

Locating Filipino Americans: Ethnicity and the Cultural Politics of Space, by **Rick Bonus**. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2000. 248 pp. \$59.50 cloth. ISBN: 1-56639-778-2. \$19.95 paper. ISBN: 1-56639-779-0.

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In *Locating Filipino Americans*, Rick Bonus argues that contemporary Filipino American community formations are intimately tied to specific public spaces. Based on fieldwork conducted between 1992 and 1995 in Los

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Angeles and San Diego counties, which included over eighty interviews primarily with first generation Filipino immigrants, and that focused on the public spaces of Oriental stores, community halls, and ethnic newspapers, Bonus analyzes how these spaces serve not only as arenas for the display of Filipino American ethnic identities, but also as sites that constitute these identities. Influenced by current scholarship that highlights the dynamics (as opposed to the static and bounded nature) of race, ethnicity, culture, and identity, Bonus argues against the notion of a singular Filipino American identity by emphasizing the "articulations of Filipino American identities in specific times and places" (p. 4). In doing so, Bonus takes seriously temporal as well as spatial change, and he situates Filipino American identities in the historical context of the colonial relationship between the Philippines and the United States and the resultant migrant flows that this unique history helped to shape throughout the twentieth century.

While Bonus consistently stresses the class, regional, generational and gender diversity among Filipino Americans, he also claims that they share collective notions of their identity as racialized subjects in the United States. In Oriental stores wholly or partly owned by Filipino Americans, in community centers where their organizations convene, and in their ethnic newspapers, Filipino Americans position themselves as a vital part of America, although the nation has historically relegated most of them to work in the lower sectors of the American service economy and, in more contemporary times, continues to racialize, marginalize, and exclude them from mainstream society as inferior strangers. The interviews reveal that Filipino American ownership or active participation in these spaces serves as a response to American exclusion, as well as a strategic source of economic and political survival and pride. In making this argument, Bonus sensitively treats these Filipino Americans as agents who contest the historical forces of U.S. colonialism, racialization, and labor exploitation, but at the same time desire to be included in the nation as Americans as well as Filipinos. Placing these desires in the context of larger debates about American immigration and citizenship, Bonus makes the important argument that Filipino Americans want to be included as Americans on their

own terms and in a different way, one that rejects assimilation and its erasure of their Filipino identities.

Locating Filipino Americans is a generative work that speaks to larger debates about American immigration, citizenship, race, and ethnicity, and makes good multidisciplinary use of current theories regarding space and identity. Although Bonus does not delve into areas of future research, his book provides a starting point for much needed work on community formations among second generation Filipino Americans and Filipino Americans in areas outside of Southern California. Bonus interviewed fifteen second generation Filipino Americans for this study, but he admits they were not his primary focus. Do public spaces such as pool halls and music and dance clubs frequented by Filipino American youth similarly help to shape collective Filipino American identities? What is the relationship between space and Filipino American community formations in areas outside of Southern California where the numbers of Filipino Americans are not as high?

With its clear and accessible writing style and a chapter that provides the reader with an introductory overview of Filipino immigration to the United States throughout the twentieth century, *Locating Filipino Americans* is an original work that will be most useful to students of Asian American Studies, American race and ethnicity, and contemporary immigration.