

Eras Journal - Seth Schermerhorn

Abstract of "Secularisation by the 'sacred'?: Discourses of 'religion' and the San Francisco Peaks"

This article examines discourses of 'religion' and considers whether discourses of 'religion' may be considered secularising discourses in the context of the San Francisco Peaks, which various American Indian tribes in the southwestern United States have struggled for decades to protect from what many have described as 'desecration'.

It suggests that although indigenous practitioners and advocates may employ a variety of discourses and categories of religion in their efforts to protect the San Francisco Peaks, these discourses are not necessarily secularising discourses.

Most importantly, this article argues that western categories do not apply to indigenous traditions and that even when indigenous peoples use these discourses and categories, they do not necessarily use them in the same way that westerners do. Therefore, the question of whether discourses of religion may be considered secularising discourses is essentially inapplicable the context of the San Francisco Peaks.