

**Reflections on Governance Reform and
Ways of Policy Reasoning**

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Democracy Network**

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“The three-part strategic framework for environmental policy-making hasn’t changed in 40 years: first, define a problem (e.g. global warming) as ‘environmental.’ Second, craft a technical remedy (e.g. cap-and-trade). Third, sell the technical proposal to legislators through a variety of tactics, such as lobbying, third-party allies, research reports, advertising, and public relations.”

The Death of Environmentalism

Points of Departure for Reflections

**Crisis of Confidence for US
Environmental Movement as Reflected by
publication of “Death of
Environmentalism”**

**Crisis of California State Fiscal
Governance**

**“Democratic Autonomy” by Henry S.
Richardson**

Is the critique of the environmental movement really a more fundamental question about how we think about policy reforms generally?

Do we think in terms of technical fixes for policy problems when we might more effectively think in terms of how we make our governance institutions more capable to respond to the challenges of change, uncertainty, and fragmentation?

Policy governance as a “machine” vs as an organic system

California's Fiscal System as an Example

Since 1978 and Proposition 13 each year brings yet more reform proposals to fix the fiscal system

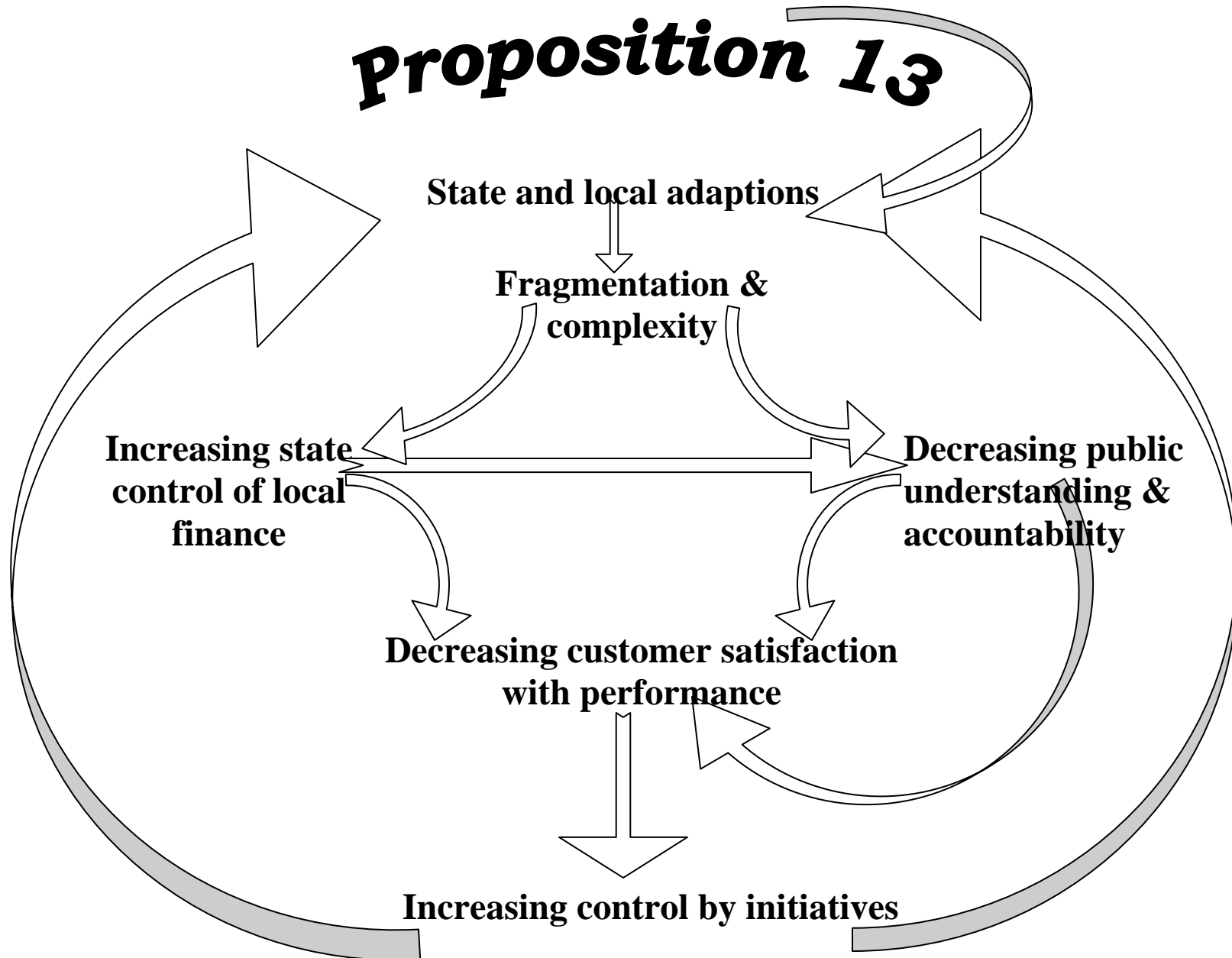
Each new reform results in still more reforms and adaptations

Leading to more fragmentation, less accountability, and declining understanding and support from the public

The result is a fiscal system that few understand and that is constantly in a state of crisis

California's Fiscal System

Proposition 13



“An all-pervasive climate of mistrust exists throughout the state that distorts all issues, creates gridlock, and causes citizens to restrict government freedom of action. In other words, mistrust and the disconnect are far more than background noise. Instead, they combine to affect every issue considered in these dialogues. Until and unless these deeper issues can be addressed-bridging the disconnect and rebuilding trust- it will be difficult, if not impossible, to make far-reaching, sustainable reforms that go beyond a patchwork of temporary fixes.”

*Listening to Californians:
Bridging the Disconnect*

Ways of Public Policy Practical Reasoning:

Instrumental Reasoning: From ends to means

Preference Reasoning such as cost-benefit analysis: From preferences of public

Public Reasoning about Ends: Recognizes that ends are often uncertain and preferences are limited because they don't recognize changes in preferences based upon learning

From: H.S. Richardson, Democratic Autonomy.

Dilemma of Experts with their many proposals for reform based upon instrumental and preference reasoning:

“How do we get the message across?”

is soon followed by:

“Why don’t they do what we want them to do?”

Niels Roling and P.G.H. Engel

Frequent answers:

“We need moral leadership”

“We need visionary leadership”

“We need to educate the public”

**COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE
PRACTICES ARE FORMS OF
PUBLIC PRACTICAL REASONING
ABOUT ENDS**

EXAMPLES:

CONSENSUS BUILDING FORUMS

NEGOTIATED RULE MAKING

NETWORK STRUCTURES

COMMUNITY VISIONING