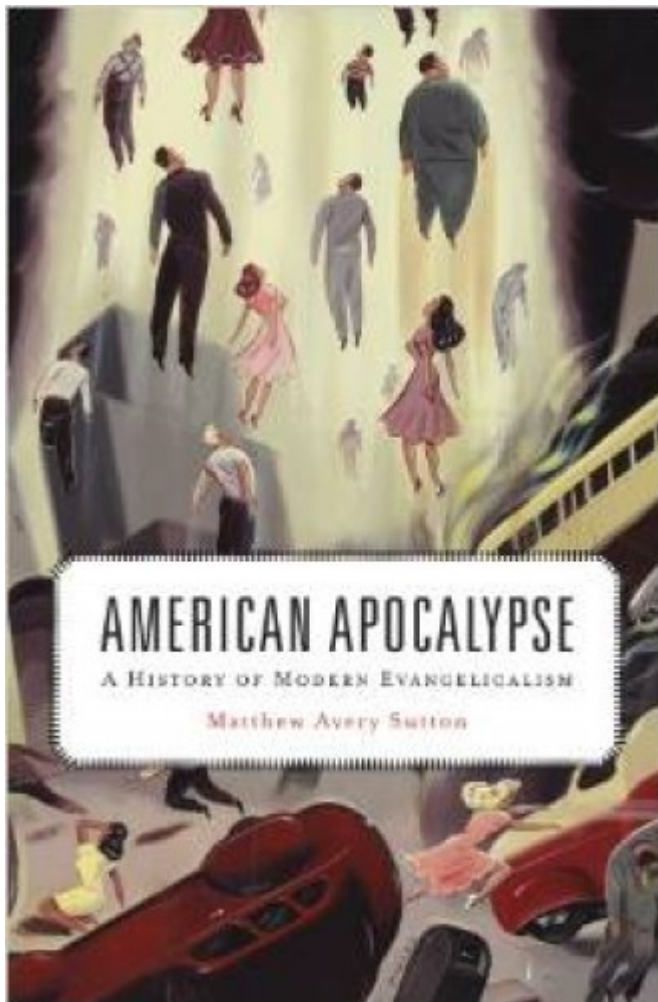


Edward J. Blum's Christmas list

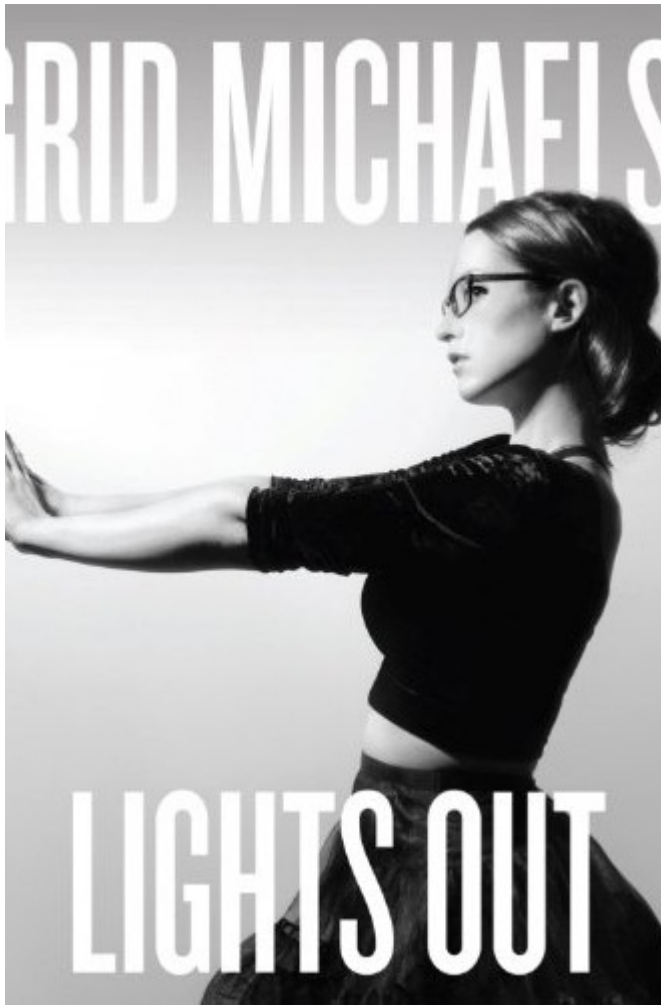
by [Edward J. Blum](#) in the [December 10, 2014](#) issue

