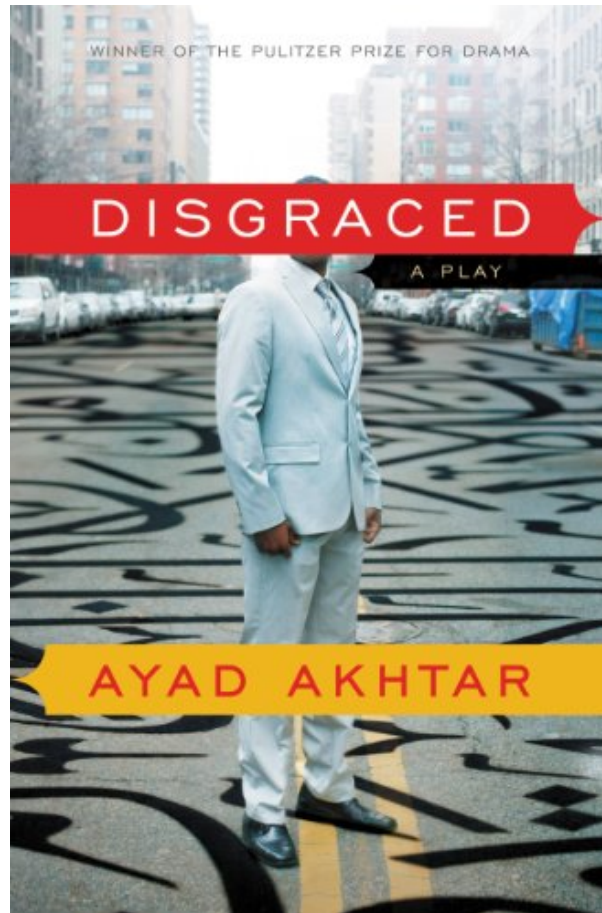
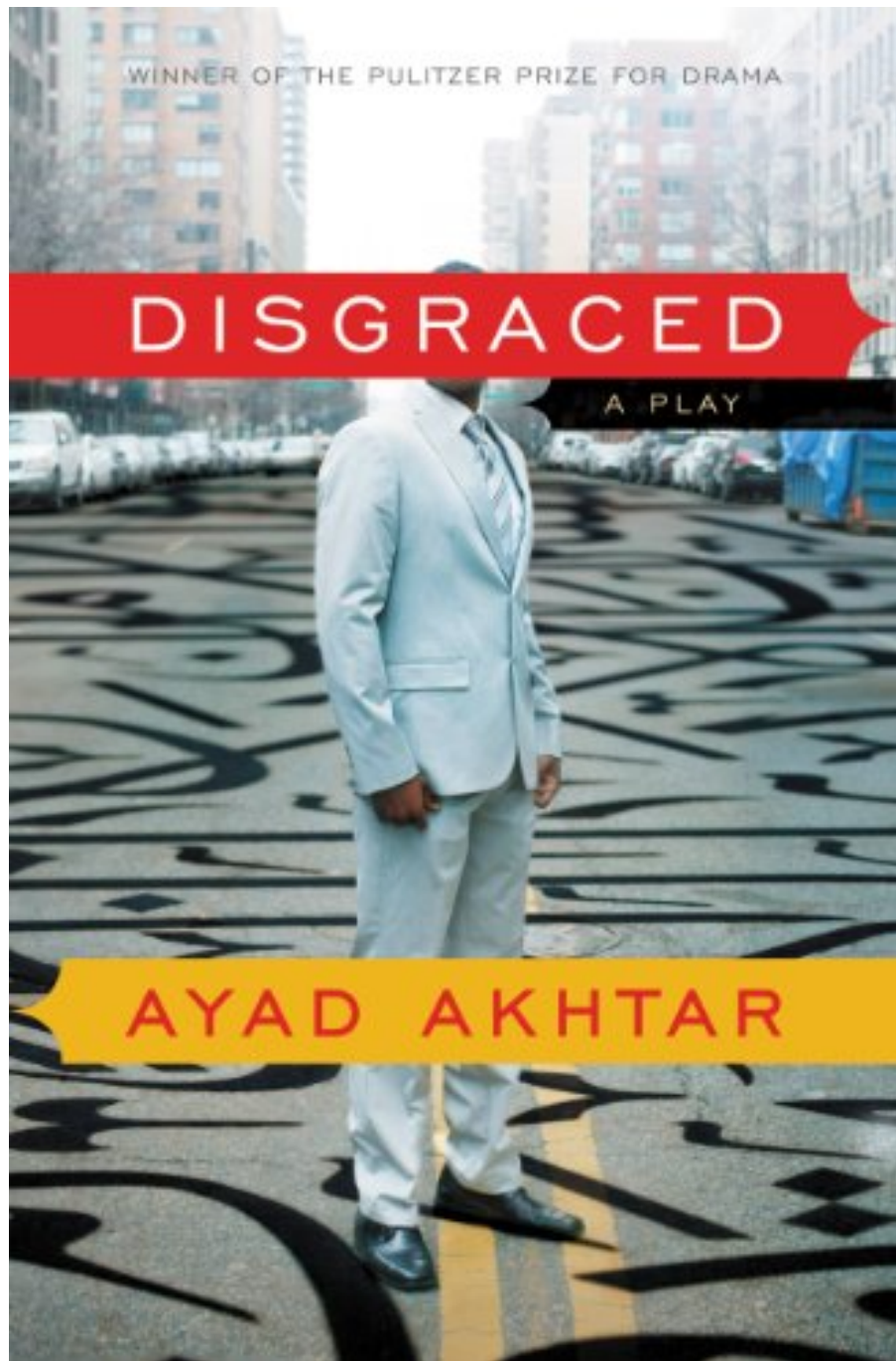


