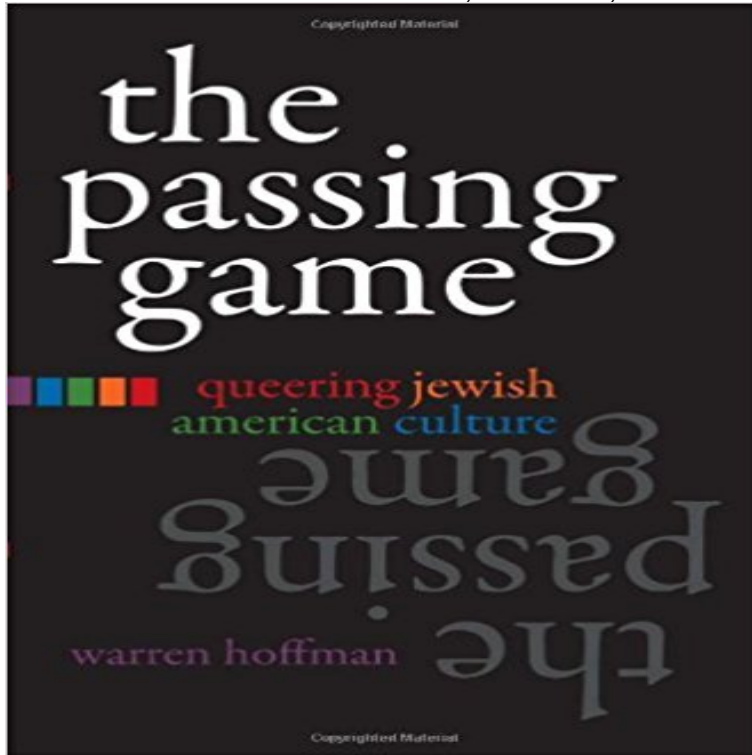


The Passing Game: Queering Jewish American Culture (Judaic Traditions in Literature, Music, and Art)



Tony Kushner's award-winning epic play *Angels in America* was remarkable not only for its sensitive engagement of Jewish- American and gay culture but also for bringing these themes to a mainstream audience. While the play represented a watershed in American theater and culture, it belies a hundred years of previous attention to queer Jewish identity in twentieth-century American literature, drama, and film. In *The Passing Game*, Warren Hoffman sheds light on this long history, taking up both Yiddish and English narratives that explore the tensions among Jewish identity, queer sexuality, performance, and American citizenship. With fresh insight Hoffman examines the 1907 Yiddish play *God of Vengeance* by Sholem Asch, the cross-dressing films of Yiddish actress Molly Picon, and several short stories by Isaac Bashevis Singer. He also analyzes the English-language novels *The Rise of David Levinsky* (Abraham Cahan), *Wasteland* (Jo Sinclair), and *Portnoy's Complaint* (Phillip Roth). Hoffman highlights the ways in which the characters in these canonical texts attempt to pass as white, straight, and American in the early and mid-twentieth century. This pioneering work is a welcome contribution to the study of Jewish American literature and culture.

No. 20, Fall 2010 of *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Womens Studies* *The Passing Game: Queering Jewish American Culture* Judaic Traditions in Literature, Music, and Art (review). pp. 167-171. Rachael Kamel. [html](#) [icon](#) [HTML](#) [pdf](#)
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