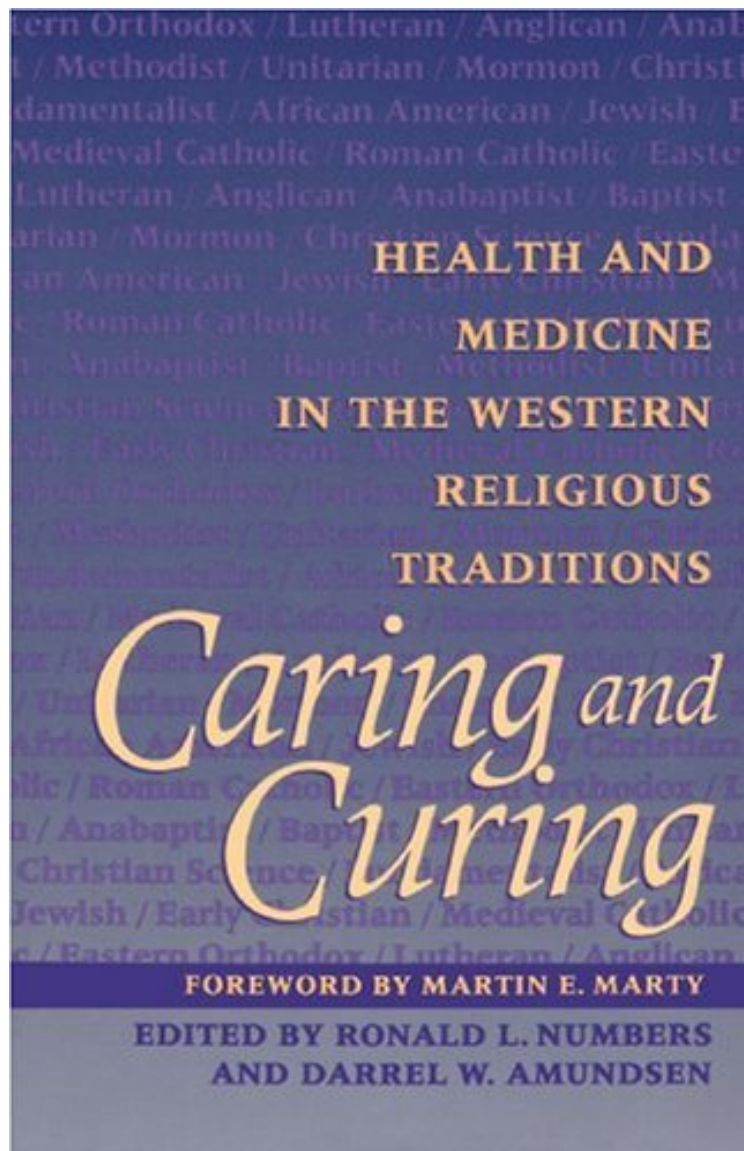


# Caring and Curing: Health and Medicine in the Western Religious Traditions

*Ronald L. Numbers, Darrel W. Amundsen*  
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**Ronald L. Numbers, Darrel W. Amundsen : Caring and Curing: Health and Medicine in the Western Religious Traditions** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Caring and Curing: Health and Medicine in the Western Religious Traditions:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Tech Teacher 2Excellent item, fast shipping, Thanks9

