

# **The New Deal**

## **A Mistake We're Still Living With**

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### **I. Introduction**

Two-part argument: The New Deal did not accomplish what it set out to do; and its negative consequences were enduring.

### **II. The New Deal**

- A. Historical Background: the Great Depression
- B. New Deal Programs
  1. First New Deal, 1933
  2. Second New Deal, 1935
  3. The “End of Reform”
- C. Historiography
  1. Mainstream: Leuchtenberg, Kennedy, Wall
  2. Critical: Higgs, Powell, Shlaes
  3. Was it a “big deal”?

### **III. How It Was a Mistake**

- A. Little evidence that programs accomplished the aim of economic recovery
- B. Programs extended the reach and footprint of federal government

### **IV. How Its Impact Endured**

- A. Continued expansion of government: World War II, Great Society
- B. Advance of “imperial presidency”: executive orders, court-packing
- C. Specific programs: e.g., Social Security

### **V. Conclusion**

The way we understand history influences our view of present events. Revising the predominantly positive view of the New Deal tempers the inclination to government intervention in periods of economic crisis.