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MACMILLAN MODERN DRAMATISTS

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**NEW BRITISH  
POLITICAL  
DRAMATISTS**

Howard Brenton,  
David Hare,  
Trevor Griffiths  
and  
David Edgar

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**John Bull**  
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**M**  
MACMILLAN

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# Contents

<i>List of Plates</i>	vi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	viii
<i>Editors' Preface</i>	ix
<i>1968–83: A History</i>	x
1 1968 and All That: Agit-Prop or <i>Avant-Garde</i>	1
2 Howard Brenton: Portable Theatre and the Fringe	28
3 David Hare: The State of the Nation	60
4 Coming to Terms with the Seventies: Fusions	95
5 Trevor Griffiths: Strategic Dialectics	118
6 David Edgar: War on All Fronts	151
7 On the Edge of the Eighties: Developments	195
<i>Notes</i>	229
<i>Bibliography</i>	232
<i>Index</i>	239

## List of Plates

1. *Christie in Love* by Howard Brenton, Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, 1970. © Donald Cooper.
2. *Measure for Measure* by Howard Brenton and William Shakespeare, Northcott Theatre, Exeter, 1972. © Nicholas Toyne, Topsham, Devon.
3. *The Churchill Play* by Howard Brenton, Nottingham Playhouse, 1972. © Nottingham Playhouse.
4. *The Romans in Britain* by Howard Brenton, National Theatre (Olivier), 1980. © Donald Cooper.
5. *The Genius* by Howard Brenton, Royal Court Theatre, 1983. © Donald Cooper.
6. *Brassneck* by Howard Brenton and David Hare, Nottingham Playhouse, 1973. © Nottingham Playhouse.
7. *Teeth 'n' Smiles* by David Hare, Royal Court Theatre, 1975. © Donald Cooper.
8. *Fanshen* by David Hare, Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, 1975. Reproduced by kind permission of Joint Stock.
9. *Licking Hitler* by David Hare, BBC TV, 1977. © BBC.

*List of Plates*

10. *Saigon: Year of the Cat* by David Hare, Thames TV, 1983. © Thames TV.
11. *Comedians* by Trevor Griffiths, Old Vic, 1975. © Donald Cooper.
12. *Comedians*, Old Vic, 1975. © Donald Cooper.
13. *Through the Night* by Trevor Griffiths, BBC TV, 1975. © BBC.
14. *Oi! for England* by Trevor Griffiths, Central TV, April 1982. © Central Independent Television.
15. *Destiny* by David Edgar, BBC TV, December 1977. © BBC.
16. *The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs* by David Edgar, RSC Warehouse, 1978. © Donald Cooper.
17. *Mary Barnes* by David Edgar, Royal Court Theatre, 1978. © Donald Cooper.

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## Editors' Preface

The *Macmillan Modern Dramatists* is an international series of introductions to major and significant nineteenth- and twentieth-century dramatists, movements and new forms of drama in Europe, Great Britain, America and new nations such as Nigeria and Trinidad. Besides new studies of great and influential dramatists of the past, the series includes volumes on contemporary authors, recent trends in the theatre and on many dramatists, such as writers of farce, who have created theatre 'classics' while being neglected by literary criticism. The volumes in the series devoted to individual dramatists include a biography, a survey of the plays, and detailed analysis of the most significant plays, along with discussion, where relevant, of the political, social, historical and theatrical context. The authors of the volumes, who are involved with theatre as playwrights, directors, actors, teachers and critics, are concerned with the plays as theatre and discuss such matters as performance, character interpretation and staging, along with themes and contexts.

## 1968–83: A History

*1968*

- Jan Tet offensive by Viet Cong.
- Feb Following mass exodus into Britain of expelled Kenyan Asians, Bill restricting entry passed.
- Mar Mass demonstration in support of Viet Cong outside American Embassy, in Grosvenor Square.  
Lyndon Johnson decides not to restand as US President.
- Apr Assassination of Martin Luther King.  
Enoch Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech.  
Race Relations Bill receives the Royal Assent.  
Rudi Dutschke shot during demonstration in West Berlin.
- May Student demonstrations and occupations in France, later accompanied by general strike and factory-occupations. France briefly brought to a halt.

