



Toward a New Cold War: Essays on the Current Crisis & How We Got There

Noam Chomsky , John Pilger (Foreword)

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A sobering assessment of American foreign policy from the end of the Vietnam era to Ronald Reagan.

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Date : Published September 1st 2003 by New Press (first published 1982)

ISBN : 9781565848597

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Format : Paperback 496 pages

Genre : History, Politics, Nonfiction

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Mat says

Best book I have read by Chomsky so far.

I read this when I was holed up in a hospital in Osaka for a month with a broken jaw. Great read. Very well written and there was plenty of information in here which I did not know. Not only is Chomsky a genius linguist (the inventor of generative grammar theory so to speak), but he is also an amazing scholar. I cannot even begin to imagine how many books, newspapers and magazines this guy must read. Where does he find the time!?!?!?!?

I preferred this over Manufacturing Consent because there were some chapters in Manufacturing Consent which did not interest me like the chapter on the assassination attempt on the Pope.

Neel Kuila says

Like always, an in-depth account of numerous short sighted actions in American foreign policy. The lessons of the past are apparently going over US officials heads, as this book is shockingly relevant 20+ years later.

Chomsky pulls apart traditional arguments for intervention and further illustrates how well constructed the media echo chamber functions as a state propaganda system. Publicized good intentions of arming the "right" side can be the sheep's clothing for business interests. The media also has its business interests at heart, and promotes editors who are subservient to the causes of the day and skilled at manufacturing consent. There's a lack of even questioning our right to intervene, then and now. It's a cycle of we made our mess, let's clean it up. You know, classic Chomsky stuff.

Practically speaking: this book is good for someone with a good base of foreign affairs. Not for a beginner. For people knowledgeable about dissent, this is nothing new, just a different skin on the same game as today.

Michael Guyer says

Chomsky is a treasure trove of information. If there is one takeaway from this collection of essays (and most of his work), it is the following: don't trust US media, particularly when it comes to US foreign policy. The fact that the mainstream media in the US is not officially state-run provides the illusion of it being independent, but time and time again Chomsky demonstrates how it ceaselessly tows the line for US defense interests. The writing is often dry and it took me quite a while to get through this collection; I'd consider giving it a 3.5/5 if possible but for the sheer amount of information alone I've given it 4/5. I do not agree with Chomsky's analysis on all political matters, but when it comes to this particular area i.e. exposing the complicity of the mainstream media in US atrocities committed abroad, Chomsky is at his finest.

Ronald Wise says

After hearing Chomsky on my NPR station, KUOW, one afternoon, I went to a used bookstore and bought everything they had by him. This was one of the books. When reading Noam many things seem to make more sense until you start thinking about how his analyses compare with those of the pundits in the mainstream media. You can either think he's crazy, or you can believe that the government and media are working together to keep the public discourse from the real issues. I tend to believe Noam, but then I have fleeting moments where I wonder about my own sanity too. This book focuses a great deal on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which doesn't seem to have changed much since 1982. The discussions of other topics in the book have since become obsolete, but are still full of historical insight.
