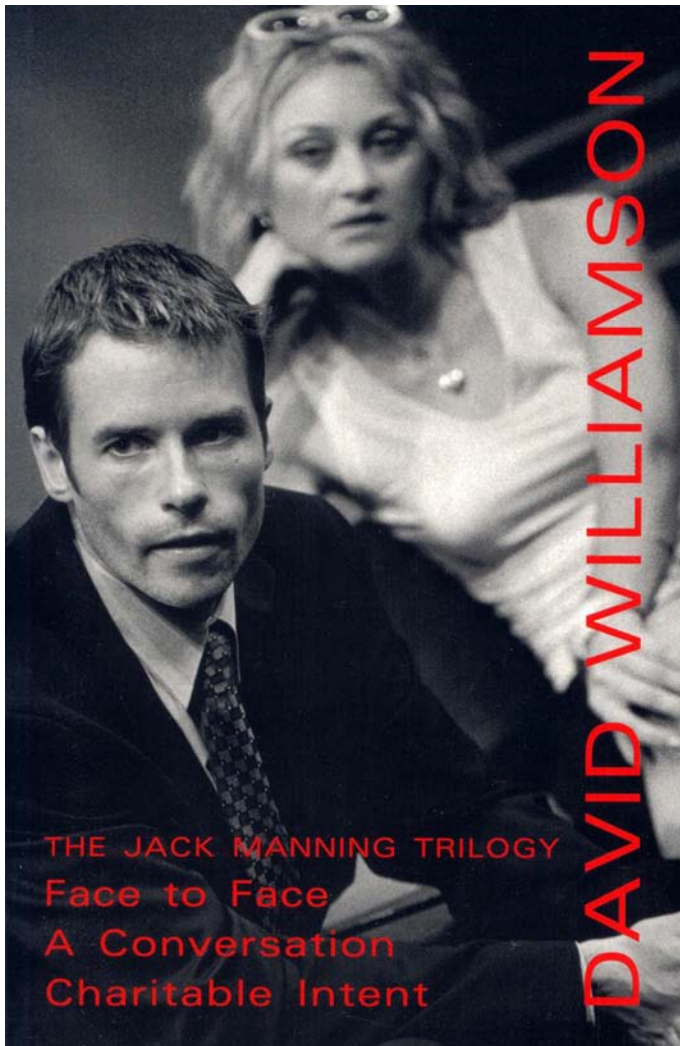
Soulmates

First performed seven years later this play picks up on some of the themes and arguments of *Dead White Males*. In it two writers are pitted against each other. Max is a great literary writer and Katie, a successful popular writer.

The argument over literature verses money and popularity is played out against a backdrop of criticism, reviews and post modernism. The play ends in a literary festival with a panel Art v Commerce where hypocrisy, infidelities and lies are revealed.

Discussion

- In groups, choose a scene from either play and perform it for the class. Explain why your group chose that particular scene.
- In the video interview William comments: "We have deep universal human emotions." Discuss.
- In *Dead White Males* Mellisa says: "...You get much better marks if your teacher's arguments are so lucid and compelling that you have a full on, high voltage, conversion experience." (p71). Discuss.
- *Dead White Males* and *Soulmates* uses layers of secrets. Discuss how the revelation of these secrets helps to build the characters and develop the plot.
- Form teams and debate: *Great literary works are never best selling fiction*.
- Can we ever know the truth? Discuss with reference to either play.
- Design the set for a scene from the play you are studying. Use a storyboard and explain how your design enhances the play's themes.
- There is often music associated with the performance of a play. Design the music for act 2 of either play. Explain why you have chosen these sound tracks/sounds.



The Jack Manning Trilogy

The plays *A Conversation*, *Charitable Intent* and *Face to Face* focus on the conferencing method, a process of bringing together the victims and perpetrators of a crime to attempt to find reconciliation.

Face to Face examines the last chance Glen has of avoiding a courtroom trial. He is a man with an uncontrollable temper and on being fired damaged his boss' car. During the conferencing session his co-workers at Baldoni Exhibition Constructions and his family offer their perspectives. What is revealed are the layers of work-politics which have brought Glen to this point of rage.

