

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910971456203321
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Titolo	Identity and identification in India : defining the disadvantaged / / Laura Dudley Jenkins
Pubbl/distr/stampa	London ; ; New York, : RoutledgeCurzon, 2003
ISBN	1-280-07496-5 0-203-40193-X 0-415-29680-3
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	266 p. : ill
Disciplina	305.5/122/0954
Soggetti	Social classes - India Caste - India Group identity - India
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [235]-255) and index.
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Sommario/riassunto

Can a state empower its citizens by classifying them? Or do reservation policies reinforce the very categories they are meant to eradicate? Indian reservation policies on government jobs, legislative seats and university admissions for disadvantaged groups, like affirmative action policies elsewhere, are based on the premise that recognizing group distinctions in society is necessary to subvert these distinctions. Yet the official identification of eligible groups has unintended side-effects on identity politics. Bridging theories which emphasize the fluidity of identities and those which highlight the utility of group-based mobilizations and policies, this book exposes didactic enforcement of categorizations, while recognizing the social and political gains facilitated by group-based strategies.
