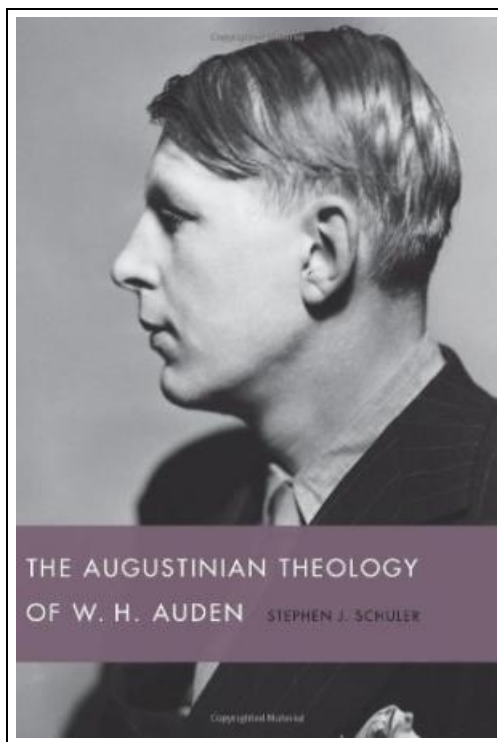


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University of South Carolina Press, United States, 2013. Hardback. Condition: New. New.. Language: English . Brand New Book. When W. H. Auden returned to Christianity in the early 1940s, he identified himself with what he called an existential method of spiritual and literary inquiry, which the writings of St. Augustine helped him define as a mode of thinking that not only allows for human subjectivity, but emphasises the hopes, fears, needs, desires, and anxieties of the individual. Augustine thus became for Auden a model of a thinker who seamlessly merged psychological reflection with philosophical speculation and theological insight, and it is this combination of introspection and theoretical investigation that shapes much of Auden's later poetry. The Augustinian Theology of W. H. Auden illustrates that Augustine's thought is a major influence on Auden's post-conversion poetry and prose. Auden encountered Augustine both directly, through his reading of the Confessions, and indirectly, through several of Auden's contemporaries, such as Reinhold Niebuhr, Charles Norris Cochrane, and Charles Williams. Stephen J. Schuler argues that Augustine provided Auden with the language of privation to describe the nature of moral and social evil, enabling him to make sense of the pervasive anxieties produced by World War II. Augustine's works also offered Auden a rationale for his intuition that the physical world, and especially the human body, is intrinsically good. Auden's struggle to reconcile the implications of his Augustinian theology with his attitudes toward romantic love and sexuality are explained by Schuler, who demonstrates how the Augustinian theology of Reinhold Niebuhr helped shape Auden's ideas about human identity and community, which is defined and maintained by love in all its various forms. Finally, Schuler analyses Auden's Augustinian view of the ethics of poetry. By examining the presence of Augustinian ideas...

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