

Gerst, Eric D. Vulture culture: dirty deals, unpaid claims, and the coming collapse of the insurance industry. AMACOM, 2008. 241p index ISBN 9780814400265, \$24.00 The book jacket prose of Vulture Culture promises that insurance lawyer Gerst "pulls no punches ... sounds the alarm on ... uncontrolled greed ... stomach-turning deeds ... [in his] no-holds-barred revelations ... in a thrilling if horrifying plot." In this exposé of the American insurance industry, in what resembles a PowerPoint conference presentation, the author explains how this mess developed. He treats various difficulties the industry faces, including fraud in disaster situations such as Hurricane Katrina and a lack of regulation in health care, and offers a game plan for improving this vital sector of the US economy. That he begins with a 2004 insurance investigation headed by then New York attorney Eliot Spitzer will perhaps entice readers to keep turning pages, hoping to learn more about the ex-governor's more famous activities in 2008, as featured on supermarket-checkout-line gossip magazine covers. For a broader, more scholarly work dealing with the insurance industry, see *The Liability Century: Insurance and Tort Law from the Progressive Era to 9/11* (CH, Nov'08, 46-1744). Gerst's book is most suitable for general readers and professionals. Summing Up: Recommended. Public and corporate libraries. -- A. R. Sanderson, University of Chicago