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DON'S PARTY

BY DAVID WILLIAMSON

TEACHER'S NOTES

BY JOHN McCALLUM

STUDY GUIDE

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DAVID WILLIAMSON'S *DON'S PARTY*

by John McCallum

1. Introducing the play

Don's Party arrived on the theatre scene in Australia in 1972 with the same sort of impact that the character Cooley has when he arrives at the party in the play. It was energetic and fun; it was exhilaratingly frank and, in the process, gloriously obscene; and it deflated a lot of the pretensions of the new young professionals who came to the theatres and who are represented in the play. Above all, for the critics and audiences at the time at least, it was Australian. As the critic H.G. Kippax said, 'There isn't a line, and not a character, that hasn't the ring—just off-key—of one part of Australia, larger than life.'

This accurate social observation of Australian life was an important part of the play's great appeal for audiences. By bringing together at the election night party eleven representatives of a certain part of Australian society and allowing the grog, the sexual frustrations and the waning political hopes to have their effects, the play revealed inner failings and feelings of disillusionment in the characters with which a lot of people seemed to identify. The play was, in part at least, a sociological document—which means that now, it may be becoming, in part at least, an historical document. This raises the first important issue in studying the play.

The play as a social document

There can be no doubt about the accuracy of the play's comment. The political detail behind it is described by H.G. Kippax in his introduction to the published script. (In fact the election, and the rising and falling hopes for a Labor victory, provide the play's central metaphor, as we shall see below.) But there is also a great deal of social detail which gives a 'shock of recognition' to audiences. All the trappings of an Australian middle-class, trendy party are there: the beer, the Twisties, the home-made pizzas, the bawdy jokes and cracking-on by the men, the women talking about their husbands in the corner (although the details of their conversation were shocking to some in 1972) and the gradual decline into drunken argument. The play caused a national wave of confession by people who said that they'd been to parties just like that.

The characters are, or were, a perfect selection of types of a certain class of Australians. They represent the new professional class of teachers, psychologists, lawyers and others whom one social commentator has called 'sons of ocker'. They are a generation educated in the affluent boom years of the Menzies era, beyond the social and economic expectations of their parents; and, some would say, beyond their own capacity to take part in civilised life. They have money, social status and political ideas but they still retain much of the 'coarse' ocker behaviour of the Australian tradition. One English journalist has said that the trouble with Australians is that you can't tell from their behaviour or language how educated they are. You can see this either as a refreshing aspect of Australian egalitarianism, or a sad comment on Australian vulgarity.

The issue that is raised by the political and social detail in the play is: has it become dated? Certainly a theatre doing the play now would have difficulty making some of the references and some of the jokes work on stage. Memories of the DLP, Vincent Gair, John Gorton and John McEwen fade with each passing year, and since the play first appeared Gough Whitlam has come and gone. Even Bob Hawke will presumably one

day be forgotten. More importantly the social behaviour as presented in the play may be changing. Are Australian parties still like that? Is the rather frantic preoccupation with getting drunk and cracking-on still an accurate reflection of Australian social life? In this age of general disillusion do the small disappointments in *Don's Party* still seem important? These are interesting questions for discussion.

In any case there are other concerns in the play which may give it a more universal appeal. The characters are more than just political and social types. They represent different general human traits, and their personal concerns and problems—how to cope with disappointment, how to get on with each other, how to find enduring satisfaction—are common in societies everywhere. This raises a second important aspect of the play.

The play as a human document

In this, as in other plays, David Williamson is interested in the way people struggle and conflict in group situations. The characters in *Don's Party* represent a wide range of ways of coping with social life. Don, the schoolteacher and failed novelist, copes by a mixture of relaxed detachment and debunking humour. He is not even seriously put out when Cooley attacks the very basis of his failure: his inability just to start writing, let alone write, the Great Australian Novel. Mal, the great 'politician' who in his own life has compromised all his political ideals, copes through child-like aggression. Each time he is rejected he comes back to start a fight with some new hapless victim. Mack, who has just been deserted by his wife (but who claims he left her) copes by means of an engaging openness about his pathetic inadequacy.

> MACK: Am I a real kink?
> COOLEY: Bloody oath.
> MACK: Why do you think I did it?
> COOLEY: Because you're a kink. (p. 62)

Cooley is an original larrikin, with a lawyer's income to support the habit. Of all the characters in the play he is the one who appears to cope best, and he is certainly one of the funniest characters in the play—yet he also embodies many of the less endearing aspects of what Williamson has called the 'awful Australian uniqueness'. He is vulgar, selfish, thoughtless, cowardly and disruptive, and yet he is so cheerfully self-sufficient that audiences always seem to like him. Perhaps that is a comment on them (and on Williamson's supposedly 'objective' portrayal of him) as much as on Cooley himself.

