

**Religious Healing in the U.S.**  
**840:580**  
**Fall 2014**  
**M W | 2:15-3:35**  
**HSB - 201 | Douglass Campus**

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*\*\*Please note: Religious Healing in the U.S. meets concurrently with 840:380. Students taking the course for M.A. credit will be asked to complete additional assignments and attend meetings outside of the regularly scheduled class time.*

**Course Description:** This course will explore the history of religious healing in the United States, focusing especially on the following questions: How have major social, cultural, economic, and political trends in the United States impacted the way in which religious Americans defined illness and its cure? What are some of the key theories and models that scholars employ to analyze religious healing? How have individuals from various religious traditions responded to the ascendancy of the medical establishment and the growing prestige of medical science? How does the practice of modern medicine compare to explicitly religious healing rituals? How have different healing traditions interacted in an American context?

**Course Objectives:**

This course seeks to encourage critical thinking about the nature of religious healing in the United States. After taking this course, students should:

- become familiar with the diversity of religious healing in the U.S.
- gain a broad outline of major historical developments that have shaped the healing practices of Americans, such as the rising power of modern medicine, changing notions of gender, new immigration patterns in the U.S., etc.
- be able to critically compare the practice of modern medicine with explicitly religious forms of healing.
- be able to critically compare major religious healing traditions in the U.S. based on original research in primary sources.
- be introduced to key theoretical approaches to religious healing

**Course Texts (other readings are available on the internet or through Sakai):**

Fadiman, Anne. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*  
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998

ISBN-10: 0374525641  
ISBN-13: 978-0374525644

Whorton, James C. *Nature Cures: The History of Alternative Medicine in America*  
Oxford University Press, USA, 2004  
ISBN-10: 0195171624  
ISBN-13: 978-0195171624

Barnes, Linda L. and Susan S. Sered. *Religion and Healing in America*  
Oxford University Press, USA, 2004  
ISBN-10: 0195167961  
ISBN-13: 978-0195167962

Kinsley, David, *Health, Healing and Religion: A Cross Cultural Perspective*  
Prentice Hall, 1996  
ISBN-10: 0132127717  
ISBN-13: 9780132127714

### **Course Requirements:**

Essay: You will be required to write one main essay (15-17 pages/at least 3750 words). In your essay you will be asked to provide comparative analysis of two healing traditions of your choice. As you write the essay, you will need to utilize both primary and secondary sources. I will provide more specific guidelines in class, but you should be aware of the following:

*General Requirements for the Essay:* Papers turned in after class has started on the final due date will be considered late and lose 5%. Papers turned in after class is over will lose 15%. **No papers will be accepted if they are turned in more than one class period after the due date** unless arrangements have been made with the instructor. **In addition to the hard copy of your paper turned in during class, you should also submit your paper to Turnitin.com via Sakai on the due date of the paper. **\*\*Please note, your paper is not officially turned in until I have a hard copy of the paper. You will also lose 10% off your paper if you do not submit it electronically via Sakai on the due date.**** Email submissions *will not* be accepted.

*\*While undergraduates taking the course must participate in a peer-review process, this is optional for M.A. students.*

**\*\*Plagiarism and cheating will be handled in accordance with university policy.** See <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml#plagiarism>

Mid-Term and Final: Unlike undergraduates taking the course, students taking the course for graduate credit will have a take-home mid-term. The questions for the exam will be handed out one week prior to the due date. There will also be final exam given during the scheduled final exam period.

Quizzes: There will be unannounced quizzes throughout the semester based on the course readings. **Readings should be read by the date they are listed on the syllabus.** Anyone who has read the assigned pages should have no problem answering the questions. One quiz

score may be dropped and will not count towards the final grade (this includes a missed quiz). Make-up quizzes will only be allowed for excused absences approved by me beforehand (for funerals, heart bypass surgeries, et cetera). \*\*It is your responsibility to make sure you have read the material by the due date. Problems downloading the online readings will not excuse you from taking a quiz.

\*\*In addition to the regularly assigned readings, M.A. students should also read the selections listed under "Further Reading." We will discuss these readings at specially scheduled meetings for those taking the course for graduate credit.

Participation: Half of your participation grade will be calculated based on your participation in discussions during the specially scheduled M.A. meetings, as well as a brief presentation that you will give towards the end of the semester (the presentation will focus on the research you conducted for your essay). **In addition, attendance is expected at all classes.** If you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. If you miss more than four classes it will negatively impact your participation grade.

### **Grading System:**

Main Essay: 35%	Final Exam: 20%	Participation: 15%
Mid-term Exam: 15%	Reading Quizzes: 15%	

### **Grade Scale:**

100-92 A, 91-87 B+, 86-80 B, 79-77 C+, 76-70 C, 69-below F.

