

california politics a primer

california politics a primer is your essential guide to understanding the complex and dynamic landscape of political life in the Golden State. California's vast size, diverse population, and economic power make its political system uniquely influential within the United States. This article provides a comprehensive overview of California politics, covering the structure of government, major parties, electoral processes, key policy issues, and the impact of demographic trends. Whether you're a student, researcher, or curious resident, this primer will clarify the state's political framework, highlight important players and policies, and offer insights into recent developments. The following sections break down the core elements of California politics, making it easy to grasp critical topics such as statewide offices, voting trends, legislative processes, and current policy debates. By the end, you'll have a clear perspective on how California politics operate and why they matter nationally. Let's delve into the fascinating world of California governance with a thorough, fact-based analysis.

- Overview of California's Political Structure
- Major Political Parties and Their Influence
- Electoral Processes and Voting Trends
- Key Policy Issues in California Politics
- The Role of Demographics in Shaping Politics
- Recent Developments and Future Outlook

Overview of California's Political Structure

State Government Organization

California operates under a constitutional framework that divides power among executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The Governor leads the executive branch, setting policy direction and overseeing state agencies. The bicameral legislature consists of the State Assembly and State Senate, responsible for making laws, passing the budget, and representing constituents. The judicial branch, headed by the California Supreme Court, interprets state laws and ensures justice is administered fairly. This three-part system ensures checks and balances, promoting accountability across government operations.

Local Governments and Their Roles

Local governance in California includes counties, cities, and special districts. Counties manage regional services such as public health, elections, and law enforcement, while city governments oversee local ordinances, zoning, and municipal services. Special districts handle specific needs like water supply, transportation, and education, providing targeted services within geographic boundaries. This layered structure allows for tailored solutions to California's diverse communities and regions.

Major Political Parties and Their Influence

Democratic Party Dominance

The Democratic Party has maintained significant control over California politics for the past several decades. With a strong voter base in urban centers such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento, Democrats hold a majority in both legislative chambers and most statewide offices. Their platform emphasizes environmental protection, social justice, expanded healthcare, and progressive taxation. Democratic dominance shapes policy priorities and legislative initiatives across the state.

Republican Party Presence

While the Republican Party has seen declining influence in recent years, it remains an important force, especially in rural areas and parts of the Central Valley. California Republicans advocate for lower taxes, business-friendly policies, and greater local control. They play a critical role in policy debates and occasionally win key positions, particularly at the county and municipal levels. GOP strategies focus on appealing to suburban voters and expanding outreach in competitive districts.

Emergence of Minor Parties

Minor parties, including the Green, Libertarian, and Peace and Freedom parties, participate in California's political scene. While their electoral success is limited, these parties often influence public discourse on issues like environmental protection, civil liberties, and campaign finance reform. California's open primary system enables minor party candidates to appear on general election ballots, increasing their visibility and impact.

- Democratic Party: Majority in legislature, focus on progressive policies
- Republican Party: Strong in rural regions, advocates conservative principles

- Minor Parties: Raise awareness of alternative policies and issues

Electoral Processes and Voting Trends

Primary and General Elections

California utilizes a top-two primary system, where all candidates compete regardless of party affiliation. The top two vote-getters advance to the general election, fostering competition and sometimes resulting in two candidates from the same party. This system is intended to encourage moderate campaign platforms and increase voter choice. General elections determine the final officeholders, with high turnout rates reflecting California's engaged electorate.

Voter Registration and Participation

California boasts one of the largest and most diverse electorates in the country. Voter registration is streamlined through automatic registration at the Department of Motor Vehicles and online platforms. Participation rates fluctuate depending on the election cycle, with presidential elections attracting the highest turnout. Efforts to expand mail-in voting and early voting options have further increased participation, making California a leader in electoral accessibility.

Recent Voting Trends

Recent years have seen a surge in youth participation and increased turnout among Latino, Asian, and Black communities. Suburban districts have shifted toward more progressive candidates, while some inland and rural areas remain conservative strongholds. These trends reflect demographic changes and evolving policy priorities, shaping the state's political future.

