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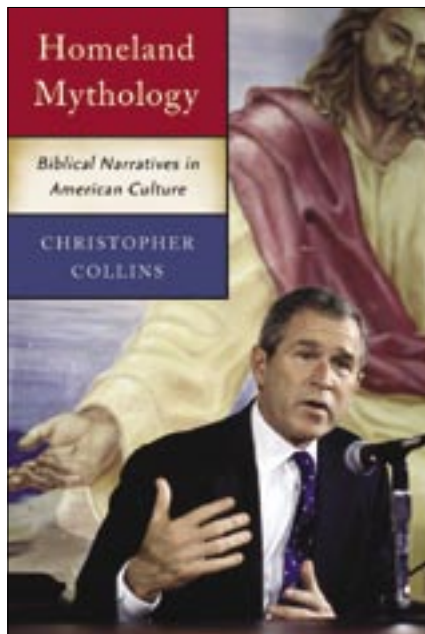
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NEWS RELEASE

HOMELAND MYTHOLOGY

Biblical Narratives in American Culture

Christopher Collins



ISBN: 978-0-271-02993-1
2 illustrations

cloth • \$29.95
288 pages • 6 x 9

University Park, PA—Though the Age of Enlightenment long ago theoretically resolved the question of how religious belief can coexist with rational understanding in human affairs, debates over the appropriate place for religion in American political life continue to rage today. In his new book *Homeland Mythology*, NYU Professor Christopher Collins argues that no modern American presidency has more successfully injected fundamentalist Christian theology into what was once a presumptively secular democracy than President George W. Bush’s administration. Professor Collins observes that America presents itself through these religiously inspired policies as no less anti-modern and nostalgic for its religious past than the very fundamentalist Islamic foes it claims to be fighting. Has American culture preserved its modern ideals of social justice and tolerance of others’ beliefs or has it moved on into a postmodern future of instant information and unlimited personal choices? If the last eight years are any indication, it has done neither—it has reverted instead to a premodern past of crusades, dungeons, and Machiavellian secrecy.

In *Homeland Mythology*, Collins explores the foundations of America’s most deeply rooted national narratives. Taken from the Bible, these narratives form the basis for the justification of some of the cruelest acts Americans have committed, including the slave trade, the Indian genocide, and in our own time, preemptive war. The central question in this book is not why politicians create these myths to justify their ends, but rather why we allow ourselves to believe them. Unlike any previous work on the mythic foundations of America, *Homeland Mythology* delves deep into why so many of us accept the axiom that the end can indeed justify the means, just so long as that end is packaged in the language of biblical religion.

- more -



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“For too long, scholars assumed that national policy could be understood in terms of rational choice economics and game theory. Fortunately, we are coming again to realize the power of stories in our national rhetoric. *Homeland Mythology* is a timely and engaging analysis of what it means for America to be our home. Christopher Collins has done us a great service in examining the roots of many of our unexamined national myths.”

—Robert Wuthnow,
Princeton University,
author of *American Mythos: Why
Our Best Efforts to Be a Better Na-
tion Fall Short*

THE AUTHOR

Christopher Collins is Professor of English at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at New York University. He is the author of several books including *Reading the Written Image: Verbal Play, Interpretation, and the Roots of Iconophobia* (Penn State, 1991).