

Drawing on a wide range of illustrated case studies by an international group of scholars, *Seeing Religion* presents a sophisticated application of theoretical, methodological and visual techniques for conducting religious studies with visual means. The editor's summaries of the history and broader application of visual sociology and his chapter, "Why Study Religion Visually?" offer detailed and compelling substantiation of the field. Finally, the book offers practical advice and examples to scholars of religion who wish to incorporate visual materials into their own research. A must read for visual sociologists, sociologists of religion, and anyone interested in cutting edge social research.

— **Steven Gold**, Professor of Sociology, Michigan State University, USA and Co-editor (with Stephanie Nawyn) of *The Routledge International Handbook of Migration Studies*

Much like sociology generally, the sociology of religion has chiefly traded in words and numbers, favouring the discursive and the statistical as carriers of meaning. And yet, research is increasingly turning to visual methods – including photography, video, and an attentiveness to embodied identities – to shed new light on how religious identities are formed and lived. This volume gathers together some of the best examples of this research, presenting a series of essays that demonstrate how an incorporation of visual methods can help us to see religious phenomena from a fresh perspective, generating new insight and challenging our understandings of the place of religion in the modern world. Essays cover a wide range of examples from across the globe, while also integrating subtle reflection on the theories and methods that inform the analyses that emerge. This is a book that calls us to think more deeply about what we see, but also about how we go about seeing it. It disrupts our assumptions about what good research can achieve and in so doing has the potential to expand the horizons of the sociology of religion. It is a fine example of what can be achieved when sociology breaks from the norm and dares to do things differently.

— **Mathew Guest**, Reader in the Sociology of Religion, Durham University, UK

The potential of visual research methods in the sociology of religion is vast, but largely untapped. This comes as a surprise however, given the visual, symbolic, and material nature of religion and spirituality. Evidence of religious faith and practice is materially present in everything from clothing and jewelry to artifacts found in people's homes and workplaces. Not only is religion's symbolic and material presence palpable throughout society, it also informs attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of countless people worldwide. Words-and-numbers approaches to social research however, sometimes miss important dimensions of religion and spirituality in the contemporary world. *Seeing Religion* is an invitation to a visual sociology of religion. Contributors draw from their current research to discuss the application of visual methods to the study of religion and spirituality. Each chapter stimulates the sociological imagination through examples of research techniques, analytical approaches, and methodological concerns.

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