

Winner**Martin Hägglund (Yale University)****Title***This Life: Secular Faith and Spiritual Freedom* (Pantheon, 2019).**Citation**

Martin Hägglund's *This Life: Secular Faith and Spiritual Freedom* is unclassifiable. A work of great critical ambition that confronts religion and capitalism, freedom and mortality, threats on the planet, and the history of the left, it projects itself as a bold secular sermon and posits a radical morality for our times. Readers cannot remain indifferent: the notion of secular faith here presented will ruffle many feathers across the political spectrum. It is a work of literary criticism, with readings of Dante, Proust, and Knausgaard, and it is a work of philosophy, with readings of Augustine and Kierkegaard inspired by an original interpretation of Heidegger and, at its heart, it is a new thinking of existence in time. It is simultaneously a radical (and practical) case for democratic socialism, arrived at by a powerful juxtaposition of Karl Marx and Martin Luther King, Jr. It is also a work of what is sometimes called wisdom literature, speaking as it does with extraordinary directness and success to the general reader about the ever-timely question of how to live. It is a book against which alternative life projections must be measured. Balancing its bold universalism with a case in favor of modesty and sensitivity to the finitude of all human identities and projects, *This Life* is absolutely unique.