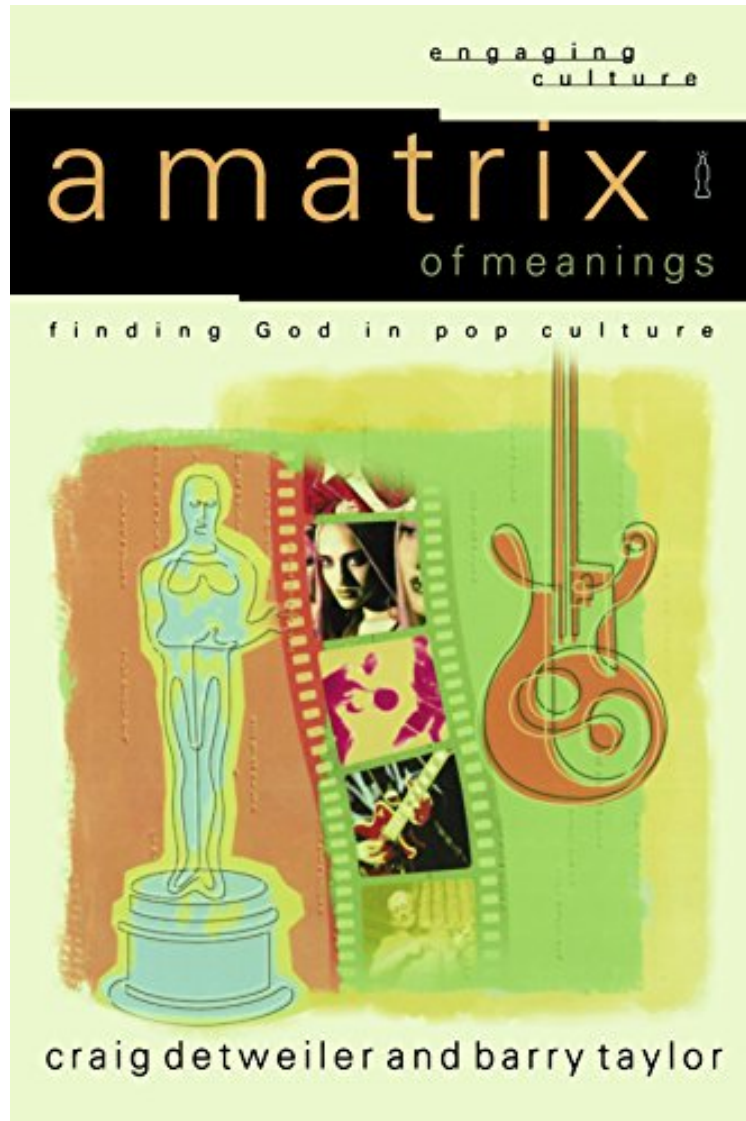


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Craig Detweiler, Barry Taylor
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Craig Detweiler, Barry Taylor : A Matrix of Meanings: finding God in pop culture (Engaging Culture) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Matrix of Meanings: finding God in pop culture (Engaging Culture):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book give a lot to think about as a follower of Christ. By Steve This book take a honest look at the world today and see a generation looking for something far bigger than they

