



Fantasy and Belief: Alternative Religions, Popular Narratives, and Digital Cultures (Approaches to New Religions)

By Danielle Kirby

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Religion and spirituality are being transformed in our late modern and secularising times. New forms of belief proliferate, often notable for not being limited to traditional systems of reference or expression. Increasingly, these new religions present worldviews which draw directly upon popular culture - or occulture - in fiction, film, art and the internet. Fantasy and Belief explores the context and implications of these types of beliefs through the example of the Otherkin community. The Otherkin are a loosely-affiliated group who believe themselves to be in some way more than just human, their non-humanity often rooted in the characters and narratives of popular fantasy and science fiction. Challenging much current sociological thinking about spirituality and consumption, Fantasy and Belief reveals how popular occulture operates to recycle, develop, and disseminate metaphysical ideas, and how the popular and the sacred are combining in new ways in today's world.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Fantasy and Belief takes the reader on an engaging journey into an under-researched corner of our haunted culture, a corner inhabited by the Otherkin. Along the way it explores several important trajectories for the study of the sacred and popular culture in the modern world. It should have broad appeal both inside and outside the academic community." --**Christopher Partridge**, *University of Lancaster*

"Kirby offers a sympathetic treatment, taking this community at face value and seeking to understand rather than to criticize it. The book includes a useful overview of related phenomena/trends such as the occult, witchcraft, paganism, magic, and New Age understandings of the world. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty." --*Choice*

"*Fantasy and Belief* makes provocative points that should influence how we think about religion and religion-like groups and movements in the contemporary world...The investigation of contemporary and virtual religions has the potential to revolutionize how social scientists think about religion." --*Anthropology Review Database*

About the Author

Danielle Kirby is Lecturer in Communication at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.

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