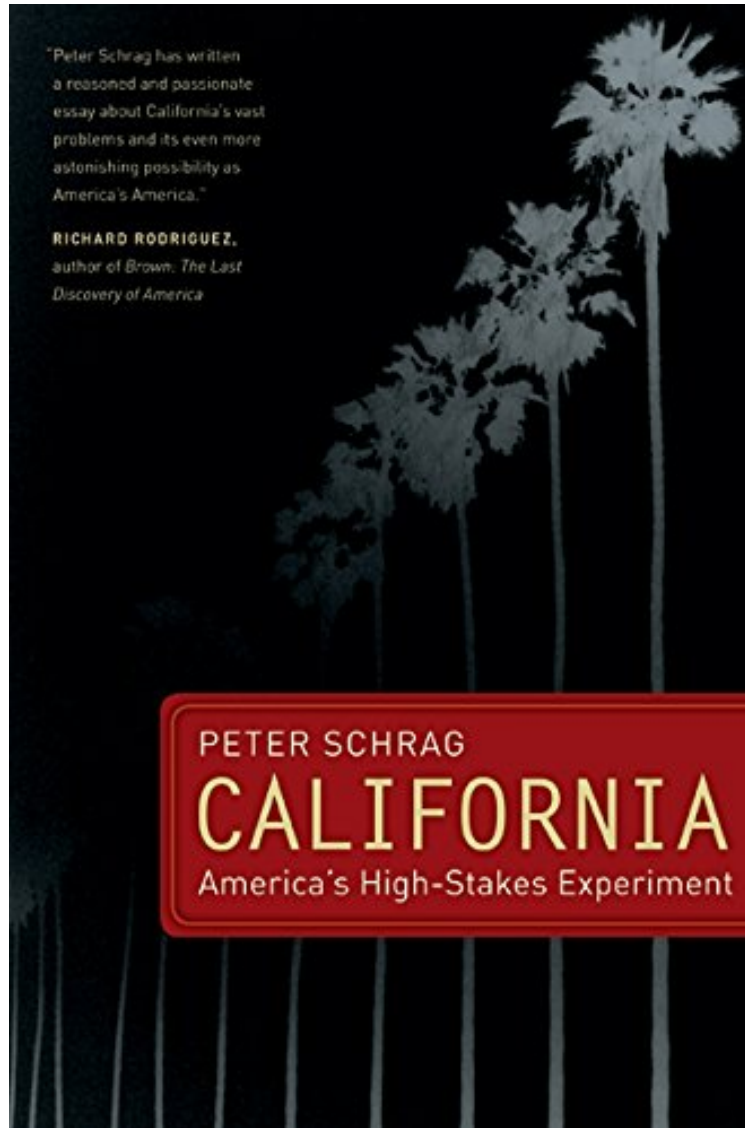


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## California: America's High-Stakes Experiment

*Peter Schrag*

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#705018 in Books 2008-01-04Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .85 x 6.00l, 1.02 #File Name: 0520254058352 pages | File size: 38.Mb

**Peter Schrag : California: America's High-Stakes Experiment** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised California: America's High-Stakes Experiment:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A good primer on what went askew in CaliforniaBy Babbey JacksonPeople who are not from California often ask me why we are going bankrupt. I then ask them where they are from and if they are not from Ohio, then I recommend they read this book. A lot of things had to come into play in order for California to end up in the precarious situation in which it currently finds itself. This book does a good job of

breaking some of those factors down and gives a layman's perspective into complex macroeconomic issues that sent things spiraling into billions of dollars of debt and political stagnation. At the very least, it gives one a superficial familiarity with the elements in play and will make you more interesting at cocktail parties. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Aaleigha Great condition 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Three Stars By Rodrigo Fernandez It came as expected but the book wasn't interesting.

Peter Schrag takes on the big issues: immigration, globalization, and the impact of California's politics on its quality of life in this dynamic account of the Golden State's struggle to recapture the American dream. In the past half-century, California has been both model and anti-model for the nation and often the world, first for its high level of government and public services: schools, universities, highways and latterly for its dysfunctional government, deteriorating services, and sometimes regressive public policies. California explains how many current "solutions" exacerbate the very problems they're supposed to solve and analyzes a variety of possible state and federal policy alternatives to restore government accountability and a vital democracy to the nation's most populous state and the world's fifth-largest economy.

From Publishers Weekly: Once blessed with a superb educational system, well-funded infrastructure and competent, vigorous state government, California now wrestles with lousy schools, decrepit public services and government gridlock. This incisive study traces the decline to a state constitution that requires unobtainable legislative super-majorities to pass taxes, spending increases and budgets; to America's nationwide anti-tax ideology, which was jump-started by California's infamous Proposition 13; and to term limits that have made the legislature a collection of neophytes. With the legislative process paralyzed, the author observes, lawmaking has devolved to ad hoc ballot initiatives: a hoary populist nostrum now exploited by monied special interests with which voters impose burdensome spending mandates on the state while rejecting the taxes needed to fund them. The result is a chaotic but perpetually stymied "hybrid democracy" dominated by glitzy ad campaigns and Schwarzeneggerian political theater. Journalist Schrag (former editorial page editor for the Sacramento Bee and author of *Paradise Lost: California's Experience, America's Future*) provides a fascinating guide through the labyrinth of California state politics and probes the intractable social conflict underlying its dysfunctions: the unwillingness of a disproportionately white, Anglo, middle-class electorate to pay for public services for an increasingly brown, immigrant, working-class population. Lucid, evenhanded and thoughtful, Schrag offers one of the best analyses yet of the California train wreck and its troubling implications for America's future. (Apr.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Once again, Peter Schrag asserts himself as a perceptive and courageous commentator. This book can be painful because it is so true. Here is first-rate social commentary: edgy, engaged with disquieting issues, yet never, finally, despairing that California might regain its way and, after corrective action, reclaim its role as a hopeful American experiment." - Kevin Starr, Professor of History, University of Southern California "There is no one better at observing, analyzing and understanding the great California experiment in politics and culture than Peter Schrag. For more than a century, this state has been the nation's economic and cultural leader. The question posed by Schrag is whether that leadership will continue or end in the 21st century. Facing the growing conflicts of diversity, dysfunction, disinvestments and disenchantment, can this state again govern itself? The answer to that question will be a test not only for California but for the future of the nation." - Leon E. Panetta, former White House Chief of Staff, and Director, Panetta Institute "From the Inside Flap" I recommend California for anybody interested in understanding the great challenges facing our state." Senator Dianne Feinstein