



No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater (Theater: Theory/Text/Performance)

Angela C. Pao

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"*No Safe Spaces* opens up a conversation beyond narrow polemics . . . Although cross-racial casting has been the topic of heated discussion, little sustained scholarship addresses both the historical precedents and theoretical dimensions. Pao illustrates the tensions and contradictions inherent not only in stage representations, but also in the performance of race in everyday life. A wonderful book whose potential readership goes well beyond theater and performance scholars."

---Josephine Lee, University of Minnesota

"Non-traditional casting, increasingly practiced in American theater, is both deeply connected to our country's racial self-image(s) and woefully under-theorized. Pao takes on the practice in its entirety to disentangle the various strands of this vitally important issue."

---Karen Shimakawa, New York University

No Safe Spaces looks at one of the most radical and enduring changes introduced during the Civil Rights era--multiracial and cross-racial casting practices in American theater. The move to cast Latino/a, African American, and Asian American actors in classic stage works by and about white Europeans and Americans is viewed as both social and political gesture and artistic innovation. Nontraditionally cast productions are shown to have participated in the national dialogue about race relations and ethnic identity and served as a source of renewed creativity for the staging of the canonical repertory.

Multiracial casting is explored first through its history, then through its artistic, political, and pragmatic dimensions. Next, the book focuses on case studies from the dominant genres of contemporary American theater: classical tragedy and comedy, modern domestic drama, antirealist drama, and the Broadway musical, using a broad array of archival source materials to enhance and illuminate its arguments.

Angela C. Pao is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University.

A volume in the series Theater: Theory/Text/Performance

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