

Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-80535-3 - Literature and Race in Los Angeles  
Julian Murphet  
Frontmatter  
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## Literature and Race in Los Angeles

Los Angeles is both the most fragmented and minoritized metropolis in America, and its most luridly abstract and aestheticized city. With more than eighty-five languages being spoken in its classrooms, and one homogenous visual language emanating from its entertainment industry, LA radically challenges the prospects of that archaic representational medium: literature. In its investigation of the work of Bret Easton Ellis, James Ellroy, Anna Deavere Smith and others, *Literature and Race in Los Angeles* articulates their aesthetic preoccupations with the structures of social space in the city. Harnessing some of the theoretical insights of Henri Lefebvre and the 'LA school' of geographers, Murphet demonstrates the versatility of literary production in LA and speculates about the fortunes of literature in a predominantly visual culture.

JULIAN MURPHET is a Junior Research Fellow at St John's College, Oxford and Visiting Professor at the University of California at Berkeley in 2000–2001. This is his first book.

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## Cultural Margins

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*Department of Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature and English,  
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*for Felix*

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Because there must be production,  
nature must be replaced wherever it can be replaced by every  
possible means of activity,  
a major field must be found for human inertia,  
the worker must be kept busy at something,  
new fields of activity must be created,  
where all the false manufactured products,  
all the ignoble synthetic ersatzes will finally reign,  
where beautiful true nature has nothing to do,  
and must give up its place once and for all and shamefully to all the  
triumphant replacement products

Antonin Artaud<sup>1</sup>

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