

American buffalo

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American Buffalo, the drama play of David Mamet revolves around three themes; friendship, success/failure and deception. To answer the question of how does American Buffalo present friendship as an absolute good, I have taken major help from answer.com displaying many instances where friendship, loyalty, and faithfulness have been the circle of attention. When American Buffalo opens, Don is lecturing Bob on the importance of committing himself to the “business” deal they have made; Bob is supposed to be watching the target of their robbery but has instead returned to the junk shop.

Don tells him, “Action counts. Action talks and bullshit walks.” After Bob apologizes, Don protests, “Don’t tell me you’re sorry. I’m not mad at you.” What the audience learns from this remark is that Don is genuinely interested in helping Bob become more astute in the ways of their own brand of business. (Answers.com) Don’s father-figure interest in Bob is implied through the advice he offers him on a number of topics.

When he sends Bob to the diner to get coffee, he insists that he buy something for himself, since “Breakfast is the most important meal of the day”; later, he urges Bob to take vitamins. His most important lesson, however, is what he tells Bob about friendship: “There’s lotsa people on this street, Bob, they want this and they want that. Do anything to get it. You don’t have friends this life. . . .” The implied end of this sentence — “is worth nothing” — reveals the high value Don places on friendship and people protecting each other from what he calls the “garbage” of the world.

As the play proceeds, Bob is revealed to be a drug addict, frequently asking Don for money to support his habit — which Don “lends” him, preferring not

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to press him for explanations. By the end of the play, however, Don forsakes his friendship with Bob in the name of business — an action which causes him a great deal of shame, since he knows he has failed to follow his own advice. The last scene of the play shows their relationship being rebuilt and Don trying to make amends for his doubting the strength of Bob's devotion. (Answers. com)

Like Don, Teach too seems to hold up friendship as an absolute good. He enters the play cursing Ruthie, a mutual friend, for making a joke when he took a piece of toast off her plate at the diner. Her remark of " Help yourself" causes Teach to rage at her for forgetting all the times he has picked up the check. Ruthie's remark has hurt Teach because she has not lived up to the code of friendship that he assumes he embodies. (Answers. com) However, when Teach sees the chance to make " real classical money" in Don's robbery scheme, he immediately tries to talk Don into dismissing Bob.

Hiding his avarice under the guise of " good business," Teach convinces Don that Bob, although Don's friend, is not a good candidate for such an operation: " A guy can be too loyal, Don. Don't be dense on this. What are we saying here? Business. " When Don does remove Bob from the plan and their plot begins to turn awry, Teach suggests that Bob has betrayed them — a false implication which, nonetheless, is believed by Don until the final scene of the play, when he realizes that it is he who has betrayed Bob in the name of " good business.

" (Answers. com) References American Buffalo (Themes). (n. d.). Notes on Drama. Retrieved May 17, 2008, from Answers. com Web site: <http://www.answers.com/topic/american-buffalo-play-4> American Buffalo (play). (2008, <https://assignbuster.com/american-buffalo/>

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