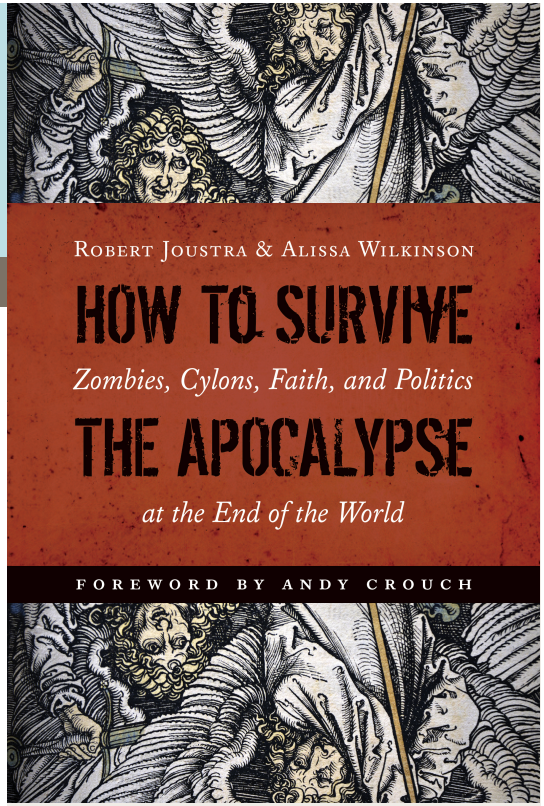
'THE MEANING OF THINGS ... IN THE END OF THINGS':

New book explores our obsession with dystopian/apocalyptic stories, characters ... and what it reveals about our culture and faith



WHAT IS THE BOOK ABOUT?

Joustra and Wilkinson examine a number of popular stories from the Cylons in "Battlestar Galactica" to the purging of innocence in "Game of Thrones" to the hordes of zombies in "The Walking Dead" and argue that such apocalyptic stories reveal a lot about us here and now, about how we conceive of our life together, including some of our deepest tensions and anxieties.

Besides analyzing the dystopian shift in popular culture, Joustra and Wilkinson also suggest how Christians can live faithfully and with integrity in such a cultural context.

WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

- Incisive insights into contemporary pop culture and its ever-increasing apocalyptic bent
- Continually increasing number of movies, television programs, books flourishing in this genre
- Increasing perception of political opposition as ushering in U.S.'s demise, if not the world's
- Perception of rapidly declining biblical authority in culture

INCLUDED, EXPLORED IN THE BOOK:

Just a few of the shows, movies, character, books, authors, media, groups, movements explored:

- Walking Dead, Scandal, Mad Men, Battlestar Galactica, Hunger Games, Lord of the Rings, Game of Thrones, House of Cards, Breaking Bad, Mad Max, World War Z, Divergent, television news and others
- Millennials, Antiheroes, Baby Boomers, Christians, Atheists and others
- Philosopher/author Charles Taylor, George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, Spike Jonze and many others
- Secularism, Individualism, Subjectivism, Anarchy, among others
- Politics
- Christian faith, biblical books of Revelation, Daniel and others
- A history of apocalypse storytelling

BOOK DETAILS

Paperback: 176 pages

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EXCERPTS AVAILABLE FOR PRINT & ONLINE OUTLETS

AUTHOR BIOS/CREDENTIALS

Alissa Wilkinson is a New York City-based critic, journalist, and professor. Her writing appears in *Rolling Stone, Vulture, RogerEbert.com, The Washington Post, The Atlantic, The Los Angeles Review of Books, Books & Culture, Thrillist, Flavorwire, Bright Wall / Dark Room, Movie Mezzanine, Paste*, and others. Since 2013, she has been at *Christianity Today*, first as chief film critic and then as critic at large, and she is a contributing writer at *Pacific Standard*. She regularly reports on festivals like Sundance and Berlinale, writes about broader trends in culture and the arts, and reports on the intersection of entertainment, culture, and religion in America.

Alissa is an assistant professor of English and humanities at The King's College in downtown Manhattan, where since 2009 she's taught criticism, postmodern theory, cultural anthropology, and other topics, and supervised senior theses. She holds an M.F.A. in creative nonfiction from Seattle Pacific University, an M.A. in humanities and social thought from New York University, and a B.S. in information technology and computer science from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She studies American evangelicalism and culture, and regularly lectures on religion, culture, film, and other topics in the U.S. and abroad. She is currently at work on *Orphaned Believers: Reframing Religion in the Age of Faith-Based Film*, which will be published in 2017 by The Critical Press.

PARTICULAR AREAS OF EXPERTISE:

- Religion and popular culture
- Religion and literature
- Religion and cultural criticism
    - More specifically:
        - The perception of Biblical authority in a wireless world
        - Religious strains in US and global independent and art-house cinema/TV
        - Contemporary American literature
        - Pluralism and pop culture

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Robert Joustra teaches politics & international studies at Redeemer University College outside Toronto, where he is also Director of the Centre for Christian Scholarship. He is an editorial fellow at *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, and a fellow with the D.C. think tank The Center for Public Justice. He is editor, with Jonathan Chaplin, of *God and Global Order: The Power of Religion in American Foreign Policy* (Baylor University Press, 2010), co-author, along with Kevin den Dulk of *The Church and Religious Persecution* (Calvin College Press, 2015), and co-editor, along with Jordan Ballor, of *The Church's Social Responsibility: Reflections on Evangelicalism and Social Justice* (Christian Library Press, 2016). Prior to joining the faculty at Redeemer, he worked for nearly a decade in politics with the think tank, Cardus. His articles and reviews appear in *The Globe and Mail, The Literary Review of Canada, Books & Culture*, and more.

PARTICULAR AREAS OF EXPERTISE:

- Religion and politics
- Religion and globalization
- Religion and popular culture
    - More specifically:
        - Religious freedom and international relations
        - Religion, radicalization and foreign policy
        - Political philosophy and 'trashy television'

REASONS TO BOOK ROBERT & ALISSA

- Highly relevant and very specialized scholarship, content you won't find anywhere else
- Experienced across all media platforms
- Personable, conversational, great interviews
- Encyclopedic knowledge of relationship between pop culture and faith

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