

Fall 2021

## **GEOGRAPHY 50AC: CALIFORNIA**

159 Mulford Hall  
Tuesday / Thursday, 11:00-12:30

Instructor: Seth Lunine, Ph.D. (he/him/his)

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Office: 561 McCone Hall

Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:00-4:30 (in-person) or by appointment (Zoom).

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### Discussion Sections (in-person)

101. F. 3-4, 145 McCone Hall

102. Th. 1-2, 575 McCone Hall

103. Th. 4-5, 135 McCone Hall

104. W. 11-12, 325 McCone Hall

105. Tu. 4-5, 145 McCone Hall

106. Th. 2-3, 575 McCone Hall

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

“California is no ordinary state,” Carey McWilliams argued in 1949, “it is an anomaly, a freak, the great exception among the American states.” Just two decades later, Wallace Stegner claimed that “California is like the rest of America, only more so.” Whether it is perceived as an exception, a microcosm, or a harbinger, each of these notions begs similar questions: how can we understand California’s distinctiveness? How has a history of explosive growth, rapid transformation, and incessant experimentation created both our astonishing advantages and our devastating challenges?

If anything, California is diverse. It is an assemblage of distinct geomorphic provinces, each shaped by extreme, often violent forces. Yet the ferocity of earthquakes, fires, and floods was matched by the avarice, plunder, and brutality enacted against California’s complex Indigenous populations by European colonialists and then Euro-Americans beginning with the Gold Rush. California’s “natural wealth” is better understood as a product of human ingenuity, and exploitation. Gold attracted the people, created the wealth, and sparked the innovations that “unlocked” other resources. A succession of dynamic industries—mining machinery,

agribusiness, film, aerospace, electronics, and information technology—attests to California’s enduring eminence as an incubator of technological innovation. If California was currently a country, it would have the 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world. What happens in California has global significance.

Migration enabled this dynamism. Motivated and entrepreneurial by virtue of their very presence in California, the historical succession of Euro-American, Chinese, Mexican, Japanese, “Okie,” African American, Southeast Asian, and Latinx newcomers shows that the “California Dream” is entangled with economic opportunity. Their experiences have converged and diverged to create California and its legendary cultural vitality. But the state’s greatest advantage poses some of its biggest challenges. The interactions and divisiveness of massive and variegated populations help explain the formation of the “inner-city” and the recent suburbanization of poverty, as well as farmworkers who are treated as essential as a class but expendable as individuals. The conflation of populism and xenophobia during economic crises figures heavily into California’s politics from The Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 until today. An array of distinct social movements emerged from California’s unequal social relations: environmentalism, the Black Panthers Party, the Tax Revolt, and the feminist movement, to name but a few.

Indeed, California may be defined by the people who have come here, and we will focus on their experiences. Because this is an American Cultures course, we will study the overlapping and interacting Black, Asian American, European American, Latinx, and Native American communities that have created and recreated the state, while considering the instability and historical novelty of these categories themselves. In doing so, we will engage in an ongoing conversation about the historical contingencies and contemporary contexts that define race and difference, with special attention to how oppression and inequality are created and challenged in distinctive ways in California. We will also situate California within broader historical forces shaping American life, such as regional capitalism, the Great Migration, suburbanization, environmental degradation, and gentrification.

Above all, California is a contradiction. It is a symbol, a myth, and a talismanic lifestyle. And there is always a disjuncture between what the Golden State promises and what it delivers. Terrestrial paradise or a plundered province? California Dream or cruel illusion? We will address these questions, and many more, using themes and concepts of the discipline of geography, such as environmental geography, regional capitalism, economic geography, the production of space, and cultural landscape studies. Class meetings will consist of lectures and periodic individual and group activities designed to help us synthesize course materials and understand how our own experience and knowledge shapes our perceptions of the California and its people, as well as of ourselves and each other. In doing so, we will pursue ways to think critically about the state we inhabit and what it may become.

