



The Assassination of New York

By Robert Fitch

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The Assassination of New York By Robert Fitch

Robert Fitch argues that, within a generation, New York City has been transformed from the richest city in the world to one of the poorest in North America. The pillars of its economy—Macy's, the *Daily News*, Citibank, Olympia and York, the Trump organization—have cracked or collapsed. Today, the officially poor in New York number nearly 2,000,000 and more than 400,000 residents of the city are without jobs.

In this indictment of those who have wrecked New York, Robert Fitch points to the financial and real-estate elites. Their goals, he argues, have been simple and monolithic: to increase the value of the land they own by extruding low-rent workers and factories, replacing them with high-rent professionals and office buildings. The planning establishment has been able to raise the value of real estate inside the city boundaries over twenty-fold. In doing so, Fitch suggests, it effectively closed New York's deep-water port, eliminated its freight rail system, shuttered its factories and destroyed its capacity for incubating new business.

Now the real-estate values have collapsed. The city is left with 65,000,000 square feet of office space—enough to last, without any new building, to the middle of the twenty-first century. In pursuit of those who are responsible, Fitch arraigns the great and the bad of the city's establishment: Roger Starr, architect of "planned shrinkage" (the withdrawal of fire, police and mass transit services from black and Latino neighborhoods); the Ford Foundation, which proposed converting vast tracts of the South Bronx into a vegetable garden; City Hall fixers like John Zucotti, Herb Sturz and James Felt, who cut the deals between government and real estate by working for both sides; and the Rockefeller family, whose involuntary investment in the Rockefeller Center became a gigantic "tar baby," nearly swallowing up their entire fortune.

Drawing on never-before-published material from the Rockefeller family archives, as well as other archival documents, this book aims to expose those responsible for the demise of New York.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The assassins of New York City, Fitch argues, were a group of powerful elites tied to the FIRE (financial, insurance and real estate) industries who began to influence city planning as far back as the Depression and still hold some power. According to the author, the goal of these people (whose ranks include the Rockefeller family) was to de-industrialize NYC so that their real estate holdings could be put to more profitable uses than manufacturing, namely the construction of large office buildings and luxury housing. Fitch (*Who Rules the Corporation*) provides a raft of statistics to document how the de-industrialization policy, which included the strangulation of the city's port, resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of blue-collar jobs, just as the elites had intended. However, the second phase of their plan--the creation of hundreds of thousands of white-collar jobs--never materialized, resulting in a city with a high unemployment rate and inadequate public services. Fitch details so many ill-conceived, FIRE-inspired master plans for New York City that the material becomes confusing and repetitious. In his zeal to document how the FIRE elites systematically murdered NYC, Fitch's book is more a treatise than a whodunit. Students of urban politics and planning will consider his information crucial, but more casual readers will find their minds wandering. Nonetheless, Fitch gives the average NYC resident plenty to get angry about, but holds out hope for the future by suggesting that a return to economic diversity could lead to a resurrected Gotham.

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From Library Journal

Fitch, who has taught urban studies and consulted for an organizations, is a modern-day muckraker. This is a passionate book, compelling even when one disagrees with details of Fitch's argument and even when he's patently wrong. He examines the destruction of New York's industrial base in favor of an intensely subsidized program of office construction; he offers a powerful, even ranting, indictment of the city's planning establishment. His book complements works like Jack Newfield and Paul DuBrühl's *The Abuse of Power* (1977) and is, in part, a critique of Robert Caro's *The Power Broker* (Vintage, 1975). Fitch sometimes lacks the sense of historical context that would put his archival research in perspective. Yet his book is an important attack on the prevailing notion that New York must make itself into a "postindustrial" city. One would like to see a copy in every New York library and in collections with a focus on urban planning, industrial policy, and municipal government.

- *Gregory Gilmartin, New York*

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Review

"Bob Fitch has turned over every document in the archives to find out who was in the firing squad that murdered New York: the unelected power brokers in the boardrooms, the planners from private foundations, and the political puppets who meekly pulled the trigger on blue-collar industries when they were given the order to shoot ... Nothing that has been written about New York ... comes close."—Jim Dwyer, *New York Newsday*

Users Review

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Ruth Beasley:

What do you in relation to book? It is not important along with you? Or just adding material when you require something to explain what yours problem? How about your time? Or are you busy particular person? If you don't have spare time to try and do others business, it is give you a sense of feeling bored faster. And you have time? What did you do? All people has many questions above. They need to answer that question due to the fact just their can do which. It said that about publication. Book is familiar in each person. Yes, it is correct. Because start from on pre-school until university need this The Assassination of New York to read.

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