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### **History of California**

These nonfiction books cover a wide-range of Californian history, from early settlers, the Gold Rush, the rise of Hollywood and L.A., to the riotous 1960's and beyond. To order any of these titles, contact the library by email, phone, mail, in person, or order through our [online catalog](#). Most titles can be [downloaded from BARD](#).

#### **The Port Chicago Mutiny: the Story of the Largest Mass Mutiny trial in U.S. Naval History by Robert L. Allen**

Read by Gregory Gorton

7 hours, 40 minutes

Recounts the catastrophic explosion at the U.S. Navy's Port Chicago munitions base near San Francisco on July 17, 1944. Details the mutiny trial of fifty African American seamen who refused to continue work after the blast and discusses the trial's impact on the budding civil rights movement. 1993.

[Download from BARD: The Port Chicago Mutiny: the Story of the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB078655

#### **The Land of Little Rain by Mary Hunter Austin**

Read by Jill Ferris

4 hours, 17 minutes

Early environmentalist and author Mary Austin, portrayed in *Mary Austin and the American West* (DB 72474), describes the landscape between the high Sierras and the Mojave Desert in this 1903 work about the flora, fauna, and people of the California desert. 1903.

[Download from BARD: The Land of Little Rain](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073448

### **The Star Machine by Jeanine Basinger**

Read by Kristin Allison

24 hours, 51 minutes

Film historian researches the studio system used in Hollywood from the 1930s to the 1950s. Describes the process of selecting and grooming performers to elevate into commodities--provided they surrendered their individuality.

Discusses the reactions of actors Deanna Durbin, Ann Sheridan, and Dennis Morgan to such business deals. 2007.

[Download from BARD: The Star Machine](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067283

### **California Rich by Stephen Birmingham**

Read by Flo Gibson

10 hours, 14 minutes

The story of California entrepreneurs--their ventures, scandals, and offspring. The fortunes and foibles of the Stanford, Hearst, and Huntington families are examined with emphasis on the wealthy Irvine family. A gossipy, sometimes exaggerated but entertaining view of the rich western trend setters.

[Download from BARD: California Rich](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB018450

### **Inventing L.A. The Chandlers and Their Times by Bill Boyarsky**

Read by Barry Bernson

4 hours, 59 minutes

A veteran Los Angeles Times reporter chronicles the history of the paper and its founding family, the Chandlers. Discusses the politics, fortunes, and feuds of multiple Chandler generations and explores their influence on Southern California since the arrival of patriarch Harrison Gray Otis in 1882. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Inventing L.A. The Chandlers and Their Times](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB070724

## **Black Against Empire the History and Politics of the Black Panther Party by Joshua Bloom**

Read by Julian Thompson

19 hours, 58 minutes

Comprehensive history of the Black Panther Party emphasizing its political ideology. Chronicles the transformation of a local group--organized in 1966 Oakland, California, by community college students Bobby Seale and Huey Newton to prevent police brutality--into an international entity. 2013.

[Download from BARD: Black Against Empire the History and Politics...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076438

## **Humboldt: Life on America's Marijuana Frontier by Emily Brady**

Read by Walter Phelps

7 hours, 14 minutes

In 2010 journalist Brady lived for a year in the Northern California area known as the Emerald Triangle, located primarily in southern Humboldt County. She reports on a time of transition for its secretive and cash-based underground industry of marijuana production. Her nonfiction narrative chronicles the lives of four very different residents as the hidden economy and subculture of the region begins to adapt to the noticeable rise in public tolerance of cannabis use and the changes legalization could bring. Some descriptions of violence and some strong language. 2013

[Download from BARD: Humboldt: Life on America's Marijuana Frontier](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DBC07159

## **L.A. Noir the Struggle for the Soul of America's Most Seductive City by John Buntin**

Read by Jim Zeiger

21 hours, 39 minutes

True Los Angeles crime legends from the 1930s to the 1960s. Features accounts of gangster Mickey Cohen and LA police chief Bill Parker amid the glitter of Hollywood and organized crime operations that included brothels, gambling circuits, drug dens, and bribery rings. Violence and some strong language. Bestseller. 2009.

[Download from BARD: L.A. Noir the Struggle for the Soul of America's...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069647

## **Official Negligence: How Rodney King and the Riots Changed Los Angeles and the LAPD by Lou Cannon**

Read by John Rayburn

33 hours, 36 minutes

Veteran political reporter Lou Cannon dissects the Rodney King trial and its aftermath of riots. He concludes that the style of government in Southern California led to many of the problems, first within the police department and then within the judicial system. Cannon also explores the various myths he feels were perpetuated by the media. Bestseller.

