thorough assessment of this controversial debate.

The storm of controversy surrounding Arendt broke over the publication of Eichmann in Jerusalem. Her conclusion that Eichmann was unaware of his own wickedness, was just a normal bureaucrat following rules out of "sheer thoughtlessness" and was "neither perverted nor sadistic," struck many critics as unfailing and abstract. Other of her facts and interpretations were questioned, and Whitfield in each case presents fairly both sides of the argument. He shares in the criticism of Arendt's charges that the Jews cooperated in their own destruction and that the Jerusalem court that tried Eichmann did so in a too narrowly Jewish context. But he defends her chilling portrait of Eichmann as a new kind of indifferent killer, one who could not disobey the order to slaughter people for whom he felt no great animus.

"More so than any other observer of the trial," he writes, "Arendt sought to stretch the moral imagination, so that a new kind of danger to humanity might be recognized."

Into the Dark continues that amplification by shedding light on the important and controversial thought of an original thinker. It raises profound questions that it does not adequately answer, perhaps because those answers lie beyond intellectual imagining.
Friendly Fascism, a long series of new variations on the theme that power tends to concentrate in the hands of those who already have too much of it, is a book you want to like and take seriously. It promises quite a lot: to tell the story of how the well-organized, well-financed, well-promoted political network that has come to be called the New Right took control of America's right-wing establishment. It's often a sad book because Crawford, who thinks of himself as a conservative in the tradition of Edmund Burke, John Adams, and to an extent the Buckleys, is dismayed that the Right is no longer the dignified, exclusive club it is supposed to be. Somebody let in the folks in leisure suits, white patent leather slip-ons, and bouffant hairdos. Crawford can't seem to accept the fate of an elitist intellectual in a democracy. Given the choice between an elitist who knows full well what the people really need and a tub-thumping, antiabortion, anti-ERA, pro-school-prayer rabble-rouser, the polyester people will go for the rabble-rouser every time.

Once you have become calloused to Crawford's sometimes whiny tone, however, the book becomes quite fun to read. It's an insider's book that's often both hard-hitting and feisty. I can report with pleasure that Crawford has learned well from his mentors, the Buckleys, how to skewer his enemies without savaging them. (The most villainous of his enemies appears to be Richard A. Viguerie, the Mephistopheles of direct mail fund raising for New Right causes. There's not a good word for Viguerie in the book, I'm delighted to say.) More important, I think Crawford is correct about the danger the New Right represents for the Republic. For him the threat from these people—the single-issue groups, the fundamentalist churches, the Political Action committees, the "Moral Majorities," and all the rest—is not to the "political process," as so many liberals seem to be saying. "Why," they write, "do these people want to get involved now? Why are they participating in the process when after all they never did before?" (Liberal elitists can be just as whiny as their conservative counterparts.) The danger from the New Right is much more fundamental than that. They put their own will (often identified with some kind of higher law) ahead of the Law. Or, to put this in more concrete terms, the ayatollahs of the New Right—in the name of law and order—would like to make a revolutionary change in the American system of government. They want, simply, to make over the system in their own image, a catastrophe that would make living under a "friendly fascist" regime seem downright enjoyable.