

Essential Reading

1. **America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy** by Francis Fukuyama. Yale University Press, March 2006.

Francis Fukuyama here gives the most lucid and knowledgeable account of the neoconservative vision of America's place and role in world affairs, and where it has overreached disastrously. He argues effectively for an American foreign policy more aware of the limits of American power, less dependent on the military, and more respectful of the interests and opinions of other countries and emerging international norms and institutions. *By Nathan Glazer, Professor of Sociology and Education Emeritus, Harvard University.*

2. **American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century** by Kevin Phillips. Viking, March 2006.

The title of Phillips's latest book may overstate his case (in the text, he prefers the term "theocratic direction"), but his analysis likely will strike chords among those troubled by our current political moment. Phillips (*American Dynasty*) expounds upon historical parallels for each of his three subjects. In his section on "Oil and American Supremacy," for example, he points to Britain's post-WWI involvement in the Middle East as an analogy to Iraq, and in his section on radicalized religion, he warns of "the pitfalls of imperial Christian overreach from Rome to Britain." The five major measures of U.S. debt—from national to household—keep setting records, he observes in his section on "Borrowed Prosperity," and the real estate boom spurred by the Federal Reserve, he argues, cannot continue. The lesson of the past, he warns, is that intractable national issues "generate weak and compromising politicians or zealous bumbler." *Edited from Publishers Weekly.*

3. **The Battle for God** by Karen Armstrong. Ballantine Books, February 2001.

"About 40 years ago popular opinion assumed that religion would become a weaker force and people would certainly become less zealous as the world became more modern and morals more relaxed. But the opposite has proven true, according to theologian and author Karen Armstrong (*A History of God*), who documents how fundamentalism has taken root and grown in many of the world's major religions, such as Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Even Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism have developed fundamentalist factions. Reacting to a technologically driven world with liberal Western values, fundamentalists have not only increased in numbers, they have become more desperate, claims Armstrong, who points to the Oklahoma City bombing, violent anti-abortion crusades, and the assassination of President Yitzak Rabin as evidence of dangerous extremes.

"Yet she also acknowledges the irony of how fundamentalism and Western materialism seem to urge each other on to greater excesses. To 'prevent an escalation of the conflict, we must try and understand the pain and perception of the other side,' she pleads. With her gift for clear, engaging writing and her integrity as a thorough researcher, Armstrong delivers a powerful discussion of a globally heated issue. Part history lesson, part wake-up call, and mostly a plea for healing, Armstrong's writing continues to offer a religious mirror and a cultural vision." *Gail Hudson, for the publisher.*

4. **The Diminishing Divide: Religion's Changing Role in American Politics** by Andrew Kohut, John C. Green, Skott Keeter, and Robert C. Toth. Brookings, April 2000.

“At a time when America needs international support more than ever, Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes explain why the United States is distinct and sometimes disliked. Rather than rely on conjecture, they use international surveys to answer these critical questions. Anyone worried about America's place in the world will find new evidence and unconventional answers in this well-written book.” *By Joseph S. Nye, Jr., author of Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics.*

5. **Divided by God: America's Church-State Problem--and What We Should Do About It** by Noah Feldman. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, July 2005.

Having examined Islam and democracy in his first book, *After Jihad*, Feldman, a law professor at N.Y.U., turns his attention to America's own fraught religious-secular divide. Much of the book consists of an agile account of the evolution of church-state relations, from the creation of the First Amendment to the 2003 Supreme Court ruling against a public display of the Ten Commandments. Feldman identifies two polarized camps today: “values evangelicals,” who uphold religious values as integral to political decisions, and “legal secularists,” whose aim is to keep religion and government separate. He downplays the heterogeneity within these groups, perhaps in order to bolster his solution for reconciliation: sanctioning “public manifestations of religion,” while withholding government funding from religious institutions. *From The New Yorker.*

6. **Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik** by Douglas Johnston (Editor). Oxford University Press, April 2003.

The world-class authors writing in this volume suggest how the peacemaking tenets of five major world religions can be strategically applied in ongoing conflicts in which those religions are involved. Finally, the commonalities and differences between these religions are examined with an eye toward further applications in peacemaking and conflict resolution. *From publisher.*

7. **Finding Global Balance: Common Grounds Between the Worlds of Development And Faith** by Katherine Marshall, Lucy Keough. World Bank Publications. June 2005.

This book relates the latest chapter in the story of a remarkable partnership between the worlds of faith and development, launched in 1998 by Jim Wolfensohn and then Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, when they convened a meeting of faith and development leaders in Lambeth Palace.

