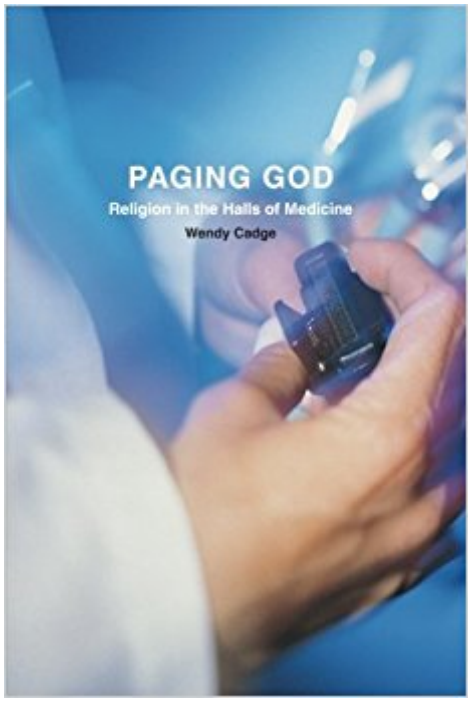
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Paging God: Religion In The Halls Of Medicine



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Synopsis

While the modern science of medicine often seems nothing short of miraculous, religion still plays an important role in the past and present of many hospitals. When three-quarters of Americans believe that God can cure people who have been given little or no chance of survival by their doctors, how do todayÃ¢â ¬â„¢s technologically sophisticated health care organizations address spirituality and faith?Ã Â Through a combination of interviews with nurses, doctors, and chaplains across the United States and close observation of their daily routines, Wendy Cadge takes readers inside major academic medical institutions to explore how todayÃ¢â ¬â„¢s doctors and hospitals address prayer and other forms of religion and spirituality.Ã Â From chapels to intensive care units to the morgue, hospital caregivers speak directly in these pages about how religion is part of their daily work in visible and invisible ways. In Paging God: Religion in the Halls of Medicine, Cadge shifts attention away from the ongoing controversy about whether faith and spirituality should play a role in health care and back to the many ways that these powerful forces already function in healthcare today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"From the opening narrative about a Buddhist monk near death to the concluding story about a parent seeking prayer, Paging God is rich with insights about the challenges facing health practitioners as America becomes more religiously and ethnically diverse.Ã Â This is ethnographic research at its best.Ã Â Wendy Cadge has written an impressive study that should be read by

everyone interested in understanding how religious diversity is reshaping our society." (Robert Wuthnow author of America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity)"Paging God is essential reading for those interested in the ever-shifting place of spirituality in American healthcare and society. Weaving interviews from patients, staff, doctors and chaplains into a fascinating story of the power of religion and spirituality in the lives of those struggling with illness and death, Wendy Cadge's study excels in scientific objectivityÃ¢â ¬â •but with sensitivity to the nuanced role of religion in the lives of people involved in the hospital experience." (Helen Rose Ebaugh University of Houston)"We tend to see the hospital as a temple to the gods of technology, professionalism, and bureaucracy. Paging God looks at the human and emotional texture of lives livedÃ¢â ¬â •and lostÃ¢â ¬â •in the hospital. Focusing on the role of religion and a more amorphous 'spirituality' Wendy Cadge focuses on the spacesÃ¢â ¬â •chapel, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and Medical Intensive Care UnitÃ¢â ¬â •and careersÃ¢â ¬â •especially the hospital chaplainÃ¢â ¬â •where values and individual pain are configured. In the role of the hospital chaplain she has found a particularly revealing case study in the development of a not-quite semi-profession, illuminating that borderland between the individuality of human pain and the power of technical capacity. This book should be of interest to anyone interested in the felt reality of health care in the twenty-first century." (Charles Rosenberg Harvard University)Ã¢â ¬Å“The blend of historical, archival research, in-depth interviews and participant observation, and visual analysis of archeology and design in Paging God is powerful, and Wendy CadgeÃ¢â ¬â„¢s attempts to make sense of this peculiar yet dominant social world will be enthusiastically received.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Elizabeth M. Armstrong Princeton University)Ã¢â ¬Å“Combined with a historical perspective of health care chaplaincy over the past 120 years, Wendy Cadge presents a comprehensive study of the role of faith in contemporary American acute care hospitals, and of those who are especially charged with fulfilling it. This social study of how faith is experienced by clinicians in contemporary acute health care is fascinating, but above all, an invaluable contribution to the study of health care systems and of health care chaplaincy.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Daniel H. Grossoehme, DMin, BCC Cincinnati ChildrenÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Hospital Medical Center)Ã¢â ¬Å“Drawing both on historical materials and on her rich first-hand field data, Wendy Cadge reveals how pervasive diverse forms of religion and spirituality are among patients and their familiesÃ¢â ¬â •and among caregivers inside American hospitals. Using a narrative case study-based framework, Cadge pays particular attention to hospital chaplains and nurses, the work they do, and the evolution of their professions. Perceptive and penetrating, Paging God is an absorbing, creative, and illuminating book that has ramifying import.Ã¢â ¬Â• (RenÃƒÂ©e C. Fox author of The Sociology of Medicine: A Participant ObserverÃ¢â ¬â„¢s View)Ã¢â ¬Å“In Paging

