

# LOS ANGELES BURNING

## Memory, Justice and the 1992 Riots

### USC LIBRARIES RESOURCE GUIDE

Monday, April 29, 2013, Doheny Memorial Library

Fires raged in the USC neighborhood and throughout Los Angeles over several days in April and May of 1992. The U.S. military patrolled Vermont Avenue in armored vehicles. Community leaders like Rev. Dr. Cecil Murray, the former pastor of First African Methodist Episcopal (FAME) Church, advocated for justice and peace after an all-white jury failed to convict four LAPD officers for the videotaped 1991 beating of Rodney King. Los Angeles observed the 20th anniversary of the civil unrest in April 2012, and the USC Libraries recently unsealed two important archival collections related to these watershed events after legal restrictions expired in the fall of 2012.

More than twenty years later, Angelenos are still trying to understand the significance of the Rodney King verdict and the events of 1992. Today, on the 21st anniversary of the verdict, a panel discusses many questions that remain—about racial profiling by the LAPD, the geography of wealth and poverty in Southern California, relations between African American, Korean American and Latino communities and rebuilding efforts in South L.A.

In 1991 and 1992, two commissions—one chaired by Warren Christopher (former U.S. secretary of state) and the other by William H. Webster (former FBI director)—investigated the LAPD to understand the causes of the King incident and the unrest. Their records were donated to the USC Libraries in the fall of 1992. Thanks to a grant from the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), USC archivists created online guides that, for the first time, will make these two collections fully accessible to researchers and the public.

Today, the USC Libraries display a selection of documentary materials from the archives of the Christopher and Webster commissions, which investigated the LAPD and the underlying causes of the civil unrest.

**BETH NAMEI** and **DACE TAUBE** of the USC Libraries have selected the following resources to help you learn more about the issues discussed at today's event. Consult the online version of this guide at [libguides.usc.edu/lariots](http://libguides.usc.edu/lariots) for many more resources, including links to newspaper and television coverage of the 1992 riots.

## Selected Books

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***The Riot Within: My Journey From Rebellion to Redemption*** (2012)

By Rodney King and Lawrence J. Spagnola

**Doheny Memorial Library: E185.97.K595 A3 2012**

***Twilight Los Angeles, 1992*** (1994)

By Anna Deavere Smith

**Doheny Memorial Library: PS3569.M465T95 1994**

***Performance and Activism: Grassroots Discourse After the Los Angeles Rebellion of 1992*** (2009)

By Kamran Afary

**Doheny Memorial Library: F869.L89A23 2009**  
**Leavey Library: F869.L89A23 2009**

***Geography of Rage*** (2002)

By Jervy Tervalon

**VKC Library: F869.L89A2577 2002**

***Official Negligence*** (1998)

By Lou Cannon

**VKC Library: F869.L89N327 1997**

***Understanding the Riots*** (1992)

By the staff of the *Los Angeles Times*

**Doheny Memorial Library: F869.L89N44 1992**

***Blue Dreams: Korean Americans and the Los Angeles Riots*** (1995)

By Nancy Ablemann and John Lie

**Doheny Memorial Library: F869.L89K616 1995**  
**Leavey Library: F869.L89K616 1995**

***Ethnic Peace in the American City*** (1999)  
By Jeannette Diaz-Veizades and Edward T. Chang  
**Leavey Library: F869.L89A2517 1999**

***The Rodney King Rebellion: A Psychopolitical Analysis of Racial Despair and Hope*** (1992)  
By Brenda Wall  
**Doheny Memorial Library: F869.L89N4 1992**

***Writing the Ghetto: Class, Authorship, and the Asian American Ethnic Enclave*** (2010)  
By Yoonmee Chang  
**Doheny Memorial Library: PS508.A8C53 2010**

***Koreans in the Hood*** (1999)  
Edited by Kwang Chung Kim  
**Doheny Memorial Library: E184.K6K6555 1999**

***Images of "Others": The Effect of Media Coverage of Racial Unrest on Public Opinion*** (2001)  
By Kimberley Ann Gross

**Doheny Memorial Library: P94.5.M552U637 2001a**

***Korean Americans and African Americans in the Los Angeles Riots: A Study of the Rhetoric of Conflict*** (1996)  
By Hyunsuk Yoo

**Doheny Memorial Library: F869.L89K686 1996a**

***Strange Future: Pessimism and the 1992 Los Angeles Riots*** (2005)  
By Min Hyoung Song

**Doheny Memorial Library: F869.L89A27 2005**  
**Leavey Library: F869.L89A27 2005**

## Selected Archival Collections at USC

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### Los Angeles Webster Commission Records

The Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners established the Webster Commission to assess law enforcement's performance in connection with the 1992 riots.

Included in this collection are interviews, article clippings, broadcasts, reports, emergency operations plans and internal LAPD documents that were collected and analyzed by the commission over the course of its study.

### Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department Records

Chaired by the attorney and former Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department assessed the structure and operations of the LAPD in connection with the Rodney King incident of March 1991.

This collection consists of materials collected and analyzed by the commission and its professional staff over the course of their 100-day study. Materials reflect the major themes of the commission's investigation including use-of-force guidelines, bias and discrimination, personnel and hiring practices, internal discipline, complaints and citizen oversight.

### Richard M. Mosk Christopher Commission Records

Chaired by Warren Christopher, the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department was formed in the wake of the 1991 videotaped beating of Rodney King by several LAPD officers.

This collection consists of files kept by Richard M. Mosk in his capacity as a member of the commission.