The intervening years have seen the growth and enhancement of a network of world faith and development leaders who share a common passion to eradicate global poverty, extend social justice and ensure global security for all of the world's people.

The uniqueness of this partnership is the fresh perspective it offers on critical development issues and the opportunity for faith leaders and development leaders to seek new avenues for collaboration. This book tells the story of this partnership, within the context of the Dublin meeting. *Publisher's description.*

8. **God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World** by Walter Russell Mead. Knopf, 2007. October 2007.

Mead recounts what is, in effect, the story of a centuries-long war between the English-speaking peoples and their enemies. Since Oliver Cromwell's day, the English-speakers have seen their enemies as haters of liberty and God who care nothing for morality, who will do anything to win. Those enemies, from Catholic Spain and Louis XIV to the Nazis, communists, and Al-Qaeda, held similar beliefs about their British and American rivals, but we see that though the Anglo-Americans have lost small wars here and there, they have won the major conflicts. So far.

The stakes today are higher than ever; technological progress makes new and terrible weapons easier for rogue states and terror groups to develop and deploy. Mead sees the current conflicts in the Middle East as the latest challenge to the liberal, capitalist, and democratic world system that the Anglo-Americans are trying to build. What we need now, he says, is a diplomacy of civilizations based on a deeper understanding of the recurring conflicts between the liberal world system and its foes. In practice, this means that Americans generally, and especially the increasingly influential evangelical community, must develop a better sense of America's place in the world. *From publisher.*

Mead is Senior Fellow in U.S. Foreign Policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

9. **God's Continent: Christianity, Islam, and Europe's Religious Crisis** by Philip Jenkins. Oxford University Press, May 2007.

Common knowledge has it that European Christianity is sick unto death, and falling church attendance, baptisms, and church weddings bolster that notion. Yet in Europe independent congregations are mushrooming, a sizable proportion of new immigrants are Christian, and the trend of population growth indicates that Christianity will remain the majority faith in Europe for the foreseeable future.

Jenkins also inspects Islam in Europe [and believes] that Western European political elites have been monumentally insensitive to the complaints of ordinary Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He thoroughly discusses the moderate, peaceable Islam most Muslims practice and argues that European Muslims well may settle into amicable coexistence as their incomes and comforts rise. This immensely informative, quintessentially balanced, utterly lucid volume completes Jenkins' Future of Christianity trilogy magnificently. *From Booklist, starred review.*

10. **God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It** by Jim Wallis. HarperSanFrancisco, 2005. Reprint edition September 2006.

New York Times bestseller God's Politics struck a chord with Americans disenchanted with how the Right had co-opted all talk about integrating religious values into our politics, and with the Left, who were mute on the subject. Jim Wallis argues that America's separation of church and state does not require banishing moral and religious values from the public square. *God's Politics* offers a vision for how to convert spiritual values into real social change and has started a grassroots movement to hold our political leaders accountable by incorporating our deepest convictions about war, poverty, racism, abortion, capital punishment, and other moral issues into our nation's public life. Who can change the political wind? Only we can. *From publisher.*

11. **Liberty and Power: A Dialogue on Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy in an Unjust World** (Pew Forum Dialogues on Religion & Public Life) by J. Bryan Hehir (editor), Michael Waltzer, Louise Richardson, Shibley Telhami, Charles Krauthammer and James Lindsay. Brookings, September 2004

Hehir is our opening keynote speaker. His edited book addresses what role religion should play in shaping and implementing U.S. foreign policy.

How a nation “commits itself to freedom” has long been at the heart of debates about foreign aid, economic sanctions, and military intervention. Moral and faith traditions have much to say about what is required to achieve this end. And after September 11, no one can doubt the importance of religious beliefs in influencing relations among peoples and nations.

The contributors (Michael Walzer, Louise Richardson, Shibley Telhami, Charles Krauthammer, James Lindsay) to this volume come at the issue from very different perspectives and offer exceptional and unexpected insights on a question now at the forefront of American foreign policy.

12. **Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid** by Jimmy Carter. Simon & Schuster, November 2006.

Jimmy Carter’s latest book derives from his personal experiences in both arenas: as chief executive of the nation and as founder of the Carter Foundation, his post-presidency organization dedicated to world peace. In essence, the reader is presented with a history of Arab-Israeli discord and the search for a successful resolution.

