

Chapter 1 : Bloomsbury - Search

Book Summary: The title of this book is Fantastic Spiritualities and it was written by J'annine blog.quintoapp.com particular edition is in a Paperback format. This books publish date is Sep 02, and it has a suggested retail price of \$

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Monsters, Heroes, and the Contemporary Religious Imagination. A Continuum Imprint, We live in a postmodern age, and one of its characteristics is a secular quest for an authentic spirituality usually outside of the confines of a traditional religious institution. Jobling in her book suggests this need is to find a narrative that allows its purveyors to deal with truth, morality, otherness, authority, and identity. Her spirituality is really ethics. When she examines her four major examples of the fantastic, she admits they all "lay considerable emphasis on the significance of both human choice and human responsibility in universes with no discernible transcendent external authority. All are rooted in a robust sense of ethical commitment; the significance of personal engagement and discernment in ethical matters is foregrounded" She examines four major examples of the fantastic genre—the Harry Potter series Rowling , His Dark Materials Pullman , Buffy the Vampire Slayer Whedon , and the Earthsea cycle Le Guin —and shows that the world views of these four are actually marked by profoundly modernistic assumptions. Her book is divided into ten chapters and looks at four major themes of two chapters each, along with an introduction and conclusion. Those themes are "transforming selves," "metaphysics and transcendence," "transforming worlds," and "the good and the monstrous. Both provide templates for contemporary readers to examine and appropriate their own growth to individuation. The background to that sense of independence is traced in the next two chapters on "metaphysics and transcendence," which examines the structures against which one struggles to come to an authentic sense of self. Thus changed, one now has a new and different relationship with the world as one finds it. A similar thing happens in the Harry Potter series. Both show that the world of oppression and evil can be challenged, overcome, and changed. The last major theme to be explored in the book is entitled "The Good and the Monstrous. One does not need God or institutionalized religion to know how to behave. To be human is sufficient for discernment. Similarly, in Buffy, "there may be no religious absolutes, but there remains powers, for both good and evil" Buffy is read as a "liminal creature, poised between dark and light" , and like the postmodern subject, caught up in and defined by forces too large to be You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

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Adam Possamai, hyper-real spiritualities or fiction-based, Jediism, Matrixism It is no surprise to readers of this blog that I have a great personal interest in the enjoyment and exploration of the fantastic in literature, film, and television, and that I believe these forms of contemporary mythos also provide us with important tools and forms for spiritual expression and exploration as well. In my continuing research in this area one of the resources I have found helpful is the research of Dr. Among his other activities he is also one of the editors of the Australian Religion Studies Review, and he has researched and written extensively on new religions, as well as the nexus of the fantastic in popular culture and its connection with spirituality to form what he has labeled "hyper-real spiritualities. Possamai, I have appreciated and benefited from your work in religious studies and popular culture, particularly that which looks at hyper-real religions and spiritualities. Thanks for making time to answer a few questions on this topic. Can you tell us how you developed an interest in and academic focus on religion and popular culture? Many thanks for your interest in my work and for your very kind words. To answer your question, in my private life, I have always been a fan of popular culture and spent many years of my youth on novels, graphic novels, movies, and computer and role playing games. I also became involved in writing short stories of science fiction and fantasy and have recently published in French, *Perles Noires*. The next step was very easy and became natural for me. I was going to mix the activities from my private life with my professional one and mix my passion for the sociology of religion with that of popular culture. How has the shift in the West from identification with organized religion to individualized spirituality melded with popular culture as a medium for expressing spiritual activity in the late modern or postmodern world? There is no doubt that the western world has changed since the s. Some theorists call this change late modern, others postmodern, and it is beyond the scope of this interview to explain this difference. However what these social and cultural changes have brought are, among many other things, a stronger focus of individuals on themselves rather than on a community; and a breaking apart of boundaries between fields of knowledge such as between academic and everyday knowledge, and high and popular culture. Because of this greater focus on the self, because of the implosion of boundaries between spheres of knowledge, and because of the development of consumer culture in western societies with its strong culture of choice, individuals are now free to choose from almost whatever they want to construct their personal spiritualities. With the New Age spiritualities of the s and s, it was common to pick-and-choose from various religions and philosophies to construct a spirituality that gives sense to an individual. With religions such as Jediism and Matrixism, the realm of choice has been extended from religion and philosophies to reach popular culture. In one chapter in your fascinating book, *Religion and Popular Culture: A Hyper-Real Testament*, you discuss the creation of subjective myths in consumer culture that are expressed in pop culture. Can you address how science fiction, horror and fantasy provide resources for the creation of these myths and provide some examples of how these myths surface in certain religious or spiritual groups? Popular culture, in this context, is used as a source of inspiration as I already touched on in the previous question. Checking various Internet sites on Jediism, it is easy to find that people who are interested in this spirituality take elements from various religions such as Zen Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Shinto and also Catholicism and from the Star Wars movies, and then blend them together. As in a typical popular religion, there is no established theology and Jeddists use religion and popular culture for the personal construction of their spirituality which is what is referred to by subjective myths. For example, when the movie, *The Attack of the Clones*, came out, Jeddists realised that Jedi Knights were portrayed very closely to a type of Franciscan monks. This impacted on the construction of the subjective myths of certain Jeddists who pulled out from this spirituality as, I guess, they could not relate to sexual abstinence. Needless to say, being a Jeddist is not necessarily a permanent source of identity. People might be one for weeks, months, or years and then move to another spirituality, or even become atheist. There are other examples of these religious groups, such as Matrixism which is inspired by the Matrix.

Chapter 3 : Jannine Jobling (Author of Fantastic Spiritualities)

requires a concerted and committed effort to extend teaching through pathways that reach into places where there is a thirst for a deeper prayer life that is connected with Scrip-

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