

Grunwald, Michael. The new New Deal: the hidden story of change in the Obama era. 1st Simon & Schuster hardcover ed. Simon & Schuster, 2012. 518p index ISBN 9781451642322, \$28.00; ISBN 9781451642346 e-book, \$12.99

"This book aims to tell the story of the stimulus--how it happened, how it's changed the country, how Republicans found their voice in opposing it, and how it's been distorted by the Washington Funhouse." Thus writes veteran journalist Grunwald in his descriptions of the process and outcomes of this new New Deal, an account of, formally, the \$831 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The book is laid out in 19 chapters within three chronological divisions: "The Campaign for Change," "Making Change," and "Change in Action." Bookending those sections are an introduction and an epilogue (followed by 50 pages of notes and index), the bulk of which could easily have been written by the Democratic National Committee for the 2012 presidential campaign, for it is here that the paean to the Obama administration and its initiatives on energy, health care, education, and infrastructure is most pronounced--and exaggerated. However, the entire volume is replete with explicit rhetorical cheerleading that dilutes its value significantly. Journalists Noam Scheiber and Bob Woodward cover similar ground in, respectively, *The Escape Artists: How Obama's Team Fumbled the Recovery* (CH, Oct'12, 50-0990) and *The Price of Politics* (2012) far more evenhandedly. Summing Up: Optional. General readers, undergraduate students, professionals.