One of the great comic devices in *Don's Party* is the way that each character has such an appropriate set of social positions or attributes. Their jobs, for example, seem just right for their characters. Don is a schoolteacher (with a hobby of growing native plants). Mal is a psychologist, but in 'management consultancy', not private practice. (To impress Kerry he later says he is in 'executive selection'.) The humourless, pompous Liberal voter, Simon, is an accountant for a firm that makes 'plastic extrusions and polystyrene slabs'. Evan is a dentist (another serious, dull occupation it seems). His hobby is renovating. Mack is a design engineer whose hobby is taking pornographic photos of his wife. (One wonders what he designs.) Kerry is an artist, whose hobby seems to be her lover, Cam, who creates 'environments'. Susan is a student and part-time dancer (stripper, Cooley says). Jenny, Kath and Jody are mothers and housewives.

The pornographic objects the guests bring are also appropriate. Mal brings a cartoon pinched from Playboy, Simon a 'vaguely phallic' balsa model, Mack, a nude photo of his estranged wife and Evan, an abstract print which has no pretension to being pornographic but is good art. Cooley, of course, brings Susan.

Details such as this enable Williamson to create a rich and complex social world in which his characters are firmly set. They also indicate that the apparently loose, rambling progress of the play is in fact a carefully worked out study of human beings in their social context.

The characters of the women in *Don's Party* have been condemned by some critics as being shallow and insufficiently 'human'. Williamson has defended them on the grounds that in 1969 Australian women were in a powerless position, dependent on their men, and therefore the portrayals are accurate. Certainly the women come into their own at the end, when the men have declined into drunken stupors. The scene where Jenny tells Don of her feelings of

frustration and despair reveals a lot about her, and, at least as played by Pat Bishop in the film of the play, is one of the scenes which many people remember as the most moving.

The question of sympathy for the characters is another important issue in the study of *Don's Party*. By many standards the characters in the play are an extremely unattractive lot, and yet they seem to be treated very affectionately. The play partly satirises their foibles and partly celebrates their liveliness and humanity. The answer to this apparent contradiction may lie in an age-old theory that all comedy is based on pain. If the person slipping on the banana skin is an intimate friend you don't laugh, you rush sympathetically to help them. Laughter comes when you feel in some way distant from or superior to the misfortune—but the greater the original misfortune, the greater the comedy. One fine achievement of *Don's Party* is to enable us to feel emotionally involved and comically distant by turns. Thus, to quote H.G. Kippax again: 'You laugh because the alternative would be embarrassing in a public place'.

The play as a play

How does David Williamson achieve this subtle alternation between humour and sympathy? How does he give to such a carefully arranged selection of details the appearance of a loose, chaotic party? The play is carefully structured and contrived to give the appearance of something uncontrived and natural. It has no plot, in the sense of a developing story with a beginning, an increasingly exciting or intriguing middle, developing to a climax and denouément. Rather, it has an emotional pattern which governs the action.

That pattern is one of raised expectations and hopes and subsequent disillusionment. This is obviously the broad pattern of the play as a whole—with the hopes for a Labor victory dashed when the DLP preferences start to come in. It is the pattern of the lives revealed of the characters—with their ambitious hopes for happiness or professional satisfaction turning sour as they settle into drab suburban lives. The pattern is also repeated in little incidents throughout the play. The attempted seductions are all thwarted (or, when they get as far as the bedroom, embarrassingly interrupted). The carefully prepared food for the party is thrown on the floor, or disparaged. We never even hear the punch-line to the promising duck-hunting joke. The mood of the play is encapsulated in the neat little image which rounds it off. Don starts to light a cigarette, pauses to ponder (over the events of the evening, or over the events of his life?) and the match burns his fingers.

All this could he material for a very gloomy play indeed, and many people do find it depressing. The gloom is relieved, however, by the sympathy for the characters in their disillusionment, and, above all, by the humour.