*There are no prerequisites for enrollment this course. All are welcome!*

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through successful participation in the course, students will:

- Gain a critical understanding of major themes in historical and contemporary California through key concepts in geography, including environmental geography, regional differentiation, industrial clustering, the production of space, and cultural landscape studies;
- Develop a theoretical understanding of race and ethnicity based on geographically- and historically-specific accounts of African Americans, Asian Americans, European Americans, Latinx, and Native Americans in California;
- In addition to geographical inquiry, identify and explore approaches and insights from a range of disciplines, including political economy and cultural studies;
- Develop academic skills, including critical reading strategies, essay composition, traditional and experimental research methodologies, and test-taking skills.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

*All assigned readings are posted on our bCourse site.*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*Each of the four parts of the class described below must be completed for a passing grade.*

### Discussion Section (20%)

Sections will consist of active, hands-on exercises that will give you an opportunity to share your ideas and insights, as well as your questions and concerns, about lectures and readings. Formats may include discussions, reading response, group exercises, test preparation, map quizzes, and projects designed to help you contextualize and analyze your own experiences in California. In section we will learn from each other and create a safe environment to ask questions and experiment with ideas as we explore California.

### Midterm Exam (15%), **Tuesday, October 5**

The midterm exam will be taken in class and will likely consist of short answer and essay questions. We will distribute a review handout, including key terms and practice questions, by Friday, October 1.

### Course Project (35%), **due on December 2 by 11:10pm**

Please see project descriptions on pages 15-17.

**Final Exam (30%), Wednesday, December 15, 8am-11am (location TBD)**

The final exam will be taken in class and will likely consist of short answer and essay questions. The exam will cover lectures and readings from the second half of the course (10/7-12/2). We will distribute a review handout, including key terms and practice questions, by Friday, December 3 and offer several review session during RRR week.

**COURSE GRADING & EVALUATION**

Section..... 20%  
Midterm Exam... 15%  
Course Project.... 35%  
Final Exam..... 30%

Course grades will be comprised by the total points earned on all four components listed above. I will curve scores if I think it fair. A curve can only help your grade; I will not bring grades below the standard scale.

A	93-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%	F	< 60%
A-	90-92%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%	P	> 70%
		B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%	NP	< 70%

The deadline for changing your [P/NP grading option](#) is October 29.

**COURSE POLICIES**

Communication is key. Please keep your GSI and instructor apprised of any issues or challenges that will effect your performance in our course. *Read all course announcement sent via bCourse.*

Attendance & Participation: *Attendance is indispensable for doing well in this course.* Please come to lectures on time having completed the readings and prepared to ask and answer questions about the material, think critically and creatively, and collaborate with your classmates. *Do not leave class early.*

Readings: *Readings are essential to this course.* Complete each reading before the lecture for which it is assigned. We will watch several videos during lecture. Videos should be treated as text in that they are required and may be included on exams.

Laptops and other Digital Devices: *Please turn off your phones and refrain from using laptops and other digital devices during lecture* (with the exception of a documented need to type or use a digital device rather than take handwritten notes). Your performance in the class will benefit, according to [recent research](#).

Take notes! Engaged listening and note taking are important skills. Bring pens and paper to every lecture for note-taking, writing exercises, and in-class assignments.

Late Work: Late submissions of course assignments are possible with prior permission. Talk to your GSI or instructor as soon as possible if you anticipate the need for an extension on any assignment. Make-up exams must be arranged ahead of time and may require documentation.

Learning Environment: We will cover some contentious topics in this course and you are not required to agree with your classmates, GSI, or instructor. But you are required to treat everyone with respect and listen to their ideas.

Disabled Students' Services: The fundamental principles of nondiscrimination and accommodation in academic programs establish that students may not, on the basis of their "disabilities", be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any University program or activity. If you require academic accommodations for this course, please obtain a Letter of Accommodation from the Disabled Students' Program (see: <https://dsp.berkeley.edu/students/accommodations-and-services> ).

