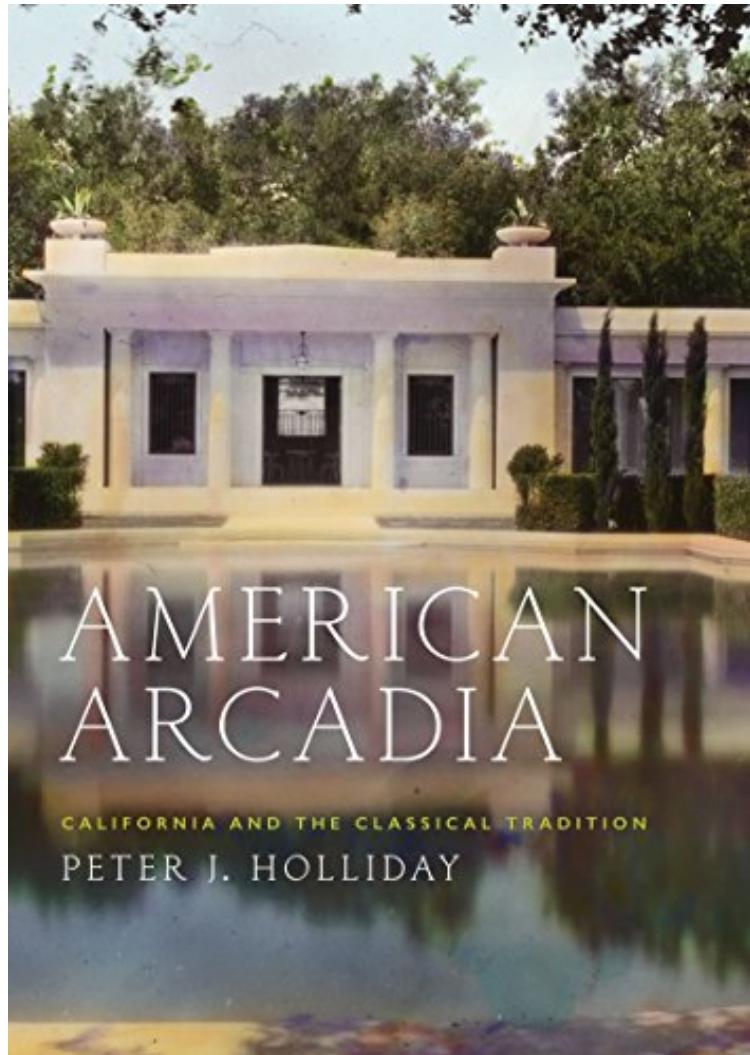


## American Arcadia: California and the Classical Tradition

Peter J. Holliday

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**Peter J. Holliday : American Arcadia: California and the Classical Tradition** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Arcadia: California and the Classical Tradition:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A tradition revealedBy C. BaswellEast coast snobs like me tend to think of California, especially southern California, as a land of glitz, with little awareness of the distant past. Holliday's book shows us how wrong we are, laying out (and showing in beautiful images) a world of classical style in California's arts and especially architecture. Although written by an academic, this is an accessible and clearly written book. The photos alone make the book worth owning. So much to learn here.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Perfect Gift.By Audrey in RomeI received this book as a birthday present and love it. Peter

Holliday's American Arcadia is the perfect book for anyone who is a fan of classic Hollywood or Classical architecture. Holliday combines a scholar's knowledge with personal passion. He has produced a beautifully illustrated lively narrative. His history and anecdotes will intrigue California natives and visitors alike. I highly recommend this book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. There's more to CA than beaches and mountains. Who knew?!! By M. Worner As a 20 year resident I've grown accustomed to the quirks and charms of living in LA. We spend a lot of time in traffic, focused on reaching our destination without much concern for what we may be passing along the way. We also tend to stick to well-worn paths since we know those will get us to where we want to be, hopefully on time. Reading American Arcadia has opened my eyes to what I've been missing and has provided an incentive to explore So Cal beyond what is known. There's a richness and history here that I hadn't previously recognized or appreciated. Thank you Mr. Holliday for helping me break free from routine and explore!

A vivid and engaging exploration of California's debt to the ancient world Discussing the influence of the classics on America is nothing new; indeed, classical antiquity could be considered second only to Christianity as a force in modeling America's national identity. What has never been explored until now is how, from the beginning, Californians in particular chose to visually and culturally craft their new world using the rhetoric of classical antiquity. Through a lively exploration of material culture, literature, and architecture, American Arcadia offers a tour through California's development as a Mediterranean haven from the late nineteenth century to the present. In its earliest days, California was touted as the last opportunity for alienated Yankees to establish the refined gentleman-farmer culture envisioned by Jefferson and build new cities free of the filth and corruption of those they left back East. Through architecture and landscape design Californians fashioned an Arcadian setting evocative of ancient Greece and Rome. Later, as Arcadia gave way to urban sprawl, entire city plans were drafted to conjure classical antiquity, self-styled villas dotted the hills, and utopian communities began to shape the state's social atmosphere. Art historian Peter J. Holliday traces the classical influence primarily through the evidence of material culture, yet the book emphasizes the stories and people, famous and forgotten, behind the works, such as Florence Yoch, the renowned landscape designer and set designer for *Gone with the Wind*, and "Sister Aimee" Semple McPherson, the most publicized Christian evangelist of her day, whose sermons filled the Pantheon-like Angelus Temple. Telling stories from the creation of the famed aqueducts that turned the semi-arid landscape to a cornucopia of almonds, alfalfa, and oranges to the birth of the body-sculpting movement, American Arcadia offers readers a new way of seeing our past and ourselves.

"Many works have considered classicism in America, but American Arcadia is the first to explore its manifestation in the Golden State. Peter Holliday details how Californian dreams were filled with Corinthian columns and temple pediments as well as palm trees and surf boards. This well-researched study is enriched by Holliday's deep knowledge of the classical world, extensive research, and a wonderful eye (and ear) for details and engaging stories." -- Diane Favro, University of California, Los Angeles "What a wonderful contribution American Arcadia is to the cultural history of California. All around us, for all this time, California has been teeming with reference to the classical cultures of Greece and Rome--from place names like Pomona and Arcadia, to the Roman goddess of wisdom and war alongside the grizzly on our state seal, to that funny old state motto, 'Eureka, I've found it!' And yet nobody before the indefatigable Peter J. Holliday has had the scholarly acumen to sleuth out all the cultural sources and meanings of our classically-inspired architecture, public art, and city planning to shed new light on our collective Californian past, present, and future. A gift to the scholarship of our state!" -- Daniel Duane, author of *Lighting Out: A Golden Year in Yosemite and the West*, and *Caught Inside: A Surfer's Year on the California Coast* "An eminent and absorbing contribution to the literature of California." -- Library Journal "Well-researched and all-encompassing, this is a thoughtful analysis of how contemporary Californian culture came to be." -- Publishers Weekly "Before (and after) Spanish Revival, there was a dream of our state as a Grecian Eden. Holliday makes his case surprisingly well, starting with the state seal's declaration "Eureka" before moving on to movie star homes, civic centers and the over-the-top classicism of Hearst Castle and Getty Villa. Academic but picturesque, with a Southern California focus and no freeway gridlock in sight." -- San Francisco Chronicle About the Author Peter J. Holliday is Professor of the History of Art and Classical Archaeology, California State University, Long Beach. Trained as an historian of classical art and archaeology, Holliday has received awards for his research and writing from the American Academy in Rome, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, J. Paul Getty Trust, Samuel H. Kress Foundation, and National Endowment for the Humanities.