Why Niebuhr Now? John Patrick Diggins 2011-06-15 Baruch Obama has called him “one of my favorite philosophers.” John McCain wrote that he is “a paragon of clarity about the costs of a good war.” Andrew Sullivan has said, “We need Niebuhr now more than ever.” For a theologian who died in 1971, Reinhold Niebuhr is maintaining a remarkable high profile in the twenty-first century. In Why Niebuhr Now? acclaimed historian John Patrick Diggins tackles the complicated question of why, at a time of great uncertainty about America’s proper role in the world, leading politicians and thinkers are turning to Niebuhr for answers. Diggins begins by clearly and carefully working through Niebuhr’s theology, which focuses less on God’s presence than his absence—and the ways that absence abets the all-too-human sin of pride. He then shows how that theology informed Niebuhr’s worldview, leading him to be at the same time a strong opponent of fascism and communism and a leading advocate for humility and caution in foreign policy. Turning to the present, Diggins highlights what he argues is a misuse of Niebuhr’s legacy on both the right and the left: while conservatives distort Niebuhr’s arguments to support their call for an endless war on terror in the name of stopping evil, many liberal interventionists conveniently ignore Niebuhr’s fundamental doubts about power. Ultimately, Niebuhr’s greatest lesson is that, while it is our duty to struggle for good, we must at the same time be wary of hubris, remembering the limits of our understanding. The final work from a distinguished writer who spent his entire career reflecting on America’s history and promise, Why Niebuhr Now? is a compact and perceptive book that will be the starting point for all future discussions of Niebuhr.

Reinhold Niebuhr and the Question of Global Democracy—David Ray Griffin 2020-12-20

Christian Realism and Political Problems, by Reinhold Niebuhr—Reinhold Niebuhr 1953

The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness—Reinhold Niebuhr 2011-07-15 The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness, first published in 1944, is considered one of the most profound and relevant works by the influential theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, and certainly the fullest statement of his political philosophy. Written and first read during the prolonged, tragic world war between totalitarian and democratic forces, Niebuhr’s book took up the timely question of how democracy as a political system could best be defended. Most proponents of democracy, Niebuhr claimed, were “children of light,” who had optimistic but naive ideas about how society could be rid of evil and prevented by enlightened reason. They needed, he believed, to absorb some of the wisdom and strength of the “children of darkness,” whose ruthless cynicism and corrupt, anti-democratic politics should otherwise be repudiated. Argued for a prudent, liberal understanding of human society that took the measure of every group’s self-interest and was chastened by a realistic understanding of the limits of power. It is in the foreword to this book that he wrote, “Man’s capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man’s inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.” This edition includes a new introduction by the theologian and Niebuhr scholar Gary Dorrien in which he elucidates the work’s significance and places it firmly into the arc of Niebuhr’s career.

Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought—Charles W. Kegley 2009-12-01 This collection of essays, by world scholars of different faiths and fields of study, eloquently documents the importance and continuing influence of Niebuhr’s extensive body of work. Following an “intellectual autobiography” by Niebuhr are twenty essays forming a candid and vigorous discussion spanning the range of Niebuhr’s thought. Since Niebuhr first came to the world’s attention as a critic of social conditions, the book begins with an examination of his social thought, especially as a Christian ethicist, proceeding from this to the political sphere. Further essays offer critical exposition, criticism, and questions on such topics as Niebuhr’s philosophy of history, his role in American political thought and life, his theology, and the historical roots of his thought. For this new edition, there are updated essays by John Bennett, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and Kenneth Thompson, plus new interpretations by Ronald Stone and Richard Fox. Other contributors include Paul Tillich, Emil Brunner, and Abraham I. Heschel. A bibliography of Niebuhr’s work has been brought up to date by D. B. Robertson.

The nature and destiny of man—Reinhold Niebuhr 1945

Reinhold Niebuhr and John Dewey—Daniel F. Rico 1993-01-01 Reinhold Niebuhr and John Dewey frequently have been identified as the most influential American philosophers of their respective times. Although their direct contact in print and in political action was minimal, their substantive conflict over such issues as religion, nationalism, and the political and social order of American democracy both reflected and shaped much of America’s inner dialogue from 1932 to mid-century and beyond. In this intriguing book, Daniel Rico makes a strong case that, although the clash between Niebuhr and Dewey was real and important, in a wider context the two shared more insights than either could have possibly recognized. In Part Two, Rico interprets Dewey’s thought as a Hegelian critique of the political order in America, as revealed by the progressive movement, and as an effort to raise both philosophical and practical questions about the relation of democracy to the forces of power and wealth. In Part Three, Rico interprets Niebuhr’s thought as a Hegelian critique of the political order as revealed by American capitalism and as an effort to raise both philosophical and practical questions about the relation of democracy to the forces of power and wealth. In Part Three, Rico interprets Niebuhr’s thought as a Hegelian critique of the political order as revealed by American capitalism and as an effort to raise both philosophical and practical questions about the relation of democracy to the forces of power and wealth.

