

Religion, Medicine and Healing: Contemporary Perspectives

I. Instructor and Assistants for the course

Course: Religion and Healing (REL 3930).

Instructor: Dr. Robin Wright, Department of Religion. Anderson Hall 107C.

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Research Assistant: TBA

II. Course Website

Students are held responsible for all materials and related information posted on the course website. There is no required textbook for the course, all of the reading material will be provided on Sakai.

III. Objectives of the course:

The focus of this course is on 'non-conventional' healers and healing practices in various religious traditions around the globe. The most important themes we shall discuss are: the 'efficacy of religious symbols' for the healing process; cross-cultural notions of the body, of pain, and healing; embodiment of healing powers by religious specialists; ritual performances and their meanings; the importance of sound, sonic imagery, and music to healing processes; the relations of healing practices to cosmology, metaphysics, and sacred narratives; and, finally, the transformations of self and meaning that emerge during or from a cure.

The healing traditions we shall study, by ethnic groups or geographical regions, are the following: (1) indigenous peoples shamanisms of the Americas and urban mestizos of Latin America; (2) Asian, Eurasian, and Southeast Asian Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Sufism; (4) charismatic Christianity and Pentecostalism; (5) Naturopathy and Nature Religions; (6) Intellectual Property Rights. How does each tradition contrast with 'Western' bio-medicine? What relations does each maintain with conventional western bio-medical systems?

Is our current national health system capable of collaborating with, non-conventional forms of spiritual healing? Or are the interests of the industrial and pharmaceutical complex a hindrance through market control, predatory production of herbal remedies in ways that are damaging to peoples and the environment?

Finally, this course raises a more fundamental question of "Healing the Earth", which lies at the heart of our and many other societies' principal illness, that has been popularly called the "disconnect with nature", the barriers we've constructed historically separating us from non-Western societies by symbolic and political domination, massive alterations of the natural environment, and a blind trust in the future of high technology. This course argues that the way to healing ourselves and re-establishing a sustainable relationship with our "home" - the planet earth – and its aboriginal inhabitants is through healing the 'nature disconnect' on various fronts. The lessons of ancient traditions coupled with a re-scaling of 'modern medicine' are valuable starting-points towards this overall humanitarian goal.

IV. Each of the modules focuses on one or more of the following Themes:

- Phenomenological study of experiences of sickness and healing; contrasting approaches to sickness and healing among both traditional and non-traditional peoples;

- 'Aesthetic' aspects of healing: the importance of the religious imagination in representing pain, the notion of 'soul- loss'; synaesthesia, ethnopoetics, sonic imagery; music and religion; music and healing; relations of ethnomusicology and medical anthropology;

- 'Performance': traditional healing relies on a wide variety of performative aspects (e.g., dance and induction of altered states of consciousness) that must be mastered by the healer during his/her training; these aspects are crucial for shamanic traditions which perform 'community healing' in which the specialists embody the ancestral energy, or life-force, transmitting it in their cures;

- Diversity of cultural meanings of sickness and healing (in cosmology, cosmogony, ontology, eschatology); the 'category of the unknown', reversible 'deaths', and levels of 'knowledge' in curing; sources of and access to, spiritual 'power';

- Plant spirit shamanism, ‘ayahuasca’ curanderos or ‘vegetalistas’ of urban Latin America who seek through visionary experience a cure for their clients; importance of sacred plants in healing rites; Mayan herbalists;
- Healing as a process consisting of distinct phases; the relations between categories of illness and modes of healing; ritual forms, dietary restrictions, and preventive modes of protection against illness;
- The idea of ‘embodiment’ of the sacred, as in Western Pentecostal Christianity and Charismatic Catholicism, and its importance to understanding the processes of healing;
- The relevance of the socio-political contexts in which the non-conventional healers work, their relation to ‘dominant structures’ of scientific expertise; economic, political power.

V. Expectations:

Our Responsibilities: To present a solid review of the subject matter. The instructor, Teaching Assistant, and Research Assistant are committed to help you understand the material. If you have any questions regarding course materials, policies, grading, and technical problems, I would highly encourage you to contact one of them ahead of time. You are encouraged to ask questions through the Sakai page.

