

## **AMST 101: Race and Class in Los Angeles**

Fall 2014

T, Th 1230-150, THH 201

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Office Hours: Wednesday 9-950 am, Thursday 2-250 pm, and by appointment

### Course Description

Beaches; Hollywood; palm trees; beautiful weather; and most importantly, a chance to start over. These have all been key images in representations of Los Angeles from the moment of U.S. conquest to the present. But equally important to the reality of Los Angeles has been the less glamorous side: a history of racial violence; capital of the working poor; two major waves of civil unrest (the Watts riots of 1965 and the Los Angeles uprising of 1992); and a hot-bed of anti-immigrant activism. It is the relationship between these two different trajectories that we will study in this class. How can Los Angeles produce such incredible wealth *and* poverty at the same time? What is the relationship between the two? Especially critical is the fact that as goes Los Angeles, so goes the rest of the U.S. Whether it is immigration, racial diversity, economic polarization, or sprawl – Los Angeles holds important lessons for both the U.S. and cities across the globe.

In this the course we will concentrate on five main topics that will hopefully illuminate larger social processes that shape Los Angeles: History and Settlement; Immigration; Economics and Labor; Place & Space; and Environmental Justice.

### Diversity Course

This course fulfills the Diversity requirement by focusing on two different forms of difference: race, and to a lesser extent, class. Students will learn about race and racism in several ways, including how race is constructed and evolves, the unequal distribution of opportunity based on race, and inter-ethnic relations. We will focus on class relations by examining the racialized nature of the economy, the globalization of capital, and local labor politics.

### Course Requirements and Evaluation

The teaching assistants are your primary contact for the course—they conduct the discussion sections, read and grade your papers and exams, and will help you synthesize course topics. As noted below, 15% of your course grade is based on your participation in the section.

There are two essay examinations in this class, one paper, one exhibit reflection, and two film assignments designed to help you understand Los Angeles in a concrete way. The exams will consist of approximately five essay questions that cover course lectures, readings, films, assignments and class

discussions. You will need to bring a bluebook. The second examination is not comprehensive, although there may be one question that requires you to tie-up the course. The second exam will be held on the last day of class, and the second film assignment will be due during the final exam week.

You are expected to attend all lectures and discussion sections. Repeated tardiness and unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade as you will miss out on key material. In addition, regular attendance and participation in discussion sections is essential as it constitutes 15% of your overall grade. In short, in order to do well in this course you will have to attend class regularly, complete all the readings, and spend some effort engaging the material. If you do not do these things, you will not do well. Moreover, students who seek to do all the readings just prior to an exam will also have a hard time. The course is structured to require *consistent* effort.

In terms of the readings – I suggest that students write a brief summary paragraph on each of the assigned readings (not on APGTLA readings). This serves several purposes. First, it forces you to identify the main argument(s) and your reaction to it; second, it registers the material more concretely in your mind; and third, it provides a convenient review tool when it is time to prepare for the exam. I am not interested in details – I want you to focus on the main points and argument.

Also, the films shown in class are an important part of the course. Not only are there two film assignments but the exam questions include material covered in the films. Be sure to take notes on the main ideas and arguments made in the films. If you miss a film viewing you are responsible for securing the film and reviewing it on your own. I will not loan out the films to students nor set up additional times for you to view them. However, if you do miss a film in class you can email me and I can make suggestions on where you might be able to get a copy of the film.

### **Becoming Los Angeles Reflection:**

Your first assignment requires visiting an exhibit. Visit the Becoming Los Angeles Exhibit at the Natural History Museum to complete this assignment. Admission is free for USC students with their student ID. Before attending the exhibit, be sure to read both Castaneda's and Rios-Bustamante's essays listed under September 4th of the syllabus. At the exhibit pay close attention to how the exhibit portrays the transitions in California and Los Angeles from "1769 Spanish Mission System," "1821 Mexican Independence," to "1848 Shift from Mexican to United States Law." In a 2-3 page reflection, compare and contrast how Castaneda and Rios-Bustamante describe these eras to the way the history is told at Becoming Los Angeles. What information on race and class is mentioned among both the readings and at the exhibit and what sorts of information is missing? Conclude with a brief discussion on the meaningfulness of both the readings and exhibit in helping others better understand the history of race and class in early Los Angeles. *For more information on the museum go to* <http://www.nhm.org/site/plan-your-visit>.

