Theory And Method In Religious Studies Religion And Reason | e07c322931a197654f7dc29f106c0c61

Studying Religion
Bloomsbury Reader in Cultural Approaches to the Study of Religion
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Studying Religion

Waardenburg’s magisterial essay traces the rise and development of the academic study of religion from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, outlining the establishment of the discipline, its connections with other fields, religion as a subject of research, and perspectives on a phenomenological study of religion. Furthermore a second part comprises an anthology of texts from 41 scholars whose work was programmatic in the evolution of the academic study of religion. Each chapter presents a particular approach, theory, and method relevant to the study of religion. The pieces selected for this volume were taken from the discipline of religious studies as well as from related fields, such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology, to name a few.

Bloomsbury Reader in Cultural Approaches to the Study of Religion

Religion is central to Durkheim's theory of society, and his work laid most of the foundations of the sociology of religion. Daring and brilliant though his analysis was, its bold claims and questionable premises has made it the subject of ongoing academic debate. Durkheim's work on the subject reached a peak with the publication in 1912 of what turned out to be a classic in its
field, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. No other book has explained Durkheim's views on religion using the whole corpus of his writings. Dr Pickering shows how Durkheim's position developed and explains the themes and theories that run through Durkheim's work. This includes Durkheim's attitude towards secularisation and Christian churches, as well as his notion of the contemporary cult of the individual.

**Reinventing Religious Studies**

"Reinventing Religious Studies" offers readers an opportunity to trace the important trends and developments in Religious Studies over the last forty years. Over this time the study of religion has been transformed into a critical discipline informed by a wide range of perspectives from sociology to anthropology, politics to material culture, and economics to cultural theory. "Reinventing Religious Studies" brings together key writings which have helped shape scholarship, teaching and learning in the field. All the essays are drawn from the CSSR Bulletin, a provocative, occasionally irreverent, and always critical journal which has long been at the centre of debates in Religious Studies. This collection will prove invaluable for students and scholars of theory and method in Religious Studies. It offers readers a unique opportunity to understand the history of key issues in the study of religion and what remains central to the study of religion today.
Durkheim's Sociology of Religion

How should we understand and interpret the strange but familiar thing that we call “religion”? What are the foundations of a methodical approach to this subject, and what theoretical tools are available to students who are new to this area of inquiry? A Beginner's Guide to the Study of Religion provides an accessible, wide-ranging introduction to theories and basic methodology in the field. Now in its second edition and updated throughout, this concise but comprehensive book includes:

- A case for the urgency and relevance of studying religion today
- Discussion of the role and perspective of the student of religion
- Description of the nature of theory and its function
- An accessible survey of classic theorists in the modern study of religion
- Feature boxes highlighting essential quotations and guiding principles for application of theories
- An expanded consideration of contemporary issues in the field, including gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, globalization, violence, science, and new media.

Recommended further reading: A Beginner's Guide to the Study of Religion offers a thorough but concise body of material suitable for introductory courses on the study of religion, or to provide theoretical context for survey courses. Study questions and worksheets can be found on the book's webpage.

The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion
This is the first reader to gather primary sources from influential theorists of the late 20th and early 21st centuries in one place, presenting the wide-ranging and nuanced theoretical debates occurring in the field of religious studies. Each chapter focuses on a major theorist and contains: · an introduction contextualizing their key ideas · one or two selections representative of the theorist's innovative methodological approach(es) · discussion questions to extend and deepen reader engagement Divided in three sections, the first part includes foundational comparative debates: · Mary Douglas's articulation of purity and impurity · Phyllis Trible's methods of reading sacred texts · Wendy Doniger's comparative mythology · Catherine Bell's reimagining of religious and secular ritual The second part focuses on methodological particularity: · Alice Walker's use of narrative · Charles Long's critique of Eurocentricism · Caroline Walker Bynum's emphasis on gender and materiality The third section focuses on expanding boundaries: · Gloria Anzaldúa's work on borders and languages · Judith Butler's critique of gender and sex norms · Saba Mahmood's expansion on the critique of colonialism's secularizing demands Reflecting the cultural turn and extending the existing canon, this is the anthology instructors have been waiting for. For further detail on the theorists discussed, please consult Cultural Approaches to Studying Religion: An Introduction to Theories and Methods, edited by Sarah J. Bloesch and Meredith Minister.
Media, Religion and Gender presents a selection of eminent current scholarship that explores the role gender plays when religion, media use and values in contemporary society interact. The book surveys the development of research on media, religion and culture through the lens of key theoretical and methodological issues and debates within gender studies. It includes case studies drawn from a variety of countries and contexts to illustrate the range of issues, theoretical perspectives and empirical material involved in current work. It outlines new areas and reflects on challenges for the future. Students of media, religion and gender at advanced level will find this a valuable resource, as will scholars and researchers working in this important and growing field.