*Once you receive your Letter of Accommodation, please make an appointment with me to confirm your accommodations.*

Reasonable Accommodation for Students' Religious Beliefs, Observations and Practices: In compliance with Education code, Section 92640(a), it is the official policy of the University of California at Berkeley to permit any student to undergo a test or examination, without penalty, at a time when that activity would not violate the student's religious creed, unless administering the examination at an alternative time would impose an undue hardship which could not reasonably have been avoided.

Course Web Site: Our course has a web site at [bCourses.berkeley.edu](http://bCourses.berkeley.edu). It is crucial that you check the page regularly for course updates and other announcements.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic integrity is a joint endeavor among not only students but the entire academic community in all scholarship and scholarly activity. *In this course each of us is responsible for fostering an environment of honesty, fairness, and respect.* UC Berkeley has strict policies

concerning academic misconduct and dishonesty. The University defines academic misconduct as “any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community” (*UC Berkeley Code of Student Conduct*). This typically involves: (1) plagiarism: copying text or ideas from another source without appropriate citation; and (2) cheating: fraud or dishonesty in an academic assignment, including examinations. Any test, paper, or other work submitted under your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course. All words and ideas written by other people must be properly attributed: fully identified as to source and the extent of your use of their work. Cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct will result in a failing grade on the assignment, paper, or exam in questions and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. For more information about academic misconduct and consequences see: <https://advocate.berkeley.edu/conduct/>.

## STUDENT RESOURCES

Student Learning Center offers peer tutoring, writing support, and other academic resources. <http://slc.berkeley.edu>

Disabled Students' Program provides a wide range of resources to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, including advising, assessment, note-taking services, and academic accommodations. <http://www.dsp.berkeley.edu>

Tang Center / Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) offers immediate and long-term counseling services to assist students with a variety of concerns about academic success, mental health, life management, and personal development. <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/caps>

Basic Needs Center provides food, housing, and other basic needs support and services. <https://basicneeds.berkeley.edu>

PATH to Care Center provides affirming, empowering, and confidential support for survivors and those who have experienced gendered violence, including: sexual harassment, dating and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sexual exploitation. Confidential advocates bring a non-judgmental, caring approach to exploring all options, rights, and resources. <https://care.berkeley.edu>

Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (OPHD) Ensures that UC Berkeley provides an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence. OPHD takes reports alleging discrimination and harassment on the basis of categories including race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation/identity, including allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence. <https://ophd.berkeley.edu>

## LECTURE & READING SCHEDULE

*This schedule is subject to change*

Introductions & Overviews. We start with a sweeping survey of California and review the syllabus. I also explain what you can expect from the course, and offer suggestions for doing well.

Th. 8/26. Welcome to California (Geography 50AC)!

Module 1. Indigeneity & Empire. California's geomorphic diversity and biological richness is unparalleled in the US. From the end of the Pleistocene Era until today, these "forces of nature" resolutely influenced human cultures and economies. In this module, we first look at the extraordinary ecological diversity of pre-contact landscapes, which supported diverse and dense indigenous groups. Rather than a crass *environmental determinism*, however, we will focus on the complexities of Native Californian culture, especially intentional ecological interventions that shaped California landscapes over millennia. We then focus on Native Californians' experience of successive waves of contact, dispossession, incarceration, elimination, and erasure. We consider how perceptions of "nature" structured *frontier* ideologies of heathenism and savagery, while legitimating a Spanish mission system that is best understood as mass incarceration. Nevertheless, we continually consider moments and modes of Indigenous resistance and resilience, ranging from overt rebellions and nuanced *hidden stories* to contemporary politics of representation and tribal sovereignty.

Tu. 8/31. Native Californians, Native Californias

- Kat Anderson, "Introduction," in *Tending the Wild* (Berkeley: University of California press, 2005), 1-10.
- William Bauer, "Stop Hunting Ishi," *Boom: A Journal of California* 4 (2014): 46-50.
- *Recommended: Atlas of California*, "Land & People" (17), "Land & Nature" (18-19).