1. Top-two primary system promotes competition
2. High voter turnout in general and presidential elections
3. Diverse electorate influences statewide outcomes

Key Policy Issues in California Politics

Environmental Policy and Climate Change

California leads the nation in environmental regulation, with ambitious goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, invest in renewable energy, and protect natural resources. Policies such as cap-and-trade, carbon neutrality targets, and strict vehicle emission standards define the state's commitment to sustainability. These initiatives position California as a model for environmental leadership, though they often spark debate over economic impacts and regulatory costs.

Housing and Homelessness

Affordable housing and homelessness are pressing concerns in California politics. High costs of living, limited housing supply, and income inequality contribute to widespread housing insecurity. Statewide efforts include increased funding for affordable housing projects, rent control legislation, and expanded services for unhoused residents. Addressing these challenges remains a top priority for lawmakers and local officials.

Education and Public Services

California's education system, the largest in the United States, faces ongoing debates over funding, curriculum standards, and access. Investments in K-12 and higher education aim to close achievement gaps and prepare students for a competitive workforce. Public services, including healthcare, transportation, and emergency response, are central to policy discussions, reflecting the state's commitment to equity and innovation.

Criminal Justice and Public Safety

Recent reforms in criminal justice address mass incarceration, police accountability, and rehabilitation programs. Policies focus on reducing sentencing disparities, promoting alternatives to incarceration, and increasing oversight of law enforcement agencies. Public safety remains a critical issue, with ongoing efforts to balance community needs and individual rights.

The Role of Demographics in Shaping Politics

Population Diversity and Political Representation

California's population is among the most diverse in the nation, with significant Latino, Asian, African American, and immigrant communities. This diversity influences political representation, policy priorities, and electoral outcomes. Lawmakers strive to reflect the state's demographic makeup through inclusive legislation and outreach efforts, ensuring that all communities have a voice in government.

Urban vs. Rural Dynamics

Urban centers like Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco typically support progressive candidates and policies, while rural regions lean more conservative. These geographic differences shape legislative agendas and drive debates on resource allocation, infrastructure investment, and social services. Bridging the urban-rural divide remains a challenge for state leaders.

Generational Shifts and Political Engagement

Younger Californians are increasingly active in politics, advocating for climate action, social justice, and digital innovation. Generational shifts in values and priorities are reshaping party platforms and campaign strategies. Political engagement among Millennials and Gen Z voters continues to rise, influencing election outcomes and policy directions.

Recent Developments and Future Outlook

Legislative Achievements and Challenges

Recent legislative sessions have seen major advances in climate change policy, healthcare reform, and education funding. However, challenges persist, including budget shortfalls, infrastructure demands, and debates over public safety. The state's ability to innovate and adapt is critical for maintaining its leadership role and addressing future concerns.

Impact of Technology and Innovation

California is home to Silicon Valley and a thriving tech industry, which play a significant role in shaping political discourse and policy. Digital platforms influence campaign strategies, voter outreach, and government transparency. The intersection of technology and politics is increasingly central to the state's future, with ongoing debates over privacy, regulation, and economic growth.

Looking Ahead: Political Trends to Watch

California politics will continue to evolve as demographic shifts, policy challenges, and technological advancements reshape the landscape. Issues such as climate resilience, affordable housing, and healthcare access are likely to remain at the forefront. The state's role as a national trendsetter ensures that its political developments will have far-reaching implications for the United States as a whole.

Q: What is the structure of California's state government?

A: California's state government is divided into executive, legislative, and judicial branches, each with distinct powers and responsibilities. The Governor leads the executive branch, the State Assembly and Senate make up the legislature, and the judiciary is headed by the California Supreme Court.

Q: Why does the Democratic Party dominate California politics?

A: The Democratic Party dominates California politics due to strong support in urban centers, favorable demographic trends, and progressive policy platforms that resonate with a majority of voters.

