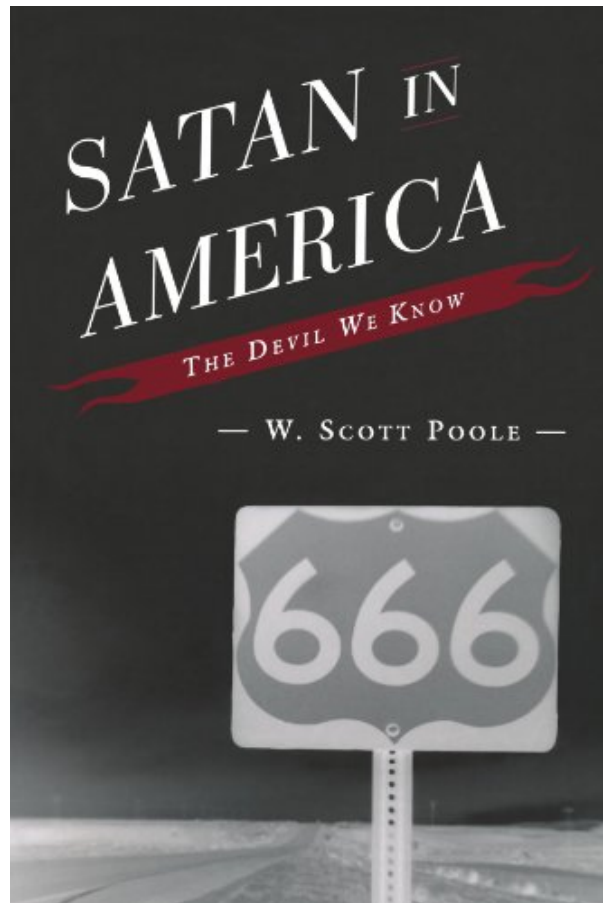
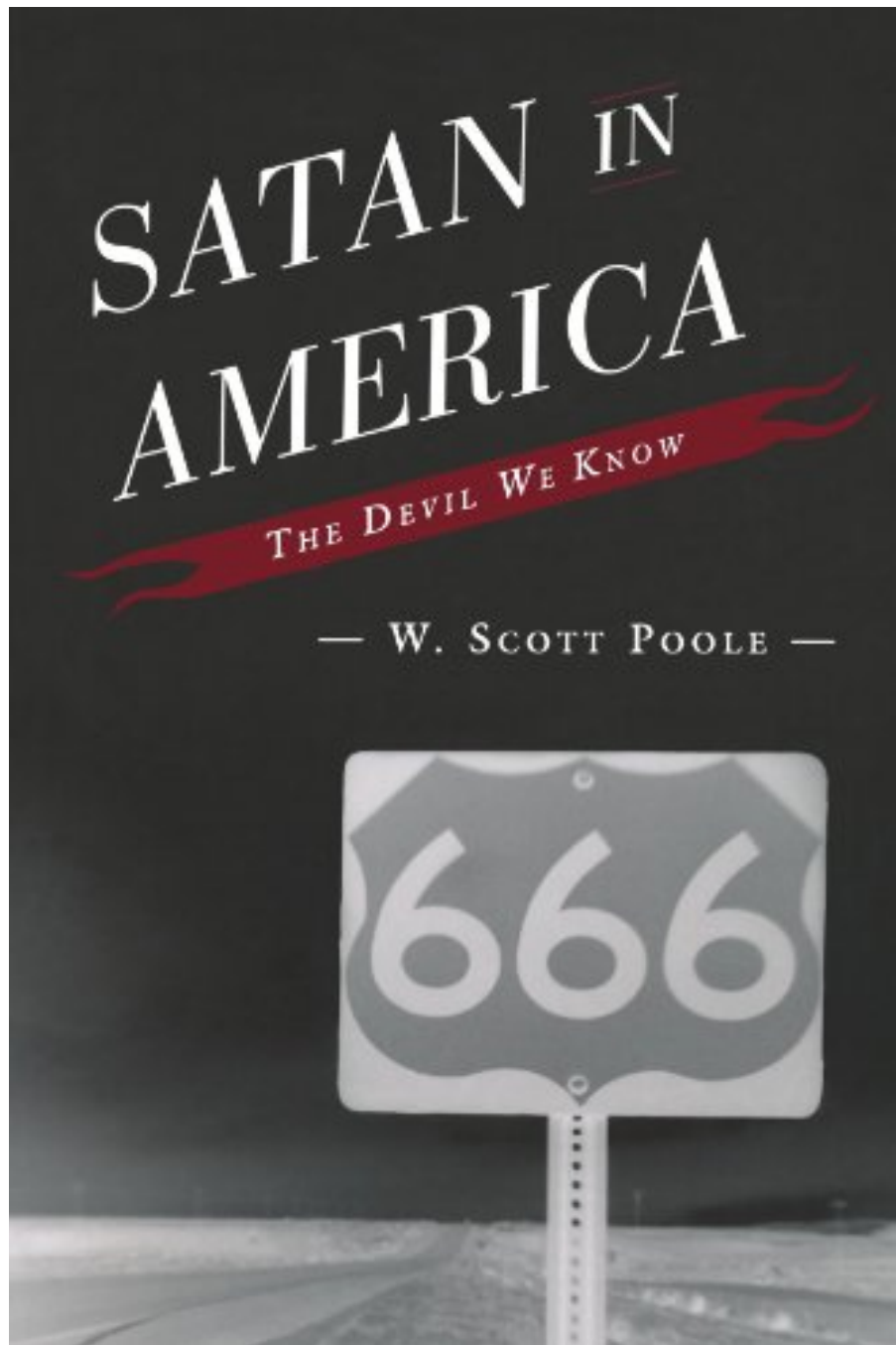


