

**PLDV 100m: Los Angeles, The Enduring Pueblo**  
4 units, Diversity Requirement, Spring 1999

**Instructors:** Associate Prof. David Sloane, TA: Todd Gish

**Time and Classroom:** 8:30-10:00 Monday and Wednesday, MRF 340

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:**

Until very recently, when most Americans thought of Los Angeles, they did not image a multiracial metropolis. Instead, Hollywood's portrait of LA shaped their imagination with visions of Jack Webb, the Nelson family, Beaver and his brother, the Brady Bunch, and Donna Reed. The view was black and white, and not just in the early days before color television. Blacks, especially after the catastrophic Watts Revolt (or Riot, depending upon your perspective), were intruders into the suburban dream of Los Angeles. The Japanese, Chinese, and most remarkably of all, the Mexicans and other Latinos, were virtually invisible.

The city's history is often told in a similar manner. That's too bad since it means that some of the most fascinating history of the city, and its economic, cultural and political growth, is ignored or obscured. This course attempts to recapture some of that history, providing students with a more comprehensive history of the city and the region by looking at the interplay between the people who built Los Angeles. The story is at times tragic and painful, at others inspirational. Throughout that history is the foundation for today's city, with its opportunities and challenges.

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND READINGS: (All readings are required)**

Himes, Chester. If He Hollers Let Him Go. New York, 1945, 1986.

Martinez, Ruben. The Other Side: Notes from the New L.A., Mexico City, and Beyond. New York, 1992.

McWilliams, Carey. Southern California: An Island on the Land. Salt Lake City, 1946, 1973.

PLDV 100 Reader: Woolsey, Rodriguez, Takaki, Adler, Davis, Sabagh and Bozorgmehr, Hondagneu-Sotelo, George, Day, among others. Available at Magic Machine, in University Village.

Sánchez, George, Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

**COURSE FORMAT**

The course meets twice a week. Mondays will almost always be a lecture day, with Wednesdays used for lectures and for discussions. Class participation is expected every day, not just during formal discussions. Attendance is mandatory. I take roll every day so that I can get to know your names, so I do know who is around.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

Your grade will be determined by a combination of attendance, participation, and the timely and effective completion of written and oral assignments. You are required to bring a question about that week's assigned readings to class every Wednesday. The Midterm will cover material up to that time in the course, the Final only material from after the Midterm. The Paper assignment will be handed out next week. The individual percentages of the grade are: Participation and Short Assignments (20%), Midterm (25%), Paper (25%), and Final Exam (30%).

## **OFFICE HOURS**

My office is in 102 University Gardens (UGR), located in a courtyard behind the Sizzler across from Gate 3 on Figueroa. The entrance to UGR is about 10 feet right of the entrance to the Sizzler, as shown in the map below (thanks to the USC Directory for the base map).

My office hours are on Mondays 2-4, but I am available by appointment. Please call at work (213-743-4424), or at home (310-837-5858), or contact me by email at [dsloane@usc.edu](mailto:dsloane@usc.edu). I am looking forward to talking with you.

Todd Gish will announce his office hour next week. If you need to contact him, please email him at [gish@usc.edu](mailto:gish@usc.edu).

We fully expect that you will talk with one of us about the paper topic before handing in your topic at the Midterm. While many students will want to talk right after class, I strongly recommend that you make an appointment to see one of us.

### **INTEGRITY**

As each of you was informed in your initial orientation to USC, academic integrity is of paramount importance. We take this responsibility seriously. The exams will be monitored, the papers will be carefully read, and checked. We want to trust you and treat you as adults, but we also know that the pressures on students to use unethical means to succeed are very strong. Please remember, anytime some one cheats they are not only scamming the system, they are also damaging the credibility of each and every student's achievements. For further information, such as the precise definition of plagiarism, please take a look at the Student Conduct Code material reprinted in SCAMPUS 98-99, pp. 73-88.

## Class Schedule/Assignment Due Dates

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### Section One: Early Years

#### 1. January 13: MultiEthnic Metropolis

The course structure and the physical/social setting of Los Angeles.

Readings: None, however, start reading NOW.