**Theory for Religious Studies**

Many of our questions about religion, says renowned anthropologist Pascal Boyer, are no longer mysteries. We are beginning to know how to answer questions such as "Why do people have religion?" Using findings from anthropology, cognitive science, linguistics, and evolutionary biology, Religion Explained shows how this aspect of human consciousness is increasingly admissible to coherent, naturalistic explanation. This brilliant and controversial book gives readers the first scientific explanation for what religious feeling is really about, what it consists of, and where it comes from.
Language, Truth, and Religious Belief

Theory and Method in Historical Ethnomusicology demonstrates various ways that new approaches to historiography—and the related application of new technologies—impact the work of ethnomusicologists who seek to meaningfully represent music traditions across barriers of both time and space.

The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion

"Revised and updated in this second edition, Eight theories of religion considers how fundamental questions have engaged the most important thinkers of the modern era. Accessible, systematic, and succinct, the text examines the classic interpretations of religion advanced by theorists who have left a major imprint on the intellectual culture of the twentieth century."--p. 4 of cover.

Religion Explained

This is the first comprehensive survey in English of research methods in the field of religious studies. It is designed to enable non-specialists and students at upper undergraduate and graduate levels to understand the variety of research methods used in the field. The aim is to create
awareness of the relevant methods currently available and to stimulate an active interest in exploring unfamiliar methods, encouraging their use in research and enabling students and scholars to evaluate academic work with reference to methodological issues. A distinguished team of contributors cover a broad spectrum of topics, from research ethics, hermeneutics and interviewing, to Internet research and video-analysis. Each chapter covers practical issues and challenges, the theoretical basis of the respective method, and the way it has been used in religious studies, illustrated by case studies.

**Theory and Method in the Study of Religion**

LaMothe paves the way for new theories and methods in the study of religion and dance by critiquing and displacing a conceptual dichotomy between “religion” and “dance” forged in the colonial era that justified western Christian hostility towards dance traditions across six continents over six centuries.

**Media, Religion and Gender**

The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion draws on the expertise of an international team of scholars providing both an entry point into the sociological study and understanding of religion and an in-depth survey into
its changing forms and content in the contemporary world. The role and impact of religion and spirituality on the politics, culture, education and health in the modern world is rigorously discussed and debated. The study of the sociology of religion forges interdisciplinary links to explore aspects of continuity and change in the contemporary interface between society and religion. Using a combination of theoretical, methodological and content-led approaches, the fifty-seven contributors collectively emphasise the complex relationships between religion and aspects of life from scientific research to law, ecology to art, music to cognitive science, crime to institutional health care and more. The developing character of religion, irreligion and atheism and the impact of religious diversity on social cohesion are explored. An overview of current scholarship in the field is provided in each themed chapter with an emphasis on encouraging new thinking and reflection on familiar and emergent themes to stimulate further debate and scholarship. The resulting essay collection provides an invaluable resource for research and teaching in this diverse discipline.

Manufacturing Religion

This volume reflects on current debates in the academic study of religion by reprinting select articles form the Brill journal Method and Theory in the Study of Religions, currently in its 25th volume, and asking a group of younger scholars to comment on them.
After World Religions

This anthology provides students with a useful collection of theoretical essays concerning the nature of religion and the methodological means by which scholars analytically approach the subject. Organized in a point/counterpoint fashion, this volume will foster in-class discussion and the honing of a student's own critical perspectives.