are, the authors go as far as to suggest that the post modern is not godless but they are God Hungry and they are looking for ways to connect to God, 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good theology, but very redundant. By Caleb The principle behind this book is pretty ideal, but I feel like the book constantly repeats the redundant theme. Don't get me wrong, it uses good examples, although an updated version that could be more relevant is very much needed for this book. I feel like the authors could have condensed their ideas and explanations with half of the pages, instead of tons of pages filled with Deja Vu. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Informative Guide to Popular Culture from a Christian Perspective. By Customer Detweiler and Taylor has written a resourceful book. It is informative on the development and social effects of popular culture. While sensitive to some contemporary critique of the role of media in late capitalism, these authors focus more on exploring the content of popular culture and the spirituality it conveys. In doing so, the authors recognize the effects of consumerism, individualism, etc., and reflects on the need, for instance, of communal integration and a healthy theology of sexuality. This book is helpful in bringing different strands of popular into a historical context. Such things as reviewing the invention of the sewing machine to the beginning of department stores, for instance, or the formation of punk culture, I found informative and interesting. The overall approach is sympathetic to contemporary evangelical Christianity, valuing culture from a missional and dialogical standpoint, and its use of social-critical resources (especially from a Marxist tradition) is very limited. The authors affirm the importance of engaging popular culture as a conscious effort to understand and appreciate it. They affirm the notion of common grace, affirming that God present in popular and that Christians can learn through it. In engaging popular culture, the authors attempt to make space for alternative visions of how to rethink and re-organize alternative theologies and ideas.

Ross and Rachel had a baby, Britney and Justin broke up, and Time magazine asked if Bono could save the world. From the glittering tinsel of Hollywood to the advertising slogan you can't get out of your head, we are surrounded by popular culture. In *A Matrix of Meanings* Craig Detweiler and Barry Taylor analyze aspects of popular culture and ask, What are they doing? What do they represent? and What do they say about the world in which we live? Rather than deciding whether Bono deserves our admiration, the authors examine the phenomenon of celebrity idolization. Instead of deciding whether Nike's "Just do it" campaign is morally questionable, they ask what its success reflects about our society. *A Matrix of Meanings* is a hip, entertaining guide to the maze of popular culture. Plentiful photos, artwork, and humorous sidebars make for delightful reading. Readers who distrust popular culture as well as those who love it will find useful insight into developing a Christian worldview in a secular culture.

From Publishers Weekly Until a few years ago, many faithful Christians saw popular culture the way the Dutch presumably see the ocean as a vast force to be kept at bay by any means necessary. That began to change with Tom Beaudoin's *Virtual Faith*, a heady mix of cultural analysis and theology. Fuller Theological Seminary alumni Detweiler and Taylor are the latest authors to call fellow Christians to take their thumbs out of the dike. Detweiler, producer of the City of the Angels Film Festival, and Taylor, a sound engineer with a roster of top clients, follow (ir)reverently in Beaudoin's wake, exploring the signs of a God-haunted generation in everything from Chris Ofili's dung-smattered Madonna to Jesus' appearance in South Park. Their book is ambitious in scope and smartly structured. Detweiler and Taylor begin with chapters on advertising and the role of celebrities, topics that other Christian commentators have generally ignored, and they are consistently alert to the commercial forces that drive pop culture's production and consumption. They are also witty, readable and passionate about both pop culture and their evangelical faith. But their cultural analysis borrows heavily from previous writers, and their claim to be discovering a "theology" of pop culture may surprise readers who expect a book from the Baker Academic imprint to engage its sources, whether Tom Beaudoin or Ned Flanders, with more critical rigor. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Back Cover Craig Detweiler (M.F.A., University of Southern California, School of Cinema/TV) is an accomplished screenwriter whose movies include *Extreme Days*. He is the codirector of Reel Spirituality, an annual international film roundtable conference, and adjunct professor at the Los Angeles Film Studies Center. Barry Taylor (Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary), adjunct professor of popular culture and theology at Fuller, is a professional musician, painter, and the leader of New Ground, an alternative worship gathering in Los Angeles. About the Author Craig Detweiler (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is professor of communication at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. He previously served as codirector of the Reel Spirituality Institute at Fuller Theological Seminary. Detweiler has written scripts for numerous Hollywood films, and his social documentary, *Purple State of Mind* (www.purplestateofmind.com), debuted in 2008. He has been featured in the New York Times, on CNN, and on NPR. Barry Taylor (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary), adjunct professor of popular culture and theology at Fuller, is a professional musician, painter, and the leader of New Ground, an alternative worship gathering in Los Angeles.