Reinhold Niebuhr—Rabin W. Levin 2007 An introduction and significance of one of the twentieth century’s most influential theologians, Reinhold Niebuhr.

Moral Man and Immoral Society—Reinhold Niebuhr 2005-03-01 Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) was one of America’s foremost twentieth-century religious thinkers and social critics. As pastor of Bethel Evangelical Church in Detroit, he became deeply interested in social problems. He was Professor of Applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary, remaining there until his retirement. Ultimately, he abandoned his liberal Protestant hopes for the church’s moral role of society and became a Socialist activist. Moral Man and Immoral Society is Niebuhr’s eloquent argument for the church’s involvement in social reforms as well as a platform for his beliefs that men are sinners, that society is ruled by self-interest, and that history is characterized by irony, not progress.

Reinhold Niebuhr and International Relations Theory—Guilherme Marques Pedro 2017-07-28 This is the first book in international relations theory entirely devoted to the political thought of Reinhold Niebuhr. Focusing on the existentialist theology which lay at the base of Reinhold Niebuhr’s theory of international politics, it highlights the ways in which Niebuhr’s thought was not only profoundly theological, but also constituted a powerful existentialist reconfiguration of the Realist tradition going back to Saint Augustine. Guilherme Marques Pedro offers an innovative account of Reinhold Niebuhr’s eclectic thought, branching out into politics, ethics, history, society and religion and laying out a conceptual framework through which his work, as much as the realist tradition of international political thought as a whole, can be read. The book calls for the need to revisit classic thinkers within IR theory with an eye to their interdisciplinary background and as a way to remind ourselves of the issues that were at stake within the field as it was growing in autonomy and diversity – issues which remain regardless of its disciplinary development, at the core of IR’s concerns. This book offers an important contribution to lift scholarship, revealing the great historical wealth, intellectual originality but also the limitations and paradigms of one of the greatest American political thinkers of the twentieth century.

Reinhold Niebuhr—Reinhold Niebuhr Reinhold Niebuhr, the most significant North American theologian since the eighteenth century, has decisively influenced the shape of Christian thought and action in the United States for much of the twentieth century. Niebuhr addressed social and political issues from the perspective of “Christian Realism.” This book was his blend of liberalism, shaped social analysis, and elements within the Augustinian tradition. His legacy continues to be influenced through his writings and the work of many of his distinguished students.

 Liberating Paul—Neil Elliot 2005-02-01 For centuries the apostle Paul has been invoked to justify oppression—whether on behalf of slavery, to enforce unquestioned obedience to the state, to silence women, or to legitimate the domination of women. This book shows how the New Testament suggests an alternative path that can liberate humanity from the toxic consequences of the way Paul has usually been read, or rather misread, in the churches. In the first half of the book, Elliot examines the many texts historically interpreted to support oppression or maintain the status quo. He shows how often Paul’s authentic message has been interpreted in the light of later pseudo-Pauline writings. In Part Two, Elliot applies a “political key” to the interpretation of Paul. Through subsequent centuries have turned the cross into a symbol of Christian party. Elliot forcefully reminds us that in Paul’s time this was the Roman mode of executing rebellious slaves, a fact that has profound political implications.

The Oxford Handbook of Reinhold Niebuhr—Robin Levin 2021-03-03 This authoritative Handbook features 38 chapters placing Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) in his historical context to offer readers an appreciation of his insights and how he was received by his contemporaries.

Man’s Nature and His Communities—Reinhold Niebuhr 2012-04-01 This book centers on the major theme of Reinhold Niebuhr's lifework, the nature of humanity and the political and social life. Idealistic and realistic social philosophies are reappraised and tribalism is analyzed as a pervasive quality of humankind's societies. A thinker who has always advanced by criticizing his own assumptions, Dr. Niebuhr continued to break new ground and to reconsider some of his earlier judgments. In this book, Dr. Niebuhr reviews the doctrines of the political order advanced by religious and secular interests; he traces the long history of the paradox of man's obvious universal humanity and the tribal loyalties which are the roots of human inhumanity; and he deals with the complex relation between ambition and creativity. Adding to and modifying his remarkable contribution to contemporary thought, Dr. Niebuhr has written a book that is of fundamental importance.

Democratic Humility—Christopher Beem 2015-06-09 Reinhold Niebuhr helps us to understand why our politics is broken and research on the brain confirms his analysis: we are all vain and self-righteous, and far too quick to reject anyone who thinks otherwise. To restore a democracy that works, we need to understand ourselves better and develop the humility such knowledge should engender.