A Beginner's Guide to the Study of Religion

This book explores the ways in which past cultures have been used to shape colonial and postcolonial cultural identities. It provides a theoretical framework to understand these processes, and offers illustrative case studies in which the agency of ancient peoples, rather than the desires of antiquarians and archaeologists, is brought to the fore.

An Introduction to the Phenomenology of Religion

Making Religion provides a unique overview of theoretical and practical aspects of the discursive study of religion. Leading scholars in the field discuss the opportunities and challenges of discourse analysis and its application in the study of religion.
Method and Theory in the Study of Religion: Working Papers from Hannover

In this thoroughly revised edition, James Cox provides an easily accessible introduction to the phenomenology of religion, which he contends continues as a foundational method for the academic study of religion in the twenty-first century. After dealing with the problematic issue of defining religion, he describes the historical background to phenomenology by tracing its roots to developments in philosophy and the social sciences in the early twentieth century. The phenomenological method is then outlined as a step-by-step process, which includes a survey of the important classifications of religious behaviour. The author concludes with a discussion of the place of the phenomenology of religion in the current academic climate and argues that it can be aligned with the growing scholarly interest in the cognitive science of religion.

Diaspora and Transnationalism

Understanding living religion requires students to experience everyday religious practice in diverse environments and communities. This guide provides the ideal introduction to fieldwork and the study of religion outside the lecture theatre. Covering theoretical and practical dimensions of research, the book helps students learn to ‘read’ religious sites and
communities, and to develop their understanding of planning, interaction, observation, participation and interviews. Students are encouraged to explore their own expectations and sensitivities, and to develop a good understanding of ethical issues, group-learning and individual research. The chapters contain student testimonies, examples of student work and student-led questions.

**The Study of Religion**

Method as Identity considers how social identity shapes methodological standpoints. With a refreshing hip hop sensibility, Miller and Driscoll reorient the contemporary academic study of religion toward recognition of the costs and benefits of manufacturing “critical” distance from our objects of study.

**Religious Ethics**

Contributors specifically address the categories of description, interpretation, comparison, and explanation in Religious Studies scholarship.

**Methodology in Religious Studies**
The comparative method is an integral part of religious studies. All the technical terms that scholars of religion use on a daily basis, such as ritual, hagiography, shrine, authority, fundamentalism, hybridity, and, of course, religion, are comparative terms. Yet comparison has been subject to criticism, including postcolonialist and postmodernist critiques. Older approaches are said to have used comparison primarily to confirm preconceptions about religion. More recently, comparison has been criticized as an act of abstraction that does injustice to the particular, neglects differences, and establishes a mostly Western power of definition over the rest of the world. In this book, Oliver Freiberger takes a closer look at how comparison works. Revisiting critical debates and examining reflections in other disciplines, including comparative history, sociology, comparative theology, and anthropology, Freiberger proposes a model of comparison that is based on a thorough epistemological analysis and that takes both the scholar's situatedness and his or her agency seriously. Examining numerous examples of comparative studies, Considering Comparison develops a methodological framework for conducting and evaluating such studies. Freiberger suggests a comparative approach - which he calls discourse comparison - that confronts the omnipresent risks of decontextualization, essentialization, and universalization. This book makes a case for comparison, arguing that it is indispensable for a deeper analytical understanding of what we call religion. The book is intended to enrich the practice of both aspiring and seasoned comparativists, stimulate much-needed further discussions about comparative methodology, and encourage more
scholars to produce responsible comparative studies.

**Eight Theories of Religion**

This collection of essays provides an insight into the theoretical and methodological debates within the academic study of religion in Hanover and beyond over the last years.

