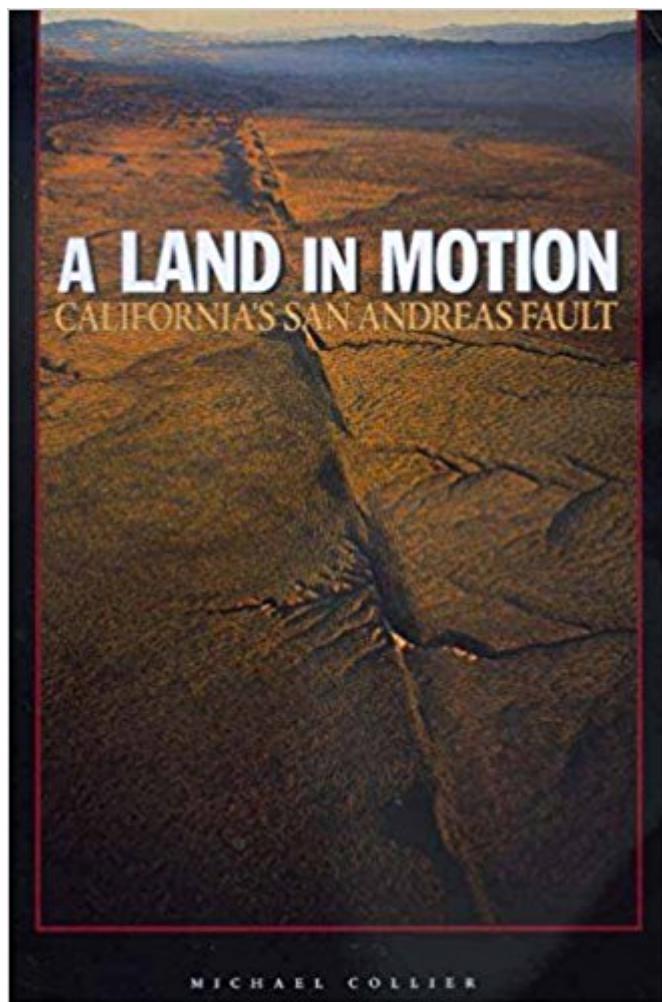


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A Land In Motion: California's San Andreas Fault



Synopsis

The San Andreas Fault is the most famous fault on Earth, running nearly the entire length of western California from just north of the Mexican border to the Mendocino coast. It is a very active tectonic boundary which directly affects the lives of more than twenty million people. The San Andreas Fault has been responsible for shaping much that is beautiful about California, and it also has the capacity to destroy the communities that lie along its course. A Land in Motion provides a geologic tour of the San Andreas Fault in an accessible narrative punctuated with dramatic color illustrations, lively anecdotes, and authoritative information about earthquakes. As he tours the length of the fault, Michael Collier provides a valuable overview of plate tectonics and gives a geologic history of the San Andreas Fault written for non-scientists. He discusses the evolution of seismology as a science and traces the knowledge that scientists have gleaned about earthquakes and plate tectonics from their work on the San Andreas Fault. Collier looks into human history as well, discussing major earthquakes that have hit the San Andreas, including the famous San Francisco earthquake of 1906, the San Fernando quake of 1971, the Loma Prieta quake of 1989, the Landers quake of 1992, and many lesser temblors. Collier illustrates his text with magnificent photographs that highlight some of the most beloved landscapes in California. He provides excellent views of the fault throughout the state—of Crystal Springs reservoir near San Francisco, of Pinnacles National Monument east of Monterey, of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore near San Francisco, and more. Collier concludes his tour of the San Andreas Fault with a provocative discussion on earthquake prediction versus earthquake planning that all Californians—and all who live where earthquakes occur—will want to read.

