

"A wonderful contribution to urban political theory as well as a concrete guide for how to exploit new opportunities for moving urban America forward. . . . Santa Cruz becomes a laboratory for understanding how to take and hold power, and for seeing what local power can and cannot do." —Harvey Molotch, New York University

"The Leftmost City gives the reader lively prose, provocative arguments, and a fresh stream of ideas. . . . All will learn from the extraordinary politics of Santa Cruz, thanks to the lucid and down-to-earth instruction by authors Gendron and Domhoff." —Clarence N. Stone, George Washington University

Almost all U.S. cities are controlled by real estate and development interests, but Santa Cruz, California, is a deviant case. An unusual coalition of socialist-feminists, environmentalists, social-welfare liberals, and neighborhood activists has stopped every growth project proposed by landowners and developers since 1969 and controlled the city council since 1981. Drawing on hundreds of primary documents, as well as original, previously unpublished interviews, *The Leftmost City* utilizes an extended case study of Santa Cruz to critique major theories of urban power: Marxism, public choice theory, and regime theory. Santa Cruz is presented within the context of other progressive attempts to shape city government, and the authors' findings support growth coalition theory, which stresses the conflict between real estate interests and neighborhoods as the fundamental axis of urban politics. The authors apply insights gleaned from Santa Cruz to progressive movements nationwide, offering a template for progressive coalitions to effectively organize to achieve political power.

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POWER AND PROGRESSIVE POLITICS IN SANTA CRUZ

RICHARD GENDRON and G. WILLIAM DOMHOFF

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