



Godwired: Religion, Ritual and Virtual Reality (Media, Religion and Culture)

By Rachel Wagner



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Godwired offers an engaging exploration of religious practice in the digital age. It considers how virtual experiences, like stories, games and rituals, are forms of world-building or "cosmos construction" that serve as a means of making sense of our own world. Such creative and interactive activity is, arguably, patently religious.

This book examines:

- the nature of sacred space in virtual contexts
- technology as a vehicle for sacred texts
- who we are when we go online
- what rituals have in common with games and how they work online
- what happens to community when people worship online
- how religious "worlds" and virtual "worlds" nurture similar desires.

Rachel Wagner suggests that whilst our engagement with virtual reality can be viewed as a form of religious activity, today's virtual religion marks a radical departure from traditional religious practice – it is ephemeral, transient, rapid, disposable, hyper-individualized, hybrid, and in an ongoing state of flux.

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Editorial Review

Review

'Godwired is a timely, relevant, and sophisticated book. It is an insightful, well-informed discussion of game theories, storytelling, and the religious imagination, offering a convincing argument about how playing games can, at times, participate in the construction of worlds, and worlds of meaning.' – *Gary Laderman, Emory University, USA*

'Rachel Wagner explores the intersection of the two other-worlds known to human beings; the supernatural world of the spiritual, and the virtual world created by on-line communication technologies. In doing so, she brings new light to scholarship in both religious studies and new media studies, both of which can profit from her research in this book. It is a fascinating study that is sure to provoke further discussion.' – *Mark J. P. Wolf, Concordia University Wisconsin, USA*

'Wagner goes far beyond simply demonstrating the presence of something the religious scholar would recognize in games, web sites, and Second Life. She helps us understand the religious and theological implications of the emerging media culture and identify as well as understand the locations of the religious impulse within it. [...] Readable and teachable, the book holds clear promise to advance the emerging discourse on religion and virtual reality.' – *Jeffrey H. Mahan, Iliff School of Theology, USA* in *Religious Studies Review*

About the Author

Rachel Wagner is Associate Professor of Religion at Ithaca College, USA. Her work centers on the study of religion and culture, particularly religion and film and religion and virtual reality.

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