**Methods for the Study of Religious Change**

Religion, Theory, Critique is an essential tool for learning about theory and method in the study of religion. Leading experts engage with contemporary and classical theories as well as non-Western cultural contexts. Unlike other collections, this anthology emphasizes the dynamic relationship between "religion" as an object of study and different methodological approaches and openly addresses the question of the manifold ways in which "religion," "secular," and "culture" are imagined within different disciplinary horizons. This volume is the first textbook which seeks to engage discussion of classical approaches with contemporary cultural and critical theories. Contributors write on the influence of the natural sciences in the study of religion; the role of European Christianity in modeling theories of religion; religious experience and the interface with cognitive science; the structure and function of religious language;
the social-scientific study of religion; ritual in religion; the phenomenology of religion; critical theory and religion; embodiment and religion; the impact of colonialism and modernity; theorizing religion in terms of race and ethnicity; links among religion, nationalism, and globalization; the interplay of gender, sex, and religion; and religion and the environment. Each chapter introduces the topic, identifies key theorists and issues, and respects the pluralistic nature of the scholarship in the field. Altogether, this collection scrutinizes the explicit and implicit assumptions theorists make about religion as an object of analysis.

**Method Today**

This updated textbook unravels the complex issues related to methodology and theory in the study of religion. It equips students with the knowledge needed for the academic study of religion, explaining the history of the methodology, including ideas of key theorists, and discusses key issues in the field, such as gender, phenomenology, and the insider/outsider discourse. Updated throughout, additional material includes: - New chapter on colonialism and post-colonialism - New chapter on insider/outsider discourse - Coverage of 'cyber-religion' and the internet as a research tool in religious studies Study and classroom features in each chapter include: - Chapter outlines - Case studies - Boxed key concepts - Discussion questions - Chapter bibliographies The text is illustrated throughout with 35 images, and extra resources can be found online, including additional coverage of
'levels of religion'.

**A History of Theory and Method in the Study of Religion and Dance**

Explores the impact of women's studies on methodology in religious studies.

**Understanding Religious Conversion**

Looking at a wide variety of religions, this work offers an exploration of religious conversion. The phenomena is approached from a variety of disciplines, including psychology, sociology, theology and anthropology.

**Theory and Method in the Study of Religion**

'Theory for Religious Studies' takes major theoretical writers in the humanities & social sciences, & explains their relevance to the study of religion.

**Archeology and Religion in Early Northwest India**

Diaspora & transnationalism are widely used concepts in academic & political discourses. Although originally referring to quite different phenomena, they
increasingly overlap today. Such inflation of meanings goes hand in hand with a danger of essentialising collective identities. This book analyses this topic.

**The Cognitive Science of Religion**

The Cognitive Science of Religion introduces students to key empirical studies conducted over the past 25 years in this new and rapidly expanding field. In these studies, cognitive scientists of religion have applied the theories, findings and research tools of the cognitive sciences to understanding religious thought, behaviour and social dynamics. Each chapter is written by a leading international scholar, and summarizes in non-technical language the original empirical study conducted by the scholar. No prior or statistical knowledge is presumed, and studies included range from the classic to the more recent and innovative cases. Students will learn about the theories that cognitive scientists have employed to explain recurrent features of religiosity across cultures and historical eras, how scholars have tested those theories, and what the results of those tests have revealed and suggest. Written to be accessible to undergraduates, this provides a much-needed survey of empirical studies in the cognitive science of religion.

**Theory and Method in Religious Studies**
If religion is continually in a state of flux how can the study of religion critically examine contemporary religious beliefs and values? 'Representing Religion' critically examines this "crisis of representation". The volume traces the history of religious studies, critiquing the concept that "experience" is central to understanding religion. The views of influential semioticians and philosophers - notably Nietzsche, Saussure, Foucault, Barthes, and Bakhtin - are used to construct a new methodology for the critical study of religion. Representing Religion will be of interest to students and scholars of semiotics as well as theory and method in religious studies.

