

## Brief Biography

**Jeremiah B.C. Axelrod** is currently on sabbatical from Occidental College, after serving as the founding Director of the Institute for the Study of Los Angeles [ISLA] and longtime Associate Professor NTT of History, Art History, Urban & Environmental Studies, and Cultural Studies.

Professor Axelrod is the author of *Inventing Autopia: Envisioning the Modern Metropolis in Jazz Age Los Angeles*, published by the University of California Press in 2009, as well as several articles and book chapters. He has presented more than eighty formal papers at academic and public policy conferences around the world and currently serves as President of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association. His research generally probes the connections between visibility, urban topography, memory, gender, race, and transportation in twentieth century urban environments, with an emphasis on Southern California.

As Director of Occidental College's Institute for the Study of Los Angeles, Dr. Axelrod spearheaded the creation of an oral history archive, (NE)LA Stories, containing more than 100 interviews with artists, musicians, and local community members. ISLA also hosted another 100 public talks from noted scholars and artists, many of them as part of academic conferences or symposia. In addition to directly supporting dozens of undergraduates in their individual research projects, the Institute sponsored writers' series, archival digitization efforts, and even published a letterpress book of original community-produced poetry.

A strong believer in both collegiate pedagogy and interdisciplinary academic collaboration, Dr. Axelrod is currently co-authoring a textbook, *A Theory Toolkit* (under contract from W.W. Norton), that helps college-level undergraduates construct argumentative essays using key concepts from contemporary critical theory. In addition to serving on the Executive Boards of the Historical Society of Southern California and the Lummis Day Community Foundation, he is also a member of the Executive Committee for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's effort to restore the Historic Southwest Museum Site.

Before arriving at Occidental in 2005, Dr. Axelrod taught for several years in the Film Studies and History Departments at UC Irvine and served as Kevin Starr Fellow in California Studies at the University of California Humanities Research Institute. He received his Ph.D. in American History (with graduate certificates in Critical Theory, Feminist Studies, and Film Studies) from the University of California, Irvine, in 2001 after having graduated *cum laude* from Williams College in 1992, where he majored in History, Political Science (with Highest Honors), and Women's Studies.

In addition, he was the founding partner in two Internet-based technology start-ups, Music For Dozens and Grabbit, LLC, based in Portland, Oregon. Founded respectively in 2001 and 2007, both companies focused on the distribution of independent popular music to consumers, seeking to construct communities of interaction between artists and fans which are capable of sustaining rich cultural relationships. He is also a founding board member of Enigma Icon, Inc., a Nevada-based small business that develops imaginative games built upon collaborative storytelling.

Born in Hollywood, "Jem" Axelrod grew up primarily in Riverside, California, and now lives with his wife, Lil Gomez Delcampo, and their twin daughters, Amalia and Sophie, in Alhambra, California.