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Secular Steeples 2nd edition: Popular Culture and the Religious Imagination

Conrad Ostwalt

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An exploration of secularization in America, this book provides students with an innovative way of understanding the relationship between religion and secular culture. In Secular Steeples, Conrad Ostwalt challenges long-held assumptions about the relationship between religion and culture and about the impact of secularization. Moving away from the idea that religion will diminish as secularization continues, Ostwalt identifies areas of popular culture where secular and sacred views and objectives interact and enrich each other.

The book demonstrates how religious institutions use the secular and popular media of television, movies, and music to make sacred teachings relevant. From megachurches to sports arenas, the Bible to Harry Potter, biker churches to virtual worship communities, Ostwalt demonstrates how religion persists across cultural forms, secular and sacred, with secular culture expressing religious messages and sometimes containing more authentic religious content than official religious teachings.

An ideal text for anyone studying religion and popular culture, each chapter provides questions for discussion, a list of important terms and guided readings.

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Erin Marshall:

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