A Conversation focuses on the conflict between the families of a rapist/murderer and the victim's family. The crime is despicable and it is made real by playing a taped interview from Scott, the perpetrator of the crime. At the end of the play we realise that the world is not black and white, right and wrong, but one where we all must take our share of responsibility for the violence in

our society.

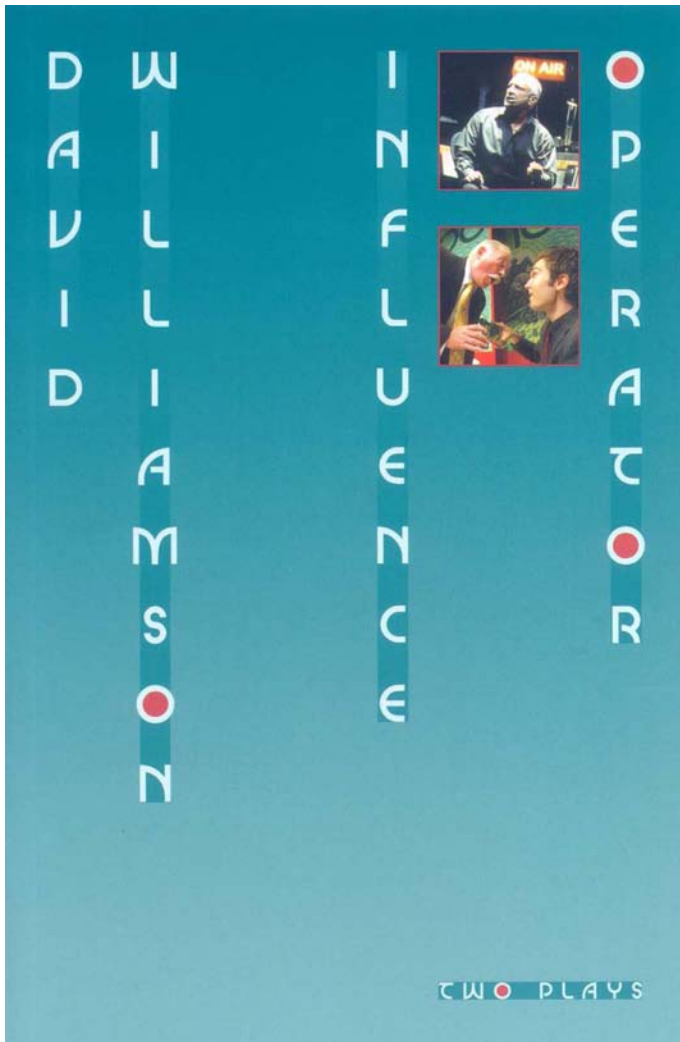
Charitable Intent concerns bullying in the workplace of a major charity. Jack Manning gradually encourages the various workmates to talk about the situation until it is finally revealed that one person has pitted them against each other and is responsible for the mess.

What is interesting about these plays is that they are performed as a conference, with static sets and action. And yet they give us all the elements of drama – plot, character development, intrigue and catharsis.

Discussion

- In the interview Williamson says: "Emotion is the life blood of drama." Discuss with reference to any of the trilogy plays.
- Select a scene from one of the plays and give a rehearsed reading of the play. Discuss why you chose that scene.
- Using powerpoint to share your findings, research the conferencing method and the kind of conflicts it is most successful in dealing with. Could it be a useful method to resolve classroom or school conflicts?
- Jack Manning is in all three plays - write a character outline of him. What is his back story? Design his costume, would it change over the three plays?
- Williamson says that *The Jack Manning Trilogy* works as drama because of *emotional contagion* with the audience. Discuss.
- Take a character from one of the plays. Write a short scene set weeks later as he/she reflects on the process.





Influence

Ziggi Blascko is a Sydney shock jock. The play opens with him manipulating the power of his radio-desk and drumming up hate and prejudice. He hones in on the working poor – a group of low paid workers who are struggling to make ends meet. But as irony has it, his own housekeeper is one of these people.

