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Call It Evil: Understanding the Trump Era

by Susan Neiman

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★ Neiman (*Left Is Not Woke*) is a moral philosopher and cultural commentator in the mold of Hannah Arendt; she wants readers to *think*. This is not a book about Donald Trump; it is about the conditions that have allowed him to prevail. Neiman has tackled the subject of evil (“the most explosive word we have”) before in books such as *Evil in Modern Thought* and *Moral Clarity*, but never as compellingly and comprehensively as here. Many observe today’s flagrant immorality and ask, “How did this happen?” Neiman explains how it happened, tracing the history, politics, economics, and the misuse of language and reason that led to this point. It is not pretty, but rather than feeling defeated by the normalization of beliefs and ideas that should have been rejected, she calls for creative resistance and reconsiders the potential of socialism as a means to restore some semblance of social justice.

VERDICT Every sentence is worth reading in this compelling book. For readers who are horrified and want to understand how we got here, this book is an absolute must.

Reviewed by Ellen Gilbert , Aug 01, 2026