

California

Writing in 1889, Britain's James Bryce found California to be "the most striking state in the Union . . . capable of standing alone in the world." Lord Bryce was neither the first nor last commentator to accept the state on its own mythic terms. Indeed, scholars have lately begun to study California as if it *were* a separate country, one on which the neighboring United States has come to rely for sophisticated technology, specialty agriculture, political innovation, television programming, and the latest lifestyles. Just as Canadians self-consciously resist "cultural imperialism" from the south, so many Eastern Americans now profess alarm over creeping "Californianization" from the West. Here, historian James Rawls surveys the ups and downs of the California Dream in the popular imagination; sociologist Ted Bradshaw considers—and qualifies—the concept of California as the world's premier "postindustrial" society; and critic Sally Woodbridge traces the nationwide diffusion of California's unique residential architecture.



VISIONS AND REVISIONS

by James J. Rawls

One morning in 1962, commuters crossing San Francisco's Bay Bridge were greeted by a billboard emblazoned with the number 17,341,416, the projected population of New York State on January 1, 1963. Alongside this number was a running electronic tally of the estimated increase in California's population, then growing at a rate of one person every 54 seconds.

By New Year's Day, 1963, California had surged ahead to become, by official estimate, the most populous state in the

Union. Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr., the father of the present governor, proclaimed a four-day celebration—"California First Days"—and called for "the biggest party the state has ever seen." In Truckee, an official delegation ceremoniously welcomed the latest carload of newcomers as they crossed the state line from Nevada. Jubilant pundits predicted a rosy future. The state's population, it was widely believed, would reach 22 million by 1970, 30 million by 1980, and by the turn of the century would be nearly equal to that of France.

The Best of Everything

California's population trends had been clear since the early 1950s. Indeed, in each decade of the 20th century, the state's population had grown at a rate three or four times that of the nation as a whole. Even before the territory was acquired by the United States, California had been highly regarded as a place to live, even if its Hispanic and Indian inhabitants, in the view of covetous visitors from the East, left something to be desired. A French traveler in the late 1830s, for example, found California, with its fertile valleys and Mediterranean climate, "ideally suited for raising animals, grains, and vines." But he lamented that it was "inhabited by a people for whom life's supreme happiness consists of horseback riding and sleeping."

In searching for the origins of what has come to be called the California Dream, one encounters the California Imperative: An extraordinary land deserved an extraordinary people. The corollary followed logically: Unworthy occupants could rightfully be expelled or barred. Both British and French visitors voiced the argument, but it was the Americans who adopted it, justifying their 1846-48 war with Mexico on the grounds that the United States had a "manifest destiny" to seize and develop California (and any other real estate north of the Rio Grande).

The Americans who began arriving soon after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which sealed the conquest, were confident that they could create in California a civilization on the shores of the Pacific that at last would equal the beauty and richness of the land itself. From the beginning, California was somehow

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A German caricature of a California gold miner, 1850. Few prospectors amassed fortunes; the entrepreneurs who provided the Forty-Niners with such staples as meat (Philip Armour) and blue jeans (Levi Strauss) fared better.

Courtesy of the Bancroft Library.

special, somehow more attractive than other “virgin” territories. There were fewer Indians than in the prairie states, and they were relatively docile. The farmland in Iowa was perhaps a bit richer than in California’s Central Valley, but Iowa had harsh winters. The climate in the Deep South was as warm as California’s, but it was also humid and fever-ridden. Unlike the Corn Belt states, California had a coastline and, in San Francisco, one of the world’s great harbors.

For a century and a quarter, this new California civilization grew and prospered. From around the country and the world, millions of would-be Californians arrived seeking something they had not been able to find at home. It was not, of course, always the same “something,” and whatever it was, the newcomers didn’t always find it. Yet, from the beginning, the *idea* of California among Americans has been even more alluring than the reality. If Texas was great, California was grand, and the few voices dissenting from this view of the state sounded, until the past decade, distinctly minor chords.

The *major* chords are familiar.

First, California has long been painted as America’s own New World, a land where almost anyone can realize his particu-

lar dream of economic success. One sees something of this in the early European and American views of the state, but it was the Gold Rush, beginning in 1848, that made the word "California" nearly synonymous with "opportunity"—to Europeans and Asians as well as Americans. Ironically, even at the height of the Gold Rush, the odds of a California miner making a big strike were slim. Yet people kept on coming, enticed by the railroad huckstering of the 1870s and '80s, the undeniable fertility of the vast Central Valley, the discovery of oil near Los Angeles in 1892, the glitter of Hollywood during the 1920s.

During the Great Depression, when 1.2 million Californians were out of work, California still beckoned to hundreds of thousands of migrants. Ma Joad, in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), tells us that she had "seen the han'bills fellas pass out, an' how much work they is, an' high wages an' all." In fact, the Joads and other Dust Bowl refugees from Oklahoma and Arkansas found neither enough jobs nor high pay. Yet, the "han'bills"—in the form of newspaper ads and Chamber of Commerce brochures—continued to work their magic as a real economic boom began during the 1940s and '50s.

Tall, Dark, and Lissome

Climate is a second item. As early as 1840, author Richard Henry Dana had flatly asserted that "California is blessed with a climate of which there can be no better in the world." Kevin Starr, in his *Americans and the California Dream* (1973), called the state "an American Mediterranean." This image of the state as a land of perpetual sunshine—"It Never Rains in Southern California," as the song goes—obviously appeals to many Midwesterners and Easterners. One suspects that the annual New Year's Day telecast of the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena—with its views of enviable men and women sauntering in shirt sleeves under palm trees and blue skies—accounts for a large part of the yearly migration to California.

California's benign climate, it is said, also makes the state a particularly healthy place in which to live. During the 1870s, southern California welcomed thousands of invalids who believed, erroneously, that the region's warm, clean air would cure tuberculosis. For years, older Americans have flocked to California to soak their arthritic limbs in the soothing ultraviolet. So healthy was the state, declared Stanford University President David Starr Jordan around the turn of the century, that California college girls were more robust than college girls in Massachusetts. "They are taller," he said, "broader-shouldered,

thicker-chested (with 10 cubic inches more lung capacity), have larger biceps and calves, and a superiority of tested strength."

The imposing stature of California women suggests a fourth element of the California Dream: Romance. The association is even older than the territory. In Garci Rodríguez Ordóñez de Montalvo's romance, *Las Sergas de Esplandián*, published in Spain in 1510, the mythical island of California, which gave its name to the region discovered some two decades later, was peopled with passionate dark-skinned Amazons. Romantic California is the theme of numerous plays (e.g., William Saroyan's *Hello Out There*) and countless Hollywood films, from *San Francisco* to the *Bikini Beach* series where bronzed and nubile youths frolic to the music of Frankie Avalon. As a 1979 article in the *Los Angeles Times* put it: "Sex and California. The two seem to go together."

Finally, California has always been regarded as a tolerant state, a place where unconventional political movements, personal eccentricities, or unusual fads and fashions could bloom unmolested.* During the late 19th century, California nurtured an impressive variety of short-lived utopian communities—Altruria, Fountain Grove, Kaweah, Pisgah Grande—all intended to chart the putative future course of humanity. The idea of California as the harbinger of the American future—from campus turmoil and tax revolts to group therapy, community colleges, freeways, and shopping malls—has become a cliché. "What we want the whole country to be," Governor Edmund Brown proudly proclaimed in 1963, "California already is."

Nothing Left?

It is clear, in retrospect, that 1963 was the high-water mark of mythical California, a fact understandably lost upon most observers at the time. Yet, as New York State slipped away into the doldrums of second place, former governor (and then U.S. Chief Justice) Earl Warren warned his fellow Californians: "I would not celebrate with fireworks or dancing in the streets. Mere numbers do not mean happiness." Few paid any attention.

As Warren predicted, the remarkable economic expansion and population growth of the 1950s and '60s have not been an unalloyed boon. Smog hangs over scenic Yosemite Valley (not to mention Los Angeles), and California's alcoholism rate is second only to Nevada's. One-third of all U.S. heroin deaths occur in-

*The state's record of ethnic strife (with the Anglos pitted, seriatim, against Mexicans, Indians, Chinese, and Japanese) indicates that, when it came to rivalry for land, jobs, or status, tolerance tended to ebb.