Q: How does California's top-two primary system work?

A: In the top-two primary system, all candidates participate regardless of party, and the two highest vote-getters advance to the general election. This often leads to competitive races and increased voter choice.

Q: What are the major policy issues debated in California politics?

A: Major policy issues include environmental regulation, affordable housing, education funding, healthcare access, and criminal justice reform. These issues reflect California's diverse population and unique challenges.

Q: How do demographics affect California's political landscape?

A: California's diverse population, including large Latino, Asian, and immigrant communities, significantly influences political representation, policy priorities, and election outcomes.

Q: What role does technology play in California politics?

A: Technology influences California politics through digital campaigning, voter outreach, and policy innovation. The state's tech industry shapes debates on privacy, regulation, and economic growth.

Q: What recent trends have emerged in California voter participation?

A: Recent trends include higher youth turnout, increased participation among minority communities, and a shift toward progressive candidates in suburban districts.

Q: How does local government function in California?

A: Local government in California includes counties, cities, and special districts, each responsible for providing public services, enforcing ordinances, and managing regional needs.

Q: What challenges face California's political system in the future?

A: Future challenges include addressing climate change, housing affordability, healthcare reform, budget management, and bridging urban-rural divides.

Q: Why is California considered a trendsetter in national politics?

A: California is a trendsetter due to its large population, economic influence, innovative policies, and leadership in social and environmental issues, often shaping national debates and legislation.

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California Politics: A Primer

California, the Golden State, boasts a vibrant and complex political landscape. From its progressive policies to its influential role in national politics, understanding California's government is crucial for anyone interested in American politics, economics, or social trends. This comprehensive guide, "California Politics: A Primer," serves as your starting point, offering a clear and concise overview of the state's political structure, key players, and prominent issues. We'll delve into the intricacies of its unique system, providing you with the knowledge to navigate the often-turbulent waters of California politics.

The Structure of California's Government: A Three-Branch System

Like the federal government, California operates under a three-branch system: the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. However, the nuances of each branch and their interactions set California apart.

The Executive Branch: The Governor and Beyond

The Governor, the head of the executive branch, holds significant power. Beyond the typical gubernatorial duties, the California Governor plays a crucial role in shaping the state's budget and agenda. The Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, and other elected officials in the executive branch contribute to policymaking and governance. Understanding the power dynamics within the executive branch is key to understanding the state's political trajectory.

The Legislative Branch: The State Legislature

California's legislature is bicameral, comprising the Senate (40 members) and the Assembly (80 members). Bills must pass both houses before reaching the Governor's desk for signature or veto. The legislative process is often lengthy and involves significant lobbying and negotiation, reflecting the diverse interests within the state. Committee hearings and floor debates provide valuable insights into policy formation.

The Judicial Branch: Courts and Constitutional Interpretation

The California judicial system is comprised of trial courts, appellate courts, and the California Supreme Court. These courts interpret state laws and the state constitution, shaping the legal landscape and influencing policy decisions. Judicial appointments and judicial activism play significant roles in shaping political outcomes.

Key Players and Political Parties in California

California's political landscape is dominated by the Democratic Party. However, Republicans, though a minority, maintain a presence, particularly in certain regions. Independent and third-party candidates also contest elections, although their success is generally limited. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each party, and the influential political figures within them, is critical to understanding the political dynamics. Analyzing the role of powerful lobbying groups and interest

organizations further illuminates the interplay of power in California politics.

Major Policy Issues Shaping California Politics

Several key issues consistently shape the political debate in California. These include:

1. The Economy and Budget: Balancing Act

California's economy is massive and diverse, yet faces challenges such as income inequality and the high cost of living. Budgetary debates often center on balancing the needs of various sectors, including education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

2. Environmental Policy: A Progressive Leader

California has long been a leader in environmental protection. Policies related to climate change, renewable energy, and conservation are major topics of political discussion, frequently shaping national conversations as well.