Th. 9/2. Colonial Californias

- James Sandos, "Between Crucifix and Lance: Indian-White Relations in California, 1769-1884," in *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush*, eds. Ramon Gutierrez and Richar Orsi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 196-229.
- *Recommended: Atlas of California*, "Colonialism & Native Californians" (22-23).

Module 2. California Capitalism. California's resource riches—beginning with gold and followed in rapid succession by mercury and silver, copper and coal, wheat and timber, oil and iron, and fish and fur—were no doubt exceptional compared to other US states. But how did rapid resource plunder engender enduring economic success? We will seek to understand California's distinctive mode of regional development within a broader, comparative framework by examining how generic categories of capital, industry, and class assumed decidedly Californian characteristics. We see how US territorial expansion and capitalist penetration transformed nature into natural resources. Specifically, we will look at how federal and state governments imposed a new system of *private property* through (1) the *genocide* of Indigenous populations and (2) the expropriation of Californio and Mexican landowners. We then see how symbiotic relations between resource extraction and industrial innovation (*resource industrialization*) fueled California's 19<sup>th</sup> century economic development, while irrevocably damaging the hinterlands.

Tu. 9/7. Gold & Genocide

- Benjamin Madley, "Yuki Indians: Defining Genocide in Native American History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 39 (2008): 302-32.

Th. 9/9. Resource Rushes & Regional Development

- Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), selections.

Module 3. Racial Order & Class Hierarchy. This module explores the creation and contestation of racial identities and the simultaneous constitution of social hierarchies for Asian, Black, Latinx, Native American, and white populations in California. That is, we focus on the formation, interaction, and stratification of multiple *racialized* groups, with particular attention to the mutual constitution of race and space. We see how popular culture, the built environment, and especially *the state* institutionalized and violently enforced subordinate racial identities and, in doing so, enabled Euro-Americans to wrest economic value from racialized difference (keeping in mind that *whiteness*, like every other racial category, is in no way natural, neutral, or static). Our examination of the frenzied pace of metropolitan development in San Francisco and paroxysms of economic crisis in California will enable us to contextualize the Chinese Exclusion Act, largely through an examination of race and space in San Francisco's Chinatown. A look at the realms of domesticity and work in Los Angeles illustrate not only everyday experiences of racialized oppression but also how daily acts of survival and community formation became meaningful feats of autonomy and resistance.



#### Tu. 9/14. Race-Making

- Tomas Almaguer, “Introduction” in *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (1994), 1-16.
- Benjamin Lloyd, “A Night Stroll Through Chinatown,” in *Lights and Shades in San Francisco* (San Francisco: Bancroft & Company, 1876), 254-66. *Note: this is a primary source written in 1876. The depiction of Chinese people in San Francisco’s Chinatown is despicable yet such literature is crucial for understanding the places and processes under investigation.*

#### Th. 9/16. Chinatowns

- Isabela Seong Leong Quintana, “Making do, Making Home: Borders and the Worlds of Chinatown and Sonora Town in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles,” *Journal of Urban History* 41 (2015): 47-74.
- Bessie B. Stoddart, “The Courts of Sonoratown,” *Charities and the Commons* 15 (1905): 295-299.

Module 4. Urban Origins. We compare the origins and early evolution of San Francisco and Los Angeles in this module. We see how San Francisco transformed from the “instant city” to the western industrial and financial capital of the US, largely by examining relations between resource extraction, industrialization, and real estate development. We then investigate the development of Los Angeles beginning with a metropolitan economy based foremost on real estate development and local boosters selling an idyllic, “whitewashed” Los Angeles to Protestant America. We look at the decimation of regional labor movements and the role of public and private promoters in Los Angeles’ industrialization, which relied not only on movies, citrus, and oil but also on national branch plants, making Los Angeles the “Detroit of the West.” In all, we see the inception of patterns of metropolitan boosterism, speculative land development, vitriolic racism, industrial capital investment, and populist politics that influenced California cities for the ensuing century.