In the theatre *Don's Party* is one of the funniest Australian plays ever. A lot of the comedy is clear in reading it: the gags ('What's he got that I haven't got?' 'The nod.') and the comic set-pieces such as the duck-hunting story (p. 19) or the farcical bedroom scenes. A lot of the humour, however, is based on character. Each of the characters is given some comic obsession or foible which gives the actor a great deal with which to build a rich comic performance. There is Jody's disarming frankness, Mal's obsession with cracking-on, Mack's obsession with his kinkiness, Simon's simple desire to spend the evening discussing Buñuel films and Kerry's preoccupation with 'meaningful', 'organic' relationships. The most obvious example, of course, is Cooley, whose open, single-minded obsession with what might be called life's fundamentals (imbibing, excreting and fornicating) is the source of a great deal of the play's fun.

All of these comic obsessions are very real to the characters concerned, and very serious. Different people reading or seeing the play will find them funny in different degrees—according to the extent to which they identify with the characters and the extent to which they feel distant and objective. It is possible to imagine two very different productions: one which played the action purely for laughs and one which lingered over the more poignant moments where the emotions are on the surface. Probably the most satisfying production would be one in which these two elements in the play were kept in balance—allowing us to laugh and cry at the same time.

Don's Party probably did more than any other play to establish the New Wave of Australian drama of the early 1970s (except perhaps for another Williamson play, *The Removalists*). The extracts from the press reviews, in the next section, illustrate its successful stage history. It began as a little, experimental production at Melbourne's Pram Factory theatre in 1971. It went to another little theatre in Sydney in 1972, the Jane Street Theatre; transferred in the same production to the larger Parade Theatre and then to a commercial venue and an extensive tour (including a tour of the Sydney production in 1973 back to Melbourne where it all began). In 1975 it opened at the Royal Court Theatre in London.

The reviews illustrate how, in spite of the general enthusiasm for the play, the critics were divided about it. The fact that they disagree about its vulgarity—some finding it exhilarating and others finding it objectionable—may simply be a sign of their personal moral attitudes. But their disagreement about the author's compassion for his characters, or lack of it, may indicate something deeper about the play itself. In any case *Don's Party* will certainly become one of the classics of Australian comedy, and a source of great pleasure to audiences and to all who study it.

2. The critics' views

Leonard Radic on the premiere production by the Australian Performing Group at the Pram Factory, Melbourne, *The Age*, 16 August 1971

Williamson's interest is in middle-class mores and values. Specifically he is interested in the educated members of that class—not those fresh out of university but some ten years after, when their ideals, like their marriages, have begun to crumble, when boredom has set in and all are looking for ways to renew their flagging zest…

The party begins quietly, as such parties do, with exchanges of niceties, anecdotes and jokes. But as the wine and beer flow, the pace quickens and the characters begin to reveal themselves along with their hang-ups and repressions…

The weakness of the play (two hours without an interval) is partly that it lacks a real climax, and partly that it stops short at the point of demonstration. This is slice-of-life drama; what is missing is an overall vision of the characters portrayed.

They are neither comic nor tragic, though they have possibilities for being both. Nor are they conceived in the spirit of satire. Williamson is content to depict them naturalistically, and to skirt the deeper issues that their behaviour raises.

H.G. Kippax on the Jane Street Theatre production, Sydney, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 July 1972

On the strength of *Don's Party*… first staged in Melbourne, and rewritten for Jane Street, I have no doubt that Mr Williamson is the best playwright working in Australia, and one of the best in the world…

First, a warning—and I mean this. This is NOT for the squeamish… It has, continuously, more four-letter words, etc. than any play I know. It has long, very explicit passages of talk about sex, sexual organs, perversion, excretion—and politics. (The DLP will hate it.)

In my opinion (and I don't like dirt as a rule) its dirt is entirely defensible. It is, so to speak, real dirt, fresh from the last drunken rort in the patio culture. Few people, even the would-be intellectuals like Mr Williamson's gaggle… can dish it out with the sustained virtuosity of this play. And few parties get quite as rough as Don's.

But there isn't a line, and not a character, that hasn't the ring—just off-key—of one part of Australia, larger than life.

The dirt is defensible, in the second place, because it is Mr Williamson's running metaphor for violence—not the overt physical violence of *The Removalists* but the inner festering violence of failed, frustrated, unhappy people. It is defensible, finally, because it is very, very funny.

Katharine Brisbane on the Jane Street production, *The Australian*, 6 July 1972

Unlike most of his contemporaries [Williamson] is not a satirist but writes with an almost unshockable compassion. This motley group of people at the watershed of middle-age

have an inevitability and, not a defeat but a reconciliation to age which the older cast at Jane Street understands. The voting counts, which crackle from the television throughout the evening, capture in a single image the author's compassionate view of these friends: he shares with them their hopes, their fiery facade, their faded radicalism. None of us can alter the passage of time and we all know that the Labor Party did not win the 1969 election.

