

ACLU OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

# SUMMER READING GUIDE 2023

100 ACLU  
SoCal

LA

Los Angeles  
Review of Books

RB



For 100 years, the ACLU of Southern California has fought to defend and advance civil liberties in the southland. Curated in partnership with the Los Angeles Review of Books, our 2023 Summer Reading Guide is a reflection of our region's rich literary feast, featuring contemporary California authors whose works inform our mission and challenge us to realize a more just and equitable future.

Get involved and learn more about the ACLU SoCal's centennial celebrations throughout the year at [ACLUSoCal100.org](https://aclusoCal100.org).

## FEATURED BOOK



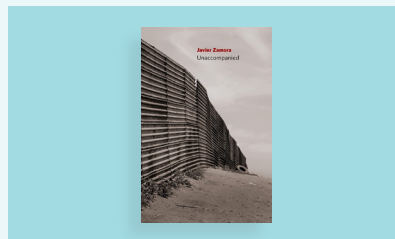
### Your House Will Pay:

A Novel

STEPH CHA

This suspenseful novel explores the painful legacy of the 1992 L.A. uprising and the complex intersections of race, family and justice. Inspired by true events, the story follows two families—one Korean-American, one African-American—whose lives become intertwined, forcing them to confront the past and search for redemption in the present.

## POETRY



### Unaccompanied

JAVIER ZAMORA

Javier Zamora was nine years old when he traveled unaccompanied from El Salvador to the United States to be reunited with his parents. His poetry debut humanizes the highly-charged politics and rhetoric of border crossing.



### Wicked Enchantment:

Selected Poems

WANDA COLEMAN  
EDITED BY TERRANCE HAYES

Born in Watts in 1946, Wanda Coleman became one of the most influential voices in American poetry. This collection showcases both her literary prowess and her enduring commitment to the themes of race, feminism and L.A.

## MEMOIR

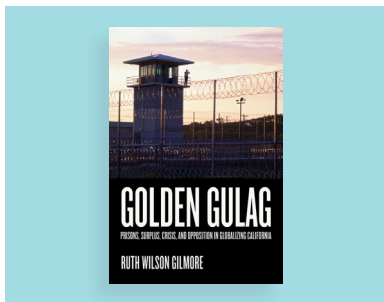


### The Argonauts

MAGGIE NELSON

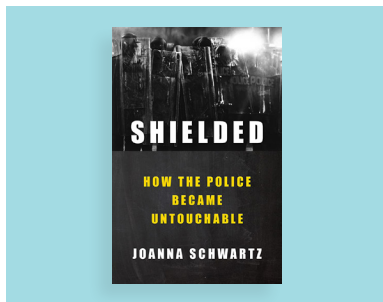
In this genre-bending memoir, Nelson chronicles her pregnancy and relationship with her partner, the gender-fluid artist Harry Dodge, grappling with what it means to be a family when patriarchy still defines our society's views of partnership and motherhood.

## SYSTEMIC INJUSTICE



**Golden Gulag:**  
Prisons, Surplus, Crisis,  
and Opposition in  
Globalizing California  
RUTH WILSON GILMORE

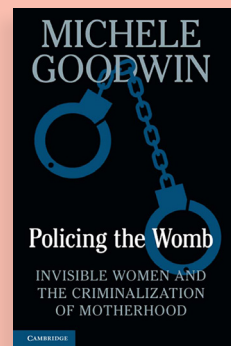
Abolitionist Ruth Wilson Gilmore investigates the rise of mass incarceration in California—noted as “the biggest prison building project in the history of the world.”



**Shielded:**  
How the Police  
Became Untouchable  
JOANNA SCHWARTZ

A leading policing scholar explains how the courts use doctrines like qualified immunity to shield police from accountability, making it nearly impossible for victims of police violence and misconduct to obtain justice.

## REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE



**Policing the Womb:**  
Invisible Women and the  
Criminalization of Motherhood  
MICHELE GOODWIN

UC Irvine Law Professor Michele Goodwin describes the ways states surveil and criminalize pregnancy—with horrific results that most often affect poor women and women of color—a fact made even more chilling in our post-*Dobbs* era.

## QUEER IMMIGRANT INTERSECTIONS



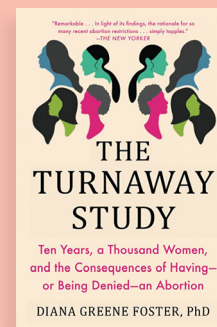
**Afterparties:**  
Stories  
ANTHONY VEASNA SO

Set among Cambodian Americans in the Central Valley, the stories in this acclaimed collection are both absurdly comical and tenderhearted, offering insight into the intimacy of queer and immigrant communities.



**Brown and Gay in LA:**  
The Lives of  
Immigrant Sons  
ANTHONY CHRISTIAN OCAMPO

Ocampo's book explores the intersection of queer identity and the immigrant family experience—centering stories from interviews of over 60 queer Filipinos and Latinos in L.A., who are often sidelined from the mainstream narrative of queer life.

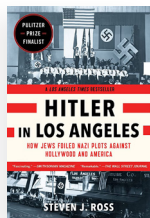


**The Turnaway Study:**  
Ten Years, a Thousand  
Women, and the Consequences  
of Having—or Being Denied—  
an Abortion  
DIANA GREENE FOSTER

Anti-abortion extremists routinely claim that abortion is physically risky and leads to depression and remorse. This landmark study by a UCSF demographer, documenting the impacts of abortion access and denial on women across the U.S., proves the opposite to be true.