**Making Religion**

Why do many people think religion is subjective? Or symbolic? Or non-rational? This book brings together eighteen important twentieth-century essays on these questions, by authors ranging from Ludwig Wittgenstein to Richard Rorty and Clifford Geertz. The editors show that such questions are both quite modern and powerfully influential in our Western thinking about religious belief. Moreover, they lead directly into the three most popular theories that attempt to make sense of religion: positivism, functionalism, and relativism. Selecting essays that represent each of these three theoretical positions, Frankenberry and Penner trace their incoherence and argue for a new method and theory for understanding religious beliefs.
Religion, Theory, Critique


Engaging with Living Religion

It has been argued that religious studies is a polymethodic discipline, and that the student of religion should be familiar with the approaches of the major disciplines concerned with understanding the nature of religion, not least because the approach adopted has profound influence on the phenomena chose for investigation and the conclusions reached. This book is the first textbook, specifically designed for undergraduate students, that provides the essential background on methods of the major relevant disciplines. Presenting each of the significant approaches to religion in an informed manner, the book brings together experienced researchers from feminism, anthropology, sociology, phenomenology, psychology, philosophy, and theology. It presents a consistent approach throughout, with each chapter dealing with the same themes: the historical development of the approach, the characteristics of the approach, and the surrounding issues and debates.
Cultural Approaches to Studying Religion

The world of religious experience is changing much faster than the discipline which claims to study it. Religious studies still uses Christianity as its measure, still frames the world through the model of five world religions, still largely avoids analysis of key issues around power, poverty, violence, pollution, science, and social conflict, and still looks to highlight differences rather than commonalities. Methods for the Study of Religious Change aims to redefine the study of religion as the study of worldviews, of ideas which are active in shaping the world. It argues that the study of religion should focus on people's worldview-making capacities and should contribute to the critical analysis of global problems and the promotion of cultural and spiritual respect across religions. Survey chapters on theory and method outline this new approach while case-study chapters illustrate these ideas with innovative ethnographies of ritual, experience, language, morals and identity. The world of religious experience is changing much faster than the discipline which claims to study it. Religious studies still uses Christianity as its measure, still frames the world through the model of five world religions, still largely avoids analysis of key issues around power, poverty, violence, pollution, science, and social conflict, and still looks to highlight differences rather than commonalities. Methods for the Study of Religious Change aims to redefine the study of religion as the study of worldviews, of ideas which are active in shaping the world. It argues that the study of religion should focus on
people's worldview-making capacities and should contribute to the critical analysis of global problems and the promotion of cultural and spiritual respect across religions. Survey chapters on theory and method outline this new approach while case-study chapters illustrate these ideas with innovative ethnographies of ritual, experience, language, morals and identity.

**Considering Comparison**

This is the first book to provide an introduction to contemporary cultural approaches to the study of religion. This book makes sophisticated ideas accessible at an introductory level, and examines the analytic tools of scholars in religious studies, as well as in related disciplines that have shaped the field including anthropology, history, literature, and critical studies in race, sexuality, and gender. Each chapter is written by a leading scholar and includes: · the biographical and historical context of each theorist · their approaches and key writings · analysis and evaluation of each theory · suggested further reading. Part One: Comparative Approaches considers how major features such as taboo, texts, myths and ritual work across religious traditions by exploring the work of Mary Douglas, Phyllis Trible, Wendy Doniger and Catherine Bell. Part Two: Examining Particularities analyzes the comparative approach through the work of Alice Walker, Charles Long and Caroline Walker Bynum, who all suggest that the specifics of race, body, place and time must be considered. Part Three:
Expanding Boundaries examines Gloria Anzaldúa's language of religion, as well as the work of Judith Butler on performative, queer theories of religion, and concludes with Saba Mahmood, whose work considers postcolonial religious encounters, secularism, and the relationship between "East†? and "West†?. Reflecting the cultural turn and challenging the existing canon, this is the anthology instructors have been waiting for. For primary texts by the theorists discussed, please consult The Bloomsbury Reader in Cultural Approaches to the Study of Religion, edited by Sarah J. Bloesch and Meredith Minister.