Nothing really happens at Don's party. On the surface it is a party like any other. In fact the action is full of shocks; the comedy is a gag a line.

But the sheer joy of the play lies in the people themselves: familiar, funny and real.

Kevon Kemp on the Jane Street production, *National Times*, 10–15 July 1972

On almost every level of theatre *Don's Party* is superbly effective. It is bold in form, for it forgoes almost any formal structure at all, beyond basic unity of time and place. The play simply organises itself around the actions of its characters.

Don's Party is, in origin, one of the author's own parties… and the neatly selective cast comprises a bunch of left-wing, successful graduates with a respectable accountant and wife thrown in for kicks, as it were.

Remorselessly and brilliantly the play lifts up all those ticky-tacky houses on the hillside that these people have pulled over themselves. The superior pond life thus exposed is paraded in front of us with enormously rich and Rabelaisian comic flair…

On stage any amount of coarseness can be justified; whereas vulgarity—actions and words out of tune with the situation or character, and inserted only for shock—is right out of court. Williamson's play is filled with honest coarseness. The characters have just their right coarseness. Their vocabulary thus flows inevitably, and with its own strange beauty of diction…

All of them talk, many of them with great openness and honesty, and in their talking the playwright shows us a marvellously releasing vision of what we and such people are. If any pity is established, it is by these humans themselves, their touching humanity, their liability to sustain hurt.

I don't think Williamson has any special compassion about it all. Here they are, objective specimens of this current Australian society. Society is his target. He is saying—underneath all the gigantic laughter at his players' strip-show—what an extraordinary new world this is that has such people in it.

Julitha Dent on the Jane Street production, *The Review*, 15–21 July 1972

Don's juice-freak wife-swapping party is one of those sham celebrations that you may not have been lucky enough to avoid five years ago, running the full gamut of social stereotypes, pseudointellectual, nymphomaniac Lonely Heart Club Band little liberals and the like—the new breed of university-educated Alfs, for the taste of whom this play might well have been written.

That bourgeois life has been reduced to an increasing obsession with the urbane and banal is no justification for dragging theatre down with it. Blurted images of people bound in fragmented linguistic and social patterns have become the accepted modern dramatic idiom…

We cannot possibly deceive ourselves that because we are now producing material acceptable to the Royal Court, that Australian drama has arrived, or as Kippax (*SMH*) asserts, 'we have an Australian drama, and it's doing very nicely thank you' with inflections of provincial pride; and further, that Mr Williamson 'is one of the best [playwrights] in the world'—of this already dead but unfortunately not yet forgotten genre…

This particular play was approached in the well-tried traditional manner, nothing about it spectacularly good or bad: just enough generic candour to leave one cold.

While some waste their time arguing the defensibility of its dirt, must we be content to be subjected to this continual rehashing of idioms of the Fifties instead of trying to raise drama out of this rut of irrelevance, so that one can go to a play without coming away totally unmoved, muttering 'not again, not again!'.

We could all go to a better (or worse) party any night of the week. If we could be bothered.

Brian Hoad on the transfer from Jane Street to the Old Tote Company's Parade Theatre, Sydney, *Bulletin*, 30 September 1972

But with David Williamson's *Don's Party* the cruelties of the overexuberant beginnings [of Australian drama in the late Sixties] are passing. The basic ingredients are the same. All the flaws of Australian life are present and correct. Yet they are viewed through the cool, clear, quizzical eyes of a born humorist who is too intrigued with life as it is to want to change it. So out goes the bitterness, the didacticism, the cynicism and the pretence, and in comes the warmth of humanity…

In many ways it is the world of Chekhov—a play about states of mind, about the moods beneath the words. The eleven characters have more or less equal parts to play, more or less equal claims on the audience's attention; it is the complex interaction of the many voices which creates the play, which is a play not about action but about the emotional accompaniment to action.

Like Chekhov it makes no demands on you. It is offering no particular line in moral or human values. You can take it lightly and superficially if you like… ; or you can enjoy it as a moody drama of inaction… ; or you can see it as the purest form of comedy—that which lies on the other side of tragedy. Whichever way you look at it, it cannot fail to warm the heart.