He cites the lack of permanent peace in the Middle East as a “persistent threat to global peace” and posits that the stumbling blocks to a lasting cessation of armed conflict are to be found within two contexts: Israel’s unwillingness to comply with international law and honor its previous peace commitments, and Arab nations’ refusal to openly acknowledge Israel’s right to live undisturbed. *Brad Hooper. From Booklist.*

13. **Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East: 1776 to the Present**, by Michael B. Oren. Norton, January 2007.

This engrossing, informative, and frequently surprising survey of U.S. involvement in the Middle East over the past 230 years is particularly timely. Oren, a frequent contributor to the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *New Republic*, illustrates that American interests have frequently combined elements of romanticism, religious fervency, and hardheaded power politics. In the early nineteenth century, President Jefferson, perhaps acting against his own instincts to remain aloof from the affairs of the Old World, sent the infant American navy to confront the Barbary pirates off the coast of North Africa. Like many of our future endeavors in the region, the results were a mixture of success, failure, and farce. Other episodes covered here that are particularly interesting include previously obscure American efforts to locate the source of the Nile and the efforts by American missionaries to convert vast numbers of Ottoman subjects. But Oren is at his best when describing American involvement in the twentieth century as the U.S. replaced Britain as the dominant “imperial” power in the area. *Jay Freeman in Booklist.*

14. **The Preacher and the Presidents**, by Nancy Gibbs and Michael Duffy. Center Street, August 2007.

No one man or woman has ever been in a position to see the presidents, and the presidency, so intimately, over so many years. They called him in for photo opportunities. They called for comfort. They asked about death and salvation; about sin and forgiveness. At a time when the nation is increasingly split over the place of religion in public life, *The Preacher and the Presidents* reveals how the world’s most powerful men and world’s most famous evangelist, Billy Graham, knit faith and politics together.

15. **Secularism Confronts Islam**, by Olivier Roy. Columbia University Press, June 2007.

The denunciation of fundamentalism in France, embodied in the law against the veil and the deportation of imams, has shifted into a systematic attack on all Muslims and Islam. This hostility is

rooted in the belief that Islam cannot be integrated into French--and, consequently, secular and liberal--society. However, as Olivier Roy makes clear in this book, Muslim intellectuals have made it possible for Muslims to live concretely in a secularized world while maintaining the identity of a "true believer." They have formulated a language that recognizes two spaces: that of religion and that of secular society.

Western society is unable to recognize this process, Roy argues, because of a cultural bias that assumes religious practice is embedded within a specific, traditional culture that must be either erased entirely or forced to coexist in a neutral, multicultural space. Instead, Roy shows that new forms of religiosity, such as Islamic fundamentalism and Christian evangelicalism, have come to thrive in post-traditional, secular contexts precisely because they remain detached from any cultural background.

In recognizing this, Roy recasts the debate concerning Islam and democracy. Analyzing the French case in particular, in which the tension between Islam and the conception of Western secularism is exacerbated, Roy makes important distinctions between Arab and non-Arab Muslims, hegemony and tolerance, and the role of the *umma* and the *sharia* in Muslim religious life. He pits Muslim religious revivalism against similar movements in the West, such as evangelical Protestantism and Jehovah's Witnesses, and refutes the myth of a single "Muslim community" by detailing different groups and their inability to overcome their differences. *From publisher.*

Roy, a previous Camden Conference speaker, is a professor at l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales in Paris.

16. **The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West**, by Mark Lilla. Knopf, 2007.

"Mark Lilla is a master of the history of ideas. *The Stillborn God* . . . is a study of 'political theology,' the central question in the relation of religion to politics, as to which has the highest authority in moral discourse. The Enlightenment and the thinkers that followed had posited a 'great separation,' between the two, but that liberal view has collapsed, and we face the question anew as to the idea of God in the world today. Lilla follows this question from Kant to Hegel, to Karl Barth in Christianity and Franz Rosenzweig in Judaism. It is a tale told with lucidity and spareness, and challenges all serious thought in the modern world. *The Stillborn God* will be a landmark in political philosophy." – *Daniel Bell, Henry Ford Professor of Social Sciences Emeritus, Harvard University.*

Mark Lilla is Professor of Humanities and Religion at Columbia University.

17. **Strong Religion: The Rise of Fundamentalisms around the World (The Fundamentalism Project)** by Gabriel A. Almond, R. Scott Appleby, and Emmanuel Sivan. Chicago University Press, October 2003.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks against the United States, religious fundamentalism has dominated public debate as never before. Policymakers, educators, and the general public all want to know: Why do fundamentalist movements turn violent? Are fundamentalisms a global threat to human rights, security, and democratic forms of government? What is the future of fundamentalism?