[Download from BARD: Official Negligence: How Rodney King and...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB045697

## **Napa by James Conaway**

Read by Bob Askey

19 hours, 52 minutes

The author relates how, in the early 1900s, winemaking in Napa Valley, California, was devastated by a bug that destroyed the vines, by Prohibition, and by depression prices. He traces the survival of some estates during the days of jug wine and the success of others, who introduced new grapes and overcame political adversity, the impact of tourism, and the big liquor companies to rejuvenate the region and its best-known product.

[Download from BARD: Napa](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB034885

## **Rebels in Paradise: the Los Angeles Art Scene and the 1960s by Hunter Drohojowska-Philp**

Read by Kristin Allison

8 hours, 31 minutes

Art critic credits museum director Walter Hopps, who staged Andy Warhol's show of soup can paintings in 1963, for establishing Los Angeles as the center of modern art. Links the 1960s art movement with news events and cultural milestones and provides profiles of various artists. Bestseller. 2011.

[Download from BARD: Rebels in Paradise: the Los Angeles Art Scene...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073770

### **Junípero Serra California's Founding Father by Steven W. Hackel**

Read by Mark Ashby

12 hours

Biography of Franciscan priest Junípero Sera (1713-1784), born on the Spanish-owned island of Mallorca. Traces Serra's career as an educator and his migration to Mexico, where he enforced the Inquisition. Chronicles his efforts to build missions in California and convert the natives to Catholicism. 2013.

[Download from BARD: Junipero Serra California's Founding Father](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB077478

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR20273](#)

Also available in braille BR20273

### **The World Rushed in: the California Gold Rush Experience by J.S. Holliday**

Read by Jim Walton

18 hours, 16 minutes

With three companions, all from Youngstown, N.Y., William Swain set out in April 1849 by lake steamer from Buffalo and joined an emigrant train, the "Wolverine Rangers." They were on their way to seek their fortune in the gold rush in California. Based on newspaper accounts and letters from William's diaries.

[Download from BARD: The World Rushed in: the California Gold Rush](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB017484

### **Farewell to Manzanar a True Story of Japanese American Experience During and After the World War II Internment by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston**

Read by Catherine Byers

4 hours, 24 minutes

An intimate look at the painful years during World War II when the Wakatsuki family was imprisoned in a California internment camp for Japanese Americans.

[Download from BARD: Farewell to Manzanar a True Story of Japanese...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB043194

**Dear Los Angeles: the City in Diaries and Letters 1542 to 2018 edited by David Kipen**

Read by Lynnette Freeman, Korey Jackson, et. al.

14 hours, 49 minutes

Diary entries and letters about life in Los Angeles by locals, transplants, and those passing through. Selections span back to the Spanish missionary expeditions of the early 1500s, with writings from figures such as Marilyn Monroe, Cesar Chavez, Susan Sontag, Albert Einstein, and others. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. Bestseller. 2018.

[Download from BARD: Dear Los Angeles: the City in Diaries and Letters](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB095149

**Disaster! The Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906 By Dan Kurzman**

Read by Chuck Young

10 hours, 39 minutes

Recreates the historic California catastrophe by recounting personal tragedies that occurred during the destruction of San Francisco. Describes the social scene the night before the earthquake and the reactions of citizens, government officials, and soldiers during the following three days of fire and chaos. 2001. 2001.

[Download from BARD: Disaster! The Great San Francisco Earthquake...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB053784

**California: a Bicentennial History by David Lavender**

Read by Art Metzler

8 hours, 27 minutes

Portrait of the appealing state emphasizes its lure and romantic history. Describes its varied climate, beautiful landscapes, and valuable natural resources. Depicts the gold-rush days to the present exuberant atmosphere that attracts people of such different beliefs.

[Download from BARD: California: a Bicentennial History](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB013588

### **Fool's Paradise: a Carey McWilliams Reader**

Read by Walter Phelps

11 hours, 26 minutes

With a sampling of the historian journalist's writings dating from the late 1930s to the early 1960s, this book features California's political and labor history. Contains accounts from a Progressive viewpoint of the Wobblies union efforts, Japanese internment during WWII and essays on candidates for governor including Nixon and Reagan. Some violence and strong language. 2001.

[Download from BARD: Fool's Paradise: a Carey McWilliams Reader](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DBC16467

### **Dutch a Memoir of Ronald Reagan by Edmund Morris**

Read by Michael Scherer                      Reading time 32 hours, 32 minutes

Biographer Morris interjects himself as a fictional contemporary of Ronald Reagan in this authorized account of the fortieth president of the United States. He covers Reagan's life from his birth in Tampico, Illinois, through his college days, his movie career, his governorship of California, his presidency, and final public appearance. Bestseller.