CALIFORNIA: A CHRONOLOGY

- 1533 Fortún Jiménez of Spain discovers Baja (Lower) California.
- 1535 Conquistador Hernando Cortés visits Baja California in search of the mythical seven cities of gold.
- 1542 Looking for the Northwest Passage, Spanish navigator Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo is the first European to set foot in what is now the state of California. His expedition reaches what would later be the Oregon-California border.
- 1579 England's Sir Francis Drake anchors north of San Francisco Bay and claims the land for Queen Elizabeth.
- 1769 Father Junípero Serra establishes the mission of San Diego, the first of nine Spanish outposts he sets up in California.
- 1780 Non-Indian population: 600.
- 1781 Spanish governor Felipe de Neve founds Los Angeles.
- 1821 Mexico wins independence from Spain.
- 1846 On June 10, Americans in Sonoma, California, establish the "Bear Flag Republic." It lasts until July 9, when they hear news of war with Mexico and enlist in the U.S. Army.
- 1848 Gold is discovered at Sutter's Mill, northeast of Sacramento. Nine days later, Mexico signs the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ceding to the United States all of present-day California.
- 1850 California becomes the 31st state.
- 1852 State population: 255,000.
- 1869 Central Pacific Railroad meets Union Pacific tracks at Promontory Point, Utah.
- 1871 Nativist mob murders 15 Chinese in Los Angeles.

side the state. In great rings around the state's cities, the geometry of tract housing has replaced that of green cropland and orchards. Increasingly, California is perceived elsewhere in America as offering less than expected, a victim of its own successes.

The mid-1960s in California were ushered in by the smoke of a burning Los Angeles. The six-day 1965 Watts riots—a field day for social critics and photojournalists—were undeniable proof that California had not fulfilled the expectations of all who had come. That Watts was only the first of the nation's black riots of the 1960s—Detroit, Newark, Washington soon followed—did

- 1906 San Francisco earthquake kills 452. Los Angeles's first motion picture studio is established.
- 1921 "California, Here I Come" is introduced by Al Jolson.
- 1940 State population: 6,907,387.
- 1942 Three months after Pearl Harbor, 93,000 Japanese Californians (two-thirds of them American citizens) are interned. They are released three years later, at the end of World War II.
- 1948 California becomes the nation's largest agricultural producer, surpassing Iowa.
- 1950 State population: 10,586,223.
- 1952 State law discouraging ownership of land by Orientals is ruled unconstitutional.
- 1964 Free Speech Movement disrupts Berkeley campus.
- 1965 Watts (Los Angeles) riots. 34 killed, over 1,000 injured.
- 1966 Black Panther Party is founded in Oakland by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton. Cesar Chavez forms United Farm Workers Organizing Committee.
- 1974 Los Angeles County experiences its first population drop in 123 years. 1974 population: 7,003,000.
- 1976 State legislature enacts a moratorium on the construction of nuclear power plants in California.
- 1978 Californians overwhelmingly approve Proposition 13, a constitutional amendment cutting property taxes by an average of 56 percent.
- 1979 State population: 22,694,000.
- 1980 Proposition 9, a proposal to halve the state income tax, is defeated by a 3 to 2 margin on June 3.

not seem to matter. One Watts rioter told a reporter: "Everywhere they say 'Go to California! California's the great pot o'gold at the end of the rainbow.' Well, now we're here in California, and there ain't no place else to go, and the only pot I seen's the kind they peddle at Sixtieth and Avalon."

The following year, novelist-essayist Joan Didion, writing in the *Saturday Evening Post*, described the desperate quest for the good life among the faded bungalows and tacky motels of the sun-drenched San Bernardino Valley. "Here is where . . . the divorce rate is double the national average and where one person in every 38 lives in a trailer. Here is the last stop for all those

who came from somewhere else, for all those who have drifted away from the cold and the past and the old ways."

Didion's portrayal of California (her essay was entitled "How Can I Tell Them There's Nothing Left?") was part of a new genre of critical literature—the minor chords now in concert—that emerged during the late 1960s and early '70s.* The national market for such books was just about saturated when the 1978 mass murder-suicide of the (California-based) People's Temple in Guyana—and the assassinations of San Francisco mayor George Moscone and councilman Harvey Milk a few weeks later—revived interest in California's alleged dementia.

In the latest outpouring of pop commentary, one finds all the old themes: opportunity, climate, health, romance, freedom. But they have been turned inside out, frisked for clues as to what went wrong.

The image of California as the land of opportunity, for example, has been cited by several observers as a *cause* of California's recent tragedies. The Gold Rush syndrome—high hopes, soon dashed—makes Californians especially susceptible, the argument goes, to the appeal of self-proclaimed messiahs.

Too Much Sun

Historian Henry Steele Commager, a New Englander, implicates the climate. California, he contends, has become "a society that worships open air and play rather than work." Television producer Norman Lear, a resident of the state, suggests that California's weather attracts "emotionally unwrapped people." And a 1979 article in the *New York Times* blames the sun for the "tradition of failure" among California's professional football teams: The sunshine, intoned the *Times*, makes life too easy and "restrains the competitive fury" necessary for victory on the gridiron.†

In these sour analyses, California is no longer seen as a land of health, but as a dark precinct of social pathology. One 1978 article in the *Sacramento Bee* reported that New Yorkers (oddly enough) commonly perceive Californians as having "a love affair with death." San Franciscans speak of the next earthquake even as they build more skyscrapers. But the allure of death is

*See, for example, Raymond Dasmann's *The Destruction of California* (1965), Richard Lillard's *Eden in Jeopardy* (1966), William Bronson's *How to Kill a Golden State* (1968), Curt Gentry's *The Last Days of the Late, Great State of California* (1968), Kenneth Lamott's *Anti-California* (1971), Michael Davie's *California: The Vanishing Dream* (1972), and Peter Schrag's *How the West was Lost* (1973).

†This generalization does not seem to apply to the Miami Dolphins, Super Bowl Champions in 1972 and 1973.

not limited to the northern part of the state. Witness the nonchalant remark of one writer in coastal southern California, where dry-season brush fires are a chronic hazard: "We live, of course, with the fear of fire any day. . . . This has a good deal to do with what attracts people here, that vicarious thrill of living in a place that may at any moment be destroyed."

California's image as a land of romance has been transformed into one of frolicking immorality. The television and newspaper coverage given to the all-embracing sexual proclivities of People's Temple leader Jim Jones and to Harvey Milk's self-proclaimed homosexuality spurred sizeable verbal barages. The arch-conservative *Manchester* (New Hampshire) *Union Leader*, for example, denounced San Francisco as "the Sodom of the United States." The *Union Leader's* sentiments may represent an extreme view, but they illustrate a general drift. As regards California's vaunted social freedom, the consensus elsewhere seems to be that the state has far too much of it—and the rest of America should take heed. (For what it's worth, even *Pravda* has chimed in, saying California is "an example of the moral and social bankruptcy of bourgeois society.")

The recurring critique of California—by insiders and outsiders—during the past 15 years has perhaps had a certain corrective effect, though in itself it is no more accurate than the notions it supplanted. The old California Dream and the new California Nightmare are both soaring abstractions, each tethered to Reality, but only to part of it.

In a sense, there is a "California" and there is a California, and neither Pangloss nor Jeremiah would find much of interest in the latter. As in Rhode Island or Indiana, the air may be a little dirtier than it was 15 years ago, the suburbs more crowded, the traffic a lot heavier, the scenery a bit more cluttered; but for most people, life proceeds no more remarkably than it does anywhere else. Perhaps the rest of America needs "California" as both a threat and a promise.



TRYING OUT THE FUTURE

by Ted K. Bradshaw

The most significant economic event in California history was not the Gold Rush or the coming of the railroad. It was World War II. In 1940, the federal government spent a mere \$728 million in California, much of it simply to relieve economic hardship caused by the lingering Great Depression. But after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, California became a vast staging area for the Pacific war zone, with San Diego and San Francisco as ports of embarkation. The climate proved ideal for testing airplanes and training troops. The state's fledgling aircraft and shipbuilding industries moved quickly to a war footing.

By the time the Japanese surrendered in August 1945, Washington had pumped \$35 *billion* into California. Its economy had suddenly become "modern." Federal outlays for defense-related construction and manufacturing accounted for about one-half of California's total personal income. The state's aviation industry, which claimed 60 percent of these wartime expenditures, emerged pre-eminent in the world. (Douglas, Lockheed, North American, Northrop, and Convair all located their main plants in California.) Moreover, millions of American servicemen had moved through California on their way to Australia, the central Pacific, and the Philippines; smitten, many returned to stay at war's end.

The momentum acquired during World War II was sustained in part by this postwar influx of manpower (California's population climbed from 7 to 15 million between 1940 and 1960), in part by U.S. rearmament during the Cold War and two more Pacific wars—Korea and Vietnam. Following the Soviet launching of Sputnik I in 1957, California also played a vital role in the quickening space race, as "aviation" became "aerospace." By 1963, 40 percent of the total U.S. space and defense work force was concentrated in five California industrial centers: Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Bernardino/Riverside, San Diego, and San Jose. If ever there was a military-industrial complex, it was here.

