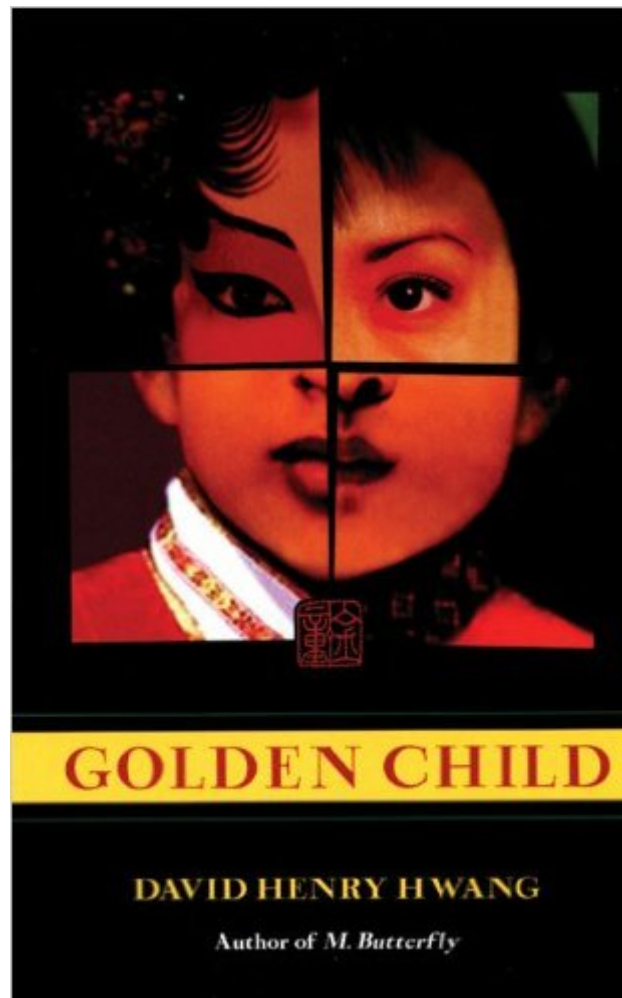


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# Golden Child



## Synopsis

A vivid, moving play in perfect command of its eternal theme of family and change. • Wall Street Journal • Written with insight, compassion, and a sharp eye for the unintended consequences of clashing cultures, Golden Child is one of Hwang's best works, as entertaining as it is thought-provoking. • Backstage David Henry Hwang draws on the true stories told to him by his grandmother of his great-grandfather's break with Confucian tradition by his conversion to Christianity, and the eventual unbinding of his daughter's feet. A skillfully-told story that engages the emotions as well as the brain, • Golden Child explores the impact of these decisions on each of his great-grandfather's three wives, and succeeding generations (Entertainment Focus). David Henry Hwang is the author of the Tony Award-winning M. Butterfly, Yellow Face (OBIE Award, 2008 Pulitzer Prize finalist), Golden Child (1997 OBIE Award), FOB (1981 OBIE Award), Family Devotions (Drama Desk nomination), and the books for musicals Aida (co-author), Flower Drum Song (2002 Broadway revival), and Tarzan, among other works. David Henry Hwang graduated from Stanford University, attended the Yale School of Drama, and holds honorary degrees from Columbia College in Chicago and The American Conservatory Theatre. He lives in New York City with his wife, actress Kathryn Layng, and their children, Noah David and Eva Veanne.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you liked the segments of the film "The Joy Luck Club" which took place in China, you'll love

David Henry Hwang's play "Golden Child." Although Hwang is probably better known for his play "M. Butterfly," "Golden Child" is a remarkable piece of writing which deserves attention. According to the production history included in the book version, an early version of "Golden Child" premiered in 1996, and a later version was presented at Broadway's Longacre Theatre in 1998. But "Golden Child" is also one of those plays which succeeds purely as a readers' text. "Golden Child" opens with Andrew, a Westernized man of Chinese heritage, who is visited by the ghost of his Chinese-born mother. This brief prologue leads to the story of his mother's girlhood in China. We meet Andrew's grandfather, Tieng-Bin; Tieng-Bin's three wives; and the Western clergyman who seeks to convert them to Christianity. "Golden Child" is a thought-provoking exploration of family life and cross-cultural contact. There is both humor and tragedy in the dialogue. The story addresses such topics as polygamy, foot-binding, ancestor worship, and opium use in traditional Chinese culture. Hwang's ironic portrayal of the politics of "conversion" may be a revelation to those Western Christians who harbor romantic, idealistic notions about bringing the "light" to non-European peoples. I was very impressed with Hwang's writing, and I highly recommend "Golden Child."

I will never understand why this play tanked in New York. It is a simple, elegant tale about assimilation and familial dysfunction. David Henry Hwang is a masterful writer, and this is some of his best work. The only weakness is its ending, which falls a little flat as a character (who is clearly the author) explains the entire point, as if the audience missed it. Although this (like most of his work) is about Chinese, it should be read by people of all walks of life.

I don't normally read plays. I always feel as if I will be missing something by reading the script rather than seeing it performed. After reading David Henry Hwang's "Golden Child", however, I am hoping that I will one day have the opportunity to see this play in person. Hwang mentions in the introduction that "Golden Child" underwent several rewrites until the final draft was completed. The end product, to me, is utterly flawless. A perfect mesh of comedy and tragedy unfolds as Hwang confronts the effects a man's conversion to Christianity has in early 20th century China. A very captivating read, I highly recommend David Henry Hwang's "Golden Child".

I saw this play performed at the Pershing Square Signature Center in New York City and bought the book at the Signature bookstore. I think having a bookstore in a theater is a great idea! So after reading the book I found that the framing device used in the production I saw must be new. The framing device that was added is hinted at in the introduction, the descent of Eng Tieng-Bin

uses a tape recorder to record the oral history of Eng Ahn.

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