Your Responsibilities: To keep up with lectures, readings, films, and submitting assignments **BEFORE** the due date. This is an online course, and it is easy to fall behind, therefore I highly encourage you to keep up with the “Lecture Schedule” provided to you on the Resources tab. You are expected to:

- o Follow guidelines provided by the instructor
- o Watch lectures, do the assigned readings, watch films
- o Submit assignments **BEFORE** the due date

- o Follow the UF honor code (see below). Remember: All written portions of assignments are checked for plagiarism.

VI. Grading:

Reflection Paper: There are three “reflection papers” required for the course. Each one should be written about one of the films presented before the due date of the reflection paper. Each paper should be 1-2 pages (700 words) in length, typed, using 12-size Times New Roman font in a double-spaced format. Papers should seek to answer “prompt” questions provided beforehand in a clear, succinct, and original way. The prompt questions generally ask you to focus on a theme that is important in both the film and the readings to which the film is related. Simply repeating the storyline is not acceptable. The prompt questions will be posted on the “Assignments” section of the Sakai course website on the day of the showing – in nearly all cases, a Friday - and will be due by midnight on the dates indicated in the Lecture Schedule (September 20, October 18, November 18).

Midterm and Final Exam: The midterm exam will consist of a combination of question types: matching terms to definitions, multiple choice, and short essays. The material to be covered by the midterm includes everything from Day 1 of the course until October 11. Midterm exams will be opened under the Tests and Quizzes section on Friday, October 11, at 8 a.m. and closed by midnight on October 13. The Final exam, scheduled for December 9, 2013, will be structured similarly to the Midterm, and will cover all material from October 11 until the last day of class. The Final will be available at 8 a.m. on 12/09, and due by midnight on 12/11, 2013. Keep in mind that exams are timed. Once you begin the exam, you will have 2 hours to complete it. Both the Midterm and the Final exams will be evaluated for possible plagiarism by the Turnitin tool.

Make-up Exams: will be scheduled for those students who are unable to take the midterm or final on the dates established (October 11 for Midterm, December 09 for the Final). Students must present appropriate written proof that it was not possible to take the exam on the established date (a doctors' note in the case of a medical situation requiring immediate treatment, a statement from director of a sports program in the case of the student's participation in a sports event, appropriate letters in the case of a family emergency, or family event.) In all cases, clearance from the Professor is required for a make-up exam to occur. Depending on the circumstances of the case, students should plan to take make-up exams one week following the scheduled date.

Participation question: There will be a total of ten participation assessments. You will need to go to the Test and Assessments tab and

take a 4-question multiple-choice quiz. The quiz will open up on the date indicated on the Lecture Schedule and will close at midnight of the same day.

Extra Credit Essay: The wealth of material available on Modules 8 & 9 ("Naturopathy" and "Healing the Planet" respectively) makes it impossible to cover all of the interesting questions that are currently of great relevance to this course. Thus, for students interested in researching and writing a short essay on the film "The Gersen Miracle", extra credit points can be garnered (50 total) to add to your grade.

Grade calculations:

Reflection Paper (3 - each worth 100):	300 points	(37.5%)
Midterm Exam:	200 points	(25%)
Final Exam:	200 points	(25%)
<u>Participation (10 – each worth 10):</u>	<u>100 points</u>	<u>(12.5%)</u>
Total:	800 points	(100%)

Final scores will not be rounded (i.e., 89.92% is not 90%). Your final grade will be based of three reflection papers, one midterm exam, one final exam, and participation questions. Grade Scale:

- A: >93% of X
- A-: >90% of X
- B+: >87% of X
- B: >83% of X
- B-: >80% of X
- C+: >77% of X
- C: >73% of X
- C-: >70% of X
- D+: >67% of X
- D: >60% of X
- D-: >57% of X

E: <57% of X

VII. Special Treatment

We do not offer any kind of special treatment, or adjust grades on the individual basis. If you are having problems with the course material or health related problems, please contact instructor as soon as possible. Do not attempt to contact me at the end of the semester and expect me to solve any of the above problems. Incompletes are strongly discouraged and will be given only when students who have finished most of the assignments satisfactorily cannot complete the final requirements due to unforeseen events. If this is the case, students must arrange for the incomplete before the end of the semester.