3. Social Issues: A Progressive Agenda

California consistently adopts progressive social policies on issues such as LGBTQ+ rights, reproductive rights, and criminal justice reform. These issues frequently become the focus of political battles and reflect the state's generally liberal demographic.

4. Immigration: A Complex Issue

Given its large immigrant population, immigration is a significant issue influencing California's politics. Debates regarding immigration enforcement, pathways to citizenship, and the rights of undocumented immigrants regularly feature prominently in political discussions.

Navigating the Complexity: Resources and Further Research

Understanding California politics is a journey, not a destination. This primer offers a foundation for further exploration. Stay informed by following reputable news sources, participating in civic engagement, and exploring the resources provided by the state government's website.

Conclusion:

California politics is a dynamic and often unpredictable arena, influenced by a diverse range of factors. This primer has provided an overview of the state's governmental structure, key players, and critical policy issues. By understanding these fundamental elements, you can begin to navigate the complexities of California's political landscape and engage more effectively in the political process.

FAQs:

1. How can I register to vote in California? You can register to vote online through the California Secretary of State's website.
2. How does the California recall process work? California allows for the recall of elected officials through a petition process followed by a special election.
3. What is the role of Proposition initiatives in California politics? Propositions allow citizens to directly propose and vote on laws and constitutional amendments.
4. How influential is California's political landscape on national politics? California's large population and diverse economy makes its political trends and policy decisions highly influential nationally.
5. Where can I find reliable information on California's budget? The California Department of Finance website provides detailed information on the state's budget.

california politics a primer: California Politics Renee B. Van Vechten, 2023-05-09 From the structure of the state's government to its local representatives, policies, and voter participation, the revised Seventh Edition of California Politics offers a concise overview of how California's political system works. Renée B. Van Vechten presses readers to think about how history, political culture, rules, and institutions conspire to shape politics today - and tomorrow.

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california politics a primer: California Politics Renee B. Van Vechten, 2018-01-12 A thorough yet concise overview of California institutions, politics, and initiative process, grounded in an overview of California's political culture. —Ronnee Schreiber, San Diego State University The thoroughly revised Fifth Edition of California Politics: A Primer concisely explains how California's history, political culture, rules, and institutions come together to shape politics today and how they will determine the state of affairs tomorrow. Author Renee B. Van Vechten begins with a brief political history of California, then walks through direct democracy, the legislature, executive branch, and court system. She covers local government and concludes with a discussion of the state's budget process, campaigns and elections, political engagement, and policy issues. From the structure of the state's government to its local representatives, policies, and voter participation, California Politics: A Primer delivers the concepts and details students need. New to the Fifth Edition An emphasis on California's place in the federal system provides students with context around the state leadership's resistance to Trump administration policies on things like California's sanctuary state status, immigration, the environment, and more. Increased coverage of policy topics throughout the book helps students see how recent policy has impacted issues such as greenhouse gas emissions regulations, attempted fixes for water- and drought-related issues, new transportation projects, and prison reform. Extended discussions of elections-related innovations introduce students to recent elections-related topics such as the Top-Two Primary, efforts to increase voter

registration, all vote-by-mail elections, and redistricting. New coverage of the Five Californias gives students a better understanding of California's political geography and how distinct segments of the population are primed for political engagement or disaffection. New lists of key terms with clear definitions at the end of each chapter enable students to review the content more effectively. New and updated maps and graphics depict important topics such as California's newly proposed high-speed rail project. Instructors, sign in at study.sagepub.com/california5e to access test banks built on Bloom's Taxonomy; editable, chapter-specific PowerPoint® slides; a set of all the graphics from the text; and more!