#### Tu. 9/21. Imperial San Francisco

- Gray Brechin, *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), selections.

#### Th. 9/23. Sunshine & Noir in Southern California

- Mike Davis, “Sunshine and the Open Shop: Ford and Darwin in 1920s Los Angeles,” in *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*, eds. Tom

Sitton and William Deverell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 96-122.

Module 5. Agribusiness. Rather than family farmers toiling for self-sufficiency, agriculture in California is best understood as a business. We investigate the structure and interworkings of California's fabled agribusiness sector by focusing on technological innovation and cheap human labor as the basis for productivity and, therefore, profitability. First, we examine wealthy "growers"—not "farmers" in California's singular form of agriculture—and the role of an array of industrial, logistics, and marketing firms that changed the country's dietary practices and perceptions. Next we look at the *harvest labor system* and the growers' imperative of securing and exploiting cheap labor, which has resulted in cycles of labor recruitment and expulsion involving Indigenous, Chinese, Whites, Japanese, Punjabis, Mexicans, Filipinos, dustbowl migrants, Braceros, and both documented and undocumented immigrants.

Tu. 9/28. Central Valley Commodity Chains

- Richard Walker, *The Conquest of Bread: 150 Years of Agribusiness in California* (New York: The New Press, 2004), selections.
- Tim Bean, "The Cannabis Frontier," *Edge Effect* (2016).
- *Recommended: Atlas of California*, "Agribusiness" (50-51).

Th. 9/30. The Harvest Labor System

- Don Mitchell, "La Casa de Esclavos Modernos: Exposing the Architecture of Exploitation," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 71 (2012): 451-461.
- Laura-Anne Minkoff-Zern & Christy Gertz, "Farmworkers—The Basis and Bottom of the Food Chain," *Race, Poverty & Environment* 18 (2011): 17-19.

**Tu. 10/5. MIDTERM EXAM**

Module 6. The Federal Trigger. This module looks at the causes and consequences of the "federal trigger" of government intervention in California during the 1930s and 1940s. New Deal policies (such as *selective credit programs*) and the unprecedented redistribution of resources helped revive California during the Great Depression but created policies and patterns for enduring racialized inequalities. We next explore how federal investment in

military production transformed California and we look at the new cultural landscape that formed during World War II in places like Richmond, where working-class Southern whites and, especially, African Americans arrived *en masse*, and we begin to consider the durable inequalities that World War II made possible.

#### Th. 10/7. New Deals

- Gray Brechin, “A New Deal for California: Recovering a History Hidden in Plain Sight,” *Boom: A Journal of California* 4 (2014): 64-70.

#### Tu. 10/12. Military Mobilizations

- Joshua Jelly-Schapiro, “High Tide, Low Ebb,” in *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas*, ed. Rebecca Solnit (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 57-65.

Module 7. Uneven Metropolitan Development. Postwar suburbanization reconstituted the form, economy, and culture of metropolitan California. Rather than reductive notions of “white flight” and “urban crisis,” we see how federal policies (such as *redlining* and *selective credit programs*) institutionalized discrimination and difference through allocating resources to mostly white homeowners in the suburbs, while withdrawing funds from increasingly African-American central cities. These divisions crucially influenced how different groups experienced California cities and helped precipitate an array of social movements. Focussing on (1) the *black power* politics of community defense and empowerment emanating from West Oakland and (2) the *tax revolt* of white suburban homeowners, we examine how oppression was both created and contested in California’s metropolitan spaces.

#### Th. 10/14. The Suburban Solution

- Eric Avila, “The Nation’s White Spot,” in *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 20-64.
- *Recommended: Atlas of California: “Highways & Transportation”* (64-65).

#### Tu. 10/19. Urban Renewal

- Review Avila (10/17)

#### Th. 10/21. Black Power & Tax Revolts

- Donna Jean Murch, “Survival Pending Revolution,” in *Living for the City: Migration, Education, and the Rise of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 169-190.