VIII. Email Communication

All email correspondence to course instructors must be sent through Sakai using the Mail function. Correspondence regarding the lecture, homework, and the overall course should be directed to the instructor, TA, or RA.

IV. Academic Honesty and the Honor Code

Plagiarism or cheating: Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating will automatically receive a grade of zero on the assignment in question and will fail the course. In addition, they will be reported to the appropriate university authorities. Please keep in mind that plagiarism does not consist only in copying verbatim someone else's material and presenting it as if it were yours. It also includes taking ideas (even paraphrased!) from an author without according him/her proper recognition (through a footnote, for instance). Other forms of cheating (particularly downloading material from the Internet and presenting as if it were yours) will also be subject to the same action.

See:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm><http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm> for more information on UF policies.

X. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting accommodation or special consideration must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation or special consideration.

RELIGION, MEDICINE, AND HEALING: AN ANTHOLOGY

Robin M. Wright (ed.)

Contents:

1 Introduction

Key terms and definitions; theoretical perspectives and methodologies; varieties of religious specialists, acquiring the knowledge and power to heal.

- Kleinman, A. "What is Specific to Western Medicine ?" Ch. 2 in: *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine. Vol. 1.* Bynum, W.F. & R. Porter, eds., Routledge: N.Y. 1997, pp. 15-23.

2 The Problem of Chronic Pain

- "Pain and Bodies", Jean Jackson, Ch. 21 *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment.* Frances E Mascia-Lees. Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Pp. 270-87.

Video: "The Science of Healing" (Netflix)

3 Shamanic Traditions of the World

3.1. Northwest Amazonian pajés (shamans)

- Wright, R.M., “The Making of a Jaguar Shaman” 2013; “The Making of a Shamans’ House”, 2013;
- “Chamanes jaguares del *Yuruparí*, declarado patrimonio de la Humanidad”(Jaguar shamans of *Yurupari*, declared world heritage), 2012;

Powerpoint : “Blood of the Ancestors”.

3.2. Amazonian *ayahuasca* healers and churches

- Taylor, James, “*La Medicina: Ritual and Healing with Ayahuasca.*” (14 pp.);
- Rittner, Sabine, “Sound –Trance- and Healing and pattern medicine of the Shipibo in the Amazon Lowlands of Peru”, *Music Therapy Today*, Vol. VIII(2), 2007, 196-235;
- Ede Frecska, “The Risks and Potential Benefits of *Ayahuasca* Use from a Psychopharmacological Perspective”. In: *The Internationalization of Ayahuasca*, ed. By Biatriz Caiuby Labate & Henrik Jungaberle. LIT, Verlage, pp. 152-65’;
- **Comparative Table:** “Mestizo Shamans, Ayahuasca Churches, Traditional Shamanism/Herbalists” (organized by RM Wright)/

Video: “Vine of the Souls”

3.3. Physical and Spiritual Transformations in Bon Shamanism of Nepal & Tibet

- “Presence”, by Robert R. Desjarlais, in: *The Performance of Healing*, ed. By Carol Laderman & Marina Roseman. Routledge, 1996, pp. 143-164;

- "The *Man Chinni* Exorcism Rite of Tamang Shamans", by Larry G. Peters, *Shamans' Drum*, No. 55, 2000, pp. 16-25;

Video: "Fate of the Lhapa" (2007); <http://www.der.org/films/fate-of-the-lhapa.html>

3.4. Musical performance and poetics in Malay Shamanism

- "The Poetics of Healing in Malay Shamanistic Performances", Carol Laderman, In: *The Performance of Healing*, ed. By Carol Laderman & Marina Roseman. Routledge, 1996, pp. 115-41.