During the two decades following World War II, 6 out of every 10 jobs created in California could trace their paternity directly to Washington. Of the \$10 billion in research and devel-

opment (R&D) contracts let by the federal government in 1963, for example, 40 percent went to California manufacturers, universities, or private think tanks like the RAND (the name comes from "R an[d] D") Corporation. During the late 1960s, the University of California, the California Institute of Technology, and Stanford University together garnered 1 out of every 5 federal defense research contracts awarded to U.S. universities. For a time, research personnel at the University of California outnumbered teaching faculty.

Could the aerospace/defense boom last forever? By the mid-1960s, local businessmen and politicians had in fact begun to worry—properly so—that California had put all its eggs in a single basket. One client (Washington) was essentially buying and paying for one major family of California products (high-technology hardware). Journalist Christopher Rand, reporting from Los Angeles in 1966, sensed "a feeling of cutback" in the air. There is, he wrote, "from time to time, inevitably, talk about what would happen in the event of serious reductions in the defense and space programs. How to convert, and to what, in the face of such cutbacks, has been a big question, and some high-grade talent has been devoted to answering it."

Shifting Gears

Even before the domestic aerospace industry slumped during the early 1970s, California's most sophisticated industries had begun diversifying both their products and their markets. Aerospace companies sought a growing share of the international demand for commercial and military aircraft. Think tanks started looking at such issues as transportation and waste disposal. Electronics firms slowly weaned themselves from dependence on the Pentagon. There was, they all realized, a big civilian market out there. Today, the state's high technology exports, from Northrop "Freedom Fighter" jets to pocket calculators, find their way to a broad international market. California's flexibility has surprised the experts and defied the doomsayers.

The economic history of California during the past three decades is beginning to receive serious attention from scholars, who are intrigued by its implications for the United States as a whole. While the state is isolated from the rest of the nation geographically, and to some extent psychologically, by deserts, forests, and mountain ranges (the state's most permeable border seems to be with Mexico), many social scientists are attempting to isolate California analytically—viewing the state, for pur-

poses of comparison, as if it were an independent country. By doing so, they have thrown several features into sharp relief.

First, California, unlike New York or Illinois, has received since World War II a massive amount of economic "foreign aid" from Washington. No less important, most of it has gone into research and high technology industry, not into subsidies for municipal government or welfare. Washington helped underwrite California's postwar economic expansion as surely as it did Japan's or West Germany's. California, as a result, became the fastest growing industrial area in the world. Were the state a sovereign nation, its GNP today would rank eighth, behind Canada's but ahead of Italy's.

Breaking Away

Second, because California's rapid economic development occurred when it did—and not, say, 50 years earlier—California didn't really need to move heavily into steel, automaking, or textiles. It could "import" these items (duty-free) from the older industrial states. So California's entrepreneurs invested instead in what became the most sophisticated, fastest growing, and flexible sector of the U.S. economy—high technology.

What makes the California experience especially interesting is that the state has transformed itself from a sparsely populated frontier into the world's premier technological society in the space of a century, with most of the advance coming during the past 30 years.* California, it seems, has become a kind of giant laboratory where historic processes have been speeded up, as in time-lapse photography. In this sense, the state has been likened by several scholars to a crystal ball in which the rest of the industrialized world may glimpse the promise and the pitfalls of a "postindustrial" future.

The postindustrial thesis, commonly associated with Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell, holds that a major break with "traditional" industrial society is at hand, as fundamental as the Western world's 19th-century shift from an agrarian to an in-

*I use "most" advisedly. Even during the 19th century, California was at the forefront of several high-technology industries. Between 1850 and 1900, sales of sophisticated, California-manufactured mining equipment exceeded in value all the gold mined in the state during the same period.

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dustrial economy. "If the dominant figures of the past hundred years have been the entrepreneur, the businessman, and the industrial executive," Bell wrote in 1973, "the 'new men' are the scientists, the mathematicians, the economists, and the engineers of computer technology."*

The essential components of postindustrial society are these:

¶ An increasing reliance on high-technology manufacturing based on scientific knowledge rather than on mechanical trial-and-error or "Yankee ingenuity."

¶ Heightened productivity in industry and agriculture, freeing farm and factory workers for new jobs in an expanding "service sector."

¶ Increasing reliance on universities and other "knowledge industries" as generators of a valuable and replenishable kind of raw material: research.

¶ The application of "intellectual technologies" to government and policymaking.

Bell's characterization of postindustrial society is at times ambiguous; nowhere does he define matters with precision. But he unambiguously proclaims the United States to be the first such society.

Still, there is much variety. Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Ohio, for example, are traditional manufacturing states that have not reached the postindustrial threshold. Nebraska, New Mexico, and Wyoming lag even further behind. But when one looks at certain rough indicators—proportion of white collar employment, size of service sector, education of labor force, percentage of professionals and technicians, comprehensiveness of social welfare services, propensity of local governments to innovate—a handful of states appear at least to be on the road to a postindustrial future. California, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Utah, and Alaska, for example, rank above the national average in all six indicators.

California does not come out No. 1 on any *single* indicator; cumulatively, however, it is the postindustrial state par excellence, ranking higher overall than any other state.

High technology: As noted above, it began with aircraft, and the aerospace industry remains of critical importance to California, which is currently home to 30 percent (21,000) of all U.S. aeronautical engineers. But aerospace, strictly defined, is not the fastest growing component in California's booming "high-tech" sector. These days, that distinction goes to electronics.

* See Daniel Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, New York: Basic, 1973.

The electronics industry has been well established in California since 1917, when Magnavox opened a small loudspeaker factory in Oakland. During the late 1930s and throughout the '40s, small firms began springing up around Stanford University. In 1938, for example, two young Stanford graduates, William R. Hewlett and David Packard, with the encouragement of the university's dean of engineering, founded Hewlett-Packard, which is now a leading electronics manufacturer.

The electronics business took off in the 1950s, stimulated by defense contracts and, just as important, by the development of transistors and, more recently, of microprocessors. Once the garden of the San Francisco Bay Area, Santa Clara County was transformed into "Silicon Valley"—the reference is to integrated circuits printed on silicon crystals—planted with companies like Intel and Memorex. The county boasts one of the most attractive job markets in the United States, and its per capita income (\$26,690 in 1979) is the highest in the state.

What is unique about such high-technology industries is that they are knowledge-intensive. Here, the cost of a product—a silicon "chip," a communications satellite, a ballistic missile guidance system—primarily reflects the cost of designing it, not the cost of producing it. The result is rapid price deflation after mass-market items like digital watches first hit the market—up to 20 to 30 percent per year.*

A second consequence of California's industrial concentration in high technology ventures is energy efficiency. As motorists, California's industrialists may be gas guzzlers, but as businessmen they produce more per unit of energy than does the nation as a whole. Data for 1972 show that California produced an average \$158 "value" (price minus materials cost) per thousand kilowatt hours of energy (equivalent) used for heat and manufacture, versus \$94 nationwide.

Services: To Daniel Bell, one hallmark of a postindustrial society is that more than half of all workers are employed in service industries. The United States reached that crossover point in 1956. California reached it in 1910. Today, more than 70 percent of employed Californians work in the service sector, from amusement parks and fast-food restaurants to banks, com-

*To a great extent, even agriculture in the state fits this high-technology pattern. California is the nation's No. 1 farm state, with sales approaching \$12 billion in 1979. Fertile land, irrigation, and a benevolent climate are not the only reasons. Just as important is the massive agricultural research effort that has pointed California farmers toward high-profit specialty crops—grapes, nuts, artichokes, etc. Winemaking in the state is now a science, not an art; there is no such thing as a "bad year" any more. The tomato-picking machine was developed by California scientists, who then bred a thick-skinned tomato that the machine wouldn't damage.

puterized data firms, law offices, and universities. Though technically "white collar," not all service jobs are glamorous or well-paying. The average salary for Californians working in service industries was \$16,905 in 1979, about \$2,000 less than their counterparts in manufacturing.

The growth of the service sector has not meant a shift away from manufacturing—the term "postindustrial" is misleading in this respect. In both California and the United States as a whole, manufacturing employment, as a percentage of the labor force, has actually been more or less constant since 1910, at about 30 percent. The shift has come at the expense of "primary" industries—mining, forestry, and, especially, agriculture.

A "Technocratic" Society?

The professions have been big gainers. Between 1960 and 1970, the overall California labor force grew by some 22 percent. Employment in the professions—medicine, law, education, accounting—grew more than three times as fast. The story is the same with the public sector. State and local governments today employ 1.4 million people—about one out of every seven employed Californians.

The knowledge industry: The keys to a high-technology, professional-service future are scientific research, mass university education, and professional retraining. I have already noted the central role of R&D in California's economy. R&D, one might say, is "human capital-intensive"; it depends on a first-rate educational system. California set a high standard with its 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education—a comprehensive blueprint that guided the state's university system as enrollment climbed to more than 1.3 million in the mid-1970s.* College is available to virtually any Californian who chooses to attend—in practice, 80 percent of the state's high school graduates.