Due Date: Thursday, September 11 @ 1230 pm

## Race & Class in LA Paper

Students will choose a topic pertinent to Los Angeles and analyze it in terms of race and class. Students can select any topic that is approved by their Section Instructor. Your task is to 1) clearly identify the topic/problem and describe it; 2) clearly identify the various racial and class dynamics that are embedded in this topic; and 3) analyze how they operate. Examples of the kind of questions you should address include the following: Is this strictly a racial issue? To what extent is it relational? How? Is this strictly a class dynamic? What is the conception of class at work? To what extent are race and class co-articulated? Are race and class readily apparent, or are they more obscured? Who benefits and who loses from this current arrangement? What alternatives are possible?

Your paper should be no longer than six pages in length (exclusive of notes, figures, etc) and should draw on a minimum of THREE scholarly sources (in addition to any class readings). You are welcome to use additional popular sources. You are welcome to use any citation format, as long as it is consistent and comprehensive. You will review citation format and library usage in Section. You cannot choose a topic that we have or will cover in class. I encourage you to follow your interests and passion, but define your topic narrowly enough to actually answer the questions. If you are having a hard time identifying a topic, I suggest that you start reading the *Los Angeles Times* on a regular basis.

### Due Dates:

- Paper Proposal due on Thursday, September 18 @ 12:30 pm
- Race and Class Final Paper due on Thursday, November 13 @ 12:30 pm

## Film Assignments

Throughout the course of the semester we will be watching a series of films to further illuminate the topics and themes we will be discussing in class. Your job with the film assignments is to connect the films to not only the readings and materials we discuss in class, but also critically analyse the ways in which the films address the racial and class dynamics and transformations in LA. You will be required to write two film papers; see the instructions below:

*Film Assignment 1: (choose one of the following films to complete this assignment: Cadillac Desert's Mulholland's Dream, Rabbit in the Moon, Zoot Suit Riots, Crossroads: Boyle Heights).*

In a 4-5 page paper critically analyze the topic of the film. Illustrate how race and class are embedded in the dynamics presented in the film. Discuss the power relations revealed in the topic of the film and contextualize it within the larger history of Los Angeles. You must use at least two scholarly readings from the course to support and contextualize the arguments made in the paper. Be sure to provide specific examples from the film to support how race and class are discussed in the film. Be careful that you are not simply summarizing the plot or describing the events from the film. Your paper should highlight *and* analyze the racial and class dynamics of the given topic within Los Angeles during that particular time/era.

Due Date: Thursday, October 2 @ 1230 pm

*Film Assignment # 2 (choose two of the following films to complete this assignment: Born in East LA, Bread and Roses, Chavez Ravine, The Garden)*

Your second film assignment is a comparative 5-6 page paper. Compare and contrast the role of race and class in Los Angeles within the two films. How are the racial and class dynamics similar and different in the various events discussed in the films. Within your essay be sure to include at least 3-4 course readings to support and contextualize your arguments.

Due Date: Tuesday, December 16 @ 1230 pm

<u>List of Assignments and Course Evaluation</u>	<u>Percentage of Grade</u>
Becoming Los Angeles Reflection	5%
Race & Class Analysis Paper	20%
Two film Assignments	20 %
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%
Section Participation/Attendance	<u>15%</u>
	100%

#### Required Texts

Laura Pulido, Laura Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng (2012) *A People's Guide to Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

There is one required text for this class. It is available in the university bookstore, however, it is also available online from the USC library. All other readings will be available via Blackboard.

#### **IMPORTANT STUFF**

Late work – Late work is penalized. If something is due at 12:30, then it is due at 12:30. One-third of a grade will be docked for every ten minutes late. So if your paper earned a 'B', but you submitted it at 12:40, you will receive a 'B-'. Electronic work will only be accepted with *prior* permission from the instructor. You are expected to submit your work at the beginning of lecture on the specified date.

Written work – All take-home work must be typed, double-spaced, with a 12 point font on a legible ribbon in black ink. Margins should be one inch all around. All written work should include your name, date, your TA's name, and the day and time your section meets. Note, this information will not be counted as part of the page requirements listed on your assignments. Make sure your work is stapled together (no binders, folders, etc).

Writing Counts – All written work (both in-class and take-home) will be graded on both the content and analysis of the work, as well as the writing quality (I have to include this because in the past some students actually complained when I considered the quality of their writing in grading their work).