3.5. Shamanism & Community Healing in New Orleans' Mardi Gras, 2006

- "Drumming, African Identity , and Shamanism: The SSC and the Ritual State of the Spirit of Fi Yi Yi in the Black (Mardi Gras) Indian Tradition of New Orleans", Jeffrey David Ehrenreich, *Shamanism Annual*, December 2010, Issue 23, pp. 5-11.

3.6. "Core shamanism":

- Bill Brunton, "The Reawakening of Shamanism in the West"
©Shamanism, Fall/Winter 2003, Vol. 16, No. 2
(<http://www.shamanism.org/articles/article13.html>);
- S. Mokolke, "Why Study Core Shamanism?"
(<http://www.shamanism.org/articles/article15.html>);
- "Core Shamanism and Daily Life"
©Shamanism Annual, December 2009, Issue 22
(<http://www.shamanism.org/articles/core-shamanism-daily-life.html>);
- "Ethical Considerations and in Shamanic Healing"
©Shamanism Annual, December 2008, Issue 21
(<http://www.shamanism.org/articles/ethics.html>);

- “Core and Neo-Shamanism”, Joan Townsend , In: *Shamanism: an encyclopedia of world beliefs, practices, and culture*, Volume 1, edited by Mariko Namba Walter, Eva Jane Neumann Fridman, Google e-books. pp. 49-57.

Comparative Table: Traditional, Core, and Neo-Shamanism

Video: <http://www.shamanism.org/media/michael-harner-honored.php>

4 Traditional Mayan Healing Life-force Ch’ulel and the Chinese Taoist Chi

- *Rainforest Home Remedies. The Maya Way to Heal Your Body and Replenish Your Soul.* Rosita Arvigo & Nadine Epstein. Harper, San Francisco, 2001, pp. 3-40.
- *Wind in the Blood. Mayan Healing and Chinese Medicine.* Hernan Garcia, Antonio Sierra, Gilberto Balám. North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, 1999, pp. xxiii-xvi, Chs, 1-65.

Videos: “Sastun”, Dir. by Guido Verweyen, Cosmic Pictures, 2003; Bill Moyers, *Healing and the Mind*. Vol. 1. “The Mystery of Chi”, Ambrose Video, 1993.

5 Tibetan Buddhism: the Gyuschi tradition;

- Gabriele Feyerer, *Padma. Integrating Ancient Wisdom and Modern Research Using Traditional Tibetan Herbs for Today’s Diseases.* Lotus Press, Shangri-La,, 2003, pp. 11-82.
- <http://www.tibetanmedicine-edu.org/index.php/n-articles/the-three-humors-part-2>

Video: “The Knowledge of Healing...XIV.S.H. Tenzin Gyatso” by Franz Reichle (2004, Icarus Films).

6 Hinduism: Ayurvedic medicine

- “Indian Medicine”, Dominik Wujastyk, Ch. 33, in: *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine, Vol. 1.*, ed. by W.F. Bynum & R. Porter. Routledge: N.Y., 1997, pp. 755-778.
- “Modern Practice of Ayurveda and Its Globalization”, Michala Lee

Video: “The Art of Being”
(<http://www.documentarywire.com/ayurveda-art-of-being>)

8 Charismatic Roman Catholic

- “Imaginal Performance and Memory in Ritual Healing”, by Thomas J. Csordas, in: Lader & Roseman (op. cit.), *The Performance of Healing*, Routledge, 1996, pp. 91-114;

Videos: 3) Personal Healing Testimonials from a Charismatic Healing Retreat - final session
(21:24 ; 25:00 ; 35:00 (TESTIMONIAL) ; 44:50 (BENEDICTINE) ; 57:00-59:40)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLqNE3dxIXM>

- Catholic Charismatic Renewal Explain The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG_ENeX3Xxo

- Understanding the Anointing with Rodney Howard Browne, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EkQQYHpNLM>

7 Islamic Sufi Healing;

- “Unseen Power: Aesthetic Dimensions of Symbolic Healing in *Qawwali*”, James R. Newell, vol. 97, *The Muslim World*, pp. 640-656.
- Hakim G.M. Chishti, “*The Book of Sufi Healing*”, Inner Traditions International, 1991, pp. 11-16, 25-55.

