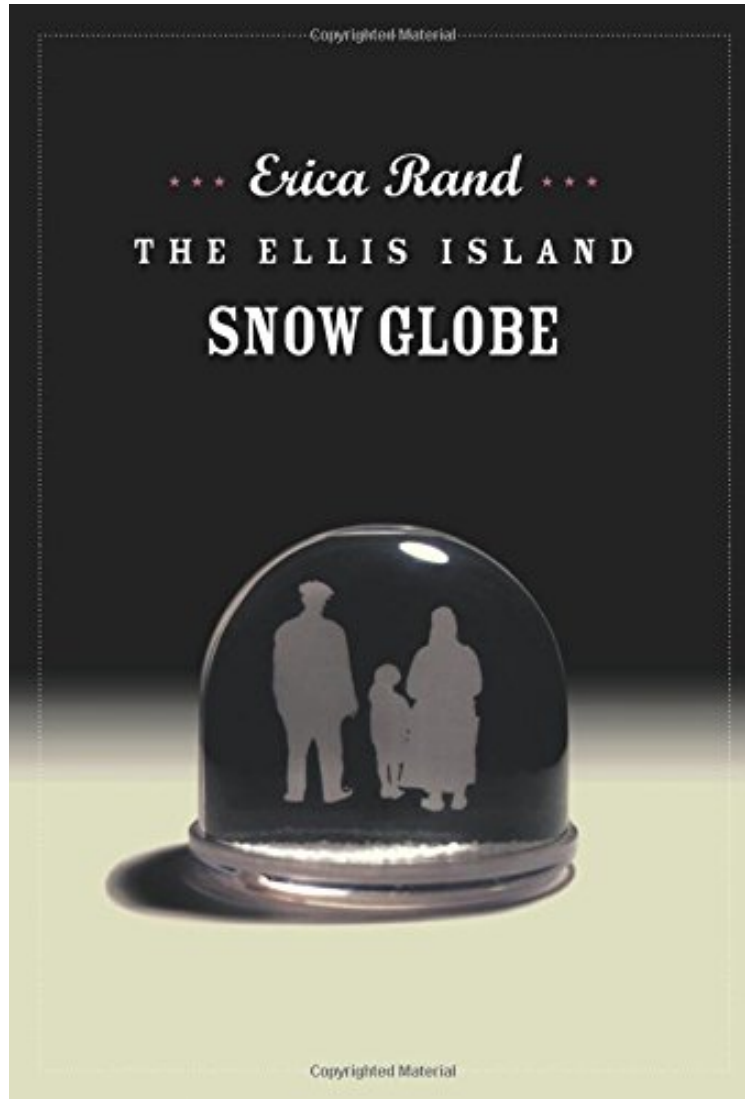


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Erica Rand

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Erica Rand : The Ellis Island Snow Globe (a John Hope Franklin Center Book) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ellis Island Snow Globe (a John Hope Franklin Center Book):

In The Ellis Island Snow Globe, Erica Rand, author of the smart and entertaining book *Barbies Queer Accessories*, takes readers on an unconventional tour of Ellis Island, the migration station turned heritage museum, and its neighbor,

the Statue of Liberty. By pausing to reflect on what is and is not on display at these two iconic national monuments, Rand focuses attention on whose heritage is honored and whose obscured. She also reveals the shifting connections between sex, money, material products, and ideas of the nation in everything from the ostensible father-mother-child configuration on an Ellis Island golf ball purchased at the gift shop to the multi-million dollar July 4, 1986 Liberty Weekend extravaganza celebrating the Statues centennial just days after the Supreme Courts un-Libertylike decision upholding the antisodomy laws challenged in *Bowers v. Hardwick*. Rand notes that portrayals of the Statue of Liberty as a beacon for immigrants tend to suppress the Statues connections to people brought to this country by force. She examines what happened to migrants at Ellis Island whose bodies did not match the gender suggested by the clothing they wore. In light of contemporary ideas about safety and security, she examines the Decide an Immigrants Fate program, which has visitors to Ellis Island act as a 1910 board of inspectors hearing the appeal of an immigrant about to be excluded from the country. Rand is a witty, insightful, and open-minded tour guide, able to synthesize numerous diverse ideas about tourism, immigration history, sexuality, race, ethnicity, commodity culture, and global capitalism and to candidly convey her delight in her Ellis Island snow globe. And pen. And lighter. And back scratcher. And golf ball. And glittery pink key chain.

From Booklist Cultural critic Rand takes an unusual and provocative approach to assessing the mythology that has coalesced around Ellis Island. Closed in 1954, then restored in the 1980s as a heritage museum, Ellis Island is now a tourist mecca, gift shop and all. Rand anchors her deconstruction of easy assumptions regarding the "huddled masses" to analyses of the souvenirs offered for sale, which include Ellis Island snow globes, back scratchers, pens, and golf balls. Her study of kitsch leads to an extended inquiry into the commercialization of the site, but Rand, writing from a queer studies perspective, also outs neglected issues of sexuality and race. Accordingly, she presents evidence of prostitution and homosexuality, and compares the "heroic" (read white) immigrants of the past with perceptions of today's illegal aliens of color. Aside from patches of academic jargon and ludicrous language (she refers to heterosexual couples with children as "breeders" and the Statue of Liberty as "one hot butch"), Rand's grappling with complex questions of social justice, image, and products is gutsy and fascinating. Donna Seaman Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved The Ellis Island Snow Globe is a wonderfully creative, playful, and serious piece of scholarship. Demonstrating that pleasure and critique need not be incompatible, Erica Rand offers not only a model for thinking about contemporary capitalism but a way to live in it. Miranda Joseph, author of *Against the Romance of Community*