Theory and Method in Historical Ethnomusicology

In this new book, author Russell McCutcheon offers a powerful critique of traditional scholarship on religion, focusing on multiple interrelated targets. Most prominent among these are the History of Religions as a discipline; Mircea Eliade, one of the founders of the modern discipline; recent scholarship on Eliade's life and politics; contemporary textbooks on world religions; and the oft-repeated bromide that "religion" is a sui generis phenomenon. McCutcheon skillfully analyzes the ideological basis for and service of the sui generis argument, demonstrating that it has been used to constitute the field's object of study in a form that is ahistoric, apolitical, fetishized, and sacrosanct. As such, he charges, it has helped to create departments, jobs, and publication outlets for those who are comfortable with such a suspect construction, while establishing a
disciplinary ethos of astounding theoretical naivete and a body of scholarship to match. Surveying the textbooks available for introductory courses in comparative religion, the author finds that they uniformly adopt the sui generis line and all that comes with it. As a result, he argues, they are not just uncritical (which helps keep them popular among the audiences for which they are intended, but badly disserve), but actively inhibit the emergence of critical perspectives and capacities. And on the geo-political scale, he contends, the study of religion as an ahistorical category participates in a larger system of political domination and economic and cultural imperialism.

**Classical Approaches to the Study of Religion**

Widely used as a primer, a text and a provocation to critical thinking, 'Studying Religion' aims to develop students' skills. The book clearly explains the methods and theories employed in the study of religion. Essays are offered on a range of topics: from the history and functions of religion to public discourse on religion and the classification of religions. The works of key scholars - from Karl Marx, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Rudolf Otto to Mircea Eliade, James G. Frazer, and Sigmund Freud - are analysed and explored. 'Studying Religion' represents a shift away from the traditional focus of describing the exotic or curious religious 'Other' to an examination of how religious behaviours and institutions are studied. The book will be invaluable to students of religious studies.
Method as Identity

The World Religions Paradigm has been the subject of critique and controversy in Religious Studies for many years. After World Religions provides a rationale for overhauling the World Religions curriculum, as well as a roadmap for doing so. The volume offers concise and practical introductions to cutting-edge Religious Studies method and theory, introducing a wide range of pedagogical situations and innovative solutions. An international team of scholars addresses the challenges presented in their different departmental, institutional, and geographical contexts. Instructors developing syllabi will find supplementary reading lists and specific suggestions to help guide their teaching. Students at all levels will find the book an invaluable entry point into an area of ongoing scholarly debate.

Representing Religion

This book, first published in 1984, examines the whole range of new religious movements which appeared in the 1960s and 1970s in the West. It develops a wide-ranging theory of these new religions which explains many of their major characteristics. Some of the movements are well-known, such as Scientology, Krishna Consciousness, and the Unification Church. Others such as the Process, Meher Baba, and 3-HO are much less known. While some became
international, others remained local; in other ways, too, such as style, belief, organisation, they exhibit enormous diversity. The movements studied here are classified under three ideal types, world-rejecting, world-affirming and world-accommodating, and from here the author develops a theory of the origins, recruitment base, characteristics, and development patterns which they display. The book offers a critical exploration of the theories of the new religions and analyses the highly contentious issue of whether they reflect the process of secularisation, or whether they are a countervailing trend marking the resurgence of religion in the West.

**The Elementary Forms of the New Religious Life**

An inclusive and innovative account of religious ethical thinking and acting in the world. Rather than merely applying existing forms of philosophical ethics, Religious Ethics defines the meaning of the field and presents a distinct and original method for ethical reflection through comparisons of world religious traditions. Written by leading scholars and educators in the field, this unique volume offers an innovative approach that reveals how religions concur and differ on moral matters, and provides practical guidance on thinking and living ethically. The book’s innovative method—integrating descriptive, normative, practical, fundamental, and metaethical dimensions of reflection—enables a far more complex and nuanced exploration of religious ethics than any single philosophical language, method, or theory can equal. First introducing the task of religious ethics,
the book moves through each of the five dimensions of reflection to compare concepts such as good and evil, perplexity and wisdom, truth and illusion, and freedom and bondage in various theological contexts. Guides readers on understanding, assessing, and comparing the moral teachings and practices of world religions Applies a disciplined, scholarly approach to the subject of religious ethics Explores the distinctions between religious ethics and moral philosophy Provides a methodology which can be applied to comparative ethics for various religions Compares religious traditions to illuminate each of the five dimensions of ethical and moral reflection Religious Ethics: Meaning and Method will help anyone interested in the relation between religion and ethics in the modern world, including those involved in general and comparative religion studies, religious and comparative ethics, and moral theory.