Some 2.2 million Californians have college degrees; 32,000 have Ph.D.s in the science and engineering fields alone. Californians stay in school longer than do students in every state except, surprisingly, Utah. Degree programs aside, some 3.5 million Californians participate in some kind of part-time

*The Master Plan established a three-tiered higher education system and provided for the apportionment of graduating high-school seniors among them roughly according to class rank. Community colleges, offering an associate B.A. degree, make up the bottom tier. In the middle are the state colleges and universities, which may award the B.A. and M.A. degrees. The University of California, at the top, offers B.A.s, M.A.s, and Ph.D.s, and is the prime conductor of academic and scientific research. The system is not as rigid as it looks on paper. State colleges, for example, may award a Ph.D. in conjunction with the University of California. To give "late-starters" a second chance, students meeting certain requirements may "graduate" from a lower tier into the one above.

educational venture every year, be it for job training, self-improvement, or mere fun. Institutionally, California boasts 104 community colleges, 19 state universities, 9 branches of the flagship University of California system, and 84 private colleges and universities.

Government: Bell's final contention is that state and local governments will increasingly come to rely on a "new class" of technocrats familiar with such methods of "scientific" administration as Program Planning Budget Systems—PPBS, to initiate—and econometric modeling. California again appears to be a case in point, and not merely because a California engineer, William Henry Smyth, coined the word "technocracy" in 1919.

Going Solar

The state's county and city governments have more computers than do non-California governments, introduced them sooner, and, on average, employ 48 technicians per city or county to run them—double the national average. One-sixth of all "planners" working in the United States are employed by various public agencies in California. The state legislature (40 Senators, 80 Assemblymen), ranked as the "most professional" in the nation, relies on a highly trained, 2,000-member staff and a vast army of contract consultants, Washington-style.

California is also unique among large industrial states in allowing grass-roots "initiatives" to be placed on the ballot. Proposition 13, which cut local property taxes by more than half after its passage in 1978, is the best known of the nearly 160 initiatives placed before voters since Progressive Governor Hiram Johnson inaugurated the practice in 1911.*

In certain key respects, then, California seems to have fulfilled all the predictions about the postindustrial society to come. Bell's book, of course, is seven years old, and the future, as Frenchman Paul Valéry reminded us, is never what it used to be. Without looking too hard, one can find developments in California that anticipate a very different kind of future. The state is full of perplexing contradictions. As author Carey McWilliams observed in 1949, "in California, everything seems to be reversed, to occur out of the natural state of events, to be upside down or lopsided."

Thus, while California has the highest concentration of high technology in the world, it is the center of the ecology and anti-

*The latest California initiative to attract national attention was Proposition 9—labeled Jaws II by critics—which proposed to halve state income taxes. The initiative was handily defeated on June 3, 1980.

technology movements. California has some of the oldest and strongest environmental organizations in the country, the largest of them being the Sierra Club founded by naturalist John Muir in 1892. (More places in California are named after Muir than after any other person.)

The 1,330 organizations entered in the *California Environmental Directory* do more than spout slogans. A popular referendum in 1972, for example, created a Coastal Zone Commission to curb helter-skelter development of California's scenic shoreline. Restrictions on automobile emissions are so stringent—far stricter than federal standards—that auto manufacturers around the world must install extra pollution control equipment if they want a piece of the \$7.3 billion a year in California auto sales. And, by a 1976 act of the state legislature, new construction of nuclear power plants has been banned until satisfactory nuclear waste disposal methods are developed.

For reasons of both climate and inclination, California has also become *the* solar state, with 42 percent of total U.S. solar collector capacity. There were 30,000 solar installations in California in 1978—home water and swimming pool heaters, primarily—and an estimated 50,000 were added in 1979. California's 55 percent state income tax credit for solar home installations is the highest such credit in the country. Indeed, most of the "alternative energy" incentives embodied in Congress's National Energy Act of 1978 were already state law in California.

Bureaucracy and Magnetic Tape

The nature of state government in postindustrial California also seems to be evolving somewhat differently than anticipated. A decade ago, postindustrialists assumed that technocratic "rationality" was the wave of the future. Each government agency, it was thought, would have its own narrowly defined mission with its own staff of trained specialists: waste, overlap, and confusion would be eliminated. Problems would be attacked—and vanquished—one by one. Scientific administration, aided by technology, would be victorious.

In fact, as political scientist Kenneth Kraemer has pointed out, "there is little to suggest that advanced industrialism carries with it superior and effective technological resolution of society's problems." Kraemer found, for example, that despite a near-total reliance on computers in the daily operations of California governments, local bureaucrats report few cost savings. Nor has bureaucratic efficiency been notably enhanced.

CALIFORNIA'S AVANT-GARDE POLITICS

California has long been in the forefront of America's technological development. Because rapid change is an inherently turbulent process, argues Berkeley political scientist Todd La Porte, the state has produced a "politics of psychic reassurance" characterized by leaders who offer not solutions but "moods."

While its politicians, from Earl Warren to Jerry Brown, have captured the national limelight, California has quietly developed a solidly competent government, with a civil service, a state legislature, and a state supreme court all widely acknowledged to be among the best in the country. One possible reason: The special structure of the state's political system, established by Governor Hiram Johnson after he took office in 1910.

To break the Southern Pacific Railroad's strangle hold on the state government—the company at one time owned 10 percent of the state's land and nearly all of its legislators—Johnson and his fellow Progressives tried to separate politics from government. Local elections and offices were made nonpartisan; the introduction of direct primaries for state and local offices further weakened political parties. (Today, party affiliation becomes crucial to the state's politicians only when they have risen to national prominence and must work with non-Californians, whether in Congress or on the presidential campaign trail.) Most importantly, Californians were given three ways to override their elected representatives: the initiative (to enact laws); the referendum (to annul laws); and the recall (to remove elected officials from office).

The Progressives' reforms left a political vacuum. In the absence of party controls, primaries were wide-open affairs. Anybody could run—and did. In 1934, socialist author Upton Sinclair (*The Jungle*) campaigned on a program to End Poverty In California (EPIC) and captured the Democratic nomination for governor.

The strong Republican response changed America's politics. Led by Louis B. Mayer, head of the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer movie studio, California's Republicans threw \$10 million into an elaborate drive

In a sense, California has become too big and diverse for "scientific" government. The state's water system, for example, is stretched to the limit, owing to the simple fact that most of California's rain falls in the north while most of its people live in the south. But every new aqueduct into thirsty Los Angeles creates disgruntled farmers and angry environmentalists hundreds of miles away. California society, in short, is not a piece of machinery where one can simply isolate a defective part and replace it. It is more like a spider's web. Toying with any one

run by a new firm named Campaigns, Inc. After beating Sinclair, Clem Whitaker and Leone Baxter of Campaigns, Inc., went on to handle some 70 California campaigns, including Warren's first run for governor (1942) and the northern California end of Richard Nixon's 1960 presidential race. Their tactics became a model for imitators elsewhere.

In California, such campaign management firms filled the political void created by weak parties, by the frequent use of referendums and initiatives, and by immigration from other states. (The decisive margin in California's elections often lay with new voters, virtual strangers to the state.) Today dozens of political management organizations boost both candidates and ballot proposals. In 1978, Proposition 13 drew two firms, Butcher-Forde (supporting) and Winner/Wagner (opposing). Some political consultants specialize in collecting the signatures required to place a proposal before California's voters. "If you give me \$500,000," one professional told author Gladwin Hill, "I'll guarantee to get on the ballot a measure to execute the governor by Christmas."

But the prime task of campaign management, in a state without grassroots party organizations, is using the media. The 30-second television spot conveying not a philosophy but an "image" or an emotion—anger, say, or hope or nostalgia—holds a paramount place in election strategy. Somewhat more than most Americans, Californians seem to vote for those who do well on the tube: actors who act like politicians, such as former Governor Reagan and former Senator George Murphy, and politicians who look like actors, such as former Senator John Tunney.

The California campaign management firms, together with a galaxy of political exotics such as the John Birch Society and the Minutemen (on the extreme right) and the Black Panthers and Tom Hayden's nonviolent California Campaign for Economic Democracy (on the far left), create an illusion of political fervor. But the statistics suggest that, with their vigorous economy and able civil service, many Californians simply don't worry much about government. Though its people are unusually well-educated, the state's voter turnout ranked 34th in the nation in the 1976 presidential election.

strand—water, land, energy—disturbs all of the others.

In recent years, California has been moving toward creation of flexible new public agencies to manage overlap and complexity. These agencies (e.g., the Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, the Criminal Justice Planning Office) differ markedly from older ones (e.g., the Hospital for the Insane, the Board of Medical Examiners). They have no popular constituency but are designed primarily to work with other federal and state agencies, multinational corporations, nonprofit

interest groups, even foreign governments. They do not themselves provide a "service" but operate *between* government entities that do. And they have broad powers to coordinate what might otherwise turn out to be conflicting activities. In effect, these new agencies are an exercise in "preventive government."