Don's Party is rooted in parochialism (as Chekhov was), but because it is dealing with people beneath the skin it is filled with more universal insights (as Chekhov again). Perhaps, too, the same sort of insights; perhaps something in common between two societies apparently so separated in space and time.

Margaret Smith on the Parade Theatre season, *Nation Review*, 11–17 November 1972

Don's Party seems to be demythologising our society of any sense of greatness. The social criticism of the play presents a mainstream society that is particularly mediocre. People have their ups and downs and have the ability to be resilient. According to this critique Australians do not have their great heights of joys and their great tragedies. They just flow along oscillating between ups and downs in a great stream of mediocrity. But perhaps this is sadder than a great tragedy, because it seems to suggest that Australians deny themselves real feeling and experience in life—they just take it as it comes and 'give it a go'.

David Thorpe in Melbourne on the national tour of the Sydney production, *Nation Review*, 11–17 May 1973

Behind its magnificent bawdiness and gross humors, its earthy language and drunken sexuality, *Don's Party* is a serious study of suburban Australia. It concerns the eroded and tarnished idealism of left-wing intellectuals caught in the mesh of a materialist society. It is a study of failure. Its poignancy stems from the desperate attempts of the characters to maintain a pose of progressiveness in a framework of mateship against all the overwhelming trivia of middle-class suburban life—children, school bills, mortgages… the lot.

Ken Healey, *Canberra Times*, 23 August 1973

Last night in the Canberra Theatre on its return to Canberra *Don's Party* demonstrated that high comedy and great tragedy share a basic element: the failure to realise in achievement some of our basic needs.

David Williamson builds good comedy on the basis of an infallible ear for the Oz vernacular, and creates superb theatre by orchestrating his dialogue from elements that trip from the tongues of likeable fits and misfits.

Tragic heroes are not a likeable lot. One may shrink from Lear, feel humbly wretched at the sight of Oedipus, even become protective toward Hamlet. But in the company of Kath, Mal, Mack, Jenny and the rest of Don's guests, one's reaction is what would be called compassion if it were possible to remain objective enough to use such dispassionate language… Without pretending to advance our understanding of Man or Humanity, spelt with capital letters, *Don's Party* holds up a wickedly articulate mirror against the flight of enamel geese on the wall of an Australian house. At a second glance it is not recognisably my own house, nor exactly yours. But I have seen most of those people at your parties. I distinctly disliked most of them then. At Don's party I recognised warmth and resilience in them which I had never noticed before.

Malcolm Pettigrove on the Old Tote's second company tour, *Canberra Times*, 30 August 1974

There is an undeniable Australianness about *Don's Party*. It is set in a Melbourne suburb on the night of the 1969 Federal elections. The election is the nominal pretext for the party. Beer is the party's medium. Ego-tripping is the party's principal game. Indifference to politics is the party's basic truth. The situation is a familiar one, and as a launching pad for all kinds of social, psychological or political investigations it could hardly be more promising. Unfortunately its possibilities are never realised. Ignition point is reached between some of the characters, but nothing of significance ever takes off.

How can it? The language and lifestyle of the characters at the party is too severely and depressingly limited, and their concern is only for themselves.

Most of us have met a Mack and a Cooley, and have shared such exchanges as:

COOLEY: Shitting, shagging, shaving. Same old routine.

MACK: Life gets a bit monotonous, doesn't it?

But most of us have met a far wider range of intellects and imaginations than Mack and Cooley represent. Even at the same party. Unfortunately we seldom move beyond Mack and Cooley's circle while we are in Williamson's company.

At times, Williamson records their language and life style so faithfully that it is difficult to tell whether he is writing a satire or a celebration of it. If his purpose is objectively to depict it, without criticism or praise, the occasional hints of satire and celebration make it difficult to tell whether or not he has succeeded.

B.A. Young on the Royal Court Theatre production, directed by Michael Blakemore, *Financial Times* (London), 6 March 1975

No doubt Mr Williamson is exposing the weakness of contemporary Australian society… but it is not enough, surely, to train a searchlight on it without some further dramatic purpose.

Should we not be given some idea why Australian middle-class society has turned out like this? Mr Williamson offers us no reason on earth for a bunch of tolerably prosperous, tolerably well-educated young people to act like savages.

[B.A. Young also said that the play was yet another demonstration that Australia need take no further steps to reduce immigration, since no decent person could possibly want to live there.]

