

**Healing in the U.S.
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Spring 2011
T F | 12:35-1:55
HSB-204**

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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? 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 within 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 compare critically the practice of modern medicine with explicitly religious forms of healing.
- be introduced to some basic 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

Course Requirements:

Mid-Term: There will be a take-home mid-term based on class lectures and readings.

Essay/Case Study: You will be required to write one main 8-10 page essay (at least 2000 words) this semester. In your essay you will explore a specific topic related to the healing tradition of your choice. There will be a research component to this essay and you will present your research to the class. I will provide more specific guidelines in class, including more specific questions for you to answer in your response.

Requirements for the Mid-Term and Essay: Mid-term exams and essays turned in after class has started on the due date will be considered late and lose 5%. The mid-term and essay may be turned in for late credit (minus 15%) one class period after the due date. **No mid-terms or essays 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 *prior to the due date*. **In addition to the hard copy of your paper turned in during class, you should also submit your exam/paper to Turnitin.com via Sakai on the due date of the paper. You will lose 10% off your paper if you do not submit it electronically via Sakai on the due date. **Please note, your paper is not officially turned in until I have a hard copy of the paper.** Email submissions *will not* be accepted.

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

Final Exam: There will be a final exam given during the scheduled final exam period.

Attendance & Participation: Attendance is expected at all classes. A record of attendance will be kept throughout the semester. More than 4 missed classes will negatively impact your participation grade (you will lose 10% off your participation grade for each absence above the first four). In order to encourage participation, for 15 classes when a reading is due this semester, please submit 3 questions related to the reading in the digital dropbox on Sakai. (You will lose 5% off your participation grade for each set of questions that you fail to submit. Also, please name each file based on the date of the reading, e.g. Jan-21. Further guidelines for these questions will be discussed in class.) Please note: If in our discussions I notice that students are not completing the reading assignments, I may begin giving quizzes on the readings that also would count towards your participation grade.

Grading System:

2 Exams: 50% (25% each)
1 Essay: 30%

Attendance & Participation: 20% (10% each)

100-92 A, 91-87 B+, 86-80 B, 79-77 C+, 76-70 C, 69-60 D, 59-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.)

1/18 Course Overview

1/21 What exactly counts as healing anyway? How will we study it? Please read Barnes & Sered, Ch. 14.

COMPETING NARRATIVES OF HEALING IN AMERICAN HISTORY: INTRODUCING THE CAST

The Biomedical Model

1/25 Please read Kinsley, "Modern Medical Culture," available on Sakai.

1/28 Please read Whorton, Ch. 11, and Barnes & Sered, Ch. 30.

The Shamanic/Traditional Healer Model

2/1 Please read Fadiman, Chs. 1-7.

2/4 Please read Fadiman, Chs. 8-13.

The Faith Model

2/8 Please read Williams, "Early Pentecostal Healing," and selections on "Faith Healing," available on Sakai.

2/11 Please read Fadiman, Chs. 14-19.

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

2/15 Please read Whorton, Chs. 1 & 2.

2/18 No class.

2/22. Please read Whorton, Chs. 3 & 8.

The Metaphysical Model Pt. 2: Mind over Matter

2/25. Please read an excerpt from Harrington, *The Cure Within*, available on Sakai.

3/1 Please read Whorton, Ch. 5.

3/4 Review for mid-term exam. Questions for mid-term given in class.

KEY TOPICS IN THE STUDY OF HEALING IN AMERICA

Gender and Sexuality in American Healing

3/8 Please read Barnes & Sered, Chs. 4 & 15.

3/11 Mid-term due.

3/15 & 3/18 No class. Spring Break!

Politics and the Culture Wars in American Healing

3/22 Please read Barnes & Sered, Ch. 16.

3/25 Please read Barnes & Sered, Ch. 10 and an excerpt from Balmer, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory*, available on Sakai.

Pain and Death in American Healing

3/29 Please read an excerpt from Orsi, *Thank You, St. Jude*, available on Sakai.

4/1 Please read Hunt, "Death and Dying," available on Sakai.

Race and Ethnicity in American Healing

4/5 Please read Barnes & Sered, Chs. 12 & 19.

4/8 Essay due.

4/12 Presentations of Research.

4/15 Presentations of Research.

Consumerism and Material Culture in American Healing

4/19 Please read Williams, "The Bible Cure," available on Sakai.

4/22 No reading due.

4/26 Where are we at today? Combinationism in American Religious Healing. Please read Whorton, Ch. 12 & Conclusion.

4/29 Review for final. .

Final Exam Time: Wednesday, 5/11 8:00-11:00