## In Review



## American Apocalypse

By Matthew Avery Sutton  
Harvard University Press



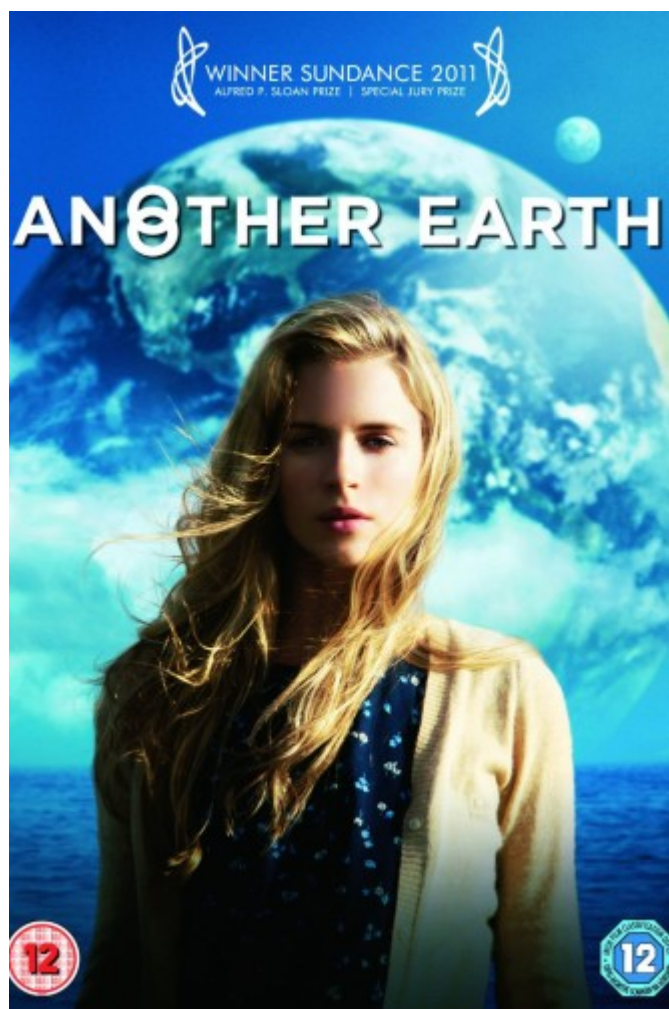
## **Lights Out**

by Ingrid Michaelson  
Cabin 24



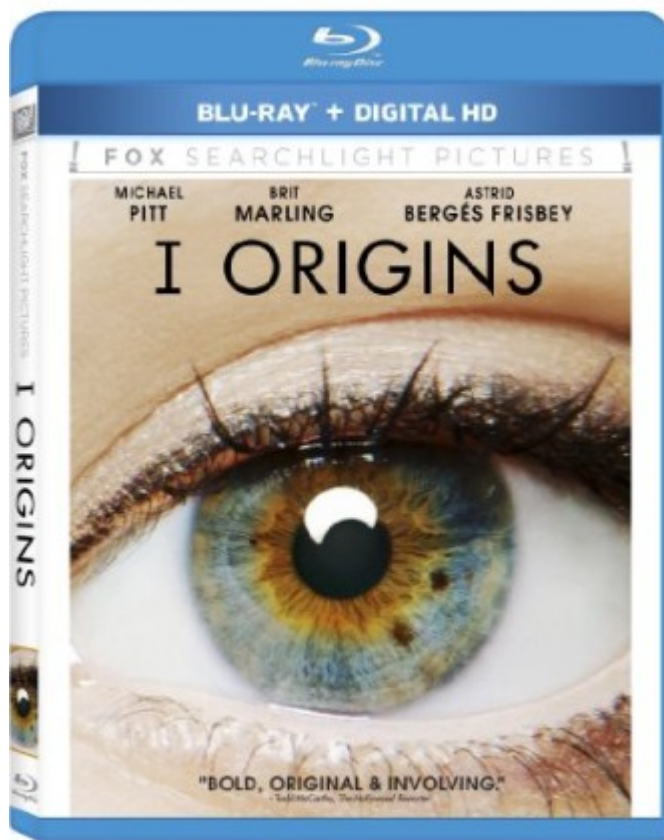
## Edge of Tomorrow

Warner Home Video



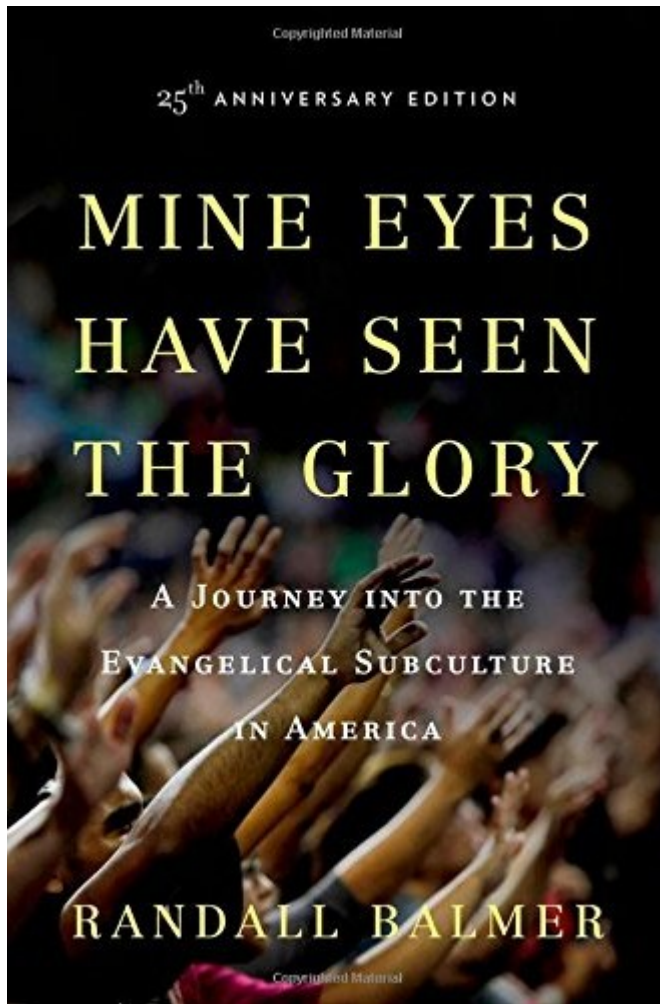
## **Another Earth**

Fox Searchlight



## I Origins

20th Century Fox



## **Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory**

by Randall Balmer

Oxford University Press





**X**

by Ed Sheeran  
Atlantic

***To give***

Matthew Avery Sutton read just about everything that fundamentalists and evangelicals had to offer in preparation for his pointed argument in *American Apocalypse* : premillennial dispensationalism pushed conservative Protestants into public, political, national, and international action. If you want to wrestle with evangelicals, read this book.

You've probably heard "Girls Chase Boys" from the album *Lights Out*: it's poppy and catchy. The song "Afterlife" has a similar feel but is much deeper. What you may not realize is that Ingrid Michaelson is one of the most thoughtful singer-songwriters out there. (Her song "Keep Breathing" is a family favorite.)

I'm not one to pretend that I don't like Tom Cruise or his movies. I love them: from *Top Gun* to *Jack Reacher*, the man always keeps me entertained. In *Edge of Tomorrow*, we watch him die again and again. He does this beautifully.

### ***To receive***

I adored Brit Marling in *Another Earth*, one of the finest redemption films ever made. Now she's in a new film, *I Origins*, which emphasizes eyes and sight. I'm obsessed with how Americans try to see the unseeable in Jesus, so this is one I can't miss.

I first read Randall Balmer's *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory* as an undergraduate almost 20 years ago. Now it's been reissued in a 25th anniversary edition. The book explained the evangelicalism of my youth and pushed me beyond it. It is history, ethnography, and lived religion all in one.

It was only after three hours of viewing that my interest in *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* picked up. During the closing credits Ed Sheeran's lyrical song "I See Fire" captivated me. If I have three hours to spare, I'd rather fill my ears with x, Sheeran's new CD, than fill my eyes with a bunch of dwarves meandering around in a forest.