To answer questions like these, *Strong Religion* draws on the results of the Fundamentalism Project, a decade-long interdisciplinary study of anti-modernist, anti-secular militant religious movements on five continents and within seven world religious traditions. *From inside flap.*

18. **Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill**, by Jessica Stern. Ecco, August 2003 (paper 2004, Harper Perennial).

This sophisticated examination of religiously motivated terrorism is a welcome antidote to the armchair analyses of Islamic extremism that surfaced in the wake of September 11th. Stern spent five years interviewing religious terrorists of all stripes, including anti-abortion crusaders, Hamas leaders, and militants in Pakistan and Indonesia. She found men and women who were driven not by nihilistic rage or lunacy but by a deep faith in the justice of their causes and in the possibility of transforming the world through violence. That faith, Stern suggests, is fuelled by poverty, repression, and a sense of humiliation, and then exploited by “inspirational leaders” who turn confused people into killers. The West cannot fight terror by intelligence and military means alone, she argues; a “smarter realpolitik approach” toward the developing world would use policy to deprive terrorists of not only funding and weapons but potential recruits. *From The New Yorker.*

Stern is a U.S. expert on terrorism, is a lecturer at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, and a faculty affiliate of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. From 1994 to 1995, she served as director for Russian, Ukrainian, and Eurasian Affairs at the National Security Council; from 1998 to 1999.

Also Recommended

1. **The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology**, (Cambridge Companions to Religion) (Paper), by Christopher Rowland (Editor). Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Liberation theology is widely referred to in discussions of politics and religion but not always adequately understood. This Companion offers an introduction to the history and characteristics of liberation theology in its various forms in different parts of the world. Through a sequence of eleven chapters readers are given a comprehensive description and evaluation of the different facets of this important theological and social movement, and there is a clear Introduction. The book will be of interest to students of theology as well as to sociologists, political theorists and historians.

2. **Faith and Politics: How the “Moral Values” Debate Divides America and How to Move Forward Together**, by Senator John Danforth. Viking, September 2006.

A former three-term Republican U.S. senator from Missouri and an ordained Episcopal priest, Danforth brings exceptional insight to the debate about the political use of religion and the separation of church and state. He worries that Republican courting of the Christian Right is distorting all notions of public and private morality. He urges more liberal and moderate Christians to challenge the presumptiveness of the Christian Right to speak for all Christians. Rather than construct a political agenda based on narrow interpretations of religious orthodoxy, Christians should focus an expansive faith in God that embraces conflicting opinions on a range of controversial issues, including stem-cell research and gay marriage. This incredibly thoughtful book will give pause to readers of all political and religious beliefs. *Vanessa Bush in Booklists. Edited.*

3. **The Illustrated Guide to World Religions**, edited by Michael D. Coogan. Oxford, January 2004.

This book is for those who want a reference book about the world’s major religions.

4. **“Iraqi Kurds and Iraq’s Future.”** Thomson Gale, 2005. By Ellen Laipson and Henri J. Barkey, from December issue of Middle East Policy. Laipson is speaker at the 2008 Camden Conference. This is a digital version of their article which can be purchased from amazon.com.

The authors examine the role of Iraqi Kurds in shaping post-war Iraq and their prospects for remaining part of a federal state. It argues that while the overwhelming majority of Iraqi Kurds favor independence, their precarious geographical and political position will, at least in the short run, temper those aspirations. Iraqi Kurds control most economic activity in their territories, have their own militia, the *pesh merga*, and maintain a strong relationship with Washington. They were instrumental in shaping the draft constitution and advocating for federalism that ensures protection of their minority status. A key factor in shaping their political preferences will be Iraqi Kurds' relations with their neighbors, especially those with large Kurdish populations--Syria, Iran and most importantly Turkey. Issues of security, distribution of oil revenue, and the role of religion in politics will also play an important role in deciding whether Iraqi Kurds follow the secessionist route or not. In the end, it remains to be seen whether Iraqi Kurds can reconcile their two identities and envision a future in which their interests converge with those of the majority of Iraqis. *From Middle East Policy magazine.*

5. **The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy**, by John J. Mearsheimer, Stephen M. Walt. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007.

