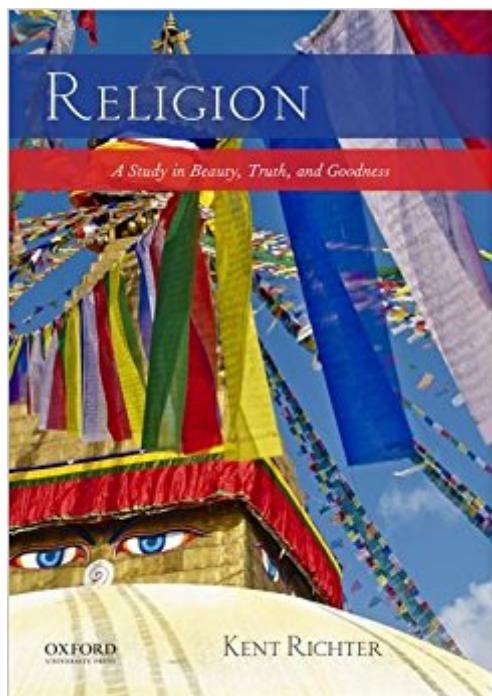


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Religion: A Study In Beauty, Truth, And Goodness



Synopsis

Religion: A Study in Beauty, Truth, and Goodness covers the wide array of elements, including the concepts of ultimate being, scripture, ritual, morality, and beauty, which make up the fascinating entity known as religion. Taking a phenomenological approach that emphasizes the standpoint of the religious believer--a view from the inside of religion--Kent Richter uses the categories of experience, belief, and behavior ("Beauty, Truth, and Goodness") as a way to think about religion in general. This approach helps students understand both the great variety in religious traditions and the internal coherence that religion holds for its practitioners.

Book Information

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"I can see my undergraduate students not just reading Religion, but liking it too. Richter has a gift for expressing complex concepts in religious studies in very accessible language."--Thomas W. Martin, Susquehanna University "I love the beauty/truth/goodness central metaphor--there is something immediately appealing about it."--James G. Lochtefeld, Carthage College "This is exactly what new college students need as a bridge to the academic study of religion."--Stephen Lahey, University of Alaska

Kent Richter is Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at College of DuPage. He is the coauthor of *Understanding Religion in a Global Society* (2004).

Dr. Richter's text is one of the best religion textbooks that I have used in quite a while. I was able to

obtain a pre-published copy of it this past year, and have used it in three of my Introduction to Religion classes. Three of its numerous strengths include:1) Richter's writing style is very engaging and readable, which works really well for students who have had little exposure to an academic study of religion.2) He asks questions throughout that help students think critically about religious concepts, in each religious tradition, whether it's Moksha, the Trinity, Nirvana, the Tao, or Sunyata. What I appreciate here is that Richter doesn't offer any final answers, but he raises these questions and equips the students with tools to think more carefully about these concepts.3) He incorporates a phenomenological approach throughout, which helps the reader to understand various religions from the point of view of the people in those religions. Where the student goes from there--that is, whether or not they accept or reject those ideas--is wholly up to them. That is to say, before one can accept or reject a worldview, one has to know what they are accepting or rejecting. Richter helps the reader get there. Needless to say, I will be using Richter's text for years to come.

Richter's introduction to religion (and how to analyze religions) is an excellent text for undergraduates first entering the field of Religious Studies, but also for the general reader who is curious about religion and religious beliefs. He gradually introduces the reader to the concepts of religious studies and is careful to fully explain not only the meaning of technical terms but also the significance of the terms. Although this is not a comparative religion text, Richter's breadth of knowledge leads him to discuss not just the religions likely to be familiar to readers but also non-Western religions. His approach to religions as quests for Beauty, Truth and Goodness is truly masterful. All in all, a wonderful beginning textbook and a worthwhile book for the intelligent general reader.

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