[Download from BARD: Dutch a Memoir of Ronald Reagan](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB048814

### **The Browns of California: the Family Dynasty that Transformed a State and Shaped a Nation by Miriam Pawel**

Read by Joe Wilson

24 hours, 30 minutes

A narrative history of four generations of a family that provides a focused account of California's history. Begins with Prussian immigrant August Schuckman, who settled in northern California in 1852, and ends with August's great-grandson, Jerry Brown, who reclaimed the family homestead. 2018.

[Download from BARD: The Browns of California: the Family Dynasty...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB092562

**The King and Queen of Malibu: the True Story of the Battle for Paradise by David K. Randall**

Read by Richard Davidson

11 hours, 12 minutes

Journalist recounts the lives of Frederick and May Rindge, who settled in Southern California in 1887 as newlyweds. Examines their relationship, the businesses and investments that provided for their purchase of what would become Malibu, and May's militant defense of the area against development. Bestseller. 2016.

[Download from BARD: The King and Queen of Malibu: the True Story...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB085087

**A Bright and Guilty Place: Murder, Corruption, and L.A.'s Scandalous Coming of Age by Richard Rayner**

Read by Roy Avers

9 hours, 52 minutes

Rayner portrays forensic investigator Leslie White and prosecutor Dave Clark, who worked together in Los Angeles during the 1920s and Great Depression when the city was wealthy from its movie and oil industries. Details crime boss Charlie Crawford's 1931 murder and Clark's becoming the prime suspect. Bestseller. 2009.

[Download from BARD: A Bright and Guilty Place: Murder, Corruption...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069501

**The California Gold Rush and the Coming of the Civil War by Leonard L. Richards**

Read by Jake Williams

10 hours, 47 minutes

History professor chronicles the fight for California between pro- and antislavery groups after the Mexican War. Describes the impact the discovery of gold had on the political climate, the rush for statehood, and an 1859 duel between senator David Broderick and state supreme court judge David S. Terry. 2007.

[Download from BARD: The California Gold Rush and the Coming of the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066763



**Escalante's Dream: on the Trail of the Spanish Discovery of the Southwest by David Roberts**

Read by Robert Fass

11 hours, 31 minutes

An adventure writer travels the 1,700-mile eighteenth-century journey of the Domínguez-Escalante scouting expedition. As he describes his own experiences, he recounts the glories, catastrophes, and courage of the original expedition, which sought to chart a new route to the Spanish missions in California from Santa Fe. Unrated. Commercial audiobook. 2019.

[Download from BARD: Escalante's Dream: on the Trail of the Spanish...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB096522

**Joaquin Murrieta: the Life of a Legend by Michael Romero**

Read by Bill Folger

1 hour, 28 minutes

Joaquin Murrieta was an early Chicano guerrilla leader during the California gold rush. This book examines him as a New world "Robin Hood," an eth-class hero who led an insurrection in California.

[Download from BARD: Joaquin Murrieta: the Life of a Legend](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DBC03119

**Subversives the FBI's War on Student Radicals, and Reagan's Rise to Power by Seth Rosenfeld**

Read by Dan Bloom

31 hour, 21 minutes

Journalist uses once-classified government documents to detail the FBI's efforts during the 1960s to undermine suspected radicals at the University of California, Berkeley, including Free Speech Movement leader Mario Savio. Describes covert operations authorized by J. Edgar Hoover at the request of then-governor Ronald Reagan. 2012.

[Download from BARD: Subversives the FBI's War on Student Radicals...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB077343

**Orange Sunshine: the Brotherhood of Eternal Love and its Quest to Spread Peace, Love, and Acid to the World by Nicholas Schou**

Read by Steven Carpenter

8 hours, 11 minutes

Details the 1960s California drug-dealing group that established its own church, the Brotherhood of Eternal Love, and believed that LSD was the way to God. Portrays leader John Griggs, a protégé of Timothy Leary, who smuggled drugs from Mexico, Afghanistan, and Colombia into the United States. Strong language. Bestseller. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Orange Sunshine: the Brotherhood of Eternal...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071983

**Total Recall My Unbelievably True Life Story by Arnold Schwarzenegger**

Read by Jack Fox

21 hours, 50 minutes

Austria-born Schwarzenegger describes winning six Mr. Olympia titles, starring in such movies as the Conan and Terminator series and Total Recall, marrying and raising children with Maria Shriver, and being the Republican governor of California. Discusses his return to acting and his marital woes. Strong language. Bestseller. 2012

[Download from BARD: Total Recall My Unbelievably True Life Story](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB075560

**Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915 by Kevin Starr**

Read by Patricia Beaudry

20 hours, 37 minutes

Interprets the evolution of California as a social, psychological, and symbolic enterprise. The author shows how the combination of land and a variety of people interacted to form a distinct culture.