Mearsheimer and Walt, political scientists at the University of Chicago and Harvard, respectively, survey a wide coalition of pro-Israel groups and individuals, including American Jewish organizations and political donors, Christian fundamentalists, neo-con officials in the executive branch, media pundits who smear critics of Israel as anti-Semites and the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, which they characterize as having an almost unchallenged hold on Congress.

This lobby, they contend, has pressured the U.S. government into Middle East policies that are strategically and morally unjustifiable: lavish financial subsidies for Israel despite its occupation of Palestinian territories; needless American confrontations with Israel's foes Syria and Iran; uncritical support of Israel's 2006 bombing of Lebanon, which violated the laws of war; and the Iraq war, which almost certainly would not have occurred had [the Israel lobby] been absent. The authors disavow conspiracy mongering, noting that the lobby's activities constitute legitimate, if misguided, interest-group politics, as American as apple pie. Considering the authors' academic credentials and the careful reasoning and meticulous documentation with which they support their claims, the book is bound to rekindle the controversy.

6. **The Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs**, by Madeleine Albright. Introduction by Bill Clinton. HarperCollins, 2006.

As Secretary of State under President Clinton, Albright is especially qualified to tackle the thorny subject of the role of faith in international relations. In an accessible style, she looks at these issues in light of recent history both abroad and at home, from the religious fundamentalism that led to the ouster of the shah of Iran to the invasion of Iraq and American hope that a political culture can emerge there that integrates democracy and Islam. But Albright also looks critically at President Bush, an evangelical Christian who invokes God in the name of fighting "evil."

Albright balances the pragmatic need to confront religious-based unrest and the idealistic need to temper one's own personal beliefs in the public realm. While fully acknowledging the threat al-Qaeda poses, Albright rejects the notion that a "clash of civilizations" is in progress and wisely calls for care and nuance in how America approaches international confrontations that are tinged with religion. *Edited from a Publishers Weekly review.*

7. **Moyers on America: A Journalist and His Times** by Bill Moyers. New Press, May 2004. Selected for his chapter "Many Faiths, One Nation."

8. **Sacred Causes: The Clash of Religion and Politics, from the Great War to the War on Terror**, by Michael Burleigh. HarperCollins, 2007.

Covering a vast canvas, Burleigh examines the many 'secular' religions the twentieth century produced, analysing how successive totalitarian leaders fantasised and aped the hierarchy, rites and ritual of the churches in the desire to return to the day where ruler and deity were one. All the many bloody regimes and movements of the century are here, from Stalin's Soviet Union, Hitler's Germany, Mussolini's Italy, Franco's Spain through to modern scourge of terrorism the current 'War on Terror'. Often blackly comic, the book shows how the churches, in its various guises, have been swayed by--and contributed to--conflicting secular currents. He traces religious beliefs and institutions from a time when the church, disenchanted with both democracy and fascism, began to search for political alternatives. *From publisher.*

Burleigh is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

9. **The Arab Shi'a: The Forgotten Muslims**, by Graham E. Fuller, Rend Rahim Francke. Hardback 2000. Paper 2001. Palgrave Macmillan.

Within the Arab world, the Sunni population constitutes the majority and wields political power in every Arab state today. However, there are significant Shi'a communities in key Arab countries, and they constitute the majority of the population in Iraq and Bahrain and the plurality in Lebanon. For historical and political reasons, the Shi'a have fared rather poorly in much of the Arab world, and the topic of Shi'ism and Shi'a groups are among the most sensitive issues for the Sunni elite. Fuller, a RAND Corporation Middle East specialist, and Francke, executive director of the Iraq Foundation, provide an interesting and informative analysis of the travail of the Shi'a politics in the Arab world and explain various patterns of discrimination against the Arab Shi'a. *From Library Journal. Edited.*

10. **Wayward Christian Soldiers: Freeing the Gospel from Political Captivity**, by Charles Marsh. Oxford University Press, June 2007.

In *Wayward Christian Soldiers*, leading evangelical theologian Charles Marsh offers a powerful indictment of the political activism of evangelical Christian leaders and churches in the United States. Over the past several years, Marsh observes, American evangelicals have achieved more political power than at any time in their history. But access and influence have come at a cost to their witness in the world and the integrity of their message. The author offers a sobering contrast between the contemporary evangelical elite, which forms the core of the Republican Party, and the historic Christian tradition of respect for the mystery of God and appreciation for human fallibility. The author shows that the most prominent voices in American evangelicalism have arrogantly redefined Christianity on the basis of partisan politics rather than scripture and tradition. *From publisher.*

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