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The Psychology of Religion, Fourth Edition: An Empirical Approach

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Scholarly and comprehensive yet accessible, this state-of-the-science work is widely regarded as the definitive graduate-level psychology of religion text. The authors synthesize classic and contemporary empirical research on numerous different religious groups. Coverage includes religious thought, belief, and behavior across the lifespan; links between religion and biology; the forms and meaning of religious experience; the social psychology of religious organizations; and connections to morality, coping, mental health, and psychopathology. Every chapter features thought-provoking quotations and examples that bring key concepts to life.

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Editorial Review

Review

"A splendid update of the definitive text in the psychology of religion. Important new developments in the psychology of atheism, conversion, evolutionary perspectives, and the cognitive science of religion receive extensive coverage. This is an authoritative and cutting-edge resource that can be used in either undergraduate courses or graduate seminars. Research in the psychology of religion has accelerated in the past decade, and these authors capture the excitement and main threads of contemporary developments without ignoring classic work in the field."--Robert A. Emmons, PhD, Department of Psychology, University of California, Davis; Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of Positive Psychology*

"A truly marvelous work of scholarship--an indispensable resource for anyone with a serious interest in the scientific study of religion. Hood, Hill, and Spilka offer a highly readable text that systematically presents the growing body of research in a comprehensive yet concise way. The fourth edition has a restructured format that makes it even more practical and adaptable for classroom use. Without doubt, this fourth edition will retain its place as the leading text in the field."--W. Paul Williamson, PhD, Department of Psychology, Henderson State University, Arkansas

"The volume is broad in scope, yet grounded in a meaning-making approach. It integrates a wide range of topics and classic research along with the latest findings. Hood, Hill, and Spilka write with wisdom, wit, and authority, making this a highly enjoyable and thought-provoking text."--Crystal L. Park, PhD, Department of Psychology, University of Connecticut

"This is the standard reference for scientific knowledge about how people live their religious and spiritual lives. This book grapples with quandaries about religion at the leading edge of our cultural discourse, including the differences between religiousness and personal spirituality and the ways in which religion can both heal and harm. It covers the lifespan from childhood to late life, addressing a range of challenges for which religion can bolster coping, such as illness, personal tragedy, and loss. The authors admirably carry forward the torch of William James and Gordon Allport in the fourth edition of this seminal text."--James L. Griffith, MD, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, George Washington University School of Medicine

"The field has grown by leaps and bounds since the third edition of this book, and Hood, Hill, and Spilka have clearly kept pace with the changes. In-depth without being overwhelming, the volume strikes just the right balance. This well-written and engaging text is ideal for graduate and advanced undergraduate courses. In addition, the book provides researchers with an invaluable means of orienting themselves to new topic areas within the psychology of religion."--Julie Juola Exline, PhD, Department of Psychology, Case Western Reserve University

"This book just keeps getting better. It is by far the most comprehensive and engaging psychology of religion text on the market. The authors review classic and contemporary theory and research on the development of religion, neuroscience of spiritual experiences, positive psychology, health, and much more. This book has it all. It is highly appropriate for use in advanced undergraduate courses and graduate seminars, and should be on the shelf of every scholar who studies religion at the level of the individual, couple, family, group, community, or society."--Wade C. Rowatt, PhD, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, Baylor

University

About the Author

Ralph W. Hood, Jr., PhD, is Professor of Psychology at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He is past president of the Psychology of Religion division of the American Psychological Association, and a recipient of its William James Award, Virginia Sexton Mentoring Award, and Distinguished Service Award. He is cofounder of *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, for which he has served as coeditor and book review editor. Dr. Hood has also been editor of the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* and is currently coeditor of the *Archiv für Religionspsychologie*.

Peter C. Hill, PhD, is Professor of Psychology at Biola University's Rosemead School of Psychology in La Mirada, California. He is past president of the Psychology of Religion division of the American Psychological Association and a recipient of its William C. Bier Award and Distinguished Service Award. He is editor of the *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*.

Bernard Spilka, PhD, is Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Denver. He is past president of the Psychology of Religion division of the American Psychological Association and a recipient of its William James Award and Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Spilka has also been vice-president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, and president of the Colorado Psychological Association and the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association. Now retired, he continues to write on the psychology of prayer and on religion, evolution, and genetics.

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