Support Systems - A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs

[http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home\\_index.html](http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Statement on Academic Integrity - Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University

Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct,

<http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>. Students are required to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity at all times. In particular, failure to submit independent work (i.e., plagiarizing papers or cheating on tests) will automatically result in a 'F' in the class and may lead to expulsion from the University. By the way, anyone reported to the Office of Academic Integrity cannot withdraw from a course to avoid the unpleasantness of penalties. As ever, honesty is the best policy. More recently, it has come to our attention that some students have actually been selling and otherwise disseminating class materials through websites, recording lectures without express approval of the instructor, etc. Such practices are contrary to USC policy and will result in a 'F' in the class. In short, please do your own work and allow others to do their own work unless the instructor says otherwise.

Athletes and Artists - All student athletes and artists are required to submit their semester travel schedules within the first **two weeks** of the semester. Submit a copy both to me and your TA. Late work will not be accepted because of travel or engagements. If you are out of town, your work should be submitted **prior to** the due date and time. Same late policy applies.

Important reminder- Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety

<http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is

important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

## **COURSE TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

This is a tentative list of topics and readings. They are subject to change.

It is expected that students will complete all assigned readings *prior* to the designated lecture.

### **Aug 26 – Course Introduction**

#### **Conceptualizing Race and Class**

### **Aug 28 – Conceptualizing Race and Class**

Readings: Karen Brodtkin, “Introduction” and “How Did Jews Become White Folks?” in *How Jews Became White Folks & What that Says about Race in America*. (Rutgers University Press, 1998), pp. 1-52.

Angela Glover, Stewart Kwoh, and Manuel Pastor, “American Progress and Disconnection” in *Searching for the Uncommon Ground* (W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), pp. 86-115.

*A People's Guide to LA:* 2.22 Upton Sinclair’s House; 5.11 Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring; 4.2 Bixby Park

## **PART ONE: HISTORY AND SETTLEMENT**

### **Sept 2 - Overview of Spanish & US Colonization + Establishing the Modern City**

In class video, “Cadillac Desert” Part 1: Mulholland’s Dream

Readings: Ed Soja and Allen Scott, “Introduction to Los Angeles: City and Region” in *The City*, eds. A. Scott and E. Soja (University of California, 1996), pp. 1-21.

Paula Schiffman, “The Los Angeles Prairie” in *Land of Sunshine: An Environmental History of Metropolitan Los Angeles*. Edited by W. Deverell and G. Hise (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), pp. 38-51.

*A People's Guide to LA:* 1.23 Los Angeles River Center and Gardens; 4.9 White Point Preserve and Education Center

## **Sept 4 - Lecture Canceled, Visit the “Becoming Los Angeles” Exhibit**

*\*\*Before your trip to the “Becoming Los Angeles Exhibit” review the assignment instructions found earlier on the syllabus and read the readings below. Your assignment will be due at the beginning of class on Sept 11th. \*\**

Readings: Antonia Castaneda, “Sexual Violence in the Politics and Policies of Conquest: Amerindian Women and the Spanish Conquest of Alta California” in *Building with Our Hands: New Direction in Chicana Studies*, eds. A. de la Torre and Beatriz Pesquera (University of California Press, 1993), pp. 15-33.

Antonio Rios-Bustamante, “The Barrioization of Nineteenth-Century Mexican Californians: From Landowners to Laborers” pp. 26-35.

*A People's Guide to LA:* 1.10 Downey Block; 2.19 San Gabriel Mission; 6.11 Siutcanga

## **Sept 9 - Racial Formation in the Making of Los Angeles**

Readings: Shana Bernstein, “Interracial Activism in the Los Angeles Community Service Organization: Linking the World War II and Civil Rights Eras” *Pacific Historical Review* 80 (2011): 231-267.

