

## HIUS 117 History of Los Angeles

Spring 2005  
HSS: 4063  
Office Hours: W: 1:30-4:00

Professor Daniel Widener  
Tel: 534-8918  
Email: [dwidener@ucsd.edu](mailto:dwidener@ucsd.edu)

This course will explore the history of Los Angeles, from its founding as a Spanish colonial outpost through its contemporary status as major world metropolis. Beyond simply recounting the tale of “what happened,” we will take Los Angeles as archetype and exception, exploring issues of culture and power, interactions between diverse social groups, the city’s place as the key node in the American “culture industry,” and struggles over the nature and shape of civil life, all in an effort to get to the bottom of a place that claims “to bring it all together.”

### Assignments:

Midterm	30%
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Final Paper	40%

**Course policies:** Late assignments will not be accepted. If you will miss an exam, you must notify me, through email, prior to missing the class during which the exam is to be held. Without prior notification, you will be required to submit medical documentation attesting to the reason for your absence.

### Required Readings:

In addition to the course reader, the following are available for purchase at Groundworks books.

Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*  
Carey McWilliams, *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land*  
Mike Davis, *City of Quartz*  
Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*

## Course Outline:

- Mar. 29 Introduction and Themes  
Mar. 31 Frontier and Center: Native California under Spanish Rule  
Read: *McWilliams*, chapter 2; *Monroy*, chapter 1.
- Apr. 5 From Spanish outpost to Mexican Pueblo  
Apr. 7 Class and Race in a changing California  
Read: *McWilliams*, 3-4; *Monroy*, 2-4.
- Apr. 12 Sunshine and Noir: fantasy and reality in the boomtown city  
Apr. 14 The Mythical City: Water and Power  
Read: *McWilliams*, 7-11, 14 and 16  
Film: *Chinatown*
- Apr. 19 The Port of Iowa: Anglo L.A. in the 1920s  
Apr. 21 Another Los Angeles  
Read: *McWilliams*, 13 and 15; *Davis*, 1
- Apr. 26 Radicalism and reform in depression era L.A.  
Apr. 28 **In-class mid-term exam #1**  
Read: *Davis*, 2
- May 3 Arsenal and Cauldron: Los Angeles at War  
May 5 The Riddle of the Zoot  
Read: *McWilliams*, Ch 16
- May 10 Conformity and Confrontation during the 1950s  
May 12 Setting the Night on Fire: Los Angeles in the 1960s I  
Read: *Davis*, Ch. 3 and 4, Pulido, "Race, Class and Political Activism," (online course reserves)
- May 17 Continuity and Change: The Politics of Bradleyism  
May 19 The Burning of Los Angeles: the politics of youth in a changing L.A.  
Film: **Killer of Sheep**  
Read: *Davis*, Ch 5 and 6
- May 24 Learning from L.A.? the politics of the built environment  
May 26 The Global Metropolis: the new economy and the new immigration  
Read: *Davis*, Ch 7, *Davis*, *Beyond Blade Runner* (online course reserves)  
Film: *Menace II Society*
- May 31 The Next Los Angeles?  
Jun. 2 **in-class midterm exam #2**  
Read: *Banham*, All