



Religion without Belief: Contemporary Allegory and the Search for Postmodern Faith

Jean Ellen Petrolle

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Shows there is a strong religious impulse in postmodern literature and film.

In our present cultural moment, when God is supposed to be dead and metaphysical speculation unfashionable, why does postmodern fiction—in a variety of genres—make such frequent use of the ancient rhetorical form of allegory? In *Religion without Belief*, Jean Ellen Petrolle argues that contrary to popular understandings of postmodernism as an irreligious and amoral climate, postmodern allegory remains deeply engaged in the quest for religious insight. Examining a range of films and novels, this book shows that postmodern fiction, despite its posturing about the unverifiable nature of truth and reality, routinely offers theological and cosmological speculation. Works considered include virtual-reality films such as *The Matrix* and *The Truman Show*, avant-garde films, and Amerindian and feminist novels.

Jean Ellen Petrolle is Professor of English at Columbia College Chicago and the coeditor (with Virginia Wexman) of *Women and Experimental Filmmaking*.

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