

*displace* religion, and containment through fantastic genre conventions that *deny* religion—correlate with the trends examined in Parts II and III. Part IV explores how streaming services could loosen the industry's grip on containing religion, but this possibility faces the recent polarization of religious representation influenced by the divisive aftermath of the 2016 election.

*Divine Programming* displays a deep knowledge of the entertainment industry, placing recent technological, economic, and social changes in production within historical contexts. Though incredibly difficult to master in the era of "Peak TV," Howell's familiarity with a vast number of series, networks, and emerging platforms coalesces into a balanced analysis of industry practices, creatives, content, and audiences. "Religion" is largely understood to mean white, Protestant, American Christianity, but Howell nestles this into larger cultural assumptions of American life. Howell does not define "religion" as "Christianity," but acknowledges this as a correlation that many Americans (including industry creatives and their audiences) still believe to be true.

Pulling from the work of Lisa Gitelman, Howell explains how "discourses of newness are undermined" by legacy mindsets that still influence contemporary creatives (206). These mindsets are extracted from Howell's collection of one-on-one interviews that, alongside other articles and interviews, produce a thorough take on those working in such an elusive and ever-changing industry. This industry-focused study pairs well with works that center on fan and audience studies; Howell deftly weaves together television criticism, industry mentalities, and larger cultural shifts. A closer look at audience reactions (and not merely audience assumptions) would provide an essential expansion.

Although the book "does not examine the representation of non-dominant religious traditions" (9), Howell's thematic and regional limitations are clear and coherent, and the book seems to invite further studies of religious traditions that fall

outside of the white, Protestant Christian norms that pervade American television. In an increasingly globalized world (and an increasingly international television industry), it would be beneficial to examine how an expanded definition of "religion" might reinforce or push back against assumptions about American Christianity as the presumed definition of "religion." Ultimately, this topic continues to grow abundantly, and *Divine Programming* has, thankfully, cracked the surface of such a fruitful field of study.

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*Catholic Activism Today: Individual Transformation and the Struggle for Social Justice*, by MAUREEN K. DAY.  
New York: New York University Press,  
2020, 320 pp.; \$39.00.

In *Catholic Activism Today*, Maureen K. Day presents an in-depth case study of JustFaith Ministries, a Catholic (though also ecumenical) organization dedicated to educating on social justice issues like poverty and war via small groups that learn, pray, and engage in immersive experiences together.

Day's main theoretical argument is that JustFaith represents a contemporary style of Catholic engagement in the public square, which she calls the "discipleship style." Older styles include "republican," "immigrant," and "evangelical," approaches as identified by historian David O'Brien. These styles of engagement are ideal types present throughout U.S. history but usually more prominent in one era over another. In the "republican" style (1750 to

1820), Catholics relegated their faith to a private sphere sharply delineated from the public, and publicly did not appeal to Catholic theology. In the “immigrant style” (1820–1920) Catholics disengaged from the public sphere, setting up parallel institutions in the U.S. as a buffer against Protestantism and anti-Catholic bigotry. In the “evangelical” style (1920–1960) Catholics invoked the Gospel on social issues, but their perfectionism (e.g. in the case of Catholic Worker) has made it difficult for them to influence the mainstream public sphere.

According to Day, in the “discipleship style” that characterizes Catholics today, Catholics see themselves as the ultimate moral authority, and they focus on making personal lifestyle transformations that they then bring to bear on their communities as individual volunteers. Day’s interview, ethnographic, and survey data of JustFaith participants suggests that organizations like JustFaith can succeed in assisting personal lifestyle transformations. Day finds that JustFaith participants change in a variety of ways: assuming a stronger Catholic identity, shifting political views (typically becoming more liberal, though some pro-choice participants become pro-life), connecting their religious and political commitments, deepening already held views, and becoming more involved in their communities.

Day discusses the problems and possibilities with the discipleship style of civic engagement vis-à-vis the other historical styles. JustFaith emphasizes immersion experiences with marginalized people that allow participants to develop mutual relationships rather than paternalistic ones. This creates a tension. On one hand, these experiences kindle compassion and change hearts more so than statistics and lists of facts could. On the other, the focus on these individual personal relationships undermines JustFaith’s goal of achieving justice on a structural level. Day describes how most participants understand “structure” to mean simply the sum of individuals rather than, for example, norms and

institutions. Thus after the program, they devote most of their time to volunteering rather than mobilizing for political change. Catholics’ centering of themselves as their own authority also makes it hard for the institutional Church to mobilize them. Still, Day sees discipleship Catholics as willing to apply their time and talents to the Church’s social justice priorities as they see fit, and also as attempting to weave together their Catholic and American identities in a way that previous styles did not.

