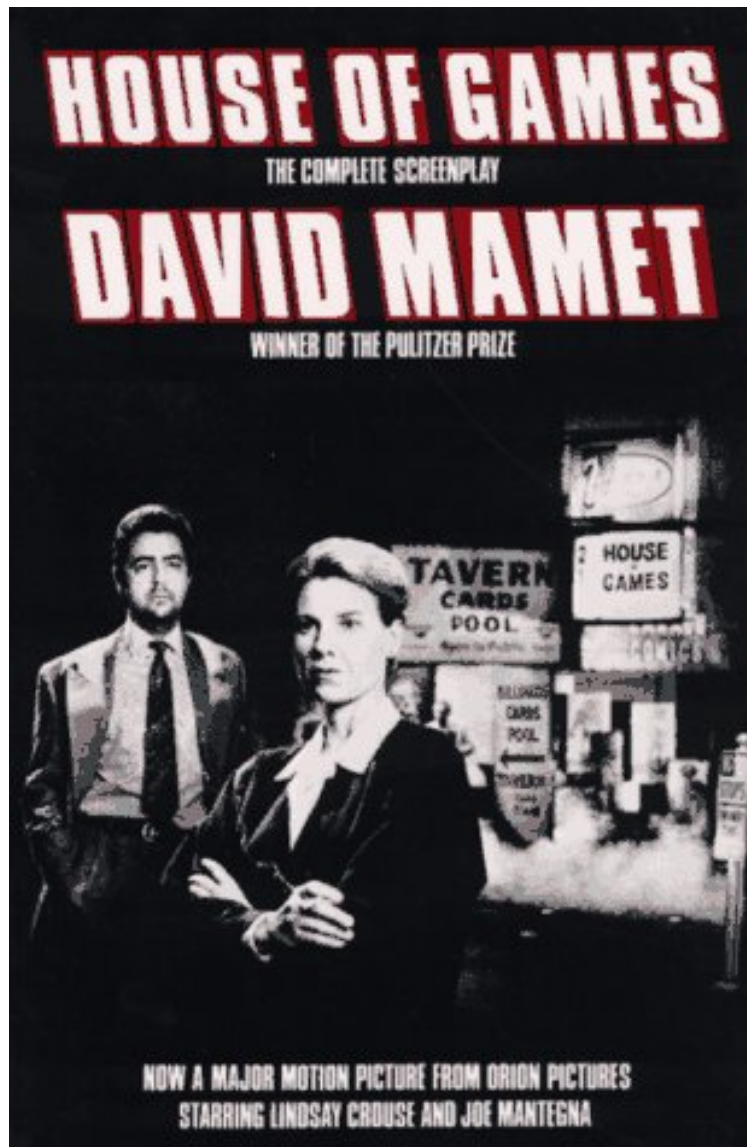


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House of Games

David Mamet

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David Mamet : House of Games before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised House of Games:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. David Mamet's Lost Classic, FoundBy Kevin L. NenstielDoctor Margaret Ford, a respected university psychologist, has recently published a book on compulsive behavior, making her clinical practice suddenly very valuable. One of her clients, a compulsive gambler named Billy, threatens suicide over an unpayable marker. Dr. Ford follows Billys trail into a sweltering den of sin called the House of Games, and