## SOCAL HISTORY



### Hitler in Los Angeles: How Jews Foiled Nazi Plots Against Hollywood and America

STEVEN J. ROSS

This Pulitzer finalist documents how a daring group of Jewish activists infiltrated Nazi groups in L.A. to foil their plans to sabotage Hollywood, attack California military installations and murder prominent Jewish figures.



### Bad Mexicans: Race, Empire, & Revolution in the Borderlands

KELLY LYTLE  
HERNÁNDEZ

The dramatic story of the *magonistas*, migrant rebels who sparked the 1910 Mexican Revolution from the U.S. and were hunted across the country by U.S. authorities for the threat they posed to Anglo-American power.



### Set the Night on Fire:

L.A. in the Sixties

MIKE DAVIS AND  
JON WIENER

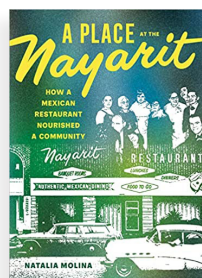
Late urban theorist Mike Davis and historian Jon Wiener show how the civil rights, anti-war, feminist, LGBTQ and Black Panther movements converged to make 1960s L.A. a hotbed of radical activism and social change.



### We Are the Land: A History of Native California

DAMON B. AKINS AND  
WILLIAM J. BAUER JR.

Two Native writers center the history of California around the Indigenous people who shaped it—shedding light on how colonialism, violence and dispossession have impacted Native communities while highlighting their ongoing resilience and resistance.



### A Place at the Nayarit:

How a Mexican Restaurant  
Nourished a Community

NATALIA MOLINA

Historian Natalia Molina explores the history of the Nayarit, the popular Echo Park restaurant founded by her grandmother in 1951. Though it was a local landmark popular with Hollywood stars, Molina shows how the Nayarit was first and foremost a place where L.A.'s Mexican community could find—and create—a sense of belonging.

## YOUNG READERS



### The Proudest Color

SHEILA MODIR AND JEFFREY KASHOU

Zahra sees the world in vivid colors. When schoolmates point out the color of her skin, she doesn't know how to feel at first, but her mother tells her to feel proud. Authored by a child psychologist and family therapist duo, this children's book is a timely and sensitive introduction to race, racism and racial identity.



### Only This Beautiful Moment

ABDI NAZEMIAN

Set in Tehran and Los Angeles, this moving and ultimately life-affirming young adult story follows three generations of boys in the same Iranian-American family—exploring racism, homophobia, filial duty, intergenerational trauma and love.



**AFTERPARTIES**  
Anthony Heaton So  
EDITED BY Alice Wong

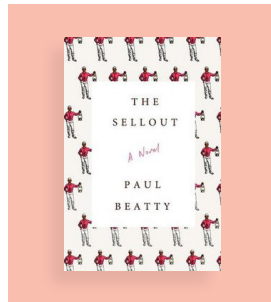
There There  
Tommy Orange

WANDA COLEMAN WICKED ENCHANTMENT





## NOVELS



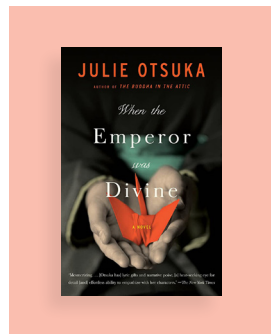
**The Sellout:**  
A Novel  
PAUL BEATTY

This provocative satire—winner of the Man Booker Prize—tells the story of the disaffected son of a prominent Black sociologist who decides to put his Southern California town on the map by reinstating slavery and segregation.



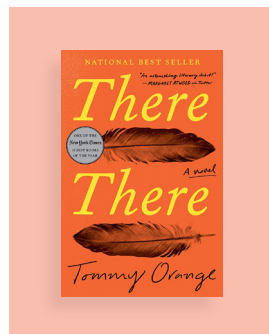
**The Other Americans:**  
A Novel  
LILA LALAMI

Set in a small California desert town after the hit-and-run death of a Moroccan immigrant, this National Book Award finalist is at once a family saga, a murder mystery and a love story informed by the treacherous fault lines of American culture.



**When the Emperor Was Divine**  
JULIE OTSUKA

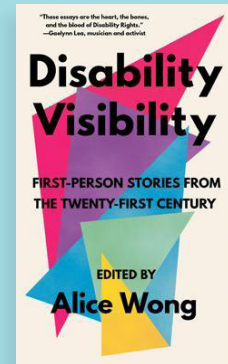
Otsuka's poignant novel follows the internment of a Japanese-American family during World War II, using the perspectives of five different family members to illuminate a shameful episode in American history.



**There, There:**  
A Novel  
TOMMY ORANGE

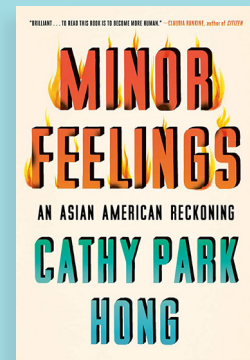
This moving Pulitzer Prize finalist follows twelve characters from Native communities—all traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow, and all connected to one another in ways they may not yet realize.

## ESSAY COLLECTIONS



**Disability Visibility:**  
First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century  
EDITED BY ALICE WONG

Activist Alice Wong brings together this galvanizing collection exploring the experiences, struggles and triumphs of disabled people, shedding light on their perspectives and advocating for disability rights.



**Minor Feelings:**  
An Asian American Reckoning  
CATHY PARK HONG

Poet and essayist Cathy Park Hong provides a boldly honest examination of the complexities of race, identity and belonging—exposing truths about the myriad stereotypes and microaggressions that Asian Americans face.



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