Postindustrial theorists also assumed that a postindustrial society would tend toward homogeneity. Widespread affluence, media saturation, and the consumer ethic, they contended, would eventually lead to a convergence of attitudes and lifestyles.

The California experience suggests that the opposite may be the case. The diversity of California encompasses fundamentalist sects and mystical cults, self-awareness centers and philanthropic movements, the John Birch Society and the Symbionese Liberation Army. Similar movements are now found everywhere, of course, but in California they seem to emerge fully grown, *en masse*, and are accepted into the normal life of the state.

An Ethnic Salad

Numbers are hard to pin down, but an examination of several published lists of "alternative" and "fringe" organizations yields some suggestive information. For example, Mark Satin's *New Age Politics* (1978) contains a list of periodicals dealing with alternative approaches to social, political, and economic issues (e.g., *CoEvolution Quarterly*, *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*). One third of them are published in California. According to the *Spiritual Community Guide* (1978), some 42 percent of all "spiritual growth centers" (Kailas Shugendo and Brotherhood of the Sun, for example) are located in the state.

Some groups have coalesced for political reasons—for reasons of both common sense and sensibility. The homosexual community in San Francisco, estimated to include 20 percent of the city's voters, claims to have played a pivotal role in the 1979 election of Mayor Diane Feinstein. Other politically active groups include the disabled in Berkeley, the elderly throughout the state, and the ethnic communities of Chinese Americans, Mexican Americans, and others.

California is among the most ethnically diverse states in the Union: 16 percent of the state's population is Hispanic, another 8 percent is black, and 4 percent is Asian. Apart from Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos, there are currently some 200,000 Koreans in the Los Angeles area alone, a 500 percent increase since 1976. About half of the 250,000 Indochinese refugees admitted to

the United States since 1975 reside in California. Former Lieutenant Governor Mervyn Dymally has predicted that, by 1990, the state's "minority" population will exceed 50 percent of the total, making California the nation's first "Third World" state. The prediction is highly questionable, but the trend is clear.*

What is notable about California's ethnic and racial minorities, as well as its "alternative lifestyle" groups, is that they are resisting "assimilation" and striving, with some success, to promote their own various cultures. No one has told them that, in the postindustrial era, they are supposed to hand over power to the technocrats.

Heading for the Hills

Postindustrialism is closely associated with urbanization, and California, not surprisingly, is the most urban state in the nation, with more than 90 percent of its citizens living in towns and cities. But even that is changing. Between 1970 and 1976, California's rural areas grew three times as fast as urban areas; during the same period, 47 cities in the Greater Los Angeles area (including L.A.) and 22 cities in the San Francisco Bay Area (including San Francisco) *lost* population. This is not just a matter of "suburbanization"; in fact, thousands of Californians are leapfrogging the suburbs to settle down in faraway and (for the moment) less congested mountain counties.

Postindustrialism itself is one factor: It enables many people who wish to live in small towns to do so. Electronics manufacturing, for example, can take place almost anywhere, since the products are usually lightweight and making them requires no rail connections and comparatively little water or electric power. Service industries like data-processing or banking may conduct much of their business by telephone, from any place. (I know of one anesthesiologist in Ukiah, 120 miles north of San Francisco, who maintains a toll-free "800" number and earns a living by dispensing specialized technical information to other doctors over the phone.) Government services—and em-

*Minority groups are not spread evenly throughout the state. One out of every four Los Angeles residents, for example, is Hispanic; 18 percent are black, and 6 percent are Asian. San Francisco has many fewer Hispanics (only 14 percent of the city's population), somewhat fewer blacks (13 percent), and far more Asians (16 percent). In economic terms, California's minority groups have fared no worse than minorities elsewhere, but their status relative to the overall high level of prosperity in the state makes their situation particularly distressing. A postindustrial society does not improve *everyone's* lot, just as it does not transform *every* sector of the economy; in a sense, it may even depend on a large underclass. The mechanization of agriculture, for example, has not eliminated the need for armies of Mexican farm workers, many of whom are now permanent residents of the state.

ployment—have expanded in all parts of California. With the expansion of the community colleges, higher education is within commuting distance of virtually everyone. In California, people no longer need to live in cities to have many of the economic or cultural advantages of urban living.

California is in a transition period between a dynamic present and several possible futures: among them, the postindustrial society of the theorists and the “small is beautiful” world of the dreamers. For the moment, however, the state appears to be in an eclectic sort of limbo, uncertain which way to go but still convinced that others will follow.

Anthropologists have identified a phenomenon called “the law of the retarding lead,” which holds that the most advanced countries have the greatest difficulty adapting to changing conditions. As their economies become established and sophisticated, as their social systems harden, as their citizens come to have an increasing stake in the status quo, developed regions lose the competitive advantage of flexibility. Progress, so to speak, seeks a vacuum.

The notion is pertinent to California, and not only because population and industry are shifting steadily—and innovatively—to the state’s less-developed rural areas. For a century, California as a whole has been in the avant-garde. Increasingly, it is less so. California’s rate of population growth is slowing. The population is becoming more “settled.” High-technology companies are not abandoning California, but they are *expanding* in such less-developed states as Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Vermont. In all of these places, the rate of in-migration is high and climbing, and R&D and electronics are among the big growth industries. Their per capita incomes are rising at an accelerating rate, faster than California’s. In 20 years, perhaps, they will face the dilemmas California confronts now.

Will California then still point the way?



THE CALIFORNIA HOUSE

by Sally B. Woodbridge

If Adam and Eve and their descendents had continued to occupy the Garden of Eden, what kinds of houses would they have built? How would they have designed their dwellings to take advantage of a lush natural setting where the climate was ever temperate and healthful, and where all time was leisure time?

These questions are not entirely fanciful. As portrayed by sincere apostles and hired evangelists, California Living had become, by the end of the 19th century, synonymous with the American vision of the Good Life. California's architects have aspired ever since to build the "ideal" home for the citizens of this new Eden. The architectural results have been widely imitated outside the state, even as the concept of the ideal California house continues to evolve.

The evangelism began, in a sense, with the rate war between the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific Railroads during the late 1880s. For a time, the cost of a ticket from Kansas City to Los Angeles fell to \$1. A new kind of settler came to the state. The gold-seekers of '49 had been young bachelors. The men and women who immigrated during the last decades of the 19th century were usually middle-aged and married—solid folk determined to live comfortably on a small plot "under their own vines and fig trees," as the railroad brochures had promised.

The humble remnants of Spanish colonial architecture, though well suited to the region's Mediterranean climate, did not much interest the "Pullman settlers" of the 1880s and '90s. Instead, they lived along the streetcar lines in wooden houses that mimicked Eastern styles. These homes were generally set on raised basements to prevent rot and were often surrounded by luxurious vegetation. The conventional wisdom of the time held that vapors from the earth were poisonous, so porches, piazzas, or verandahs were built to elevate the homeowner to a safe spectator position.

The influx of "Pullman settlers" brought rapid growth. As the inner suburbs of San Francisco (and later, Los Angeles) lost

their pastoral character, upper-middle-class families—who historically have been America's chief patrons of new residential architecture—fled to the virgin land on the far fringes of California's urban areas. Many of them built rather conventional homes, reflecting the Victorian penchant for gaudy ornament. But a bohemian minority was repelled by stylistic hodgepodge and machine-tooled filigree. They sought to create new settings that would in part reflect the highly popular aesthetic philosophies of Englishmen John Ruskin and William Morris, who emphasized aesthetic moderation, the worth of handicraft, "constructive" use of leisure time, and rejection of the unhealthy complexities of city life.

Hill-Dwelling Sophisticates

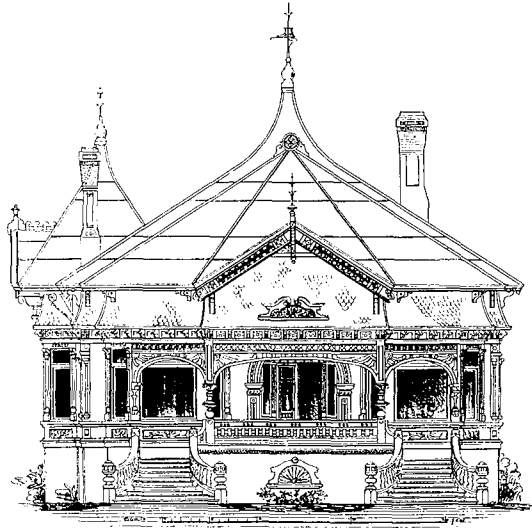
This notion of the Simple Life would one day be embodied in mass-produced "Bungalows." But for the moment it remained the ideal of the affluent. Their new "natural" houses owed much to a handful of local prototypes that perfectly expressed the ideals of what came to be known as the Craftsman Movement. Naturalist John Muir's Yosemite Valley cabin, built in 1869, was one of the pacesetters:

From the Yosemite Creek, near where it first gathers its beaten waters at the foot of the fall, I dug a small ditch and brought a stream into the cabin, entering at one end and flowing out the other with just current enough to allow it to sing and warble in low, sweet tones, delightful at night while I lay in bed. The floor was made of rough slabs, nicely joined and embedded in the ground. In the spring the common pteris ferns pushed up between the joints of the slabs, two of which, growing slender like climbing ferns on account of the subdued light, I trained on threads up the sides and over my window in front of my writing desk in an ornamental arch.

