

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910463741403321
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Titolo	California crucible [[electronic resource] ] : the forging of modern American liberalism / / Jonathan Bell
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia, : University of Pennsylvania Press, c2012
ISBN	1-283-89658-3 0-8122-0624-X
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (352 p.)
Collana	Politics and Culture in Modern America Politics and culture in modern America
Disciplina	320.51/309794
Soggetti	Liberalism - California - History - 20th century Liberalism - United States - History - 20th century Electronic books. California Politics and government 20th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [281]-331) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Introduction. Placing California in Post-World War II American Politics -- Chapter 1. Politics and Party in California at Mid-Century -- Chapter 2. Building the Democratic Party in the 1940's -- Chapter 3. The Stevenson Effect -- Chapter 4. A Democratic Order -- Chapter 5. Turning Point: California Politics in the 1950's -- Chapter 6. The Liberal Moment -- Chapter 7. Democratic Politics and the Brown Administration -- Chapter 8. Welfare Reform and the Idea of the Family -- Chapter 9. Culture Wars, Politics, and Power -- Chapter 10. The Legacy of the Democratic Party Renaissance -- Epilogue: Liberal Politics in California in an "Era of Limits" -- Notes -- Index -- Acknowledgments
Sommario/riassunto	In the three decades following World War II, the Golden State was not only the fastest-growing state in the Union but also the site of significant political change. From the late 1940's through the mid-1970's, a generation of liberal activists transformed the political landscape of California, ending Republican dominance of state politics and eventually setting the tone for the Democratic Party nationwide. In California Crucible, Jonathan Bell chronicles this dramatic story of

postwar liberalism-from early grassroots organizing and the election of Pat Brown as governor in 1958 to the civil rights campaigns of the 1960's and the campaigns against the New Right in the 1970's. As Bell argues, the emergent "California liberalism" was a distinctly post-New Deal phenomenon that drew on the ambitious ideals of the New Deal but adapted them to a diverse population. The result was a broad coalition that sought to extend social democracy to marginalized groups-such as gay rights and civil rights organizations-that had not been well served by the Democratic Party in earlier decades. In building this coalition, liberal activists forged an ideology capable of bringing Latino farm workers, African American civil rights activists, and wealthy suburban homemakers into a shared political project. By exploring California Democrats' largely successful attempts to link economic rights to civil rights and serve the needs of diverse groups, Bell challenges common assumptions about the rise of the New Right and the decline of American liberalism in the postwar era. As Bell shows, by the end of the 1970's California had become the spiritual home of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party as much as that of the Reagan Revolution.

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