

California History

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C S U N F A L L 2 0 1 9

TuTh 8-9:15 AM, SH 279
Nan Towle Yamane, Ph.D.



It was a splendid population - for all the slow, sleepy, sluggish-brained sloths stayed at home - you never find that sort of people among pioneers - you cannot build pioneers out of that sort of material. It was that population that gave to California a name for getting up astounding enterprises and rushing them through with a magnificent dash and daring and a recklessness of cost or consequences, which she bears unto this day - and when she projects a new surprise the grave world smiles as usual and says, "Well, that is California all over."
Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (1872)

... But not even the soft wash of dusk could help the houses. Only dynamite would be of any use against the Mexican ranch houses, Samoan huts, Mediterranean villas, Egyptian and Japanese temples, Swiss chalets, Tudor cottages, and every possible combination of these styles that lined the slopes of the canyon.

When he noticed that they were all of plaster, lath and paper, he was charitable and blamed their shape on the materials used. Steel, stone and brick curb a builder's fancy a little, forcing him to distribute his stresses and weights and to keep his corners plumb, but plaster and paper know no law, not even that of gravity.

On the corner of La Huerta Road was a miniature Rhine castle with tarpaper turrets pierced for archers. Next to it was a highly colored shack with domes and minarets out of the Arabian Nights. Again he was charitable. Both houses were comic, but he didn't laugh, their desire to startle was so eager and guileless.
Nathaniel West, *The Day of the Locust* (1939)

I. Course Purpose & Goals

What is the (S)tate of California? Are we extraordinarily innovative, or especially imitative? Are we truly unique, or a mere reflection of the nation as a whole? Part of the West, or an extension of the East? What part of our State's identity is myth, and what part reality? We will chase down ideas about our "elusive Eden" by following shifting land and resource use, various cultural influences, and governing polities from the time of indigenous populations to the present. How have environmental, economic, social, and political forces molded California, and which of these do you consider most significant? What have been the economic contributions of California--the Gold Rush, WWII, "Silicon Valley"? To what extent has the state's economy become (more) global? What impact does California have on the world, and what impact has the world of immigrants and migrants had on California?

This is a survey class of California's history, and the purpose is to gain a basic and broad understanding of California's past, a past that is all around us, and it is also my hope that you will be able to observe traces of California's history in our local region. I encourage you, as you are able, to take hikes, visit local museums, and talk to people who have experienced our history. Share with us your discoveries, along with any interesting books or film/ video forms you may find. From hikes in the Santa Monica Mountains to visiting any on of the rich variety of museums, there are many ways to learn about California's past. Follow your curiosity.

II. Required Readings

1-M.Kat Anderson, *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California's Natural Resources* (2013) Oviatt Online

2-Stacey Smith, *Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction* (2013)

3-Ruth Milkman, *LA Story* (2006)

*4-Additional Readings to be Emailed or Password-protected via web.

*Readings from an assortment of wonderful books: *Testimonios; Lands of Promise and Despair; American History Unbound: Asians and Pacific Islanders; The Indispensable Enemy; Barons of Labor; Orange Empire; American Babylon; Silicon Valley, Women, and the California Dream; What is in a Rim? Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea; The Coming White Minority: California, Multiculturalism, and America's Future.*

III. Assignments, Grading, & Policies

1-Participation in Class and Leading Assigned Discussions, 15% Grade, 120 points

2-four Reading Quizzes, 20% Grade, 160 points (40 each)

3-Two Midterm Exams, Week 8 and Finals' Week, 40% Grade, 320 points (160 points each)

4-One 8-10 page Term Paper (and Proposal), 25% Grade, 200 points
(40 for the Proposal, 160 for Essay)

There are a total of 800 points, with 93% A; 90 % A-; 87 % B+; 83% B;
80 % B-; 77% C+; 73% C; 70 % C-; 67% D+; 63 % D; 60 % D-; 59% F.

There are NO MAKE-UP EXAMS and NO MAKE-UP DISCUSSION DATES. Late papers will automatically have points deducted, exponentially after one week. Please turn-in only your work done for this class. Students who turn in plagiarized papers or work will automatically fail the class, with letters sent to the dean of students. On the other hand, your diligent, honest work will result in improvement, intellectual growth, and the possibility of sophisticated arguments and ideas. A significant portion of the exams will come from class lectures and discussions, along with the reading. Coming to class will significantly increase your chances of passing.

Please, be respectful of others. Arrive on time, be here "in the moment" by listening, commenting, and taking notes--no texting or emailing or watching feature movies on your computer! I will allow for breaks, so please be patient. Come see me with any questions or problems early in the term so I can help you to address them.