During the 1880s and '90s, clusters of "natural" houses were built in the Bay Area — on San Francisco's Russian Hill, in Berkeley, in Piedmont. Around 1895, architect Bernard Maybeck

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A "Queen Anne" home (c.1884) built in Santa Rosa by Joseph and Samuel Newsom. This "gingerbread" style sparked a drive for simplicity among a generation of young California architects.



From Picturesque California Homes by S. & J. C. Newsom. Published by Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1978.

designed a house that was essentially a set of redwood-shingled pavilions strung along the edge of a slope north of the University of California campus at Berkeley (where he taught). Soon, more brown shingled houses by Maybeck sprang up near the first one. As the colony of hill-dwelling sophisticates grew, they formed a quasi-evangelical organization called the Hillside Club, whose ideal was succinctly stated in its 1906-07 yearbook: "Hillside architecture is landscape gardening around a few rooms for use in case of rain." (Ever determined to fuse indoor and outdoor living, it was Maybeck who developed the sliding glass door.)

Of the many houses erected in the spirit of the Hillside Club, none captured it so imaginatively as the Boynton family's "Temple of the Wings," in North Berkeley, designed by Maybeck but infused with the ideas of Florence Boynton, a friend and follower of dancer Isadora Duncan. In 1918, *Sunset Magazine* interviewed the Boyntons about life in the spare but elegant structure they had occupied for about four years. The "house" consisted of two round, temple-like pavilions, with roofs supported by a Corinthian colonnade. The flagstone floor was warmed by hot air circulating through hollow tiles underneath. In rainy weather, canvas awnings were unfurled between the columns; otherwise, the interiors were open to the elements.

Domestic drudgery and conventional dress had been

banished. The spirited Boynton women wore flowing garments like the ancient Greeks and wove garlands of flowers into their hair. Mr. Boynton, a successful San Francisco lawyer, wore a three-piece suit to the city; he donned robes in the privacy of the temple. He described their simple diet: raisins, dried figs, prunes, almonds, English walnuts, fresh fruits in season, cheese, honey, and milk. "We cook one article of food: we roast peanuts, a fifteen minutes' task daily." It was the Simple Life.

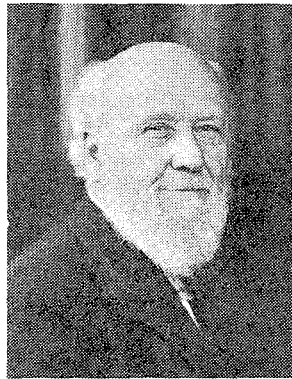
The Southern California counterpart of Berkeley's natural houses sprang up at the eastern edges of the Pasadena Arroyo among the orange and olive groves. Here, during the first decade or so of the 20th century, Charles and Henry Greene built California's first mansion-sized "Bungalows," roughly patterned on the East Indian dwellings of the same name. In a 1908 redwood-shingled Bungalow designed by Greene & Greene, long rounded beam ends protruding from under the roof eaves stretched like fingers to the outside world; dark hollows on the upper levels became cave-like sleeping porches. Skirting the ground level were verandahs and terraces embroidered with exotic plantings. The craftsmanship—elaborate wood joinery, stained glass, brick garden walls studded with granite river boulders—was expressionistic to the point of ostentation.

During the early years of this century, the California Bungalow—the state's first brand-name housing commodity—so captivated the nation that a far more modest, low-cost, shoebox version (in wood and stucco) spread eastward. Never mind that its flimsiness did not suit harsh Midwestern and Northeastern winters. It caught on anyway.



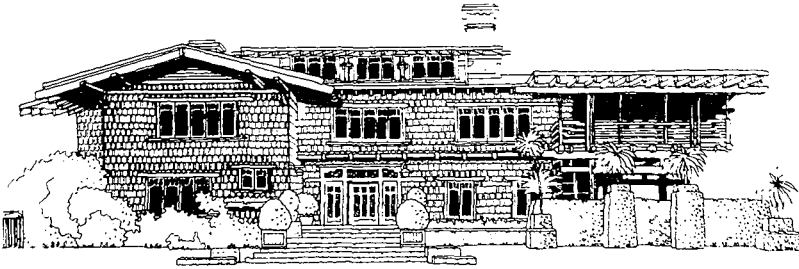
Courtesy of the American Institute of Architects.

Charles and Henry Greene.

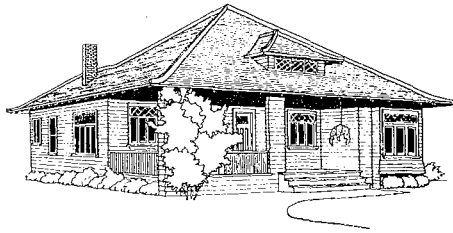


From Five California Architects by Esther McCoy. Reprinted courtesy of the author.

Bernard Maybeck.



Above, Greene and Greene's mansion-sized Pasadena "Bungalow" (1908) for the David B. Gambles; below, their economy version for the average family.



© 1980 by Mary Mix Foley. From *The American House*. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

Then came the automobile, with its promise of freedom and mobility. California's cities spread out, and new suburbs sprang up between the streetcar lines. During the surge of U.S. interest in European culture that followed World War I, the Bungalow yielded its popularity, in California as elsewhere, to a variety of cottage styles loosely based on European prototypes: the English Cotswold Cottage, the French Norman Farmhouse, and the tile-roofed Andalusian Hacienda—the latter a throwback to California's Spanish colonial heritage.*

A different kind of European style also crossed the Atlantic—Modernism, christened the "International Style" by American critics Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson. Modernism called for the same kind of moral commitment that the Craftsman Movement had espoused: the honest use of materials to serve basic needs, free of antiquarianism. For a variety of

*As noted above, the architecture of California's Spanish period was not highly prized during the first decades after statehood. But as urbanization progressed during the late 19th century, nostalgia for a pastoral, preindustrial past (that few of the state's residents could actually remember) suffused the Spanish colonial buildings with a new charm. The change in opinion is reflected in promotional literature. "An adobe house," wrote Charles Nordhoff in 1873, "no matter what is the wealth or condition of the Californian who lives in it, is simply a long range of rooms." By 1913, Herbert Croley could write that, "Rudimentary as these buildings were . . . they attain both by what they avoid and what they achieve, the essentials of good domestic architecture." Today, restored Spanish missions and old adobe homes are regarded in California as local shrines.

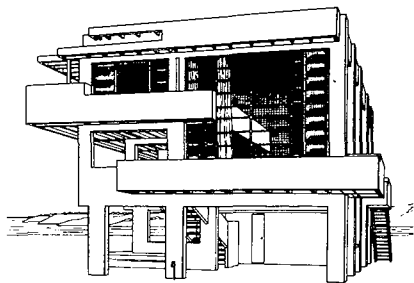
reasons, it was California that first embraced, and then popularized, the International Style.

To most Americans, it made no sense to apply words like "functional," "clean," and "honest" to a house; a man's home was still his castle and required stylistic trappings to prove it. In California, however, a growing respect for the solid architecture of the Spanish missions and Mexican *ranchos*, combined with the ideal of the Simple Life, had already spawned a natural, clean-lined, "proto-Modernism"; it was best exemplified in the San Diego and Los Angeles houses of the architect Irving Gill. Gill's cubist house for Mrs. Mary Banning was described in *Sunset Magazine* as being absolutely sincere and independent, "free from the distracting, feverish attempt to divert attention by means of excessive ornamentation."

The residential work of Irving Gill and the more exotic cubist houses that Frank Lloyd Wright built in Los Angeles during the early 1920s foreshadowed the machine-age style that Austrian-born architects Richard Neutra and R. N. Schindler would introduce during the '30s. Neutra and Schindler designed homes for members of Southern California's film and art worlds. Though stark and sometimes metallic, these International Style houses, like the earlier warm, redwood Craftsman houses, blended easily into their natural setting. Large expanses of plate glass helped to dissolve the barrier between indoors and out.