Videos (watch on your own): Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (on Youtube) singing *Qawwali*

9 Naturopathy

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Naturopathy>
- Feeding the Spirit: Nutritious Herbs That Heal: “The Amazing Health Benefits of Juicing Raw Cannabis (Marijuana) Leaves” <http://www.whydontyoutrythis.com/2013/02/health-benefits-of-juicing-raw-cannabis.html#sthash.7sUX3R6V.dpbs>
- Feeding the Spirit: Nutritionist Helps Tribes Rediscover Traditional Foods, <http://www.bastyr.edu/news/general-news-home-page/2012/02/feeding-spirit-nutritionist-helps-tribes-rediscover-traditional> 2011. Feeding the Spirit.
- “Cannabis (L.: sativa, indica, and ruderalis) and Healing in the History of the Church”, by Christopher A Wright, presented at the 2011 International “Plants and Religion” Conference, held at UF-Gainesville, co-sponsored among numerous departments, pp. 1-7

- “Cannabis has always played an important role in Religion”, by Chris Bennett , presented at the 2011 International “Plants and Religion” Conference, held ay UF-Gainesville, co-sponsored among numerous departments, pp. 8-11.

10 Healing the Planet

- Albanese, C., 2005. “Nature Religions in the U.S.” In: Taylor, B. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*. Continuum, N.Y., pp. 1175-86;

- O’Brien, Bridgette, 2013. (excerpt from) “Questions, Methods and Premises in the Study of Green School Movements”, Chapter of Ph.D. Dissertation “*Religion, Ethics and Nature in Secondary School Education: Exploring Religion’s Role in Sustainability Trends*”, Department of Religion, University of Florida-Gainesville.

- **“Healing Elements: A Native Hawaiian Perspective”** (this module consists of six classes that divide into three units. Each class provides a brief introduction, primary resources, pre-class assignments, and in-class activities, including discussion questions.

Voyage to Health: the Hawaiian Experiences

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/avoyagetohhealth/education/higher-education.html>

- **Class 1.** Hawaiian Health and Well-Being: Balancing Essential Elements
- **Class 2.** Natural Elements: Healing Places
- **Class 3.** Physical Elements: Traditional Foods, Diet and Physical Activity
- **Class 4.** Spiritual Elements: Healing Hands
- **Class 5.** Kanaloa Kaho’olawe: Land, Identity, and Health
- **Class 6.** Using History to Glorify and Defend the Past

For **further background** on native Hawaiian Health issues, read: “ Native Hawaiian Health in Hawaii: Historical Highlights”, by Bradley E. Hope and Janette Harbottle Hope. *Californian Journal of Health Promotion* 2003, Volume 1, Special Issue: Hawaii, 1-9(available on Module website);

- **“Journey to Health. The Totem’s Journey”** (the following site will take you along a cross-country voyage by Native North Americans transporting a newly-carved, sacred totem from the far Northwest to its ‘home’ at the National Library of Medicine. Bethesda, Md.
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/exhibition/healing-totem/the-totems-journey.html> ;
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/exhibition/healing-totem/index.html>

- Fisher, Andy, 2005. “Ecopsychology”, In: *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*. Bron Taylor, ed. Continuum, NY, pp. 557-8.

- De Pater, Catherine. 2005. “Ecotherapy” and “Ecotopia” In: Taylor, B. ed. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*. Bron Taylor, ed. Continuum, NY, pp. 563-66.

- Satouris, Elisabet, 1999. *Earthdance. Living Systems in Evolution*. <http://www.ratical.org/lifeweb/index.html> (developments on the Gaia narrative)

11 Issues and Debates

- *“Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and intellectual property”*,
by Jane Anderson,

<http://web.law.duke.edu/cspd/itkpaper>

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(Read esp. Chs. 1, 2, 4)

- *“The Impact of Commodification of Herbal Medicine by
Pharmaceutical and Drug Development Companies”*, by
Andrew Taylor. NEXUS Vol15 (2001/2002), pp. 55-68.

12 Selected Bibliographies and Resources

