

Religious Healing in the U.S.
840:380
Fall 2012
M Th | 12:00-1:10
LSH-A256

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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 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 introduced to some basic theoretical approaches to religious healing
- produce an original research paper based on both primary and secondary sources exploring the impact of historical trends discussed in class on a particular religious healing tradition in the United States

SAS Core Curriculum Goals

This course meets the following specific SAS core curriculum goals associated with Historical Analysis (HST), Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCd), and Writing and Communication, Revision (WCr). I will look for evidence of your mastery of these goals in the writing assignments, presentations, and exams.

- (k) Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science.
- (l) Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors.
- (WCr) Respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision.
- (WCd) Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.

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:

Essay: You will be required to write one main 9-10 page essay (at least 2250 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 (you will need to utilize both primary and secondary sources). I will provide more specific guidelines in class, including more specific questions for you to answer in your response. You also must provide a draft of the paper prior to the due date and work with other students in draft reading groups. **You will lose 5% off your paper if you do not submit a working draft of the paper for peer-review by the date indicated on the syllabus.** (I will provide further details about this process in class.) In addition, 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 both a hard copy of the paper and it is also submitted via Sakai.** 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>

Mid-Term and Final: There will be an in-class mid-term, and a 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.

Participation (Presentations and Attendance): **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. An email is automatically sent to me. Please note: 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). You will also be asked to work with a group and give a presentation related to the "Create Your Own Healing Tradition" assignment, which will count as 5% of your participation grade.

Grading System:

Main Essay: 30%
Mid-term Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%
Reading Quizzes: 15%

Participation: 15%

Grade Scale:

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.)

9/6 Course Overview

9/10 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**

9/13 Please read Kinsley, "Modern Medical Culture," available on Sakai.

9/17 Please read Whorton, Ch. 11, and Barnes & Sered, Ch. 30.

The Shamanic/Traditional Healing Models

9/20 Please read Fadiman, Chs. 1-7.

9/24 Please read Fadiman, Chs. 8-13.

The Faith Model

9/27 Please read Williams, "Early Pentecostal Healing," and selections on "Faith Healing," available on Sakai.

10/1 Please read Fadiman, Chs. 14-19.

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

10/4 Please read Whorton, Chs. 1, 2 & 9.

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

The Metaphysical Model Pt. 2: Mind over Matter

10/11 Please read "Mind Cure" selections, available on Sakai.

10/15 Please read Whorton, Ch. 5.

10/18 Catch-up day/review. **Paper topic due (details discussed in class).**

10/22 Test #1

10/25 Create Your Own Healing Tradition Assignment

KEY TOPICS IN THE STUDY OF HEALING IN THE U.S.**The Politics of Studying Religious Healing**

10/29 Please read selection from Brown, *Testing Prayer*, available on Sakai.

11/1 Create Your Own Healing Tradition Presentations

Consumerism, Material Culture, and Healing

11/5 Please read Williams, "The Bible Cure," available on Sakai.

11/8 Peer-review groups assigned.

Gender, Sexuality, and Healing

11/12 Please read Barnes & Sered, Chs. 4 & 15.

11/15 Peer-review responses due.

Race, Ethnicity, and Healing

11/19 No class.

11/20 Please read Barnes & Sered, Chs. 10, 12 & 19.

11/22 No Class. Thanksgiving break.

Pain, Death, and Healing

11/26 Please read an excerpt from Orsi, *Thank You, St. Jude*, available on Sakai.

11/29 Essay due.

12/3 Please read Hunt, "Death and Dying," available on Sakai.

Where are we at today?

12/6 Combinationism in American Religious Healing Traditions. Please read Whorton, Ch. 12 & Conclusion.

12/10 Catch-up day/review.

Final Exam Time: Thursday, 12/20 12:00-3:00