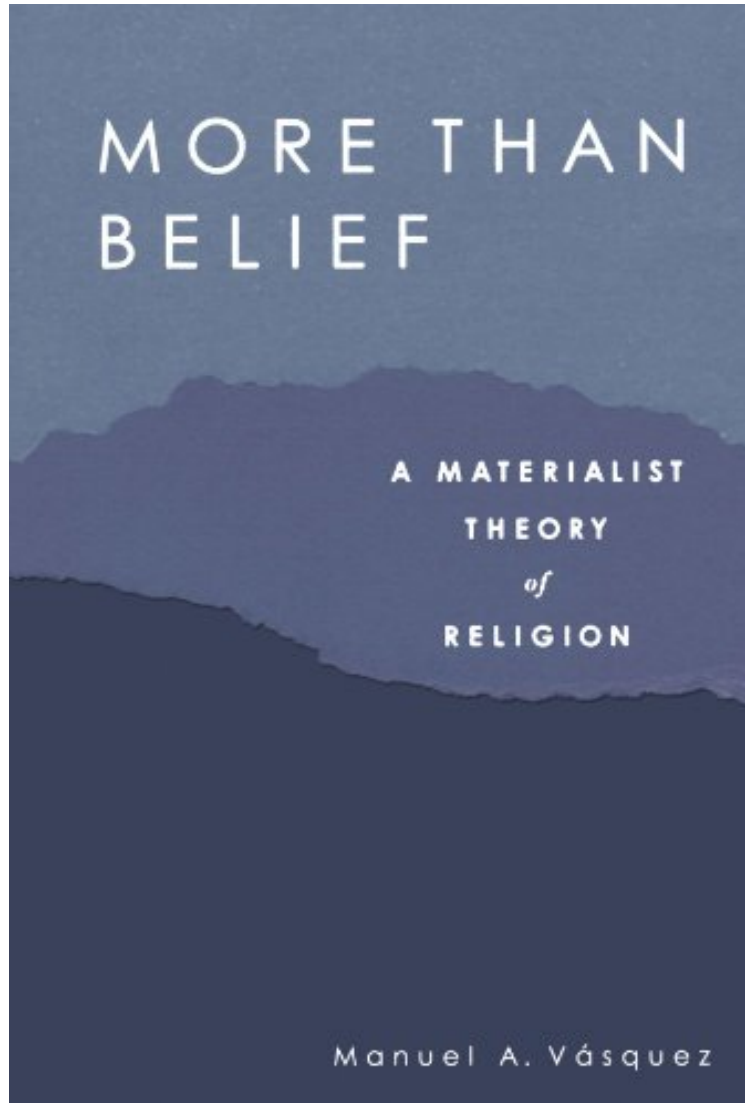


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More Than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion

Manuel A. Vasquez

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Manuel A. Vasquez : More Than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised More Than Belief: A Materialist Theory of Religion:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Engaging and informative By Folly Pancakes I have a Ph.D. in the academic study of religion, so have read quite a bit of theories about religion, past and present. Vasquez's is nuanced, wide ranging, coherent, and provocative, and is worth the time to read.

This book challenges the traditional idea that religions can be understood primarily as texts to be interpreted, decoded,

or translated. In *More Than Belief*, Manuel A. Vasquez argues for a new way of studying religions, one that sees them as dynamic material and historical expressions of the practices of embodied individuals who are embedded in social fields and ecological networks. He sketches the outlines of this approach through a focus on body, practices, and space. In order to highlight the centrality of these dimensions of religious experience and performance, Vasquez recovers materialist currents within religious studies that have been consistently ignored or denigrated. Drawing on state-of-the-art work in fields as diverse as anthropology, sociology, philosophy, critical theory, environmental studies, cognitive psychology, and the neurosciences, Vasquez offers a groundbreaking new way of looking at religion.

"Surveying a vast expanse of interdisciplinary terrain, *More than Belief* should find a wide-ranging audience. Vasquez provides accessible and astute summaries of theoretical approaches, while articulating a rigorous theory of material religion and offering a coherent methodology for the academic study of its practice. It is well suited for the graduate school classroom and should prove an invaluable resource for sociologists of religion." --Sociology of Religion "More than Belief should find a wide-ranging audience. Vasquez provides accessible and astute summaries of theoretical approaches, while articulating a rigorous theory of material religion and offering a coherent methodology for the academic study of its practice. It is well suited for the graduate school classroom and should prove an invaluable resource for sociologists of religion."--Sociology of Religion "Manuel Vasquez's provocative book is must reading for everyone who wants to understand contemporary theories of religion. It not only offers a new framework for 'rematerializing' the study of popular piety but also provides nothing less than a strategic reinterpretation of the history of Western theories about what religion is and how it functions." -Thomas A. Tweed, author of *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* "Vasquez provides accessible and astute summaries of theoretical approaches, while articulating a rigorous theory of material religion and offering a coherent methodology for the academic study of its practice."--Chad E. Seales, University of Texas Austin "Vasquez provides accessible and astute summaries of theoretical approaches, while articulating a rigorous theory of material religion and offering a coherent methodology for the academic study of its practice"--Sociology of Religion

About the Author
Manuel A. Vasquez teaches in the Department of Religion at the University of Florida. He has published numerous articles, chapters, and books on religion in Latin America and among U.S. Latinos. His research currently focuses on the intersection between religion and globalization, particular on the dynamics of transnational religious networks and flows across the Americas.