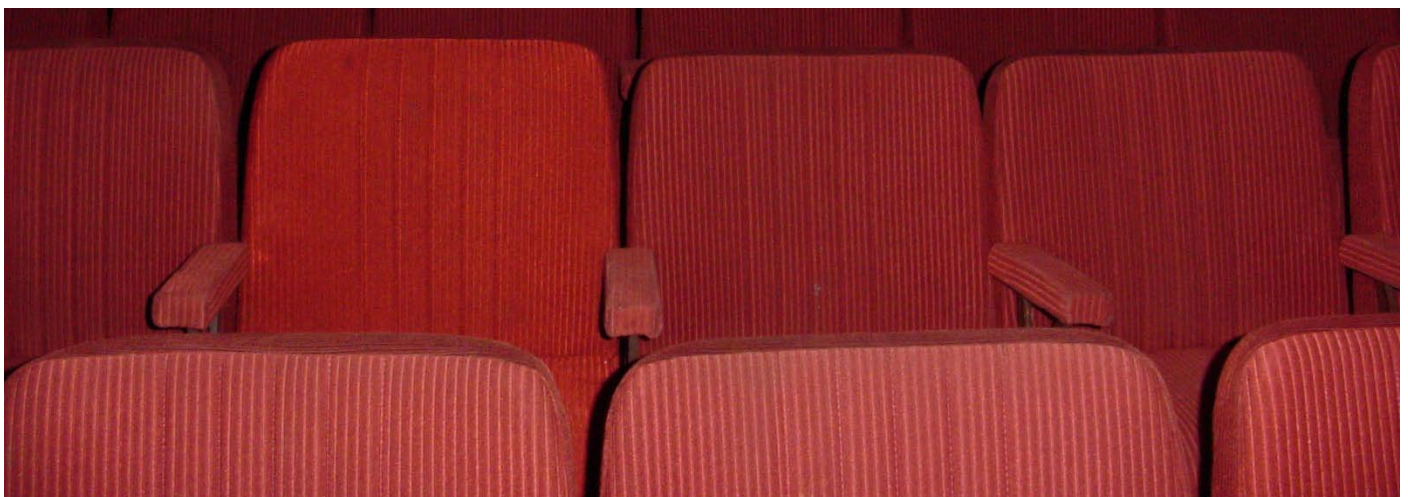
Ironies multiply as Ziggi's private and public lives col-

lide. His father reveals his involvement in war crimes, his daughter loses his savings on the stock exchange and his housekeeper, Zehra, exposes him on-air.

Bryce Hallett's review sums up the central themes of the play. 'Influence almost ends where it begins - the lone manipulator revelling in the adoration of strangers while his own life is in tatters. The merchant of "the truth" is almost unchanged except he's more smugly inflated as he reassures listeners that he'll always be back "because this country wants to hear what I've got to say"'. (Sydney Morning Herald 21/03/05)

Discussion

- In the video interview Williamson says: 'We think Australia is a classless society.' Discuss.
- Were you surprised to learn how the actor Zoe Carides researched her character and the input she subsequently had on that character's development? In small groups outline how you would go about researching any one of the other characters. Share your findings with the class.
- The play ends with the Ziggi's character saying he will be back 'because this country wants to hear what I've got to say.' (p83) Most of us from time to time have listened to such shock jocks. Why do we do this? Discuss in class.
- Write a scene of a shock jock on-air. Give a rehearsed reading to the class. Include theme music which is typical of such programs.
- Select a scene from the play and give a rehearsed reading to the class. Explain why you chose that scene.
- Design the cover of an edition of the play or its program. Explain how your design reflects the concerns of the play.



Candid Interviews with Australian Writers



Williamson



Murray-Smith



What I Wrote

In this series, ten award winning Australian playwrights talk candidly about their best known plays. Each writer reveals their writing process and discusses the themes and characters within the work.



The dynamic presenter, Dr Tess Brady, provides a critical commentary for the plays.



All the playwrights in this series are studied on the senior secondary curricula.



DVD titles are:

Andrew Bovell

Matt Cameron

Jack Hibberd

Ray Lawler

Joanna Murray-Smith

Louis Nowra

Debra Oswald

Hannie Rayson

Katherine Thomson

David Williamson

ABC TV Series 1

ABC TV Series 2



Producer : Snodger Media
Director : Catherine Gough-Brady
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