- Peter Schrag, *Paradise Lost: California's Experience and America's Future* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), selections.

Module 8. Silicon Valleys. This module considers the global ramifications and local contradictions created by our most celebrated industry. Silicon Valley's technological dynamism, worldwide connections, unparalleled prosperity, monolithic corporations, and nimble start-ups benefit our lives and livelihoods in innumerable ways. But rather than celebrating heroic entrepreneurs or the "creative class", we focus on *industrial clustering*, specialized *venture capital*, and labor exploitation (*contract labor*) as the basis of Silicon Valley's spectacular growth. Indeed, the glittering symbol of California is tarnished by wildly uneven growth, a widening wealth gap, shamefully unaffordable housing, dire homelessness, a plethora of low-wage work, and racial and gendered disparities across careers and sectors. Rather than unanticipated consequences or unfortunate outcomes, we see how these contradictions are embedded in the very logic of the preeminent success story of contemporary capitalism.

Tu. 10/26. Industrial District

- Richard Walker, "Tech City," in *Pictures of a Gone City: Tech and the Dark Side of Prosperity in the San Francisco Bay Area* (Oakland: PM Press, 2017), 13-45.

Th. 10/28. The Invisible Valley

- Jay Jayadev and Jean Melesane, eds., *De-Bug: Voices from the Underside of Silicon Valley* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2016), selections.
- Rick Paulas, "A New Kind of Labor Movement in Silicon Valley," *The Atlantic* (2018).

Module 9. Metropolitan Re-Segregation. Nowhere in the US has gentrification been more conspicuous than in the San Francisco Bay Area. This module investigates shifting patterns of metropolitan poverty and prosperity: gentrification and the attendant suburbanization of poverty. We see how previous federal policies that engendered segregation and disinvestment in central cities have recently enabled profitable "revitalization" and repopulation of historically working-class communities of color. We also consider at the role of municipal governments in redeveloping urban cores and perpetuating patterns of inequality, including the *criminalization* of young African American and Latinx men. In addition to understanding economic and political processes, we explore how gentrification is lived, embodied, and resisted daily by those experiencing *displacement*. In all, we examine who benefits from the "revitalization" of our central cities, why poverty is increasingly

centered in the suburbs, and why the fight for housing justice necessarily involves more than just affordable housing.

Tu. 11/2. Forced Out

- The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, *Counterpoints: A San Francisco Bay Area Atlas of Displacement & Resistance* (Oakland: PM Press, 2021), selections.
- Rebecca Solnit, “Death by Gentrification: The Killing that Shamed San Francisco,” *The Guardian*, 21 Mar. 2016.

Th. 11/4. The Suburbanization of Poverty

- Elizabeth Kneebone & Alan Berube, “Poverty and the Suburbs: An Introduction,” in *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 1-12.

Module 10. The Contemporary “Ethnopolis”. This module explores new patterns of Latinx and Asian American settlement and the rise of multi-ethnic suburbs and majority-minority municipalities in California. Focusing on Metropolitan Los Angeles, we see how working class and ethnic identities are fluid and reconfigured by waves of immigration, industrial restructuring, and political machinations. We see how multi-ethnic suburbs not only house a new, low-wage workforce but also contain new spaces of identity articulated in the cultural landscape. We close by comparing entrenched concentrations of working class impoverishment in the Greater Eastside with the *suburban cosmopolitanism* of the West San Gabriel Valley, which may represent a new relationship between race and space in California.

Tu. 11/9. “The Latinx Metropolis”

- Mike Davis, “The New Industrial Peonage,” in *Dead Cities and Other Tales* (New York: New Press, 2002), 191-204.
- *Recommended: Atlas of California*, “Cities & Metro Areas” (54-57), “Greater Los Angeles” (60-61).

Th. 11/11. Veterans Day

Tu. 11/16. Multi-Ethnic Suburbanization

- Wendy Cheng, “Epilogue: Suburban Cosmopolitanism in the San Gabriel Valley,” in *East of East: The Making of Greater El Monte*, eds. Romeo Guzman, Carribean

Fragoza, Alex Sayf Cummings, and Ryan Reft (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2020), 297-307.