The History Department has a Writing Help Center, and you can make an appointment before you paper is due by calling the department (677-3566). I recommend that you plan ahead. After you email your draft to the tutor, they will read over and edit your essay so they can discuss it with you at your appointment--even if you don't have a draft, show up for your appointment and they will help you begin your paper. Additionally, CSUN has a variety of truly excellent programs and centers designed to help you accomplish your best work, and to improve critical skills each semester (take a look at our website, or just ask).

IV. Class Schedule (Please see yamasun.net for updates)

Part One/

From Indian, Spanish, and Mexican to Early Progressive American California

Week #1 (8/25)- Introduction to Class, California Themes, & Class Work

What are significant California themes, and what are the different ways in which historians and writers view them?

Reading: Kevin Starr, Opening Readings from Kevin Starr's *Coast of Dreams*, "Cities, Suburbs, and Other Paces" and "A Tale of Two Cities: Los Angeles and SF."

Work Due: Read Syllabus and Chapters sent.

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Week #2 (9/2)-Land of Dolphins & Coyote Children

How do Native Californian and Spanish Cultures compare? Consider their economies, their social structure and religion, along with their political organization. What are their relationships with nature?

Reading: *Competing Visions*, Chapter 1 & *Tending the Wild*, Part 1: "California at Contact," pp. 1-124 (1-Wildlife, Plants, and People; 2-Gathering, Hunting, and Fishing; 3-The Collision of Worlds); Part III: "Rekindling Old Ways," Chapter 12 & Coda, 334-365.

Work Due: Reading

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Week #3 (9/9)-Osio's Mexican California

Who were the Californios, and what was life like in Mexican California?

Reading: *Competing Visions*, Chapter 3 on Mexican California; "Introduction" & Biographies. "Isidora Filomena;" "Rosalia Vallejo;" Dorotea Valdez;" "Maria Antonia Rodriguez;" "Teresa de la Guerra;" and Josefa Carillo" from Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz (eds), *Testimonios: Early California through the eyes of Women, 1815-1848*.

Work Due: Reading & Reading Quiz #1 9/12

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Week #4 (9/16)-Foreign Influence and American Takeover

How did foreigners contribute to Mexican California, and what was their significance?

Reading: Osio's California; Documents from Rose Marie Beebe and Robert M. Senkewicz (eds), *Land of Promise: "Colonization,"* pp. 65-150; "Mexican California," pp. 311-400.

Work Due: Reading, Class Discussion/ Reading Discussion #1 (Thursday): Maria, & Vazgen

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Week #5 (9/23)-Gold Rush!

How did the Gold Rush define the character of early American California?

Reading: Smith, *Freedom's Frontier*, Intro to chapter 2 (1-46), "Introduction" (Historiography, White Nation, National Histories, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Theory, Society, Taxonomy, Racial Geographies, Racial Biologies, Orientalism, & American History) and "Ocean Worlds" (from Gary Y. Okihiro, *American History Unbound: Asians and Pacific Islanders*, pp. 1-20, & 20-41.

Work Due: Reading, Class Discussion, and Paper Proposal/ Reading Discussion #2 (Thursday): Salvador, Justin T. & Matthew & Paper Proposals Due: 9/25

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Week #6 (9/30)-After the Gold Rush: Gold Rush Political Economy & the Rise of a Merchant Economy

Who consolidates capital and power, and what is the impact of the increasing concentration of wealth on the late nineteenth century economy? What kinds of opportunities provide upwardly mobile jobs, and to who? What is the impact of California on the nation's political economy?

Reading: Smith, *Freedom's Frontier*, Intro to chapters 3-5 (80-173), "The Labor Force in California" & "Rehabilitation of the Democratic Party" from Saxton, *Indispensable Enemy*, pp. 1-18 & 67-91.

Work Due: Reading & Reading Quiz #2: 10/2 Thursday

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Week #7 (10/7)-Labor, the Railroad, and Early Progressive Reform

What is the "response" to the industrializing economy, to the rise of "corporate" capitalism, especially in the wake of a boom-and-bust economy that included two significant panics after 1873 and 1893?

Reading: Smith, *Freedom's Frontier*, Intro to chapters 6 to end (174-236), Kazin, "The Rise to Power," *Barons of Labor*, pp. 1-65.

Work Due: Reading/ Reading Discussion #3 (Thursday): Ana Silva, Deanna, Justin H.

