

## THEOLOGY AND CULTURAL STUDIES

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### ABSTRACT

In considering the relationship between theology and cultural studies, this paper will deal with some of the aspects of the opposition between mass and high culture. It will be suggested that there is some connection with the opposition between popular and official religion. Traditionally, theology has been largely an exercise of official religion. Thus, when consideration has been given to culture, theology has focused upon so-called high culture.

After criticising this assumed orientation, this paper will argue that theology should give more attention to the fascinating realm of popular or mass culture. The example to be used is the film *Ghost*, a box office success in first year of the nineties, starring Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore and Whoopi Goldberg. The analysis of the film will consider the depiction of the interaction between the 'spirit world' - ghosts, angels and demons - and the 'real world'. It will be suggested that this interaction signifies another dimension of the 'real world' which the film represents in terms of banking and urban crime. Of crucial importance is the means of interaction, namely the spiritual medium played by Goldberg, in whom the oppositions of the remainder of the film (regarding gender, race, economic status and crime) break down.

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