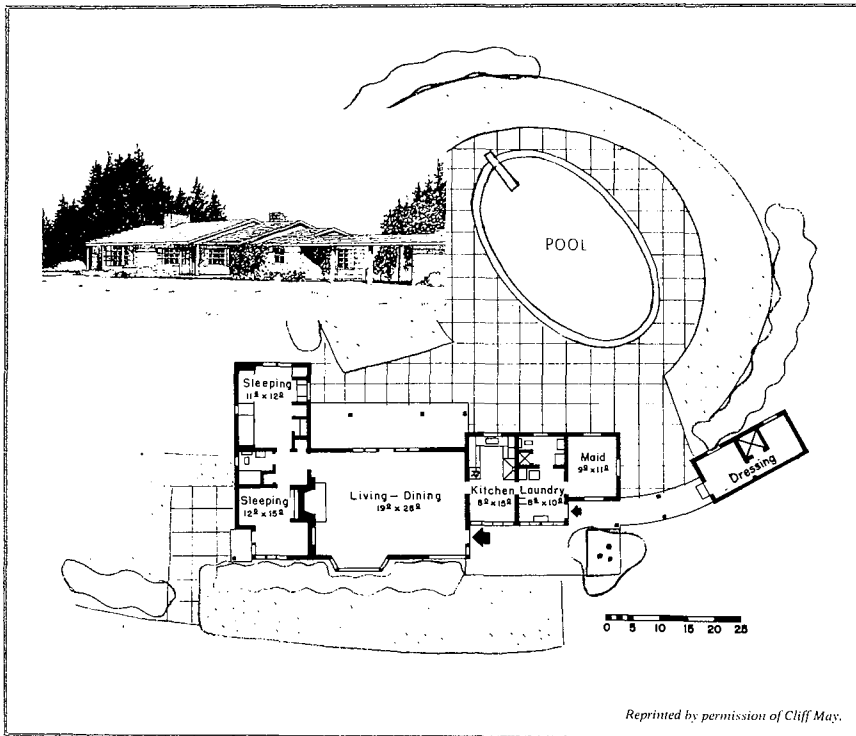
Northern California's most influential architect at this time was William W. Wurster, who regarded his professional role as that of the native son merging traditional aspects of California architecture with the European avant-garde. Beginning in the late 1920s, Wurster designed scores of houses that revolved around three features he called "the living porch," "the glazed gallery," and "the garden living room."

Wurster saw his clients' homelife as revolving around the



*A cubist beach house
(1926) in Newport Beach,
designed by Rudolph
Schindler.*

© 1980 by Mary Mix Foley. From *The American House*.
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Americans from colder climes, noted Sunset in 1946, once "laughed when anyone mentioned the [California] ranch house. . . . But zone heating changed some ideas." Ranch houses are now ubiquitous in America, even as high energy prices prompt second thoughts.

great outdoors rather than the hearth. In the September 1949 issue of *Architectural Forum*, he wrote:

The most predominant single desire for most people is for personally controlled out-of-door space, where the family can have a flower or vegetable garden at its door . . . where young children can make mud pies.

Most of the houses Wurster designed from the 1930s through the '50s drew on regional rural traditions. California's early architecture—the white-washed adobe of Monterey, for example—was sufficiently "elemental" to serve as the basis for a simple Modern Style. Clients who found the familiar historical details of European and American Colonial revival houses both

fussy and false, yet who had no taste for avant-garde Modernism, could be comfortable with an informal, vaguely rustic style that reflected the region's heritage.

At first, recognizably Modern houses were designed exclusively for sophisticated or at least affluent clients. The massive influx of migrants to California from all over the country after World War II changed that.

The postwar style-setters looked to the future, not the past. New technology for the home and a "progressive" attitude toward family relationships demanded (or so the architectural writers said) a new domestic setting. No publication was more successful than *Sunset Magazine* in selling California to prospective immigrants as the new frontier. *Sunset's* features encompassed everything from houses to plant boxes to barbecues, gardens, patios, and redwood decks. The annual *Sunset* design awards for the best houses for "Western Living" began during the early 1950s and continue to this day.

Eden for Everyman

The house that *Sunset* made synonymous with Western Living in the glowing postwar period was the California Ranch House, which resembled in its floor plan, if not its physical aspect, the old adobe Mexican *ranchos*. Like its predecessor, the Bungalow, the ranch house soon spread all over the United States. And like the Bungalow, it was difficult to characterize. The editors of the 1955 book, *Sunset Western Ranch Houses*, tried anyway:

Most of us describe any one-story house with a low, close-to-the-ground silhouette as a ranch house. When a long, wide porch is added to this form, almost everyone accepts the name. . . . Wide protected porches immediately suggest outdoor living—lazy summer afternoons, informal entertaining—but if those porches face the street and are, therefore, without privacy, you merely have a house that looks like a ranch house but does not function as one.

Prospective homeowners did not always worry about such distinctions. Wherever relatively cheap land remained on the fringes of urban areas, entrepreneurs built variations on the "indoor-outdoor" ranch house in vast tracts. Now young middle-class families could enjoy a house systematically zoned and labeled by the architect for appropriate use: outdoor living room, landscaped garden, boy's room, girl's room, patio, ter-

race, deck, swimming pool, barbecue, car-port, solarium, shop. It was not just "housing" but a "leisure center," a self-contained family spa, a "natural" retreat from the industrial age.

The California Ranch House became a symbol of the good life in the 1950s and early '60s, whether it was built in Orange County, California, or Shaker Heights, Ohio. In those prosperous days, when young couples were bringing up the largest generation in U.S. history, and most middle-class wives stayed home to mind the kids, there was perhaps a rationale for a house that promised a kind of mini-Eden. But life is different in the '80s. The housing market now includes vast numbers of single professionals and retired folk. Families are smaller, houses are more expensive, and many women aspire to careers outside the home. The idealized California Ranch House may no longer fit the times.

The latest California export—clustered, high-density residences in a park-like setting—is a response to shifts to smaller families, a harsher economy, and a threatened environment. The first of these prototype communities was the Sea Ranch condominium complex on the Mendocino County coast, designed by Moore/Lyndon/Turnbull/Whitaker in 1963.

The concept soon captivated architects and planners throughout California, who were increasingly aware of the costs of saturating the landscape with single-family tract homes. The idea, again, moved east. Today, clusters of wooden or stuccoed shed-roofed boxes dot the landscape from coast to coast, from the San Francisco Bay area's Foster City to Columbia, Maryland. In California, the ideal of the indoor-outdoor house lives on, although roof gardens, balconies, and hot tubs have succeeded terraces, patios, and pools.

And it is, after all, just that—an ideal. California Living, with its implicit assumption of leisured affluence in a lush natural setting, is as far from the daily experience of as many people in California as it is in New York.

But this vision has been a vision too long simply to founder on reality. Set in stone, glass, and redwood, it has taken tangible form and spread from California across America. Enter a man's house, Bernard Maybeck once wrote, and you will see his dreams.



BACKGROUND BOOKS

CALIFORNIA

Even by American standards, California's recorded history is relatively brief. It was not until 1769 that the first Spanish mission in California was founded—150 years after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, 250 years after Hernando Cortés invaded Mexico.

For a chronicle of California from the era of the Spanish friars and *soldados* to that of today's Governor Jerry Brown, there is Berkeley historian Walton Bean's reflective **California: An Interpretive History** (McGraw-Hill, 1968; 3rd ed., 1978). Bean measures California's "most controversial and persistent problems, such as racism, vigilantism, and the maltreatment of agricultural labor" against expansion, innovation, and economic growth under Spanish, Mexican, and U.S. control.

Entries range from abalone to Adolph Zukor (the Hungarian-born Hollywood film magnate) in James D. Hart's diverting guidebook, **A Companion to California** (Oxford, 1978). Hart's thumbnail sketches cover the state's agriculture, climate, geology, history, institutions, personalities, politics.

In 1510, Garci Rodríguez Ordóñez de Montalvo (about whom little else is known) wrote a melodramatic thriller—a Spanish best seller—that gave the future state its name. "Know ye that on the right hand of the Indies," he claimed, "there is an island called California, very near the Terrestrial Paradise."

Montalvo is one of 137 authors (including William Saroyan and Robinson Jeffers, as well as forgotten

miners and Indians) whose various diaries, verse, fiction, and critiques of California are excerpted in John and Laree Caughe's **California Heritage: An Anthology of History and Literature** (Ward Ritchie, 1962).

Montalvo's vision notwithstanding, the first Spaniards to set foot in "Terrestrial Paradise" found the land arid and mostly unfit for agriculture.

Led by Father Junípero Serra, a handful of Spanish missionaries and soldiers founded a Franciscan mission at San Diego in 1769—the first white settlement. Spreading the Christian faith among the Indians was only a peripheral concern to Spain, however.

