My thesis centers on Lolita and The Crying of Lot 49 and the ways in which both novels defamiliarize our world and ways of thinking. Both novels use formal literary techniques as a way of making ordinary cultural artifacts, situations, and environments seem unfamiliar from our everyday perceptions. This process of defamiliarizing the regular and everyday has the greater implications of estranging universal themes such as love, environment, and belonging. Both novels also question our precarious hold on corporeal reality by interpreting plot through two outside narrators whose trustworthiness is constantly placed into question. Unsurprisingly, Lolita and The Crying of Lot 49 unsettle the categories of truthfulness and reinvention in interpreting America's immediate cultural and environmental landscape. Both texts blur the distinction between recorded and imaginatively reconstructed worlds: just so, America has isolated our two narrators in the text from their immediate landscape. Interpretations of America are questioned in the thesis through the process of Shklovsky's theory of Defamiliarization interfaced with Freud's Uncanny in the novel. Language disobedience and discord also play a part and will be discussed through Bakhtin's theories on polyphonic language.
Southern California took these deeply American ideas and exaggerated them: I can remake myself to be whatever I want to be; I can create a stage set; I can live in a Mediterranean villa or a sci-fi future house; the sun shines all day and the living is easy and anything is possible. Ultra-individualism … Scott Timberg is the editor of The Misread City: New Literary Los Angeles and author of Culture Crash: The Killing of the Creative Class. RELATED. A Recipe for Coping in Trump's America.

I haven't seen any references to the American philosopher Charles S. Peirce (different spelling) who made an enormous contribution to the field of semiotics (the study of signs and sign processes). If there is any link, then Pierce's full name might imply "unreliable or untruthful signs". People go into Pynchon's and Faulkner's novels and quickly realise that things happen very differently in here and thus, unnerved by the shock of the new, hastily retreat. It's a pity. My best advice for reading Pynchon? There's a couple of ways to read The Crying of Lot 49. You can read it as a mystery novel, you can read it as a meditation on 1960s post-war America (à la Breakfast of Champions) and you can also read it as a great satire on the postmodernist novel. I read it as the latter. The reader of Lot 49 is put in pretty much the same position as Oedipa Maas: desperately trying to untangle the mystery, while simultaneously wondering if the whole thing is just a big practical joke. Like other Postmodern authors writing around this time, Pynchon turns the traditional art of storytelling on its freakin' head and plays metafictional games that allow him to question the role of language in our lives… as well as the nature of fiction. And then laugh at them because you know that The Crying of Lot 49 might be just an elaborate practical joke. But what if you're neither a jokester nor a happy recipient of jokes? What if you like your novels to be Super Serious? Well, Shmooper, you're still in luck. This novel is, in short, one of the best explorations of America during the 1960s counterculture. Ever.