One Book, One College Presents
The Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 Essay Contest

In March of 1991, four Los Angeles police officers were arraigned on felony charges stemming from their videotaped beating of an unarmed African-American motorist, Rodney G. King, at the conclusion of a high-speed chase. In April of 1992, after a jury acquitted three of the officers and failed to reach a verdict on the fourth, fires, looting, and violence broke out in Los Angeles, resulting in over $1 billion in property damage, more than 12,000 arrests, over 2,000 injuries, and 58 deaths. Within days, actress and playwright Anna Deveare Smith began interviewing political figures, academics, key participants, and other affected Angelenos in an effort to record a diverse sample of attitudes and experiences. The 2015-2016 Chaffey College Book, Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992, is Smith’s dramatic arrangement of the words she encountered. Chaffey’s One Book, One College Committee now invites you to add your own words to the mix.

We encourage you to submit an original essay that relates to Twilight, Los Angeles: 1992. You might chronicle your experiences on a significant date in history. You can write about a time when you had trouble with police, the law, or an authority figure; or write about a time when you were the law or authority figure. You can describe an occasion when you were made hyperaware of your race or someone else’s. You may narrate a story of chaos, riot, or insurrection. You can portray a heated disagreement or an attempt at understanding. You might recount a time when your version of truth significantly differed from another’s. You might tell about a time when you conducted an interview or went in search of an oral history. Or you could share a personal tale set in Los Angeles. In fact, you are welcome to submit any essay that clearly connects with this year’s College Book.

Deadline: Wednesday, March 23, 2016 by 1:00 pm

Submit a hard copy of your essay to Mary Thomas in Language Arts Room 107 on the Rancho Campus any time before the deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted. Please do not write your name on the essay; instead, include a separate cover sheet with the title of your essay, your name, phone number, and student ID number. Please also include your title on the first page of the essay and number your pages. Essays should be between two and five double-spaced pages and will be judged on originality, compelling content, and the quality of written expression.

Up to ten finalists will receive a cash prize and will read their essays at an awards ceremony in April, 2016.

For more information, contact Professor Neil Watkins (652-6952, neil.watkins@chaffey.edu) or Professor Deckard Hodge (652-6924, deckard.hodge@chaffey.edu).