



Media, Religion and Culture: An Introduction

By Jeffrey H. Mahan

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Religion has always been shaped by the media of its time, and today we live in a media culture that informs much of what we think and how we behave. Religious believers, communities and institutions use media as tools to communicate, but also as locations where they construct and express identity, practice religion, and build community.

This lively book offers a comprehensive introduction to the contemporary field of religion, media, and culture. It explores:

- the religious content of media texts and the reception of those texts by religious consumers who appropriate and reuse them in their own religious work;
- how new forms of media provide fresh locations within which new religious voices emerge, people reimagine the "task" of religion, and develop and perform religious identity.

Jeffrey H. Mahan includes case study examples from both established and new religions and each chapter is followed by insightful reflections from leading scholars in the field. Illustrated throughout, the book also contains a glossary of key terms, discussion questions, and suggestions for further reading.

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Review

"This thought-provoking book provides an invaluable introduction to the evolving field of media, religion and culture. Mahan's lucid prose combines with a series of fascinating case studies from leading scholars, teachers and researchers. The result is an accessible and nuanced text that sheds light upon creative audiences, dynamic histories and unexpected futures." - Jolyon Mitchell, *University of Edinburgh, UK*

"Understanding the complex relationship between religion and media is no easy feat. In this compelling and insightful volume we are provided with one of the most detailed and well-presented explorations of the intersections between the two. Mahan offers a truly multi-disciplinary approach that is both significant in its depth of study and broad in its range of topics. This book is a must read for anyone interested in exploring religion in contemporary society." - Christopher Helland, *Dalhousie University, Canada*

"This collection locates contemporary religion in the midst of people's struggle to shape identities in media-saturated societies and considers religious life with new forms of digital, personalized media. It discusses important ethical questions and includes a rich range of illustrative examples that help us to understand how religion today is shaped through entanglement in media culture." - Knut Lundby, *University of Oslo, Norway*

"For several years now, *Media, Religion and Culture* has been an established series of volumes on the relationship between religion, shaped by the media of its time, and media, used by members of religions to influence their publics... This book is a successful attempt at a handbook for classroom (or individual) reflection on the relationship between media, religion, and culture. It is highly recommended as an introduction to the sometimes problematic relations between the three." - Hans Geybels, *University of Leuven, Belgium*

About the Author

Jeffrey H. Mahan holds the Ralph E. and Norma E. Peck Chair in Religion and Public Communication and is Professor of Ministry, Media and Culture at Iliff School of Theology in Denver. He is affiliate faculty at the Center for Media, Religion and Culture at the University of Colorado in Boulder and co-editor with Bruce David Forbes of *Religion and Popular Culture in America*.

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