Sue Kunitomi Embrey and Susan Shumaker “Sue Kunitomi Embrey” in *Untold Stories from America's National Parks*, pp 225-243. Available at:

[http://www-tc.pbs.org/nationalparks/media/pdfs/tnp-abi-untold-stories-pt-12\\_embrey.pdf](http://www-tc.pbs.org/nationalparks/media/pdfs/tnp-abi-untold-stories-pt-12_embrey.pdf)

*A People's Guide to LA:* 2.20 Santa Anita Park and Pomona Fairgrounds; 1.21 League of Southern California Japanese Gardeners;

Begin In Class Video, Rabbit In the Moon

*Mini Film Series on Racial Formation in LA*

## **Sept 11 - In Class Video, “Rabbit in the Moon”**

Viewing and Discussion

**\*\*Becoming Los Angeles Assignment due @ 1230 pm\*\***

## **Sept 16 - In Class Video, “Zoot Suit Riots”**

Viewing and Discussion

*Before Class Review the Following:*

The Zoot Suit Riots: Read and listen to all segments of “Zoot Suit Culture” and “Map” at:  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/zoot/index.html>

*A People's Guide to LA*: 1.11 El Congreso del Pueblo de Habla Espanola; 3.6 *California Eagle*

### **Sept 18 – A Closer Look at Boyle Heights**

Guest Lecture and In Class Video, “Crossroads: Boyle Heights”

Readings: George Sanchez, “What’s Good for Boyle Heights is Good for the Jews: Creating Multiculturalism on the Eastside” *American Quarterly* 56.3 (2004): 633-661.

**\*\*Race and Class in LA Paper Proposal due at 12:30 p.m.\*\***

### **Sept 23 - Residential Segregation**

Readings: Laura Pulido, “Differential Racialization in Southern California” Chpt. 2 in *Black, Brown, Yellow and Left: Radical Activism in Los Angeles*.

“House Rules” This American Life – November 22, 2013 broadcast

Listen to the full show (1 hour)

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/512/house-rules>

“The Best Map Ever Made of America’s Racial Segregation”

Here is a brief article:

<http://www.wired.com/design/2013/08/how-segregated-is-your-city-this-eye-opening-map-shows-you/>

Here is the national map. Study Los Angeles

<http://demographics.coopercenter.org/DotMap/index.html>

*A People's Guide to LA*: 4.1 Baypoint Avenue Residential Discrimination Site; 3.17 Kashu Realty and 36<sup>th</sup> Street Residential Discrimination Site; 2.1 Alma Avenue Residential Discrimination Site; 2.2 Altadena Open Housing Covenant; 4.3 Lakewood City Hall

## **PART TWO: IMMIGRATION**

### **Sept 25 – Theories of Immigration and LA’s Immigration History**

Readings: Stephen Castles and Mark Miller (2009) "Theories of Migration" in *The Age of Migration*, pp. 20-47.

Laslett, John H.M. 1996. "Historical Perspectives: Immigration and the Rise of a Distinctive Urban Region, 1900-1970" Chapter 2 in *Ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Roger Waldinger and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. New York: Russell Foundation.

*A People's Guide to LA*: 1.17 Instituto de Educacion Popular; 2.8 El Monte Sweatshop; 1.27 Partido Liberal Mexicano

### **Sept 30- The State**

Readings: Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Politics of Accumulation: Struggle for Benefits" in *Historical Capitalism* (Verso, 1983), pp. 47-72.

*A People's Guide to LA*: 4.8 Terminal Island; 2.23 Whittier State School; 6.1 Simi Valley Courthouse and Site of Rodney King Beating; 1.26 Orpheum Theatre, Sleepy Lagoon Murder, and Ventura School for Girls

### **Oct 2 – In Class Video, "Born in ELA"**

Narro, Victor, Kent Wong, and Janna Shadduck Hernandez. 2007. "The 2006 Immigrant Uprising: Origins and Future." *New Labor Forum*

Susan Smith, "Immigration Policy and Nation Building" in *Race, Nation and Place*, pp. 50-77.

**\*\*Film Assignment # 1 due @ 12:30 p.m.\*\***

### **Oct 7– Finish In Class Video, "Born in ELA"**

Discussion following film

### **Oct 9 - The Contradictions of Immigration**

Readings: William Robinson (2006) "Aquí Estamos y no Nos Vamos!: Global Capitalism and the Struggle for Immigrant Rights," *Race and Class* 48 (2).

*A People's Guide to LA*: 3.19 Maywood City Hall

### **Oct 14 - Exam #1**

## PART THREE: THE LA ECONOMY

### Oct 16 – The Elements of Capitalism

Readings: Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Commodification of Everything” *Historical Capitalism* (Verso, 1983), pp. 47-72.

