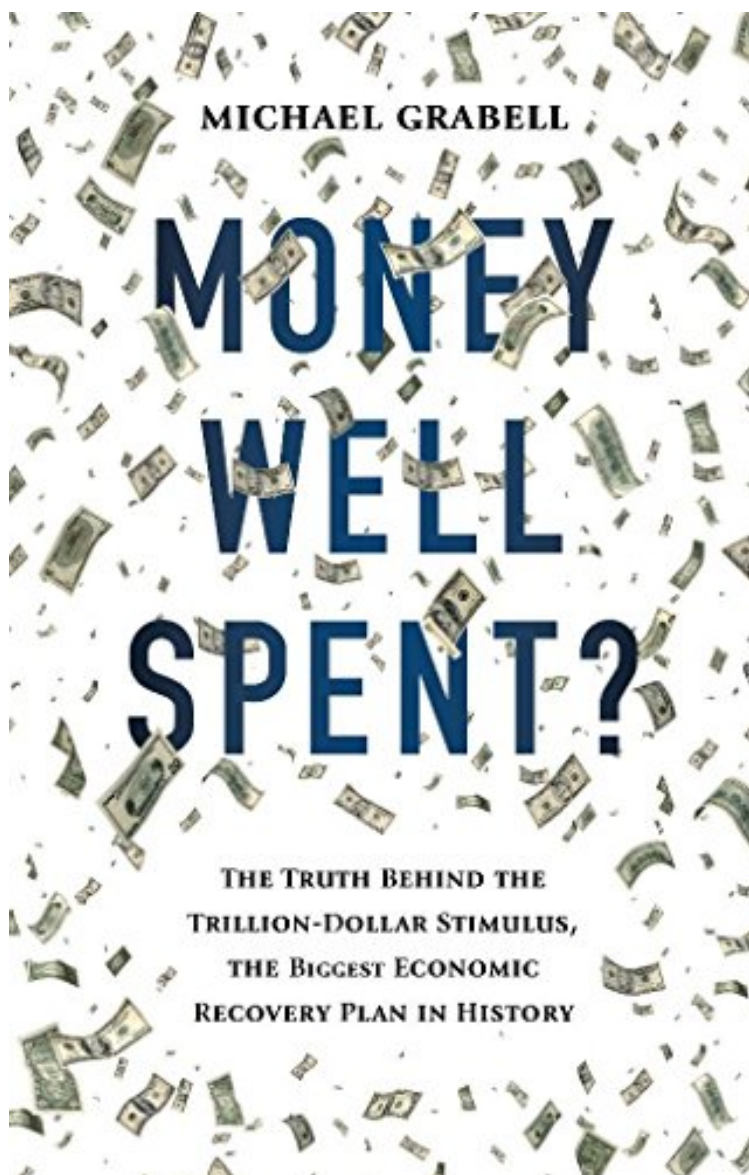


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## **Money Well Spent?: The Truth Behind the Trillion-Dollar Stimulus, the Biggest Economic Recovery Plan in History**

*Michael Grabell*

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**Michael Grabell : Money Well Spent?: The Truth Behind the Trillion-Dollar Stimulus, the Biggest Economic Recovery Plan in History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Money Well Spent?: The Truth Behind the Trillion-Dollar Stimulus, the Biggest Economic Recovery Plan in History:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Can you get outside of your chosen echo chamber? By Phred

At the level of election politics Democrats and Republicans have been so effective at creating protected election boundaries that very few candidates from the left or right must listen to the other side or even recognize the middle ground on the way to elected office. Between Internet blogs, cable television and what was called "narrowcasting" people can choose new sources based on which source is most likely to tell the listener that the listener is right about everything. The traditional purpose of the Free Press is to keep the public informed. In more recent generations the obvious purpose has been to keep the ownership of the press in income. The advent of news blogs and news broadcasts that deliberately disdain claims of unbiased reporting; ensure that the readership or listener-ship or viewership, need never be confronted with information that challenges a person's preexisting prejudices. Money Well Spent? is a legitimate effort by author Michael Grabbell to report on and analyze the trillion dollar stimulus plan and let the trillion chips fall where they may. Along the way he does his best to give names, faces, and places a sympathetic hearing. Grabbell finds the facts that make lie of some of the more infamous misinformation generated on the political right and is just as ready to declare scandal where White House investments (Solyndra) were pursued beyond reasonable hope for a positive outcome. In this respect Grabbell adheres to the independent reputation of ProPublica, where he is employed as a reporter. If nothing else this book is a case in point that investigative journalism need not be biased. In writing that last sentence, I am obligated to mention my sense that the author tends to work harder when trying to make a case against the Obama administration and that it is more natural for the author to find a case against the political right. That is, I suspect Grabbell leans to the left. Alternately an objective analysis of the results of the stimulus package should lean to the left. The number of jobs created by the stimulus package was so far from the original White House claims that the White House did have to change its method of reporting. Even so Grabbell makes it clear that substantial numbers of people became employed and/or stayed employed because the federal government stepped in to keep the economy moving after an earlier White House failed to act to avoid that collapse. The technique of following individuals and the communities they lived in lends legitimate drama and readability to this book. This is an appropriate journalistic technique, It is not new with Grabbell and is also common in political speeches. I would've preferred more tabular analysis that would have allowed for more objective accounting of stimulus wins and losses. This is one of those books you should have read before the election. It is a book you should read if you are going to document your opinions on government engagement in the marketplace. All I ask is if you do choose to read Money Well Spent?; try to turn off the echo chamber that is political opinion and reporting in the age of narrowcast journalism.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Balanced, important read! Well done! By Peter

Journalist Grabbell achieves a truly balanced point of view, which is commendable amid today's sensational news coverage on this especially polarizing topic, and in these especially polarizing times. This kind of Fifth Estate coverage on the Recovery Act is rare, and is delivered in a great and digestible narrative---quite a feat on such a complex issue. In addition to following the big picture, the interwoven personal stories of real people, communities, and companies impacted by the great recession were effective in humanizing the plight---especially needed and often lost in a conversation about a trillion dollars and sweeping policy. The chapter on the Green Economy was especially interesting to me, as it's a topic I follow with great interest. Throughout the book, Grabbell touches on boondoggle fits and starts projects, arriving at a rhetorical question about whether or not America is still capable of a 'Moonshot' type execution. Honest, frustrating, and---in a way---inspiring. I must say it again: well done!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Stimulus By Catherine

PI ordered the book based on an NPR interview with the author. Found it to be thorough in helping me understand the complexities of government decisions.

The 2012 presidential campaign will, above all else, be a referendum on the Obama administration's handling of the financial crisis, recalling the period when Obama's "audacity of hope" met the austerity of reality. Central to this is the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009"—the largest economic recovery plan in American history. Senator Mitch McConnell gave a taste of the enormity of the money committed: if you had spent 1 million a day since Jesus was born, it still would not add up to the price tag of the stimulus package. A nearly entirely partisan piece of legislation— Democrats voted for it, Republicans against— the story of how the bill was passed and, more importantly, how the money was spent and to what effect, is known barely at all. Stepping outside the political fray, ProPublica's Michael Grabbell offers a perceptive, balanced, and dramatic story of what happened to the tax payers' money, pursuing the big question through behind-the-scenes interviews and on-the-ground reporting in more than a dozen states across the country.