- *Recommended: Atlas of California*, “Unauthorized Immigration” (28-29) and Chapter 8, “Inequity & Social Divides” (101-111).

Module 11. Current Moments of Peril and Possibility in California. Our concluding module connects previous course themes of race, economy, space, and history to current crises in California: the Covid pandemic, ongoing urban rebellions, the rise of fascism, climate change, and threats of an economic downturn. In doing so, we consider reasons for serious optimism about the state of our future.

Th. 11/18. Environmental Racism & Environmental Justice

- Laura Pulido, “Geographies of Race and Ethnicity I: White Supremacy vs. White Privilege in Environmental Racism Research,” *Progress in Human Geography* 39 (2015): 1-9.
- [“‘We’re just Trying to Breathe’: An Interview with Active San Gabriel Valley,”](#) *Boom: A Journal of California* (2020).

Tu. 11/23. Living on the Edge

- Daniel Duane, “My Dark California Dream,” *New York Times*, 24 Oct. 2015.
- “Letting Malibu Burn, an Interview with Mike Davis,” interview by Suzi Weissman, *Jacobin* (2018).
- *Recommended: Atlas of California*, Chapter 6, “Environment” (78-87),

Th. 11/25. Thanksgiving Holiday

Tu. 11/30. The Carceral State (sections do not meet this week)

- Mikiso Hane, “Wartime Internment,” *Journal of American History* 77 (1990): 569-575.
- Jonathan Simon, “California’s New Carceral Logic,” *BOOM* (2016), 22-30.
- *Recommended: Atlas of California*, “Crime & Incarceration” (38-39).

Th. 12/2. Serious Optimism in Dark Times

**\*\*\* Course Project due at the beginning of class**

- Jan Lin, “Protesting Displacement and the Right to the City: Anti-Gentrification Activism in Northeast Los Angeles,” *BOOM: A Journal of California* (2019).
- Shawn Schwaller, “Greetings from Bakersfield,” *BOOM: A Journal of California* (2018).

**\*\*\* FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, December 15, 8:00am-11am (location TBD)**

## COURSE PROJECTS

*We will discuss these projects extensively during discussion sections*

The course project is due by 11:10pm on **Thursday, December 2**.

Please choose one of the following two options for your course project. Both projects are intended to help you relate your own interests and experiences to the topics and concepts discussed in lectures, sections, and assigned readings.

### **Option 1: Critical California Cartography**

This project consists of two parts: (a) a map and (b) an accompanying essay.

#### (1a) The Map

There are many different kinds of maps and many reasons and motivations for making them. In this project you will create a map that expresses your own unique perspective and insights into a place of your choice, and into California more generally.

Choose a geographical area in California and draw a map of it. Any scale is acceptable—a building, a street, a neighborhood, a town, a city, a metropolitan region, a county, a geomorphic region, or the state itself. Depending the scale of your place, use Social Explorer or Policy Map, planning documents, your memory, interviews, google maps and other internet visualization sources, or onsite observations to design and draw your map.

In addition to streets and other generic features, depict two elements or aspects of your place that are interesting or important to you. Consider several of the following themes and elements, though this is not an exhaustive list:

- Inclusion & Exclusion: Who lives there? Who visits? Who is welcomed or excluded? How are racial, ethnic, linguistic, or socioeconomic identities expressed in the landscape?
- Economics: Can you see signs of gentrification or disinvestment? New boutiques or cupcake shops? Check-cashing stores? Locally owned businesses or national chain stores, such as Starbucks? “For rent” signs and high vacancy rates? Are many houses recently renovated and painted (perhaps a shade of gray)? What is the mix of liquor stores, grocery stores, and community gardens? Have real estate developers adapted older industrial buildings for residential or commercial uses? What types of jobs and places of work can you detect?
- Politics: Is there a specific law or policy issue that affects your place, such as a gang injunction? Are you mapping a site of conflict or contestation? What about policing or other types of surveillance?



