



# **Encountering Religion: Responsibility and Criticism After Secularism (Insurrections: Critical Studies in Religion, Politics, and Culture)**

*Tyler Roberts*

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Tyler Roberts encourages scholars to abandon the conceptual opposition between "secular" and "religious" to better understand how human beings actively and thoughtfully engage with their worlds and make meaning. The artificial distinction between a self-conscious and critical "academic study of religion" and an ideological and authoritarian "religion," he argues, only obscures the phenomenon. Instead, Roberts calls on intellectuals to approach the field as a site of "encounter" and "response," illuminating the agency, creativity, and critical awareness of religious actors.

To respond to religion is to ask what religious behaviors and representations mean to us in our individual worlds, and scholars must confront questions of possibility and becoming that arise from testing their beliefs, imperatives, and practices. Roberts refers to the work of Hent de Vries, Eric Santner, and Stanley Cavell, each of whom exemplifies encounter and response in their writings as they traverse philosophy and religion to expose secular thinking to religious thought and practice. This approach highlights the resources religious discourse can offer to a fundamental reorientation of critical thought. In humanistic criticism after secularism, the lines separating the creative, the pious, and the critical themselves become the subject of question and experimentation.

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