Richard Wolff on Fighting for Economic Justice and Fair Wages, Moyers & Company  
February 22, 2013. Listen to full radio interview:

[http://billmoyers.com/segment/richard-wolff-on-fighting-for-economic-justice-and-fair-wages/#.Uq8j2\\_BI6RM.email](http://billmoyers.com/segment/richard-wolff-on-fighting-for-economic-justice-and-fair-wages/#.Uq8j2_BI6RM.email)

*A People’s Guide to LA:* 2.3 AMVAC Chemical Corporation

### Oct 21 – Economic Structures & Restructuring I

Readings: Bob Gottlieb et al. “The Continuing Divide: the Demographic and Economic Transformation of Los Angeles” in *The Next Los Angeles*, pp. 69-96.

Oliver, Johnson and Farrell “Anatomy of a Rebellion”, *Reading Rodney King/Reading Uprising*, pp. 117-141.

*A People’s Guide to LA:* 6.4 General Motors Van Nuys

### Oct 23 – Economic Structures & Restructuring II

Readings: Milkman, Ruth, Ana Luz Gonzalez, and Victor Narro. 2010. *Workplace Violations in Los Angeles County: The Failure of Employment and Labor Law for Low Wage Workers*. UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. (Executive Summary)

Jong Bum Kwon, “The Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance: Spatializing Justice in an Ethnic “Enclave” in *Working for Justice: The L.A. Model of Organizing and Advocacy*, eds. R. Milkman, J. Bloom, and V. Narro (Cornell University Press, 20xx), pp. 23-

*A People’s Guide to LA:* 2.13 Mariachi Plaza; 3.4 Bicycle Club Casino

### Oct 28 – Organized Labor and Class Struggle

Readings: Ruth Milkman (2000) “Introduction” in *Organizing Immigrants: The Challenge for Unions in Contemporary California*, pp. 1-24.

Edna Bonacich, Lola Smallwood Cuevas, Lanita Morris, Steven Pitts, and Joshua Bloom,"A Common Project for a Just Society: Black Labor in Los Angeles," in *Black Los Angeles*. Eds. D. Hunt and A. Ramon. New York University Press, 2010, pp. 360-381.

*A People's Guide to LA*: 1.12 Embassy Hotel; 1.18 Kyoto Grand Hotel; 5.3 Century City

**Oct 30 In Class Video, "Bread and Roses"**

**Nov 4 – Finish In Class Video, "Bread and Roses"**

Discussion following film.

PART FOUR: SPACE and PLACE

**Nov 6- What is Place?**

Readings: Lucy Lippard, "The Lure of the Local" in *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* (New Press, 1998).

**Nov 11 – Representations of Place and In Class Video, Chavez Ravine**

Readings: Judy Baca, "La Memoria de Nuestra Tierra: Sites of Public Memory" *Imagining America, Forseeable Futures* #8.

*A People's Guide to LA*: 1.7 Chavez Ravine

**Nov 13 – Producing Relational Space in LA**

Readings: Laura Barraclough (2009) "South Central Farmers and Shadow Hills Homeowners: Land Use Policy and Relational Racialization in Los Angeles" *The Professional Geographer* 61(2): 164-186.

*A People's Guide to LA*: 3.1 Alameda Boulevard

Start In Class Video, "The Garden"

**\*\*Race and Class in LA Final Paper Due @ 12:30 pm\*\***

**Nov 18 - Finish In Class Video, "The Garden"**

Discussion following film.

## PART FIVE: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

### Nov 20– Environmental Racism

Readings: Pulido, Laura (2000) “Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90(1): 12-40.

Los Angeles Collaborative for Environmental Health and Justice, *Hidden Hazards: A Call to Action for Healthy, Livable Communities*. Liberty Hill Foundation, 2010.

Available at: <http://www.libertyhill.org/document.doc?id=202>

*A People’s Guide to LA:* 2.17 Quemetco; 5.6 The Inkwell; 5.8 Malibu Public Beaches

### Nov 25 & 27 – Thanksgiving Break

### Dec 2 – The Environmental Justice Movement

Readings: Sonya Winton, “Concerned Citizens: Environmental (In)justice in Black Los Angeles” in *Black Los Angeles*. Eds. D. Hunt and A. Ramon. New York University Press, 2010, pp. 343-359.

Manuel Pastor, “Common Ground at Ground Zero?” *The New Economy and the New Organizing in Los Angeles*” *Antipode* (2001): 260-289.

### Dec 4– Exam #2

**Film Assignment 2 due Tuesday, December 16 @ 11 am**