

CONTENTS

- List of Illustrations* vii
- Preface and Acknowledgments* ix
- 1 STARTING POINTS**
The Place and the Writers 1
- 2 BOOSTERS AND BOASTERS**
The Making and Unmasking of a Myth 27
- 3 THE TWENTIES AND BEYOND**
Oil, Movies, and Salvation 51
- 4 A VIEW FROM THE BACK ROOM**
The Hard-Boiled Thirties 79
- 5 DOWN THESE MEAN STREETS**
The Tough-Guy Detective Story 115
- 6 SARGASSO OF THE IMAGINATION**
The Hollywood Novel 153
- 7 DOWN AND OUT IN LOS ANGELES**
From Bunker Hill to the Barrio 179
- 8 BLACK DAHLIAS AND ZOOT SUITS**
The Recovery of History 207
- 9 ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS**
Surviving Apocalypse 231
- Notes* 259
- Index* 273