

Teaching Religion and Healing

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The study of medicine and healing traditions is well developed in the discipline of anthropology. Most religious studies scholars, however, continue to assume that "medicine" and "biomedicine" are one and the same and that when religion and medicine are mentioned together, the reference is necessarily either to faith healing or

bioethics. Scholars of religion also have tended to assume that religious healing refers to the practices of only a few groups, such as Christian Scientists and pentecostals. Most are now aware of the work of physicians who attempt to demonstrate positive health outcomes in relation to religious practice, but few seem to realize the myriad ways in which healing pervades virtually all religious systems. This volume is designed to help instructors incorporate discussion of healing into their courses and to encourage the development of courses focused on religion and healing. It brings together essays by leading experts in a range of disciplines and addresses the role of healing in many different religious traditions and cultural communities. An invaluable resource for faculty in anthropology, religious studies, American studies, sociology, and ethnic studies, it also addresses the needs of educators training physicians, health care professionals, and chaplains, particularly in relation to what is referred to as "cultural competence" - the ability to work with multicultural and religiously diverse patient populations.

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