



Reviving the Left: The Need to Restore Liberal Values in America

Dwight Furrow

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In this fresh assessment of the liberal perspective on politics, philosopher Dwight Furrow explains how liberalism lost its moral credentials in the face of challenges from conservatives. He articulates a new way of understanding the moral foundations of liberalism that will restore its political fortunes along with America's shattered moral authority. A work of popular philosophy, *Reviving the Left* is written in a serious but lively, engaging, and often polemical style.

Furrow begins by noting that political ideologies have the power to motivate people because they embody conceptions of how to live. Conservatives have understood this more clearly than liberals, who for too long have relied on bureaucratic solutions and interest-group politics, which have lacked moral credibility and passion. Now more than ever, says Furrow, progressive politics, if it is to move people hungry for change, needs a new vision that will give birth to a more substantial liberal moral identity.

Furrow takes conservatism to task for promoting what he labels "a culture of cynical, violent narcissism." But rather than praising the liberalism of the past, he argues that liberals must radically revise their conception of moral value in order to reverse the damage left behind by many years of conservative rule. *Reviving the Left* argues that liberals must build a culture of caring from the ground up by giving social institutions incentives to encourage a more prominent role in public life for empathy, compassion, and responsibility. Only in such a culture will liberal political initiatives have a chance to succeed in the long run.

Unlike many books on reviving liberalism, which emphasize economics, policy debates, or political strategies, Furrow's *Reviving the Left* uniquely focuses on moral values and their philosophical underpinnings. Furrow's extensive use of references to popular culture, especially well-known films, and also topics of current political discourse makes for an exciting, contemporary rethinking of the liberal perspective with widespread appeal.

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