



Avatar and Nature Spirituality (Environmental Humanities)

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Avatar and Nature Spirituality explores the cultural and religious significance of James Cameron's film *Avatar* (2010), one of the most commercially successful motion pictures of all time. Its success was due in no small measure to the beauty of the Pandoran landscape and the dramatic, heart-wrenching plight of its nature-venerating inhabitants. To some audience members, the film was inspirational, leading them to express affinity with the film's message of ecological interdependence and animistic spirituality. Some were moved to support the efforts of indigenous peoples, who were metaphorically and sympathetically depicted in the film, to protect their cultures and environments. To others, the film was politically, ethically, or spiritually dangerous. Indeed, the global reception to the film was intense, contested, and often confusing.

To illuminate the film and its reception, this book draws on an interdisciplinary team of scholars, experts in indigenous traditions, religious studies, anthropology, literature and film, and post-colonial studies. Readers will learn about the cultural and religious trends that gave rise to the film and the reasons these trends are feared, resisted, and criticized, enabling them to wrestle with their own views about the film and the controversy. Like the film itself, *Avatar and Nature Spirituality* provides an opportunity for considering afresh the ongoing struggle to determine how we should live on our home planet, and what sorts of political, economic, and spiritual values and practices would best guide us.

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