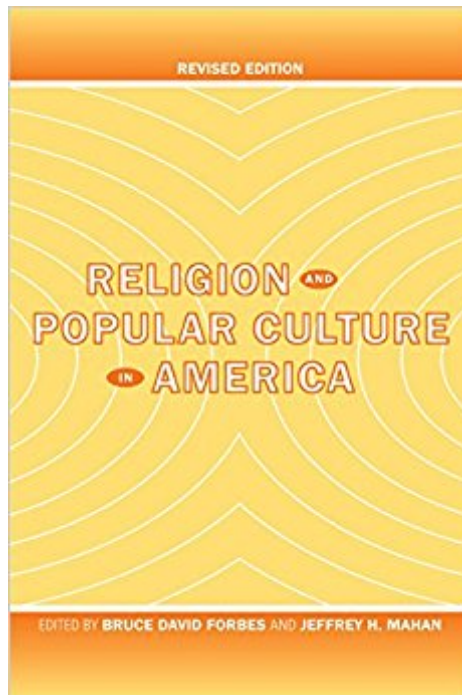




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# **Religion And Popular Culture In America**



## Synopsis

The connection between American popular culture and religion is the subject of this multifaceted and innovative collection. In fourteen lively essays whose topics range from the divine feminine in *The Da Vinci Code* to Madonna's "Like a Prayer," and from the world of sports to the ways in which cyberculture has influenced traditional religions, this book offers fascinating insights into what popular culture reveals about the nature of American religion today. Revised throughout, this new edition features three new essays—including a fascinating look at the role of women in apocalyptic fiction such as the *Left Behind* series—and editor Bruce David Forbes has written a new introduction. In addition to the new textual material, each chapter concludes with a set of suggested discussion questions.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an uninspired and uninspiring hodgepodge of 14 unrelated essays of uneven quality. Forbes and Thompson, professors at Morningside College and Iliff School of Theology, respectively, offer four classifications for understanding the relationship between religion and popular culture: various essays examine explicitly religious themes in television and mass market novels, ways that popular culture affects traditional evangelical Christianity, how popular culture promulgates its own myths and traditions, and ways that religion and popular culture can inform each other. None of these classifications seems particularly helpful. There are a few interesting articles here, a number of which have been published before, on such subjects as Madonna, Cormac McCarthy, Star Trek

fandom, weight loss books, the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and gangsta rap. But these are paired with essays on topics whose novelty has long worn out--on television as an "electronic golden calf," on sports as a form of religion and on the megachurch as a spiritual marketplace. This is a case in which the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. There are flashes of insight scattered throughout the volume, but overall the project is woefully undertheorized (indeed, setting up religion and popular culture as opposing categories in the first place seems unsophisticated). In the end, the editors offer no conclusions on religion or popular culture--and no clear direction for thinking about either subject. (Feb.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A solid introduction to the dialogue between the disciplines of cultural studies and religion. . . . A substantive foundation for subsequent exploration."--"Religious Studies Review

this was a required reading book for my religion class. It was very interesting, will most likely keep it to refer to it in the future.

This book is far fetched and ridiculous. The authors and contributors seem to be grasping at straws to get their points across. Chapters such as "Losing their way to salvation: women, weight loss, and the salvation myth of culture lite" and "Rap music and its message: Interpreting the contact between religion and popular culture" are so out there and fact-less that it's a chore to read and left me shaking my head with my hands in the air at the absurdity of some of the claims. The authors have their own theories and opinions and chose to get their points across via a book that could be scaled down into a pamphlet. If you have any sort of intelligence you should avoid this book unless it's assigned reading. I will be returning this book as soon as I no longer need it for class.

I got this book for my Religion in Pop Culture course. DO NOT GET THE EBOOK if you are taking a class. for some reason never has page numbers and it makes it very difficult to follow along in a course without the page numbers for required readings.

This text, which is , in fact an anthology of academic papers on the topic of religion(s) and popular culture is limited by the fact that it only deals with the United States while claiming to deal with America? Other than this, however the essays are for the most part informative, intelligent and lucid in an easily accessible diction and content. Not being a huge fan of abstract theoretical

constructions myself, I found the articles well-organized and significant in their content. At the same time, the extensive annotated bibliographies that accompanied each article were useful for myself in tracking down relevant data with regards to the articles about the internet, Pale Rider and Rap music and would, I assume, be likewise for those interested in pursuing other subjects such as the presence of sports and religion or weight loss as a soteriological undertaking. While I definitely feel that there is a tremendous amount to be gained from reading these articles as far as their in-depth analysis of the interrelationship between Religion and Popular Culture in the United States, I also was intrigued by the fact that. The editors of the volume as well as the vast majority of their contributors felt compelled to support, or rather accepted as a foregone conclusion the concept that religious and popular cultures constitute two areas of thought and endeavor that are, more or less, mutually distinguishable. It seemed to me, even before reading the text, that religion is, primarily another manifestation of popular culture. One of its unique characteristics is the attempt of its supporters to construct an immutable facade which belies the extreme volatility and changeability of even its most cherished and central concepts and practices.

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