L. Hoffman

Dr. L. Hoffman, Dept.
Practical and Missional
Theology, University of
the Free State.
E-mail: hoffmanL@ufs.
ac.za
ORCID: http://orcid.
org/0000-0002-8638-
1240

BOOK REVIEW

Cloete, A. (ed.) 2019. *Interdisciplinary reflections on the interplay between religion, film, and youth.* Stellenbosch: African Sunmedia, pp. 120. Price: R180. ISBN 978-1-928480-20-4. (Soft cover) Price: R150. ISBN 978-1-928480-21-1 (E-book)

Media and religion are important aspects of culture that influence society and the youth, in particular. In this book, Cloete brings together various authors to explore the interplay between religion, film, and youth. The authors, drawn from a wide range of fields, make an important contribution on this theme from the viewpoint of Practical Theology, Sociology of Religion, Communication and Worldviews, New Testament, and Media Literacy.

There is an interesting and complex interplay between media and religion.

> Since the relationship between religion and media can be described as reciprocal, a better understanding of the media can assist us in understanding what religion means today, and the other way around (p. vii).

In this book, not only the text, sound and images of the films are important, but also the experiences created in the viewer by all these elements (p. viii).

The eight chapters of the book include the following perspectives: Chapter 1: Scripturing movies and filming Scripture: Bidirectional hermeneutics (J. Punt); Chapter 2: Story and meaning-making: A multilevel approach to film in faith education (M.S. Dahle); Chapter 3: Facilitating holistic identity formation of adolescents using digital media: A dialogue between media literacy and Catholic religious education (E. Wright); Chapter 4: Thick viewing:

Movies, ethics and utopian dreams of a better world (T. Axelson); Chapter 5: Religious function of film: A viewer's perspective (A. Cloete); Chapter 6: Film as discussion platform in youth ministry (N. Chiroma); Chapter 7: The socialising power of popular culture: Superman and the formation of masculinity during adolescence (N. Hendriks); Chapter 8: The Pope's favourite: Babette's Feast in theological perspective (H. Geybels).

> Storytelling is core to our media-saturated, everyday life, as it has been throughout human history. People need stories in order to make sense of one's world and life (p. 17).

These stories are found, replayed and interpreted via film and can influence people in many ways. Different research projects reported in this book show the role film plays in youth's lives and how film can, among others, be used as a discussion platform or a socialising power.

Some of the films referred to in this book include: A cross to bear; Addicted; Annabelle; Annelie de Montmartre; Blade; Blade runner; Diary of a mad Black women; Faith like potatoes; The fast and the furious; Four corners; Freddie versus Jason; Good deed; Grave dancers; Harry Potter; Jesus Christ Superstar; Jesus de Montreal; Lord of the Rings Trilogy; Noah; Noem my skollie; Notebook; Passion of Christ; Paul, Apostle of Christ; Pompeii; Preacher's wife; Son of God; Son of Man; Star Wars; The greatest story ever told; The last temptation of Christ; The matrix; Titanic; Underworld; War room; Why did I get married?

Viewing this book as a film directed by Anita Cloete and the authors as actors and actresses, a story is told of culture that shapes film and culture and people shaped by film. The plot runs through the Bible, religious institutions, youth ministry, and religious education. The viewer (reader) experiences the vast richness found in religion and film and how these can help navigate the plot of humankind and our own small story within it.