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MEDIA ADVISORY: UNH Professor Available To Discuss Controversy Around Da Vinci Code Movie

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MEDIA ADVISORY: UNH Professor Available To Discuss Controversy Around *Da Vinci Code* Movie

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What's the big deal?

Michele Dillon, professor of sociology with a focus on religion and culture at the University of New Hampshire, is available to discuss the religious controversy around *The Da Vinci Code* film, especially in relation to the Catholic Church and Opus Dei. The book has come under criticism from religious groups who object to its premise that Jesus and Mary Magdalene married and had a child together. Dillon has read the book and will be seeing the religious-themed thriller Friday afternoon after it is released to general audiences (Friday, May 19, at 12:30 p.m.). She can be reached at 781-239-3552 or michele.Dillon@unh.edu.

Dillon has written extensively on Catholicism in the United States and elsewhere, and is especially interested in how church doctrines evolve as well as the various ways that Catholics who disagree with aspects of Catholic teaching challenge the Vatican while nonetheless remaining loyal to Catholicism. She also has examined the political engagement of the Catholic Church, and of other churches and activist organizations in public moral debates in different western countries.

According to the movie ticketing service Fandango, 88 percent of the people buying advance tickets to the film said they had read the book, which has sold more than 40 million copies. The service also reported that 74 percent of those buying tickets said their religious beliefs did not affect their decision.