#### 2. January 18: Martin Luther King Holiday

##### January 20: Indians + Missions, Myths + Realities

The missions play a very controversial role in California history. Were they torture chambers where Indians were sacrificed to Spanish imperial glory, or the foundation stones of modern California? The answers are complicated, as were the consequences.

Readings: McWilliams, 3-69.

Video: "Whispers: Gabrielino/Tongva."

#### 3. January 25: Spanish Colonial Empire

A look at life in Los Angeles between roughly 1769 and 1860, with emphasis on (1) the rise of the Californios and rancho life, and (2) the evolving pueblo from Spanish to Mexican control.

Readings: McWilliams, 70-112.

##### January 27: Violence in the American Metropolis

The 19th century town was fraught with racial violence and ethnic tensions. This lecture examines (1) the decline of the Californios due to the rising American city and (2) problems of crime and punishment in the new American city.

Readings: McWilliams, 113-182; READER (Woolsey).

#### 4. February 1: Chinese Massacre

A tragic example of ethnic conflict in Los Angeles.

##### February 3: Visual Portraits of the New L.A.

Three videos from the LA History Project that depict various aspects of the emerging American metropolis: "Ramona," the novel that established the myth of the missions; "Harris Newmark," a Jewish merchant who spent 60 years watching LA grow; and "The Orange," an examination of a critical symbol of southern California as well as its literal fruit of prosperity.

Readings: McWilliams, 183-226.

#### 5. February 8: Anglo LA: The Migration

Starting in the 1870s, escalating in the 1880s, and continuing through the early decades of the 20th century, Los Angeles was the destination of a massive migration of Midwesterners tired of their old lives, pining for new ones. Today, the details and consequences of the migration.

Readings: McWilliams, 227-313.

**February 10: Constructing the New LA**

The new Midwestern Anglo city emerged out of a small farming village to become a great metropolis. The new city depended on water, water, and more water.

Reading: McWilliams, 314-378

Video: "Owens Valley Water"

**6. February 15 President's Day Holiday**

**February 17 Twentieth Century Los Angeles**

L.A. from the 1920s to the 1940s, with discussions of the land booms of the 1920s, and a video on violence in the 1930s

Readings: Sanchez, 3-128; READER (Rodriguez).

Video: "Trouble in Angel City,"

**7. February 22: Modern Metropolis**

The rising tensions propelled by the re-emergence of Latino LA, the collapse surrounding the Depression, and the realization that Los Angeles was a modern city.

Readings: Sanchez, 129-208; READER (Day)

Discussion: Sanchez

**February 24: Midterm**

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**Section Two: World War II as a Prism into Ethnic LA**

**8. March 1: "California-Japanese War"**

In the early years of World War II, many Japanese were interned by US authorities. Today and next time, examinations of this decision in the context of decades of tension around Japanese immigration to California, and the resulting White California movement.

Readings: READER (Takaki)

**March 3: A Time Remembered: Japanese Internment**

The politics and consequences of internment.

Readings: READER (Takaki).

Video: "A Time Remembered"

**9. March 8: The Sleepy Lagoon and Zoot Suits**

Discussion of Latino LA, looking at Chicana labor activities, especially the story of Luisa Moreno; the controversial Sleepy Lagoon case, and finally the Zoot Suit Riots.

Readings: READER (Adler); Sanchez, 209-271.

Video: "Zoot Suit"

**March 10: Sanchez Discussion**

**10. March 15: Spring Break**

**March 17: Spring Break**

**11. March 22: City of Black Angels**

Discussion of the migration of Blacks to LA and the development of Central Avenue.

Readings: Himes, 1-99.

Video: "Ode to Central Avenue"

**March 24: If He Hollers . . .**

Chester Himes was one of many African Americans who came to LA looking to find a job and make a better life for himself. *If He Hollers Let Him Go* is not autobiographical, but Himes, like his hero, soon left LA, after finding the city inhospitable.

Readings: Himes, 100-203.

Discussion: Himes

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**Section Three: A Multicultural Mosaic**

**12. March 29: Race and Rage: Watts in 1965**

Los Angeles is supposed to be different, a perfect climate, nice housing, a prosperous economy through many decades. Then, how do we explain the outburst of rage in the Watts riot? Today, the changing politics of race and ethnicity in post-W.W.II L.A. from the 1950s to 1970s.