SATAN IN AMERICA: THE DEVIL WE KNOW BY W. SCOTT POOLE



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Review

Poole's engaging, wide-ranging survey of Satan in America from the Puritans to the War on Terror is an insightful and provocative counterpoint to works by Stephen Prothero and others of Jesus in America. Poole shows how much the enemy always has been within us and then projected outward. (Paul Harvey, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs)

From witch hunts of the colonial period to wars on terror in the modern era, from the raspy voice of blues musicians to the foreboding demonic presence in major motion pictures, Satan has been everywhere in American religion and culture. W. Scott Poole offers a brilliant book about the prince of darkness in our current and historical consciousness. This is an outstanding work. (Edward J. Blum, author of W. E. B. Du Bois, American Prophet)

Satan in America has an expansive scope. . . . Poole's work will introduce nonspecialists to various interesting American religious figures and ideas. . . . Recommended. (S. McCloud CHOICE)

Poole compellingly documents how the threat of the devil has been used throughout history to justify acts of bigotry, exclusion, and even official acts of cruelty and mass murder, from the colonial Indian wars up to the present. This insightful, profoundly troubling book is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the dark roots of American cultural history. (Bill Ellis, Penn State University)

About the Author

W. Scott Poole is associate professor in history at the College of Charleston. He is the author of five books dealing with American religion, race, and popular culture.

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Satan in America tells the story of America's complicated relationship with the devil. "New light" evangelists of the eighteenth century, enslaved African Americans, demagogic politicians, and modern American filmmakers have used the devil to damn their enemies, explain the nature of evil and injustice, mount social crusades, construct a national identity, and express anxiety about matters as diverse as the threat of war to the dangers of deviant sexuality. The idea of the monstrous and the bizarre providing cultural metaphors that interact with historical change is not new. Poole takes a new tack by examining this idea in conjunction with the concerns of American religious history. The book shows that both the range and the scope of American religiousness made theological evil an especially potent symbol. Satan appears repeatedly on the political, religious, and cultural landscape of the United States, a shadow self to the sunny image of American progress and idealism.

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Great Book for Anyone...almost

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I rented this book because it was required in the class I took with Dr. Poole and wish I had purchased it instead. So I am, and I'm also getting it for a relative with a background in American Studies. It is informative as to the place of the Devil specifically and of religion generally in America from its roots onward and encompasses history, politics, psychology, entertainment, and art. There are even sections on comic books, if that's your forte. The author, who writes simply with a touch of humor, makes little pretense on how he feels about the negative aspects of religion in America; so a reader might not want this if h/she is ultra-conservative and doesn't want his feathers ruffled. In other words, buy this if you are open to new ideas and slants, want to learn, be informed, and...perhaps...have your vision of America changed.

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