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Week #8 (10/14)-Midterm Part One (Native California to Early Progressive, 1906)

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Part Two/

Progressive Era to the Twentieth Century: From Frontier to American Empire

Week #9 (10/21)-Agriculture & Economic Development in the LA Century: Late Progressive and 1920s
Utopian Communities, Water, Scientific Management and the (freedom of?) the 1920s: What are the characteristics of "modern" life in California?

(Week #9, Continued)

Reading: "Conclusion," Kazin's *Baron's of Labor* (1987), pp. 277-93, and "Prologue and Part One (An Allegory of California and Fabricating Eden)" from Sackman's *Orange Empire* (2005), pp. 1-118.

Work Due: Reading, Class Discussion/ Reading Discussion #4 (Thursday): Juan, Patrick, Avital, Pedro

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Week #10 (10/28)-"Brother can you spare a dime?": California's Great Depression Years

How did various groups and individual's respond to the Great Depression? What did Upton Sinclair's campaign for governor reveal the state's political economy?

Reading: "Work in the Garden" ("Intro," "Fruits of Labor" & "Finished Product of the Environment"), "A Jungle of Representation: The Epic Campaign versus Sunkist" from Sackman's *Orange Empire* (2005), pp. 118-180 & 181-224.

Work Due: Reading/ Reading Discussion #5 (Thursday): Jazz, Spencer, Elizabeth, & Carlos

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Week #11 (11/4)- World War II

How did WWII affect the lives of Californians? What war related industries were located in California, and how were they significant?

Reading: "California (Pacific Migrant Labor)" and "WWII" from *American History Unbound*, pp. 150-183 & 333-363, Robert Self, "Urban and suburban Politics and the California Dream (Industrial Garden, (reading, continued) Working Class, Tax Dollar)," *American Babylon*, pp. 1-61.

Work Due: Reading & Reading Quiz #3: 11/6 Thursday

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Week #12 (11/11)-1950s Cold War & Suburbia American Dream?

Evaluate American prosperity in the 1950s and 1960s, what do you find were positive and negative aspects of the American fifties and sixties?

Reading: Self, "Working Class," "Tax Dollar," and Part Two ("Redistribution" and "Opportunity Politics"), *American Babylon*, pp. 61-214 and Glenna Matthews' "War and Cold War Shape the Valley" & "Toward Silicon Valley," *Silicon Valley, Women, and the California Dream*, pp. 81-146.

Work Due: Reading/ Reading Discussion #6 (Thursday): Dalton, Diana, Cayley, & Izzy

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Week #13 (11/18)- The World "A-Changing": Beats, Boomers, Music, and Rebellion, 1960s through 1970s

What accounts for the "youth rebellion" of the sixties and seventies, and what do you think was accomplished in this era of reform?

Reading: Milkman, *LA Story*, first third; Self, "Black Power," *American Babylon*, pp. 215-255, and "Northeast Asian Political Economy" & "Global Sourcing and Regional Divisions of Labor in the Pacific Rim" from Arif Dirlik, editor of *What is in a Rim? Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea*, pp. 99-162.

Work Due: Reading & Reading Discussion #7 (Tuesday): Victor, Jesus, Nathan, & Michael

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Week #14 (11/25)-From New Left to New Right: Era of "De-Institutionalization"

What accounts for the changing political climate, and how did the "New Right" gain power?

Reading: Milkman, *LA Story*, second third; "Market Dependency in U.S.--East Asian Relations" & "China's Growing Integration with the Asia-Pacific Economy" from Arif Dirlik, editor of *What is in a Rim? Critical Perspectives on the Pacific Region Idea*, pp. 163-218.

Work Due: Reading, Reading Quiz #4: 11/26 Tuesday, & Term Paper Due 11/26 or Earlier (by topic)

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Week #15 (12/2)-Your Contemporary California

How do you characterize your generation of Californians?

Reading: Milkman, *LA Story*, last third, "Sexual Economies in the Asia-Pacific Economy," *What is in a Rim?* pp. 219-250, and "The Global Economy on the Home Front: A Tale of Two Valleys" from Matthews, *Silicon Valley*, pp. 226-255. **Optional Reading:** "The Brink," pp. 1-21 in Dale Maharidge, *The Coming White Minority: California, Multiculturalism, and America's future* (1996) & Self, *American Babylon*, pp. 215-334 (Black Power, White Noose, Babylon, & Conclusion)

Work Due: Reading & Reading Discussion #8 (Thursday): Melqui, Kevin, Danielle, & Luis

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Week #16 / 12 December Thursday, 8-10 AM

Midterm Part Two (Progressive through Twentieth Century)