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california politics a primer: Keeping the Republic, 5th Edition, the Essentials and California Politics: a Primer Package Christine Barbour, Gerald C. Wright, Renée B. Van Vechten, 2011-02 *Keeping the Republic, 5th edition, The Essentials* Whether reading today's political news blog or last century's speeches on suffrage, sifting facts from hyperbole and analysis from opinion is a real challenge for students. *Keeping the Republic's* lively discussion of "who gets what and how" develops their critical thinking abilities so they aren't just memorizing details or passively reading. Every section and every feature in the book has one goal in mind: to get students to think critically and be skeptical of received wisdom. Serving as a true aid to teachers, each chapter is designed to build the students' analytical abilities. By introducing them to the seminal work in the field and showing them how to employ the themes of power and citizenship, this proven text builds confidence in students who want to take an active part in their communities and government- to play their part in keeping the republic, and to consider the consequences of that engagement (or lack thereof). In this fifth edition, students will find discussion of the Obama administration's early successes and setbacks, of how Congress fared under Democratic majorities, of the 2010 midterm election results, and of the lasting and lingering effects of the Great Recession, health care reform passage, two ongoing wars, the BP oil spill, and a fast-changing mass media climate. Bright, bold colors give the book's new interior design a jumpstart.

Bigger photos visually grab students, but it's the innovative treatment of key terms, the ability to discern the chapter's structure from clear headings, and the colorful, but cohesive layout of the features that compel students to read every page. For more information about Keeping the Republic, click here. California Politics: A Primer If you find yourself with only a week or two to squeeze coverage of California politics in to your intro to American government class, CQ Press has the perfect solution: a short, engaging—and inexpensive—primer! Giving students the right level of detail, yet underscoring the essentials for understanding how the state's political system works, author Renee Van Vechten delivers on the basics. Concise chapters offer up nuts-and-bolts information while showing how a unique set of rules and a rich political history are key to getting a handle on the Golden state. Photos, cartoons, maps, tables, and figures help to make this supplement a go-to resource. For more information about California Politics, click here.

california politics a primer: Empowered! Lisa Magaña, César S. Silva, 2021-03-23

Empowered! examines Arizona's recent political history and how it has been shaped and propelled by Latinos. It also provides a distilled reflection of U.S. politics more broadly, where the politics of exclusion and the desire for inclusion are forces of change. Lisa Magaña and César S. Silva argue that the state of Arizona is more inclusive and progressive than it has ever been. Following in the footsteps of grassroots organizers in California and the southeastern states, Latinos in Arizona have struggled and succeeded to alter the anti-immigrant and racist policies that have been affecting Latinos in the state for many years. Draconian immigration policies have plagued Arizona's political history. Empowered! shows innovative ways that Latinos have fought these policies. Empowered! focuses on the legacy of Latino activism within politics. It raises important arguments about those who stand to profit financially and politically by stoking fear of immigrants and how resilient politicians and grassroots organizers have worked to counteract that fear mongering. Recognizing the long history of disenfranchisement and injustice surrounding minority communities in the United States, this book outlines the struggle to make Arizona a more just and equal place for Latinos to live.

california politics a primer: Primer of Ecological Restoration Karen Holl, 2020-03-03 The pace, intensity, and scale at which humans have altered our planet in recent decades is unprecedented. We have dramatically transformed landscapes and waterways through agriculture, logging, mining, and fire suppression, with drastic impacts on public health and human well-being. What can we do to counteract and even reverse the worst of these effects? Restore damaged ecosystems. The Primer of Ecological Restoration is a succinct introduction to the theory and practice of ecological restoration as a strategy to conserve biodiversity and ecosystems. In twelve brief chapters, the book introduces readers to the basics of restoration project planning, monitoring, and adaptive management. It explains abiotic factors such as landforms, soil, and hydrology that are the building blocks to successfully recovering microorganism, plant, and animal communities. Additional chapters cover topics such as invasive species and legal and financial considerations. Each chapter concludes with recommended reading and reference lists, and the book can be paired with online resources for teaching. Perfect for introductory classes in ecological restoration or for practitioners seeking constructive guidance for real-world projects, Primer of Ecological Restoration offers accessible, practical information on recent trends in the field.