John Elsom, *The Listener* (London), 13 March 1975

As the results drool in, the party turns cold. The women chat about the sexual performances of the men with loveless accuracy. The men, huddled by the bar, praise and punch each other. Simply as a technical feat, *Don's Party* is an exceptional play. It is very funny as a farce, with crisp dialogue, precise timing, clear but not grotesque characterisation, and that neat dovetailing of themes which looks casual but requires great craftsmanship. The jokes also fulfil two of the criteria described by Trevor Griffiths in *Comedians*, of illuminating social behaviour and prompting the desire for change. The climax of the play is not of a type associated with farce. The women just sit in an icy circle, watching their two aging campus heroes, Don and Mal, drunk and sparring, matey and brutal, rough-and-tumbling in sad adult puppydom. This scene belongs to moral comedy, deeply felt and accurate. The pulpy flesh of polite habits has been chewed away, until we are left with some brown and fly-blown cores. The Australian setting takes some pain away for British audiences, but the suspicion remains that these cores, if bandaged by different accents, might emerge as one's best friends even (a horrible thought) oneself.

3. Questions for discussion

1. Williamson has said: 'There is an awful Australian uniqueness, and for the first time the Australian theatre is getting down to the business of finding out what it is'. Does *Don's Party* find out what it is? What is it? Are the characters representative of the whole Australia, or only a limited part of our society?

2. Take one or more of the characters and try to find evidence in the play that shows their inner human sensitivity or suffering. Obviously it is there in Jenny, because she breaks down, but what about, for example, Kerry? Or Cooley?
3. Do the male characters get more sympathetic treatment than the female ones?
4. How does the opening conversation, between Don and Kath, anticipate the later gloomy degeneration of the party?
5. 'Subtext' is the word given in the theatre to what the characters really mean when they say something. For example, 'Hello!' can mean 'I'm really glad to see you' or 'Oh no, not you again' or any number of other things. Show how the characters use sociable remarks to convey a hidden meaning in, for example, the scene between Evan, Mal, Mack and Don on page 24. Why does Evan leave?
6. What does *Don's Party* show us about 'mateship' between Australian men? What does it show us about the relationships between the women, in comparison?
7. Discuss the different images of marriage in the play. Refer also to the relationship between Cooley and Susan, the only unmarried couple. Is the play anti-marriage?
8. Is *Don's Party* an objective study of society? Discuss whether it appears to approve or disapprove of the antics of its characters. Discuss different production possibilities which might make an audience approve or disapprove of them.

4. Further reading

Other published plays by David Williamson

All published by Currency Press, Sydney

After the Ball
Amigos
Birthrights/Soulmates
Brilliant Lies
The Club
Collected Plays Volume II (*The Department, A Handful of Friends, The Club* and *Travelling North*)
Dead White Males
The Department
Emerald City
Flatfoot
The Great Man/Sanctuary
Influence/Operator
The Jack Manning Trilogy (*Face to Face, A Conversation* and *Charitable Intent*)
Money and Friends
The Perfectionist
The Removalists
Siren
Sons of Cain
Third World Blues
Top Silk
Up for Grabs/Corporate Vibes

General

Fitzpatrick, Peter, *After 'The Doll': Australian Drama Since 1955*. Melbourne, Edward Arnold, 1979

Holloway, Peter (ed.), *Contemporary Australian Drama: Perspectives Since 1955*. Sydney: Currency Press, 198 1. (This book is a useful general sourcebook for Australian drama. It also has articles by Roslyn Arnold, Katharine Brisbane, Brian Kiernan, Margaret Williams and David Williamson himself which have things to say about *Don's Party*.)

Palmer, Jennifer (ed.), *Contemporary Australian Playwrights*, Adelaide, A.U.U.P., 1979. (See particularly the interviews with David Williamson and Katharine Brisbane.)

Brisbane, Katharine, *New Currents in Australian Writing*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1978
Dutton, Geoffrey (ed.), *The Literature of Australia*, Penguin, Melbourne, revised ed. 1976. (See particularly Part 1, 'Australian Drama' by Katharine Brisbane.)

Rees, Leslie, *A History of Australian Drama*, Volume II, Sydney, Angus & Robertson, 1978
Sturm, Terry, 'Drama' in *The Oxford History of Australian Literature*, (Leonie Kramer ed.), Melbourne, O.U.P., 1981

Williams, Margaret, *Drama* in Australian Writers and their Work Series, Melbourne, O.U.P., 1977
See also: 'Interview with David Williamson', *Meanjin* 2/1979, *Don's Party*: From Play to Film', *Theatre Australia*, Vol. I, no. 5 (Christmas, 1976)