Historian Charles Edward Chapman describes the Spanish move north into California from Mexico as the inevitable growth of an empire, in **The Founding of Spanish California: The Northwestward Expansion of New Spain, 1687–1783** (Macmillan, 1916; Octagon reprint, 1973). Spain feared—often on the basis of little or no real evidence—that Great Britain, France, or Russia might seize the region and threaten Spanish colonies to the South.

The result was an empire spread too thin. Franciscan friars taught the native Indians to farm and introduced irrigation methods that turned arid patches into oases. But the Spaniards and then the Mexicans—who took control from Spain in 1821—were mostly ranchers whose vast tracts were scattered along the coast and in the Central Valley.

In 1846, four years before California became the 31st state of the Union, its non-Indian population numbered fewer than 7,000—including some ambitious Americans.

Washington first attempted to gain control over California in 1829, when President Andrew Jackson sent an emissary to Mexico to negotiate the acquisition of what is now California, Texas, and New Mexico. According to historian Andrew F. Rolle, in **California: A History** (Crowell, 1963; AHM, 3rd. ed., 1978), U.S. offers of bribery offended Mexican officials, who refused to discuss the matter further.

The first wagon train of American pioneers bound for California set out from near Independence, Mo., in 1841. Five years later, as Zachary Taylor fought Santa Ana south of the border in the Mexican-American War, Kit Carson, John C. Frémont, and other Yankee immigrants successfully battled the Mexicans to gain California's freedom in the Bear Flag Revolt.

Dashing and opportunistic, Frémont later became one of California's first U.S. Senators (in 1850) and the state's first presidential candidate, running unsuccessfully on the Republican ticket in 1856. In **Frémont: Explorer for a Restless Nation** (Doubleday, 1977), author Ferol Egan observes that the intrepid Frémont came to symbolize for Easterners the larger-than-life Western hero. Frémont's impact on California's development was equally memorable. "From the ashes of his campfires have sprung cities," exclaimed his devoted wife, Jessie, daughter of Missouri's Senator Thomas Hart Benton.

In January 1848, James W. Marshall, a carpenter from New Jersey,

found gold nuggets in the American River at Sutter's Mill. The next year, 40,000 "Forty Niners" braved the five-month voyage around Cape Horn to San Francisco for a chance at a new start and instant wealth.

In **Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915** (Oxford, 1973), historian Kevin Starr suggests that the Gold Rush irrevocably "linked California imaginatively with the most compelling of American myths, the pursuit of happiness." The discovery of gold put California up for grabs. During the ensuing 50 years, "a sudden and gorgeous drama," as Walt Whitman put it, was played out. This period of extraordinary expansion was marked by rampant speculation, the formation of powerful monopolies (especially in railroads), and cultivation of the land.

The Gold Rush hastened California's passage to statehood (1850), but Americans there remained isolated from the rest of the country—except for the Pony Express and, in 1861, the transcontinental telegraph. On an autumn evening in 1860, in a room above a Sacramento hardware store, merchants Collis P. Huntington, Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker—later to be called the "four associates"—met with construction engineer Theodore D. Judah. As Ward McAfee tells it in **California's Railroad Era, 1850-1911** (Golden West Books, 1973), the idea for the Central Pacific Railroad was born. The Central Pacific signed on as many as 10,000 Chinese coolies to build its railway, stretching from Sacramento to Promontory, Utah. Work was completed in 1869.

The four associates have been praised for their crucial role in California's economic growth and vilified for their ruthless business practices (for example, price fixing

CALIFORNIA IN LITERATURE

At the age of 19, Richard Henry Dana sailed from Massachusetts 'round the Horn to California as a common seaman in 1834. Four years later, he was among the first in a long line of "non-natives" to write about Californians and their environs. **Two Years Before the Mast** (1838) is his personal narrative of adventure along the California coast.

Bret Harte went west from Albany, N.Y., in 1854. His whimsical stories, among them "The Luck of Roaring Camp," romanticized the weathered miners, prostitutes, and gamblers of the rugged frontier.

A hard-boiled writing style marks the fiction of James M. Cain and Raymond Chandler. Cain's **The Postman Always Rings Twice** (1934) is a drifter's tale of adultery and murder, set along a rural highway in Southern California. Chandler's tough detective, Philip Marlowe, battled corrupt Los Angeles cops in such classics as **The Big Sleep** (1939).

Many established writers "hacked" for the movies. F. Scott Fitzgerald used his unhappy Hollywood experiences in his unfinished draft of **The Last Tycoon** (1941), as did Nathanael West in his eerie **The Day of the Locust** (1939).

Foreign authors who have penned their impressions of California include Britain's Aldous Huxley and Evelyn Waugh. Waugh's **The Loved One** (1948) gives a funny vision of love between two employees at Southern California's elaborate burial ground, Forest Lawn.

Nobel laureate John Steinbeck depicted the San Joaquin Valley in **The Grapes of Wrath** (1939) as a place of fruited abundance where, during the Depression, the children of migrant Okies starved. Fellow Californian Joan Didion writes essays (**The White Album**, 1979) and novels (**Play It As It Lays**, 1970) that probe the effects of celebrity, drugs, fads, and cars on Southern Californians—from bureaucrats to Black Panthers, to rock stars, to housewives.

In a lighter vein, novelist Cyra MacFadden's **The Serial: A Year in the Life of Marin County** (1977) satirizes the "mellow" lives of San Francisco's jogging, meditating, sexually self-conscious suburbanites. Her characters' chief worry, as one puts it, is "what it means to be *human*. You know—sex-role stereotyping, identity, meaningful human relationships. The whole gestalt."

and the control of docks to lessen competition). Notable among the biographies are David Lavender's **The Great Persuader** (Doubleday, 1970), a sympathetic portrait of Huntington (1821–1900), and Norman E. Tutorow's **Leland Stanford: Man of Many Careers** (Pacific Coast Publishers, 1971). Stanford (1824–93) founded the Republican Party in Cal-

ifornia, served as both governor and U.S. Senator, and financed and built the university named after his son. A melodramatic indictment of the Central Pacific—"that galloping monster, that terror of steel and steam"—is Frank Norris's muckraking novel, **The Octopus** (1901).

Today, agriculture is California's biggest business, with cash receipts

for 1979 totaling some \$11.8 billion. **Politics of Land** (Grossman, 1973, cloth; Penguin, 1973, paper), by Ralph Nader's Study Group on Land Use in California, focuses on how public and private land is allocated and used in the state. Competition for land is fierce. The authors note that the federal government has proprietary rights over 44 percent of California's 100 million acres; 25 corporate landowners hold more than 16 percent of the remaining privately owned land. Some 36 million acres, devoted to farming, produce 25 percent of the food (especially fruits and vegetables) that ends up on American dinner tables.

The precarious life of California's Hispanic migrant worker in the face of low wages and seasonal layoffs is described by novelist/naturalist Peter Matthiessen. His **Sal Si Puedes: Cesar Chavez and the New American Revolution** (Random, 1969, cloth; rev. ed., 1973; Dell, 1971, paper) paints a sympathetic portrait of the United Farm Workers' leader.

In 1887, Hollywood was a real estate development on the edge of Los Angeles. Movie-makers flocked there in the 1900s because of its sunny weather and its proximity to natural settings that could substitute for locales as different as the Sahara Desert and the French Riviera. British film historian Keven Brownlow has chronicled the history of California's early movie-making in several excellent books, among them **The War, The West, and the Wilderness** (Knopf, 1979).

Many of contemporary California's political debates have centered

around growth, land, and the environment. Because the Democrats and the G.O.P. are weak, local groups have arisen to fight the political battles. In a broad survey of recent **Power and Politics in California** (Wiley, 1980, paper), Cal Tech political scientists John H. Culver and John C. Syer note that the state's strong interest groups do not just pressure public officials but help to elect them in the first place.

One current battle has seen developers squaring off against environmentalists. During the early 1970s, there were 235 professional lobbyists in Sacramento representing "landed interests" (corporations, utilities, etc.) as opposed to 3 representing conservation groups. Although still outnumbered, the environmentalists have had their successes, notably in curbing the commercial development of coastal areas and in requiring "environmental impact reports" for all major construction projects. California's Environmental Quality Act is the most stringent state law of its kind in the country.

Political journalist Gladwin Hill takes a bemused look in **Dancing Bear: An Inside Look at California Politics** (World, 1968). A Democratic electoral majority, growing since 1932, he notes, did not prevent four successive Republican gubernatorial victories, from 1942 to 1954. (Nor did it bar Ronald Reagan from victory in 1966 and 1970.) California politics, concludes Hill, is marked by flexibility and pragmatism—"the frontier urge for experimentation, on the one hand, and the innate desire for security on the other."

EDITOR'S NOTE: *James J. Rawls and Ted K. Bradshaw suggested some of the titles mentioned in this essay.*