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protected wilderness, and the prohibition of dumping gold-mining debris in the nineteenth century to sweeping climate- change legislation in the twenty-first, David Vogel traces California's remarkable environmental policy trajectory. He explains that this pathbreaking role developed because California had more to lose from environmental deterioration and more to gain from preserving its stunning natural geography. As a result, citizens and civic groups effectively mobilized to protect and restore their state's natural beauty and, importantly, were often backed both by business interests and by strong regulatory authorities. Business support for environmental regulation in California reveals that strict standards are not only compatible with economic growth but can also contribute to it. Vogel also examines areas where California has fallen short, particularly in water management and the state's dependence on automobile transportation. As environmental policy debates continue to grow more heated, California Greenin' demonstrates that the Golden State's impressive record of environmental accomplishments holds lessons not just for the country but for the world.

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lived in rather than with media. The book uses the way media function today as a prism to understand key issues in contemporary society, where reality is open source, identities are - like websites - always under construction, and where private life is lived in public forever more. Ultimately, media are to us as water is to fish. The question is: how can we live a good life in media like fish in water? Media Life offers a compass for the way ahead.

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california politics a primer: Rules for Radicals Saul Alinsky, 2010-06-30 "This country's leading hell-raiser (The Nation) shares his impassioned counsel to young radicals on how to effect constructive social change and know "the difference between being a realistic radical and being a rhetorical one." First published in 1971 and written in the midst of radical political developments whose direction Alinsky was one of the first to question, this volume exhibits his style at its best. Like Thomas Paine before him, Alinsky was able to combine, both in his person and his writing, the intensity of political engagement with an absolute insistence on rational political discourse and adherence to the American democratic tradition.

california politics a primer: Keeping the Republic Christine Barbour, Gerald C. Wright, 2016-11-19 This refreshed and dynamic Eighth Edition of Keeping the Republic revitalizes the twin themes of power and citizenship by adding to the imperative for students to navigate competing political narratives about who should get what, and how they should get it. The exploding possibilities of the digital age make this task all the more urgent and complex. Christine Barbour and Gerald Wright, the authors of this bestseller, continue to meet students where they are in order to give them a sophisticated understanding of American politics and teach them the skills to think critically about it. The entire book has been refocused to look not just at power and citizenship but at the role that control of information and its savvy consumption play in keeping the republic.

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justice, political parties, property rights, gun control, marriage and a whole host of other modern American issues, the state in which a citizen resides makes a difference. That idea—that the political decisions made by those in state-level offices are of tremendous importance to the lives of people whose states they govern—is the fundamental concept explored in this book. Gary F. Moncrief and Peverill Squire introduce students to the very tangible and constantly evolving implications, limitations, and foundations of America's state political institutions, and accessibly explain the ways that the political powers of the states manifest themselves in the cultures, economies, and lives of everyday Americans, and always will.

california politics a primer: The Little SAS Book Lora D. Delwiche, Susan J. Slaughter, 2019-10-11 A classic that just keeps getting better, *The Little SAS Book* is essential for anyone learning SAS programming. Lora Delwiche and Susan Slaughter offer a user-friendly approach so that readers can quickly and easily learn the most commonly used features of the SAS language. Each topic is presented in a self-contained, two-page layout complete with examples and graphics. Nearly every section has been revised to ensure that the sixth edition is fully up-to-date. This edition is also interface-independent, written for all SAS programmers whether they use SAS Studio, SAS Enterprise Guide, or the SAS windowing environment. New sections have been added covering PROC SQL, iterative DO loops, DO WHILE and DO UNTIL statements, %DO statements, using variable names with special characters, the ODS EXCEL destination, and the XLSX LIBNAME engine. This title belongs on every SAS programmer's bookshelf. It's a resource not just to get you started, but one you will return to as you continue to improve your programming skills. Learn more about the updates to *The Little SAS Book*, Sixth Edition [here](#). Reviews for *The Little SAS Book*, Sixth Edition can be read [here](#).

