

Study Guide for Henry David Huang's Butterfly

Henry David Huang's *Butterfly* is a classic work of Chinese American literature that tells the story of a young Chinese woman who immigrates to the United States in search of a better life. The novel follows her as she struggles to adapt to her new surroundings, while also dealing with the challenges of her own past.

The Study Guide for Henry David Huang's *Butterfly* is an invaluable resource for students studying this novel. The guide provides a comprehensive overview of the novel, including its historical and cultural context, its major themes, and its literary techniques. It also includes a detailed analysis of each character, as well as discussion questions and essay prompts.

Butterfly is set against the backdrop of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which was passed in 1882 and prohibited Chinese immigration to the United States for ten years. The act was a response to the growing anti-Chinese sentiment in the United States, which was fueled by fears that Chinese immigrants were taking jobs from American workers.



Study Guide for Henry David Huang's *M. Butterfly* (Course Hero Study Guides) by Course Hero

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1641 KB

Print length: 24 pages

Lending : Enabled



The Chinese Exclusion Act had a profound impact on the lives of Chinese Americans. Many Chinese immigrants were forced to return to China, while others were forced to live in hiding. The act also made it difficult for Chinese Americans to become citizens and to bring their families to the United States.

Butterfly tells the story of one Chinese woman who immigrated to the United States despite the Chinese Exclusion Act. The novel follows her as she struggles to adapt to her new surroundings, while also dealing with the challenges of her own past.

The Study Guide for Henry David Huang's *Butterfly* identifies several major themes in the novel, including:

- **The immigrant experience:** *Butterfly* tells the story of a young Chinese woman who immigrates to the United States in search of a better life. The novel follows her as she struggles to adapt to her new surroundings, while also dealing with the challenges of her own past.
- **The Chinese American experience:** *Butterfly* is set against the backdrop of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which made it difficult for Chinese Americans to become citizens and to bring their families to the United States. The novel tells the story of one Chinese woman who immigrated to the United States despite the act, and it follows her as she struggles to build a new life for herself.
- **The search for identity:** *Butterfly* is a story about a young woman who is searching for her identity. She is a Chinese American, but she is

also an immigrant, and she is struggling to find her place in the world. The novel follows her as she explores her different identities and tries to find a sense of belonging.

Huang uses a variety of literary techniques in *Butterfly*, including:

- **Foreshadowing:** Huang uses foreshadowing to hint at events that will happen later in the novel. This creates a sense of suspense and anticipation, and it helps to keep the reader engaged in the story.
- **Symbolism:** Huang uses symbolism to represent different things in the novel. For example, the butterfly is a symbol of hope and freedom. It represents the young woman's dreams of a better life in the United States.
- **Imagery:** Huang uses imagery to create vivid and memorable images in the reader's mind. For example, he describes the young woman's journey to the United States in great detail, using vivid language that helps the reader to imagine the sights and sounds of her journey.

The Study Guide for Henry David Huang's *Butterfly* includes a detailed analysis of each character in the novel, including:

- **Lena Chow:** Lena is the protagonist of the novel. She is a young Chinese woman who immigrates to the United States in search of a better life. She is a strong and determined woman, but she is also struggling to adapt to her new surroundings and to deal with the challenges of her own past.
- **Dr. Mark Jenkins:** Dr. Jenkins is a doctor who helps Lena when she arrives in the United States. He is a kind and compassionate man, and

he is committed to helping Lena build a new life for herself.

- **Mr. Fong:** Mr. Fong is a Chinese American businessman who helps Lena get a job. He is a successful and respected man, and he is committed to helping other Chinese Americans succeed.
- **Mrs. Fong:** Mrs. Fong is Mr. Fong's wife. She is a kind and supportive woman, and she is always willing to help Lena.

The Study Guide for Henry David Huang's *Butterfly* includes a number of discussion questions that can be used to spark discussion in the classroom. These questions include:

- What is the significance of the Chinese Exclusion Act to the novel?
- How does Lena's experience as an immigrant shape her character?
- What are the major challenges that Lena faces in the United States?
- How does Dr. Jenkins help Lena to overcome these challenges?
- What is the significance of the butterfly as a symbol in the novel?

The Study Guide for Henry David Huang's *Butterfly* also includes a number of essay prompts that can be used for writing assignments. These prompts include:

- Discuss the significance of the Chinese Exclusion Act to the novel.
- Analyze the character of Lena Chow.
- Discuss the role of Dr. Jenkins in the novel.
- Analyze the symbolism of the butterfly in the novel.

- Compare and contrast the experiences of Chinese American immigrants in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with those of Chinese American immigrants today.

The Study Guide for Henry David Huang's *Butterfly* is an invaluable resource for students studying this classic work of Chinese American literature. The guide provides a comprehensive overview of the novel, including its historical and cultural context, its major themes, and its literary techniques. It also includes a detailed analysis of each character, as well as discussion questions and essay prompts.



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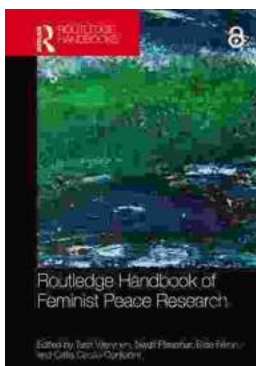
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