- Spatial history: Was your place previously redlined? Has it seen significant demographic shifts? How are historical development or previous residents represented in the landscape?
- Connection: How is your place connected to other neighborhoods, cities, or parts of the world? Through roads, pipelines, or sewers? Public transportation or parking lots? Places of work? Specialized stores and retailers? Government agencies?
- Representation, art, expression: Are there any memorials, murals, or graffiti in the place you are investigating?
- “Nature”: Can you find any traces of the “natural” landscape, such as creeks, hills, or trees? Are these important for understanding the character of your place? Is pollution an issue?
- Social Rhythms: When is your area most lively? During rush hour? After school? On Sundays?

Your map may be academic or personal—hopefully some combination of the two. Avoid themes such as “Places I like to eat” or “Where I grew up.” Instead, your map should display an overarching theme, logical relationships, or interesting juxtapositions among the elements. That is, your map should serve as an analytical tool.

You will NOT be graded on formal cartographic design or artistic skill. Instead, your map should demonstrate thought, care, and creativity—get as creative as you like (*but don’t use glitter!*). Hand drawn maps are perfectly acceptable, as are maps created on a computer. That said, your map must include a title, a scale, a north arrow, and a legend explaining the icons.

Check our bCourse site for reference material and examples, such as Darin Jensen’s [Mission Possible Atlas](#), Rebecca Solnit’s *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas*, and examples from the [Hand Drawn Map Association](#).

*Definitely feel free to visit your GSI or instructor during office hours to discuss your incipient ideas.*

### (1.b) The Essay

Your essay should be at least eight typed, double-spaced pages with 1-inch margins and a 12-point font. In general, a good essay will:

- Clearly describe the point of your map;
- Explain the relationship between the two mapped elements and how this relationship provides insight into the area under investigation and into a broader topic that is pertinent to the course (note: you may certainly write about issues that are not depicted on your map);
- Directly relate your map to concepts, arguments, or issues found in at least two course readings, though you may need to incorporate additional sources;

- Be structured by an explicit argument and organized with an introduction, body, and conclusion;
- Reference readings with a standard citation style of your choice;
- Be proofread and free of grammatical errors and typos.

## **Option 2: Photo Essay**

The Photo Essay project consists of two parts: (a) a coherent set of 10 to 15 photographs and (b) an accompanying analytical essay.

### (2.a) The Photos

Compose a photo essay of 10 to 15 images related to a key course topic or a specific place in California. The subject(s) and location(s) of the photos is up to you. You will NOT be graded on the artistic quality of your photos. Instead, the photos should collectively provide insights into a course theme, concept, or issue (that is, do not create photo essays like “Places I Like to Eat” or “Where I Grew Up”).

Photos may be your own or downloaded from the internet; they may contemporary or historical (the [Online Archive of California](#) is a good place to start). If you take your own photographs, please familiarize yourself with the National Press Photographers Association [Code of Ethics](#). However, you are in no way obligated to take your own photos and you must practice all safety precautions if you choose to do so.

### (2.b) The Essay

Your essay should be at least eight typed, double-spaced pages (not including photos) with 1-inch margins and a 12-point font. You may organize your writing as a typical essay or as extended captions for each photo or groups of photos. In either case, an introduction, clear argument, evidence in support of your argument, and conclusion is required. In general, a good essay will:

- Clearly describe the point of your photo essay and explain its significance;
- Demonstrate how your photos provide insight into the area under investigation and into a broader topic that is pertinent to the course, rather than simply providing descriptions or examples of course topics;
- Directly relate your photos to concepts, arguments, or issues found in at least two course readings, though you may need to incorporate additional sources;
- Be structured by an explicit argument and organized with an introduction and conclusion;
- Cite all photographs and readings with a standard citation style of your choice;
- Be proofread and free of grammatical errors and typos.