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california politics a primer: Tobacco War Stanton A. Glantz, Edith D. Balbach, 2000-05-10 Tobacco War charts the dramatic and complex history of tobacco politics in California over the past quarter century. Beginning with the activities of a small band of activists who, in the 1970s, put forward the radical notion that people should not have to breathe second-hand tobacco smoke, Stanton Glantz and Edith Balbach follow the movement through the 1980s, when activists created hundreds of city and county ordinances by working through their local officials, to the present--when tobacco is a highly visible issue in American politics and smoke-free restaurants and bars are a reality throughout the state. The authors show how these accomplishments rest on the groundwork laid over the past two decades by tobacco control activists who have worked across the U.S. to change how people view the tobacco industry and its behavior. Tobacco War is accessibly written, balanced, and meticulously researched. The California experience provides a graphic demonstration of the successes and failures of both the tobacco industry and public health forces. It shows how public health advocates slowly learned to control the terms of the debate and how they discovered that simply establishing tobacco control programs was not enough, that constant vigilance was necessary to protect programs from a hostile legislature and governor. In the end, the California experience proves that it is possible to dramatically change how people think about tobacco and the tobacco industry and to rapidly reduce tobacco consumption. But California's experience also demonstrates that it is possible to run such programs successfully only as long as the public health community exerts power effectively. With legal settlements bringing big dollars to tobacco control programs in every state, this book is must reading for anyone interested in battling and beating the tobacco industry.

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Title -- Copyright -- Dedication -- Contents -- Introduction -- 1. A Reproductive Justice History -- 2. Reproductive Justice in the Twenty-First Century -- 3. Managing Fertility -- 4. Reproductive Justice and the Right to Parent -- Epilogue: Reproductive Justice on the Ground -- Acknowledgments -- Notes -- Index

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industry, the political machines, and even the universities. The stories begin in the 1930s with Paul Taylor, a professor of economics at University of California, Berkeley, who pioneered field research and activism as he travelled through the areas marked by the Great Depression, together with his wife, photographer Dorothea Lange. Working in the heart of California's agricultural Central Valley, Taylor was the first of a succession of scholars who shared the dual commitment to research and engagement, to making problems visible and to effecting change through strategic action. Taylor and Lange intentionally wove their political engagement into their identities and work as researchers, as they conducted studies, led strikes, organized underserved communities, founded community development programs, created nonprofit institutions, and more. This book documents a tradition of politically engaged scholarship in one of the world's most dramatic contexts, full of disparities and contradictions, but also ripe with opportunities to make a difference. It covers a struggle that continues undiminished in the present.

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california politics a primer: **A College for All Californians** George R. Boggs, Larry Galizio, 2021 This is the first comprehensive and contemporary history of the largest and most diverse public system of higher education in the United States. Serving over 2 million students annually—approximately one-quarter of the nation's community college undergraduates—California's 116 community colleges play an indispensable role in career and transfer education in North America and have maintained an outsized influence on the evolution of postsecondary education nationally. *A College for All Californians* chronicles the sector's emergence from K-12 institutions, its evolving mission and growth following World War II and the G.I. Bill For Education, the expansion of its ever-broadening mission, and its essential role in the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education. Chapters cover California's junior and community colleges' development, mission, governance, faculty, finances, athletics, student support services, and more. It also examines the successes and ongoing political, financial, and educational challenges confronting this uniquely American educational experiment. Book Features: Encapsulates the evolution and contemporary status of our nation's largest and most diverse undergraduate education system. Examines how the colleges were influenced by the political, economic, and social issues of the day. Includes new historical information affecting postsecondary education in California. Analyzes some of the most important current and emerging issues that will continue to influence California's community colleges. Contributors: Carlos O. Turner Cortez, Michelle Fischthal, Jonathan Lightman, Jessica Luedtke, David W. Morse, Joe Newmyer, Mark Robinson, Leslie M. Salas.

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