Readings: None

**March 31: Changing Face of LA**

Recently, Los Angeles has become more diverse, primarily through immigration. Today, the transformation of Los Angeles, with some initial discussions of the consequences.

Reading: READER (Sabah and Bozorgmehr)

**13. April 5: Changing Politics of Immigration**

Recently, political “rage” has been aimed at immigrants, most famously in Proposition 187.

Why immigration re-emerged as a political issue? The politics of ethnicity are very complex.

The situation is not simply brown and white, but is mixed with many other shades.

Readings: READER (Hondagneu-Sotelo)

**April 7: LA’s Growth Machine: Bunker Hill**

Postwar LA experienced explosive suburban growth. The city became a metropolis stretching from Santa Barbara to Mexico. Today, Bunker Hill, the symbolic project of the postwar “growth machine.”

Readings: READER (Davis)

**14. April 12: LA’s Growth Machine: The Valley**

A continuation of the discussion, looking at the San Fernando Valley.

**Paper Due**

**April 14: The Other Side: Disparity**

The exciting economic rollercoaster has produced many wealthy Angelinos, and a lost generation on the other side of the economic border. Today, some interlinking examples of disparity, beginning with the issues of gangs. The issue provides insight into larger political and social issues in modern Southern California.

Readings: Martinez, 3-50.

Video: "Graffiti Verite"

**15. April 19: The Other Side: Gays and AIDS in LA**

Martinez examines the HIV/AIDS epidemic’s impact on Gay/Lesbian LA through the figures of Sergio and Father Olivares. Today, an examination of why LA was one of the first places that AIDS was identified, and the evolution of the epidemic.

Readings: Martinez, 51-101

**April 21: The Other Side: A Discussion**

Students often ask why we read this book, which starts in El Salvador, and wanders through Mexico, Cuba, and other places, in a course on LA. One place to start is with the book's central metaphor, "the other side."

Readings: Martinez, 102-170.

Discussion: Martinez

**16. April 26: 3 Faces of LA: 1992**

In April 1992, the multicultural oasis of LA exploded. The catalyst was the Rodney King incident, but the fundamental issues were more complex. Today, the civil unrest.

Readings: READER (George)

Video: "L.A. is Burning: Five Reports from a Divided City"

**April 28: 3 Faces of LA: Monterey Park**

Monterey Park became the first minority-majority Chinese suburb in America. Its story is telling about the continuing opportunities and conflicts in Southern California.

Readings: READER (Monterey Park)

**17. May 3 3 Faces of LA: Will the Pueblo Endure?**

Has the pueblo endured? How can we describe it, name it and understand it?

Readings: None, prepare for the final examination

**TBA: Final Exam**

**PLDV Reader**  
**Spring 1999**

1. Ronald C. Woolsey, "Crime and Punishment: Los Angeles County, 1850-1856", *Southern California Quarterly* v. LXI, no. 1 (Spring 1979), 79-98.
2. Richard Rodriguez. "An American Writer." In, Werner Sollors, ed., *The Invention of Ethnicity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989
3. Ronald Takaki. Selection from *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. New York: Penguin Books, 1990.
4. Patricia Rae Adler. "The 1943 Zoot Suit Riots: Brief Episode in a Long Conflict." In, Manuel P. Servin, ed., *An Awakened Minority: The Mexican-Americans*. Beverly Hills: Glencoe Press, 1974.
5. Sabagh, George, and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. "Population Change: Immigration and Ethnic Transformation." In, Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr, editors, *Ethnic Los Angeles*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996.
6. Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo. "The History of Mexican Undocumented Settlement in the United States." In, Mary Romero, Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, Vilma Ortiz, eds., *Challenging Fronteras: Structuring Latina and Latino Lives in the U.S.* New York: Routledge , 1997.
7. Mike Davis. "*Chinatown*, Revisited? The Internationalization of Downtown Los Angeles." In, David Reid, editor, *Sex, Death and God in L.A.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.
8. Lynell George. "Waiting for the Rainbow Sign" and "Guns No Butter." In, her *No Crystal Stair: African Americans in the City of Angels*. New York: Verso, 1992.
9. Timothy P. Fong, "The First Suburban Chinatown: The Remaking of Monterey Park, California", (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), chapters 1 and 3.