# DISGRACED: A PLAY BY AYAD AKHTAR



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#### Most helpful customer reviews

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

one of the best plays in the last decade

By Frank L. Greenagel II

Absolute deserved winner of the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for drama.

This is a 90 minute, 4 scene (1 act) play that has 5 characters that range in age from 22 to 40. They are of black, white, Jewish and Muslim backgrounds and they all currently live in New York. Questions of work, culture, love, loyalty and traditions are all discussed and exposed.

The pace of the play is excellent. There are no dead scenes or digressive moments - every word is important and impactful. The dialogue is incredible - there are moments of tenderness and humor, as well as those that will enrage some readers and make most think deeply.

Mr. Akhtar wrote an excellent essay "On Reading Plays" that appears at the beginning of this edition. He does an outstanding job explaining how reading a play is different from watching it (this is not a new sentiment, but he writes about it exquisitely).

Upon finishing the play this evening, I got on the internet and started looking for where it is playing. It is currently playing in Boston, about 250 miles from my house. I will drive up next week to see it.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Inevitable subject at a surprisingly high level

By David Seaman

Ayad Akhtar is a genius. It's atypical for a writer of novels to write a brilliant play (2012 Pulitzer for drama) that works both on the page and on the stage. "Disgraced" is an intense and powerful study of America. Many will claim that this play is about Islamophobia, and we'll talk about that, but another, perhaps deeper, element of "Disgraced" is what it means to live with nationalism in a country made entirely of immigrants.

We meet the cast—all of whom are privileged "successful" people whose ancestors come from very underprivileged circumstances. Emily is a WASP who has been "American" for generations, going back perhaps to the 17th Century. Any trace of the old country was bled from her family many generations ago. Furthermore she's a white girl whose mother is a racist, feeling strongly that America is white, European descent and as such Emily has an open mind but there's much she doesn't understand. Her failure to understand creates the catalyst that destroys everyone. Sadly, she'll never understand.

She's married to Amir, a man born in America but raised by parents who escaped India after part of it became Pakistan. Amir changed his last name so that he could fit into the high finance law firm in which he's on a partner track. He is no longer Muslim, his American accent is flawless and he wants to keep a safe distance from all things Islam. Last night a waiter saw him as a potential terrorist which upset Emily enough to ask him to pose for her newest painting. He presents himself at Airport Security rather than waiting for racial profiling. He recounts an incident as a child when his mother's hatred for Jews affects him.

His nephew, Abe, comes to ask him to speak at the trial for an imam charged as a terrorist. Abe too has changed his name and is "Americanized" though born in the Middle East, by mid play he's changed back.

Issac is a Jewish American art dealer who will give Emily her first show and they celebrate over dinner. He's a powerful man in the art world and not by coincidence his black wife will get the partnership at Amir's law firm because Amir's presence at the imam's trial makes The New York Times. During the meal they revert to their roots and centuries of conflict boil to the surface.

The play does look at Islamophobia as it's inevitable. The Taliban's goal to return to the purity of the Quran (or Koran) IS a major topic in post Nine-Eleven New York and a carefully unspoken topic in mixed company. But what's most pronounced is how much of our roots we must relinquish in order to be American.

The denouement is what happens when too much is relinquished and what occurs rivals anything Edward Albee ever wrote.

This is a great read. As with all plays you must design and stage them in your head and that is when we see the purity and truth; that is when the play comes to life and we purchase Akhtar's novel and try to find a production of "Disgraced" playing near-by. Easier done, since this play has been produced in regional theatres all over the United States and England.

This script includes an important forward regarding play reading and an interview with the playwright.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Though far from a perfect play, it's still one of the most exciting ...

By Win Goodbody

Though far from a perfect play, it's still one of the most exciting blasts of fresh air for the American theatre in years. Avoiding the dead ends of whimsy, meta self referential inside jokes, cuteness, and "magical realism", which is what most young playwrights coming out of the MFA industrial complex are taught, Akhtar has real issues to probe and he gets right to it. BTW, if you have not listened to the interview with him on the American Theatre podcast OFFSCRIPT, head over there right now! A whip smart writer.

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