**Course Schedule** (**Fine Print:** I may make changes to the course readings, schedule, and policies as the course progresses. It is your responsibility, even if you miss classes, to keep yourself up-to-date on the course requirements.)

### **9/3 Course Overview**

**9/8 What exactly counts as healing anyway? How will we study it?** Please read Barnes & Sered, Ch. 14.

## **MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE HISTORY OF HEALING IN THE U.S.**

### **The Biomedical Model**

**9/10** Please read Kinsley, "Modern Medical Culture," available on Sakai.

**9/15** Please read Whorton, Ch. 11, and Jonathan Baer, "Sacred Bodies: Religion, Illness, and Healing," available on Sakai.

*For further reading:* Add Kinsley, Ch. 18; and Amanda Porterfield, "Scientific Approaches to Hope and Healing" (available on Sakai).

### **The Shamanic/Traditional Healing Models**

**9/17** Please read Fadiman, Chs. 1-7.

**9/22** Please read Fadiman, Chs. 8-13.

*For further reading:* Robert Desjarlais, "Presence," available on Sakai.

**\*Extra meeting for M.A. students this week**

### **The Faith Model**

**9/24** Please read Williams, "Early Pentecostal Healing," and excerpts of healing testimonies from early pentecostal periodicals, including *Apostolic Faith*, *Leaves of Healing*, *Triumphs of Faith* (available on Sakai)

**9/29** Please read Fadiman, Chs. 14-19.

*For further reading:* Kinsley, Ch. 12-13.

### **The Metaphysical Model Pt. 1: The Power of Nature.**

**10/1** Please read Whorton, Chs. 1, 2.

**10/6** Please read Whorton, Chs. 3, 8, & pgs. 230-43.

*For further reading:* Whorton Chs. 6, 9, 10.

**\*Extra meeting for M.A. students this week**

### **The Metaphysical Model Pt. 2: Mind over Matter**

**10/8** Please read "Mind Cure" selections, available on Sakai.

**10/13** Please read Whorton, Ch. 5.

*For further reading:* Excerpts from Joshua Liebman, *Peace of Mind*, and Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with a Key to the Scriptures* (available on Sakai).

**10/15** Catch-up day/review.

**10/20 Test #1**

### **10/22 Create Your Own Healing Tradition Assignment**

**\*Extra meeting for M.A. students this week** (*will meet during regular class time, while undergraduates work on a group assignment*)

## **KEY TOPICS IN THE STUDY OF HEALING IN THE U.S.**

### **Prayer & Science: The Politics of Studying Religious Healing**

**10/27** Please read selection from Brown, *Testing Prayer*, available on Sakai.

**10/29 Create Your Own Healing Tradition Presentations** \*M.A. students not required to attend.

*For further reading:* Harrington, "The Placebo Effect: What's Interesting for Scholars of Religion," available on Sakai.

**\*Extra meeting for M.A. students this week.**

### **Consumerism, Material Culture, and Healing**

**11/3** Please read Williams, "The Bible Cure," available on Sakai.

**11/5** For today's class you will be asked to bring in examples of advertisements for various religious healing products. Please be prepared to present your findings to the class (further guidelines will be provided in class).

No further reading due.

### **Gender, Sexuality, and Healing**

**11/10** Please read Barnes & Sered, Chs. 4, and an excerpt from Orsi, *Thank You, St. Jude*, available on Sakai.

**11/12 Undergraduate peer-review groups.** \*M.A. students not required to attend.

*For further reading:* Barnes & Sered, Ch. 16, 18

***\*Extra meeting for M.A. students this week. Instead of a group meeting, however, I will schedule times to meet with each of you individually to discuss your progress on the essay. I should be able to meet with at least a couple of you during the regular class time while undergraduates share their peer-review observations with one another.***

### **Race, Ethnicity, and Healing**

**11/17** Please read Barnes & Sered, Chs. 10, 12.

**11/19** Please read Barnes & Sered, Ch. 19.

*For further reading:* Wade Davies, "Western Medicine and Navajo Healing: Conflict and Compromise," available on Sakai.

**11/24 No Class (I'll be away at a conference)**

### **Pain, Death, and Healing**

**12/1** Please read Hunt, "Death and Dying," available on Sakai.

**12/3 Essay due; MA student presentations.**

*No further reading this week.*

### **Where are we at today?**

**12/8 Combinationism in American Religious Healing Traditions.** Please read Whorton, Ch. 12 & Conclusion.

**12/10** Summary and conclusion of course.

**Final Exam Time: Wed. Dec. 17, 8:00-11:00**