

THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT

1 x 60, 2 x 60 HD



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CONTACT

Tom Koch, Vice President
PBS International
10 Guest Street
Boston, MA 02135 USA

TEL: +1.617.208.0735

jtkoch@pbs.org
pbsinternational.org

On May 6, 1882—the eve of the greatest wave of immigration in American history—President Chester A. Arthur signed into law a unique piece of federal legislation, called the Chinese Exclusion Act. It singled out by name and race a single nationality for special treatment, making it illegal for Chinese laborers to enter America on pain of imprisonment and for Chinese nationals ever to become citizens of the United States.

The Chinese Exclusion Act explores in riveting detail this little known, yet deeply resonant and revealing episode—one that sheds enormous light on key aspects of the history of American civil liberties, immigration and culture—during one of the most formative periods of history.

The film examines the economic, cultural, social, legal, racial and political dimensions of the law, the forces and events that gave rise to the act, and the effect it has had, and continues to have, on American culture and identity.

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

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CREDITS

Directors: Ric Burns & Li-Shin Yu

Writers: Ric Burns with Robin Espinola

Producers: Li-Shin Yu, Robin Espinola, Ric Burns

Image: Ric Burns, Steeplechase Films



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