[Download from BARD: Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB013459

### **California a History by Kevin Starr**

Read by Ted Stoddard

13 hours, 9 minutes

Portrait of California from its sixteenth-century colonization by Spain through 2005. USC historian Starr describes the megastate's growth and eventual distinction as "the fifth-ranked economy on the planet." Relates the role of California's entertainment industry and natural beauty in defining the state's image as a utopia. Bestseller. 2005.

[Download from BARD: California a History](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB061161

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR16426](#)

Also available in braille BR016426

### **Coast of Dreams: California on the Edge, 1990-2003 by Kevin Starr**

Read by Jeremy Gage

30 hours, 34 minutes

University of Southern California professor continues his series on California's history, chronicling the trends of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Discusses gangs, urban growth, budget crises, gay culture, environmental disasters, immigration, and the dot-com phenomenon. 2004.

[Download from BARD: Coast of Dreams: California on the Edge...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB062009

### **Golden Dreams California in the Age of Abundance 1950-1963: Americans and the California Dream by Kevin Starr**

Read by Kristin Allison

33 hours, 11 minutes

Professor continues his series on the history of California. This volume focuses on social, psychological, and cultural aspects of post-WWII suburban growth, the transformation of cities including San Diego and Los Angeles, infrastructure initiatives, and the rise of what Starr deems a "culture of dissent" that influenced the 1960s. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Golden Dreams California in the Age of...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069908

## **Golden Gate: The Life and Times of America's Greatest Bridge by Kevin Starr**

Read by Barry Bernson

4 hours, 45 minutes

Author of California: A History (DB/RC 61161) describes the creation and artistry of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge--completed in 1937. Highlights the personalities involved in building one of the Seven Wonders of the Modern World, including engineers, politicians, bankers, and architects. Bestseller. 2010.

[Download from BARD: Golden Gate: the Life and Times of America's...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB071731

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR19130](#)

## **Inventing the Dream: California Through the Progressive Era by Kevin Starr**

Read by Barry Bernson

20 hours, 57 minutes

Focuses on how Californians, particularly Southern Californians, defined their region from 1850 to 1920. A mixture of history and literary criticism, this work is largely about the Southern California of the imagination and its relation to reality. Depicts how fact and myth shaped each other during these turbulent decades. Sequel to Americans and the California dream.

[Download from BARD: Inventing the Dream: California Through the...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB024547

## **Material Dreams Southern California Through the 1920's by Kevin Starr**

Read by Roy Avers

22 hours, 24 minutes

This is the third volume in Starr's history of California. Its focus is how Americans expressed in material form their individual and collective aspirations. The author discusses the design and construction of aqueducts, buildings, gardens, cities, transportation systems, studio sets, and symphony orchestras. Sequel to Inventing the Dream (DB 24547).

[Download from BARD: Material Dreams Southern California Through...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB032353

**West of Eden: an American Place by Jean Stein**

Read by Paul Boehmer, Tara Sands, et. al.

11 hours, 19 minutes

Los Angeles native's oral history follows several famous Tinseltown families and looks at how they changed Hollywood. Families examined include those of studio executive Jack Warner, stars Judy Garland and Jennifer Jones, and Stein's own father, who started the talent-agency-turned-empire Music Corporation of America (MCA). Some strong language. Commercial audiobook. 2016.

[Download from BARD: West of Eden: an American Place](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB083642

**The San Francisco Earthquake by Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan Witts**

Read by Flo Gibson

8 hours, 8 minutes

A minute-by-minute account of the effects and aftermath of one of the most devastating earthquakes in America. The 1906 earthquake is a precursor, some believe, to a more tragic one yet to come.

[Download from BARD: The San Francisco Earthquake](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB014603

**Bear Flag Rising: The Conquest of California 1846 by Dale L. Walker**

Read by Jake Williams

10 hours, 49 minutes

History of California from its colonization by Spain to its annexation by the United States. Relates how the concept of Manifest Destiny applied to the West Coast and how three men--John Charles Frémont, Robert Field Stockton, and Stephen Watts Kearny--led the takeover of the Bear Flag state. 1999.

[Download from BARD: Bear Flag Rising: The Conquest of California 1846](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB050629

## **A Crack in the Edge of the World: America and the Great California Earthquake of 1906 by Simon Winchester**

Read by Steven Carpenter

13 hours, 46 minutes

Geologist and author of Krakatoa (RC 55879) recounts the April 1906 earthquake and subsequent fires that devastated the San Francisco area. Chronicles the natural disaster in historical, political, and social context, detailing Earth's geologic background and the science of tectonic plate theory. 2005.

[Download from BARD: A Crack in the Edge of the World: America...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB062162