accidentally joins a gang of committed grifters, led by the romantically dangerous Mike. The original 1987 film *House of Games* marked the film directing debut of legendary Chicago theatre auteur David Mamet. It also cemented his reputation as America's contemporary master of confidence games and baroque conspiracies. The movie's robust cast and roaming locations probably reflect a director unsure whether he'd ever get a second bite of the apple, but Richard Bean's 2010 stage adaptation has a small cast and intimate two-set design. Early scenes mirror Mamet's original screen images: Dr. Ford in her office, then into the gambling den, where she pierces a penny-ante swindle. But from there, Bean's adaptation abandons Mamet's events, while maintaining his long con themes. Where Mamet spends many long scenes on Mike giving Ford a walking tour of the underworld, Bean has Mike invite her into his world. Before long, she thinks she's become one of them. Bean divides the play into ten scenes following common British theatre conventions today (this play debuted at London's Almeida Theatre), act breaks are variable for a particular theatre's needs. The transition between Margaret's clean, elevated, sunlit clinic, and Mike's sordid netherworld, plays up the way she believes she can walk between settings. She could stop events whenever she wants. She's just become addicted to class tourism. Mamet, in writing his movie, avoided getting too specific about Dr. Ford's psychological understandings. Bean prefers to make use of the science. As Margaret discovers the irrational motivators which make long cons possible, motivators which the grifters understand through experience and keen observation, she feels compelled to hang Latinate terminology on it. The need to intellectualize what others just do, illuminates themes Mamet barely, fleetingly acknowledged. This also goes toward the re-staging of Mamet's original story. Bean pretty accurately manages to recreate the speech rhythms which made Mamet famous (critics praise Mamet's fragmentary dialogue as realistic, but many theatre conservatories have dedicated courses in acting Mamet, because he's so difficult). While the grifters speak the disconnected street English Margaret's cultural prejudices demand, she uses complete sentences, unable to digest dangerous ideas apart from grammar. That makes Margaret's ultimate resolution of Mike's betrayal more satisfying than the original movie. If you haven't seen it, avert your eyes now: in the movie, Margaret uses what Mike taught her to separate him from his companions, shoot him, and get away scot-free. Satisfying, but blunt. Not here. This Margaret leaves Mike alive to face the humiliation of knowing he got out-gamed by what should've been a routine mark. Many David Mamet plays, and more recently his movies, focus on themes of class tourism. This probably reflects internalized guilt: born to middle-class Chicago Jewish comfort, Mamet nevertheless embraced a youthful fondness for risk-taking. He made and lost stacks of cash playing poker, money he could afford to gamble with in ways his fellow players often couldn't. Stories like this suggest struggles, still unresolved, with petit-bourgeois white contrition. The greater intimacy inherent in Bean's adaptation, however, actually changes Mamet's character interpretations. Margaret's journey into crime becomes something different, leading to a different payoff: rather than seeking vengeance, she finds ways to turn the tables by revealing hidden truths. By the play's conclusion, her identity has truly, irrevocably, transformed. Mamet equivocates this point, but Bean wholly declares you can't linger in the underground without getting some on you. In Bean's rendering, this story isn't about thrill-seeking and guilt. It's about how humans exist in constant community, taking pieces of our identity from one another. It's about how we rely upon trust to make even the most basic arrangements, and how even the most inveterate liars need to trust one another, at least sometimes. And it's about how, when we let others inside our defenses, they never truly leave. It takes brass to change David Mamet. As one of America's few artists who actually makes a living writing, Mamet has an influence few living craftsmen share. Yet in translating Mamet's immense, geographically sprawling story to stage confines, Bean picks out psychological implications even Mamet possibly missed. The movie and the play make interesting companion pieces. And Mamet makes audiences question who we think we are. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *House of Games*. 'I'm from the United States of Kiss My Ass'. Psychiatrists, con-men and fast-paced dialogue. By Olga NMI wrote my PhD on the Films of David Mamet. It was a few years back, but must admit that still today 'House of Games' is my favourite of his movies. I'm a psychiatrist, and Margaret, the protagonist, is a psychiatrist too. Other than that we don't share much in common, although it's easy to see why she would fall for somebody like Mike, 'the unbeatable gambler'. The Master con-man takes her into his confidence (that's what confidence tricks are about, as he explains in the movie) and ropes her in. He is a consummate actor, and Joe Mantegna is a dream in the part. The film itself was classed as neo-noir and it has all the necessary elements. The script, although can't quite capture the atmosphere and the fabulous interpretations, is a joy to read, as the dialogue is a Mamet masterpiece, in my opinion as good as any of his plays. The poker/con-game, I've shown during lectures and it is perfection itself. Do yourself a favour, buy the script and watch the movie. You'll thank me for it. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. This is not the screenplay. By Benjamin W. Smith. This is the script for the stage play, which has been updated for modern times. If you are looking for the script for the 1987 film, keep looking.

Playwright David Mamet's brilliant debut as a film director, *House of Games* is a psychological thriller in which a young woman psychiatrist falls prey to an elaborate and ingenious con game by one of her patients, who entraps her with her own subconscious connivance in a series of criminal escapades. It is a breathless roller-coaster ride of a movie that keeps springing one bizarre surprise after another, sustaining suspense with dazzling audacity. The unsuspecting audience is lured into a psychological and moral thicket of troubling implications, which bear the

unmistakable imprint of Mamet's intensely personal vision. Here is the complete screenplay of *House of Games*, with many illustrations selected from the film and an introduction by the author recounting in candid detail his experience as a first-time director.

.com This is the screenplay of the first film written and directed by David Mamet, the story of a well known psychiatrist seduced by an underworld of petty intrigue. Mamet is commonly--and wrongly--considered a writer who consistently litters his characters' speech with obscenities. There are a good number of tongue lashings in *House of Games*, but what this script really proves is that Mamet has an extraordinarily poetic grasp of human language and human psychology. Every word, every exchange counts in this twisty, suspenseful screenplay, one of those rare dramas where it is impossible to predict what will happen next.