*1968–83: A History*

- Strikes and demonstrations in universities and colleges throughout Western Europe.
- June Assassination of Robert Kennedy.
- Aug Unemployment at 560,731.  
Mayor Daley's troops riot outside Democratic Convention in Chicago.  
Russian troops invade Czechoslovakia.
- Oct Prime Minister Harold Wilson and Ian Smith in talks about Rhodesia on HMS *Fearless*.  
Queen's plans to visit Argentina cancelled as a result of continuing dispute over sovereignty of the Falkland Islands.
- Nov Richard Nixon elected US President.
- 1969*
- Apr Bernadette Devlin elected MP for Mid-Ulster.
- May 100,000 workers on strike on May Day against proposed but subsequently abandoned proposals on trade-union 'reform'.
- Aug British troops into Northern Ireland.
- Oct Nationwide moratorium demonstrations in US against continuation of Vietnam War.
- 1970*
- Jan End of Nigerian Civil War.
- Mar Three 'weathermen' terrorists blown up by own bomb in New York.
- Apr US troops into Cambodia.
- May Six students killed by State Troopers at Jackson State and Kent State Universities, in aftermath of anti-war demonstrations.
- June Successful mass campaign against projected South African cricket-tour of England.  
Wilson's Labour government defeated by

*New British Political Dramatists*

- Conservatives and Edward Heath becomes Prime Minister.
- Sep Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine hijacks three aircraft in Europe.
- Salvador Allende of Chile becomes the first elected president of a Marxist government.
- Oct Pierre Laporte, Quebec Minister of Labour, kidnapped and killed by 'Quebec Liberation Front'.
- Dec Bread riots in Poland, followed by resignation of Communist Party Secretary Gomulka.
- 1971*
- Jan Nationwide demonstrations against Industrial Relations Bill.  
'Angry Brigade' bomb house of Secretary of State for Employment, Robert Carr.
- Feb Collapse of Rolls-Royce Ltd.
- June Education Minister, Margaret Thatcher, ends free milk in schools.
- 'Work-in' at Upper Clyde Shipyard.
- Aug Introduction of internment without trial in Northern Ireland.  
Industrial Relations Bill receives the Royal Assent.
- 1972*
- Jan Unemployment over 1 million.  
Strike of Britain's 280,000 miners, resulting in electricity-cuts.  
13 people killed in 'Bloody Sunday' Massacre at Londonderry, Northern Ireland.
- Feb British Embassy burnt down in Dublin.  
Miners' strike ends in victory for miners.

*1968–83: A History*

- IRA bomb kills seven people at Parachute Officers' Mess at Aldershot.
- Mar British government introduces direct rule for Northern Ireland.
- June The Watergate break-in.  
The 'Pentonville Five' imprisoned for defying the Industrial Relations Bill, but subsequently released after trade-union agitation.
- July Major bombing-campaign by IRA in Belfast, followed by British Army's 'Operation Motorman' against 'no-go' areas.
- Aug Idi Amin of Uganda announces expulsion of Ugandan Asians.
- Sep Eleven Israeli athletes killed by pro-Palestinian terrorists at Munich Olympics.
- Dec Longest criminal trial in British history ends in ten-year sentences for eight members of the 'Angry Brigade'.

*1973*

- Jan Britain joins EEC.
- Mar IRA bombs at the Old Bailey in London.
- Sep President Allende removed and killed after military coup in Chile.
- Dec Government declares 'state of emergency' during second miners' strike. Introduction of the 'three-day week' to conserve energy-supplies.

*1974*

- Feb Heath calls General Election over the 'state of emergency', and loses to the Labour Party, which forms a 'minority' government under Wilson.

*New British Political Dramatists*

- Apr End of Fascist rule in Portugal.  
May–Dec IRA bomb-campaign in England, culminating in the death of twenty-one people in Birmingham explosion.  
July The Colonels' 'Junta' ousted in Greece.  
Aug Nixon resigns in aftermath of Watergate cover-up.  
Oct General Election produces working majority for Labour Party under Wilson.  
Nov General Franco dies in Spain.  
Revolutionary government takes power in Angola.

*1975*

- Feb Heath defeated by Margaret Thatcher for leadership of Conservative Party.  
Apr Communist victory in Vietnam and Cambodia.  
May Trial of Baader–Meinhof terrorists in Stuttgart, West Germany.  
Referendum on Britain's continuing membership of the EEC results in a majority in favour.  
July Wilson introduces strict £6 per week limit on wage-rises.

