



Christian Fundamentalism and the Culture of Disenchantment

Paul Maltby

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Within the familiar clash of religious conservatism and secular liberalism Paul Maltby finds a deeper discord: an antipathy between Christian fundamentalism and the postmodern culture of disenchantment. Arguing that each camp represents the poles of America's virulent culture wars, he shows how the cultural identity, lifestyle, and political commitments of many Americans match either the fundamentalist profile of one who cleaves to metaphysical and authoritarian beliefs or the postmodern profile of one who is disposed to critical inquiry and radical-democratic values.

Maltby offers a critique that operates in both directions. His use of the resources of postmodern theory to contest fundamentalism's doctrinal claims, ultra-right politics, anti-environmentalism, and conservative aesthetics informs his engagement with contemporary fundamentalist painting, spiritual warfare fiction, dominionist attitudes to nature, and a profoundly undemocratic interpretation of Christianity. At the same time, Maltby identifies some of fundamentalism's legitimate spiritual concerns, assesses the cost of perpetual critique, and exposes the deficit of spiritual meaning that haunts the culture of disenchantment.

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