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Customer Reviews

The San Andreas Fault -- running nearly the entire length of western California, from just north of the Mexican border to the Mendocino coast -- is the most famous fault on earth. An active tectonic boundary, it directly affects the lives of more than twenty million people. Movement along this fault has the capacity to destroy communities along and near its path. The San Andreas Fault has shaped much that is beautiful about California as well -- Mendocino, Point Reyes National Seashore, Tomales Bay, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Pinnacles National Monument, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Joshua Tree National Park, and more. These landscapes are captured in author Michael Collier's stunning aerial photographs. As he tours the length of the fault, Collier provides a valuable overview of plate tectonics and a cogent geologic history of the fault, written for the non-scientist. He discusses the evolution of seismology and traces the knowledge that scientists have gleaned about earthquakes and plate tectonics from their work on the San Andreas. As he concludes, "Each generation adds its experience to a collective human understanding of the processes involved.... But life and, so far, earthquakes are unpredictable". Unpredictable though they may be for now, earthquakes and the San Andreas are made much more understandable by this clearly written and beautifully illustrated book.

"THE SAN ANDREAS is the grinding, growling interface between two great pieces of the earth's crust, each moving its separate way. This is the fault that has cleaved volcanoes, opened seaways, and split mountains. And yet, driving south of Paicines on California Highway 25, I wasn't sure just where it was". So begins Michael Collier's quest to see and understand the San Andreas Fault, the legendary geologic reality that looms large in the lives of all Californians, try as they may to keep the knowledge of its power at a remove from their daily activities. Join him on his journey, and meet the fault and the people who study it. This book will give the reader a new appreciation for science's practical applicability as well as nature's authority.

It's an excellent book as far as it goes. I would have preferred more text but the pictures are excellent.

This and John Dvorak's "Earthquake Storms are both excellent introductions for laypersons to the

geology associated with the San Andreas Fault. Dvorak's book is more comprehensive, Collier's book has some nice graphics on the edge of the pages that illustrate geological processes as you flip through the pages. I highly recommend both.

Having grown up in Southern California and experienced a number of earthquakes, I enjoyed reading some factual and interesting facts about them. The information on plate tectonics in the region adds to my understanding about the processes involved and the illustrations and photos are quite illuminating. Overall, this is a great read.

Easy to understand description of the topography of the San Andreas Fault area. Beautiful pictures and drawings of the various types of faults. Highly recommended!

The San Andreas Fault traverses much of California from the Mexican border to far in the north. Those who have never seen it sometimes picture this tectonic feature as a lurking menace ready to swallow whole towns at a second's whim. This highly accurate book dispels such misimpressions and passes along a good deal of valid scientific information in an interesting, understandable way. The book shows in colored diagrams and easily read narrative how plate tectonics has worked to create this piece of California that is moving inexorably northwest. The writers clearly explain how and why earthquake-producing stresses build up in and along the fault. Brief, but spectacular, histories show what happens when these stresses are released. The book is exceptional in that it discusses rather esoteric scientific concepts in a non-patronizing way. The text is neither dry, nor overly simplistic. Any person with a limited scientific background and a high school education can grasp the concepts being examined. The photographs of such things as offset streams, scarps, trees with interrupted growth, and sag ponds are carefully selected, and beautifully crafted. These follow the text well, avoiding the liability of having to probe through the book to match the picture with the explanation. They will call you to come to California. Two excellent features are discussion segments with geologists who work on solving the fault's mysteries, and a section on parklands in which San Andreas Fault features may be found. I highly recommend this wonderful book to anyone planning a trip to California, anyone who has an interest in the Earth and its processes, and anyone who just likes a darn good read.

Michael Collier has beautifully written and photographed the geological history of the San Andreas Fault. In what COULD have been an extremely dry subject he has captured my imagination with the

most gorgeous photos and his plain-speaking explanations of geology. It's literally a page turner, too, with the flip-page diagram, showing the movement of the tectonic plates. A beautiful book worthy of the coffee table and a wonderful addition to my reference library.

A GREAT illustrated discussion of the San Andreas fault [and allies] by a master storyteller and photographer. [Declaration: Michael is a former student]

Nice book. Fast reading. Excellent pictures. This book really hits home for Californians. Decent explanation of how the earth is moving.

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