(Download pdf) Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics

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Lisa Lowe
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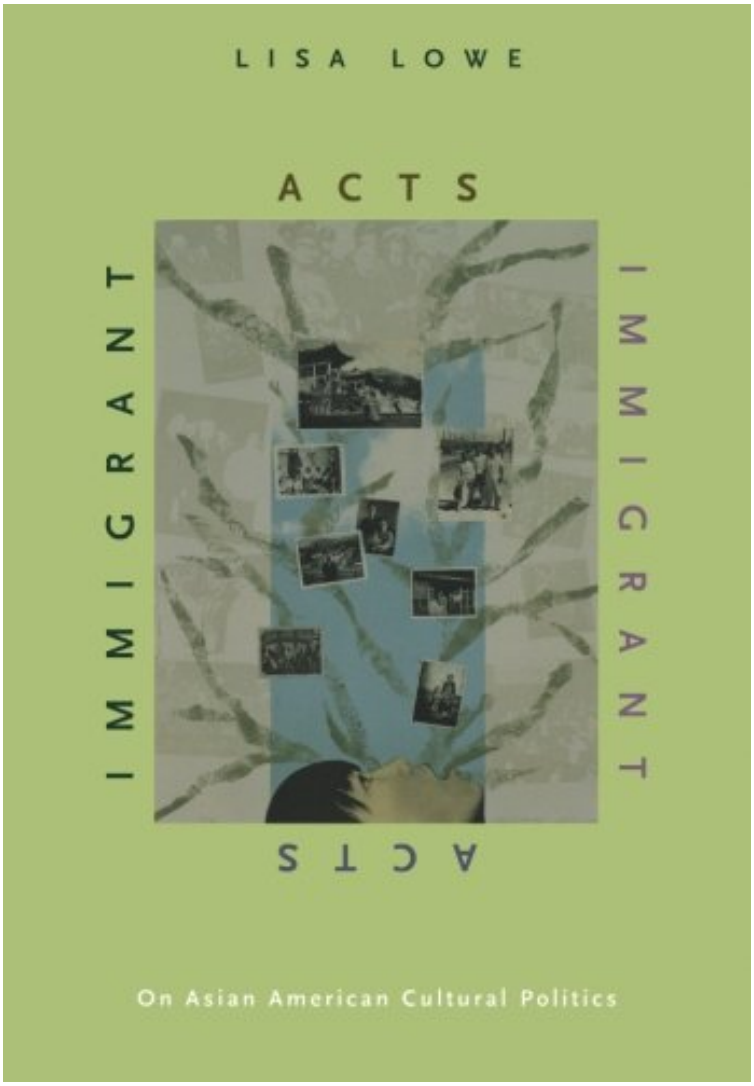

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#221478 in Books 1996-10-21 1996-10-21Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .68 x 6.25l, .94 #File Name: 0822318644272 pages | File size: 61.Mb

Lisa Lowe : Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics:

11 of 19 people found the following review helpful. An indispensable text of US identity politics, and yet...By Rob WilsonImmigrant Acts performs its own multiple acts of immigration, assimilation, suablternization in sophisticated and probing ways that would unite a Gramscian problematic of class and place with a more professional concern with identity politics in ethnic studies and Asian American racialization patterns. While I might want to argue with the will to theorize and include diverse forms of decolonization and resistance that do not fit this racial calculus of abjected othering, still, this book is an indispensable text of US identity politics in this era of maximal globalization and

localization for the Pax Americana. The chapter on beloved T. Cha remains incredibly good, the historicized reminder of immigrant acts of rejection directed against the Chinese then and Mexicans and Vietnamese now haunts any easy vision of US liberal tolerance and multicultural peace. I need this book, Mr. President, even when I hate it and love it and get locked into its hyper-textual terms (one sign of textual power, that, the displacement of the reader). I am no immigrant act myself, just a Scottish Italian half-poet,but am working overtime out here in Asia/Pacific waters off the coast of California and Taiwan and need to study the main moves. My praise is superfluous at this point, and the indigenous struggles go on far from the immigrant acts of assimilation textual resistance. The US nation wobbles, not a bit.20 of 23 people found the following review helpful. academically rigorous, and perhaps not an intro text?By K DogWith so many negative reviews of this book, I feel the need to give some context.About the difficulty of the language: first, those reading this text should note that you will be entering mid-stream into an academic conversation already taking place between marxism, poststructuralism, feminism and Asian American cultural politics (among other strands of thought). Academic language at its best helps us conceptualize in new ways, and like any language, we need to learn it.Second, as readers we should also be careful to not project what might be our own anti-intellectualism onto the texts we read. There are reasons why this book is a classic Asian American Studies text. Stick with it, and familiarize yourself with the different theoretical frameworks that are woven into it. There are many theoretical and practical insights to be gained from Lowe's work that are relevant to thinking about Asian American cultural politics.16 of 26 people found the following review helpful. Sophisticated scholarship but of questionable utilityBy A CustomerLowe is clearly a talented scholar with an expansive range of analytical capabilities. Importantly, she shows that Asian American culture reveals the racial contradictions of "American" ideologies that posit such notions of "abstract citizenship" and "abstract labor." Put another way, the Asian American experience cannot be "read" or approached in the same way as the normative white experience. However, this book is of questionable relevance because it is not at all clear who her audience is. My hunch is that she is specifically addressing Asian American scholars, and this often reads as an advocacy to bring a certain sensibility and form to the scholarship. While Lowe seems convinced to have her finger on the pulse of the Asian American experience and culture, the language is rather pretentious and inflated, and her chosen texts for analysis are of questionable value leading one to question whether or not Lowe really understands the "Asian American experience" (if such a thing can be captured as a totality) or is merely an ivory tower pedant producing ethnic literature whose readership and resonance will not extend beyond her scholarly clique.

In Immigrant Acts, Lisa Lowe argues that understanding Asian immigration to the United States is fundamental to understanding the racialized economic and political foundations of the nation. Lowe discusses the contradictions whereby Asians have been included in the workplaces and markets of the U.S. nation-state, yet, through exclusion laws and bars from citizenship, have been distanced from the terrain of national culture.Lowe argues that a national memory haunts the conception of Asian American, persisting beyond the repeal of individual laws and sustained by U.S. wars in Asia, in which the Asian is seen as the perpetual immigrant, as the foreigner-within. In Immigrant Acts, she argues that rather than attesting to the absorption of cultural difference into the universality of the national political sphere, the Asian immigrantat odds with the cultural, racial, and linguistic forms of the nationdisplaces the temporality of assimilation. Distance from the American national culture constitutes Asian American culture as an alternative site that produces cultural forms materially and aesthetically in contradiction with the institutions of citizenship and national identity. Rather than a sign of a failed integration of Asians into the American cultural sphere, this critique preserves and opens up different possibilities for political practice and coalition across racial and national borders.In this uniquely interdisciplinary study, Lowe examines the historical, political, cultural, and aesthetic meanings of immigration in relation to Asian Americans. Extending the range of Asian American critique, Immigrant Acts will interest readers concerned with race and ethnicity in the United States, American cultures, immigration, and transnationalism.

Immigrant Acts is a compelling and persuasively written presentation of Asian American cultural production. It is both an exciting and instructive volume.Barbara Harlow, The University of Texas at Austin