Day’s interview and ethnographic data shine, providing compelling evidence of her theoretical claim. The non-probabilistic survey data provide additional insight into participants’ views and experiences, though methodologically I was less convinced by the use of a group of neophyte JustFaith participants as the “baseline” for participants who had already completed the program. The methods appendix is also quite short and provides little in the way of explaining Day’s procedures for data analysis.

At the end of the book, Day asks whether the discipleship style is unique to Catholicism, or whether it “is merely a Catholic expression of a larger ‘personalist style’ that characterizes contemporary American civic engagement more broadly” (p. 236). [Eliasoph and Lichterman’s \(2003\)](#) “Culture in Interaction” piece examining the role of “group style” in mediating culture shows just this. Their pseudonymous civic group Airdale Citizens for Environmental Sanity uses “expressive individualism” to affirm civic responsibility and engagement in the public sphere. Day’s book suggests that the phenomenon that Eliasoph and Lichterman described remains alive and well. Day also tantalizes readers with brief comparisons to other Catholic discipleship groups she identifies, including Opus Dei, Sant’Egidio, Catholic Christian Outreach, and Jesuit Volunteer Corps. Some additional secondary data, especially with a relatively more conservative group like Opus Dei, would provide fascinating insight into how Catholic groups with differing theological emphases

might nonetheless share the same civic engagement style, with each other and with American groups more broadly. It would also lead to some interesting considerations on whether the discipleship style genuinely bridges Catholic and American identities, or whether Catholics have simply been co-opted by American culture.

Day's in-depth portrait of JustFaith Ministries serves as an illuminating case for anyone interested in civic engagement, religious or not, especially in the tensions between justice and charity. For sociologists and theologians alike, Day also offers thought-provoking discussion about the role of the Catholic Church in the American public square.

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## REFERENCE

- Eliasoph, Nina, and Paul Lichterman. 2003. "Culture in Interaction." *American Journal of Sociology* 108(4): 735–94.



*Defend the Sacred: Native American Religious Freedom beyond the First Amendment*, by MICHAEL D. McNALLY. Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020, 400 pp.; \$26.95 (paperback), \$99.95 (hardcover).

Environmental protection and historic and cultural preservation laws, Michael McNally observes, are the standard legal approaches taken by Indigenous people and their allies when fighting to defend Indigenous lands, waters, and lifeways. Despite the recent (but inconclusive) Supreme Court victory for the Standing Rock Sioux against the Dakota Access

Pipeline, this approach has seen limited success. McNally believes there is an alternative, potentially more successful opportunity to "Defend the Sacred": the untapped potential of religious freedom law. Following this path poses some definitional challenges in its own right.

What is religious about religion and which aspects of religiosity are covered under religious freedom law in the United States? These are the kinds of questions that scholars get parodied for asking—but that's only fair when we do it badly, divorced from the lived experience of our readers. McNally asks a compelling question: what is religion in *this* context, in *this* time and place, and how might we use a broadened definition of religion to bolster Indigenous endeavors to defend sacred lands, waters, and "lifeways?"

In his new book, *Defend the Sacred: Native American Religious Freedom beyond the First Amendment*, McNally assesses the American courts' failure to recognize Native American religious freedom through religious freedom law. Despite a checkered history of success, McNally argues that sacred claims to religious rights can be made on behalf of Native people collectively. Past failure, he argues, points to the need to reassess what exactly we mean by religion, and the problem of the failed legibility of some religious lifeways over others. In the cultural context of American zeal for religious freedom, delimiting what is and is not a recognizable form of religion becomes an important project with political implications, especially for marginalized groups whose rights are in question. McNally's book is worth reading for its detailed analysis of former successes and failures, and his creative application to present and future struggles not just over religious freedom, but over its extension to the protection of sacred land and waters.

The question of whether or not Native religious practices are protected by American religious laws goes back to the founding of settler-colonialism, predating the existence of the state. Early European settlers dismissed Native practices as primitive, finding them overly material and in opposition to the spiritual focus of Christianity,