of 10 people found the following review helpful. A Critical Analysis of Caring and Curing By Matt Kappadakunnel Caring and Curing: Health and Medicine in the Western Religious Traditions is a conglomeration of the various views from Judeo-Christianity on illness and health care. The purpose of this work is to give the reader a religious understanding and approach on the subject by using Western traditions as its foundation. The book consists of essays from Judaism and seventeen different Christian denominations, from the more traditional views of Roman Catholicism to the perspectives of more recently emerging groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses. A traditional and historical approach to medicine allows one to understand the views toward health in the past and how they can be applied today. The benefit of perceiving health care with a religious focus is that it transforms the relationship between medical practitioner and patient to realizing the power that takes place in healing and wholeness. It also causes the patient to ponder the meaning of sickness in one's life. The Judaic understanding of illness is that it is a punishment from God due to sin. One has wronged God and because of this God has given this person an illness so that he or she may suffer for one's sin. Christianity has a whole contrary meaning toward illness and views it as sanctifying and redemptive. Jesus bore the infirmities and sin of humanity and put this to death with His death on the cross. Human suffering due to illness can be united to Christ's suffering to be used as a means to conquer sin, not as a result of being conquered by sin. Infirmity brings one to a deeper understanding of Jesus' suffering and can be used to enter more into His divine nature. While Judaism views illness as a scourge from God because of sin, Christianity sees it as a means that God permits to defeat sin in humanity and continue the redemptive mission of Jesus. Judeo-Christianity recognizes the identity of God as the Healer. In the Pentateuch God revealed to the Jewish people that He is the Lord who heals them (Exodus 15:26). The Jews held a special honor for physicians because they are instruments of God's healing power. In the Christian tradition, it is universally held that Jesus performed miraculous healings to demonstrate His divinity and to substantiate His message. The medical practitioner must realize one's role as an agent administering the healing power that has been entrusted to them to be done for the service of God and to be His channel for His healing love to pass through. There is an emphasis on authentic love and care towards the patient when one actually understands one's relationship in this continuum. The patient must also recognize that the care given to them by one's physician is truly God caring for him or her through this instrument. My opinion of Caring and Curing is it is effective in providing a religious perspective of medicine from various faith traditions and allowing the reader to see the historical underpinnings in viewing health care and note the similarities and differences each tradition holds with regard to health. It is clear that the authors of these essays have a solid understanding of medicine. What I did not appreciate was the theological errors I found within several essays. These inaccuracies were misrepresentative of these faith traditions and revealed a lack of real knowledge of the tenets in itself. Nevertheless, the work fulfills its purpose in bringing a religious perspective to the perception of health and medicine to gain a deeper realization of the sanctifying value in its practice.

Most religious traditions have a rich, if largely forgotten, heritage of involvement in medical issues of life, death, and health. Religious values influence our behavior and attitudes toward sickness, sexuality, and lifestyle, to say nothing of more controversial subjects such as abortion and euthanasia. The essays in this important book illuminate the history of health and medicine within the Judeo-Christian tradition. Bringing together 20 original articles by expert scholars in the fields of the history of religion and the history of medicine, Caring and Curing provides a fascinating and enlightening overview of how religious values have come to affect the practice of medicine and medical care.

"There are few books these days that can be called definitive, but Caring and Curing is one of them." (Christian Century) "Caring and Curing should be on the shelves of all parish priests [and] university and hospital chaplains and in the libraries of many doctors who have an interest in the relationship between the faith of patients and the practice of medicine today." (Cathedral Age) "A pioneer in the field." (Bulletin of the History of Medicine) "Taken together, these essays constitute an impressive discussion of the diffuse but pervasive presence of religion in modern life. And, as such, they should be of considerable interest not only to religious historians but also to all health care professionals who must make sense of the general public's attitudes toward the proper care of the human body." (Church History) "An excellent contribution to the field of church history." (Medical Humanities) "No review could ever do justice to the originality, depth, and scope of these chapters." (Catholic Historical) "Caring and Curing [is] a must for anybody involved in medicine." (Clio Medica) From the Back Cover Most religious traditions have a rich heritage of involvement in medical issues of life, death, and health. Religious values influence our behavior and attitudes toward sickness, sexuality, and lifestyle, to say nothing of more controversial subjects such as abortion and euthanasia. The essays in this important book illuminate the history of health and medicine within the Judeo-Christian tradition. Bringing together twenty original articles by expert scholars in the fields of the history of religion and the history of medicine, Caring and Curing provides a fascinating and enlightening overview of how religious values have come to affect the practice of medicine and medical care. About the Author Ronald L. Numbers is professor of the History of Medicine and the History of Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His publications include Almost Persuaded: American Physicians and Compulsory Health Insurance, 1912-1920, God and Nature: Historical Essays on

the Encounter between Christianity and Science, and The Creationists. Darrel W. Amundsen is professor of Classics at Western Washington University. He is the author of numerous essays on the history of ancient and medieval medicine and is the author of *Medicine, Society, and Faith in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, also available from Johns Hopkins.