*1976*

- Feb–June IRA bomb-campaign in England.  
Mar Wilson resigns as Prime Minister and is replaced by James Callaghan.  
June Soweto massacre in South Africa.  
Aug Riots at Notting Hill Festival in London.  
Sep Chairman Mao dies.  
Oct 'Gang of Four' arrested in China.

*1968–83: A History*

*1977*

- Jan Charter 77, on human rights, published by Czech dissidents.
- Mar Formation of Lib–Lab Pact.
- June Mass picketing of Grunwick film-processing plant, in support of low-paid workers, chiefly immigrants.
- Sep Steve Biko dies in detention in South Africa.
- Nov Strike by fire-brigade workers. Army mans fire-services.

*1978*

- Mar Aldo Moro, ex-Prime Minister of Italy, abducted and killed by ‘Red Brigade’.
- May Liberals announce withdrawal from Lib–Lab Pact at end of parliamentary session.
- Oct Labour Party Conference rejects all policies of wage-restraint.
- Dec Vietnamese troops invade Kampuchea.

*1979*

- Jan Co-ordinated strikes by British Public Service workers results in the ‘Winter of Discontent’. 1½ million public-service workers on twenty-four hour strike.
- Feb Shah of Iran deposed.
- Apr Near nuclear disaster at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania.  
Blair Peach dies in demonstration against the National Front in London.
- May General Election results in Conservative victory, Margaret Thatcher becoming the first woman prime minister.
- Aug Lord Mountbatten killed by the IRA.

*New British Political Dramatists*

- Nov Decision taken by Conservative government to deploy 'Cruise' missiles in Britain.
- Dec Zimbabwe National Front agrees to accept arrangements for cease-fire in Rhodesian war.  
Russian troops invade Afghanistan.

*1980*

- Jan-Mar Strike of British Steel workers.
- Apr Independence for Zimbabwe.  
Iranian Embassy siege in London.
- May Trade-union Day of Action against government's economic and industrial-relations policies.
- July US boycotts Moscow Olympics in protest against Russian invasion of Afghanistan.
- Aug Unemployment tops 2 million for first time since 1935.  
Formation of the independent trade-union, Solidarity, in Poland, in the aftermath of the Gdansk shipyard strikes.
- Sep Labour Party Conference votes for unilateral nuclear disarmament.
- Oct Callaghan resigns as Labour leader.
- Nov Ronald Reagan elected as US President.  
Michael Foot elected as leader of the Labour Party.

*1981*

- Mar Social Democratic Party formed in Britain, under the leadership of the 'Gang of Four', right-wing ex-Labour Party MPs.
- Apr Riots in Brixton, South London.  
Hunger strikes by IRA 'H' Block prisoners in Maze Prison, near Belfast. One of the strikers,



*1968–83: A History*

- Bobby Sands, elected MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone.
- May Bobby Sands dies.
- July Urban riots in Toxteth and Moss Side, followed by so-called ‘copy-cat’ riots on a smaller scale in other English cities.
- Oct British Nationality Bill receives the Royal Assent.
- Dec Imposition of martial law in Poland.  
Unemployment reaches 3 million.
- 1982*
- Apr Argentinian invasion of Falkland Islands. British task-force removes the invaders to the accompaniment of a great deal of populist jingoism in Britain.
- June Israel invades Lebanon.
- Sep Israeli-inspired massacre in Lebanese refugee-camps.  
Labour Party Conference votes to expel members of Militant Tendency.
- 1983*
- June Thatcher wins re-election with continuation of monetarist programme.
- Sep Foot resigns as leader of the Labour Party.  
Neil Kinnock elected as leader of the Labour Party.
- Oct Over 200 members of US and French ‘peace-keeping’ force in Beirut killed by pro-Palestinian terrorists in bomb attack.  
Continuing protests against nuclear weapons in Britain, principally at the Women’s Peace Camp at Greenham Common airforce base,

*New British Political Dramatists*

culminate in the largest ever anti-nuclear demonstration in London. Huge demonstrations also in West Germany, Italy, Austria, Sweden and Spain.

Marplan survey reports a majority of British people opposed to deployment of Cruise and Pershing missiles.

US troops invade Grenada.

In first general election for ten years, the Radical Party successful in Argentina.

Nov First Cruise missiles arrive at Greenham Common.

US 'peace-keeping' troops in Lebanon in virtual war with Syria.

Reagan remains firm in his intent to stand for re-election as US President.

*What does not change is the will to change*

*For Carole*