

Australian drama assignment

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Australian playwrights use a variety of styles, techniques and conventions to present images on the stage that provoke and challenge their audiences.

Discuss with reference to your study and experience of the plays you have studied. The Australian playwrights studied this year have used a variety of styles, techniques and conventions, presenting images which provoke and challenge audiences. *The Removals* by David Williamson and *No Sugar* by Jack Davis, despite the different contexts, are concerned with power and status and the conflict which is created by intoning cultural and social values.

While Davis' *No Sugar* is set in Western Australia in the 1950s and focuses on the discrimination and racism experienced by Aboriginals, *The Removals* deals with Police corruption in the US. Despite these different contexts, both plays manipulate a range of style, techniques and conventions to create images which effectively challenge and provoke their audiences. Both plays combine a range of styles, techniques and conventions to create images which provoke and challenge the audience but the most significant dramatic technique is the deliberate and careful use of contrast in the spoken language.

The dialogue in *No Sugar* provokes the audience right from the first scene with the starting mixture of “lingo's”, “Garrulously Nosegays corroboree to a wetjila's brass band!” Here the audience is presented with an incongruous image of Aboriginals trying to do the impossible – adjust and assimilate harmoniously to the traditional music of the controlling culture. From the humorous slang of Jimmy, “Oh Jesus, me bloody leg” to the formal, platitude – style speech of Manville, “in this small orneriness of the Empire” (4.) the audience is challenged by the evident differentiation of status, education and

privilege. White language is formal and sanitized. Black language is comic, creative, angry and despairing, the humor challenging the audience to identify sympathetically with the gutsy and resilient characters. Contrasting social and cultural values are heard throughout the play, the playwright deliberately highlighting the black conditions with white.

Similarly, the open stage settings and parallel scenes juxtaposed throughout, serve to emphasize the contrasting situations. For example, (focus on three important scenes as evidence – looking at how the different elements create images for the audience) In a completely different context, David Williamson *The Removals* highlights the characters' weaknesses and vulnerabilities which reveal themselves as the tension escalates and the increasing corruption materializes, through the contrasting and unmistakable individual voices.

Simmons interrogates rather than communicating, using an apparently polite but deliberately terse and crude style, "I hope you're not a young smart Ares Ross. Ross in contrast parrots clichés, "got to be trained for all eventualities," and the Removal's repetitive, "Vie got 5000 dollars worth of machinery ticking over in the driveway", provoking the audience to reconsider the about the reliability and integrity of the Police force, the willingness of a tradesman to become involved in a crisis are challenged.

Events are presented rapidly and intensified through the form of the two single acts, the police station and the flat; the playwright building on an essentially realistic style with elements of Greek Theatre, the lenience taking place offstage, thus allowing the audience to rely on their imaginations to

create their own images of power and corruption out of control, challenging them to reconsider their ideas and assumption .

Both plays essentially rely on Realism to engage, provoke and challenge the audience while creating convincing and effective images. Although No Sugar has conventionally been staged using a Promenade form, experiments and discussions in class. (identify a staging ideas – perhaps transformational acting/ projection/ voice over – think about how well this would work as a radio play) The Removals traditionally is performed on a stage which “ breaks the fourth wall” in naturalistic style, relying on realistic and recognizable Australian stereotypes.