God, Wendy Cadge opens a window into faith as experienced by hospital caregivers, presenting the narratives of nurses, chaplains, physicians, and other members of the hospital team as they care for people of diverse religious traditions. Fascinating and illuminating, this book is a revelation.Ã¢â ¬Â• (Harold Koenig, MD Center for Spirituality, Theology & Health, Duke University Medical Center)"In this remarkable book, Wendy Cadge recounts the curious history of hospital chaplaincy care. With a tenor of measured appreciation, she marks out the unmistakable good that chaplains do by being fully present to those who are sick, providing a candid, detailed, and scientifically informed assessment of the state of chaplaincy today. In this comprehensive and entirely unprecedented report, Cadge shines light on the history and current shape of hospital chaplaincy in the United States. At the same time she holds up a mirror in which the field of chaplaincy can take a long look and ask whether it has become something other than what it set out to be." (Farr Curlin, MD Program on Medicine and Religion, University of Chicago Medical Center)Ã Â "This book will interest students of medicine, nursing, and theology for its grounded analysis rooted in real-world contexts. Recommended." (Choice)"CadgeÃ¢â ¬â„¢s focus on hospital administration and personnel provides a rich account of religion and spirituality in American hospitals that should not be missed by scholars of religion or medicine." (Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion)Ã¢â ¬Å“Paging God is an informative account of religion and spirituality in contemporary hospitals. The book addresses key sociological issues as they play out in the hospital context.Ã¢â ¬Â• (American Journal of Sociology)

Wendy Cadge is associate professor of sociology at Brandeis University and the author of Heartwood: The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America,also published by the University of Chicago Press.

I lived through the history she describes: the professionalization of hospital Chaplaincy. She pretty much nailed it! I wish she could have gone deeper into issues of authority and identity and how they play out in service. A must read for every working chaplain today. And next time get out of New England. There are some regional/cultural differences. And nationally- the quantifiable professionalizinng of "the cure of souls" continues.

We are using chapters of this book at our monthly gathering of area chaplains. It has been a good springboard for discussion.

Health-care is a near universal value in America with average per person spending climbing over $8,000. While the percentage of Americans who are religiously non-affiliated has risen significantly in recent years, the vast majority of Americans are religious with nearly 75% of the population identifying with a Christian tradition (49.5% Protestant or non-denominational and 25.1% Catholic according to the 2008 American Religious Identification Survey). In light of these overlapping realities, academic interest in the relationship between religion and health has increased in recent years across many disciplines.Cadge moves beyond the most common research involving patient outcomes to explore "how religion and spirituality are actually present in the day-to-day workings of health-care organizations" (p.6). Her research includes an exploration of seventeen highly ranked academic hospitals that considers how religion and spirituality are addressed in these settings. Additionally, she spent a year learning more about the chaplaincy department of one hospital. Given the complexity of legal and other issues involved in seeking patient access, she focused on the experiences through the eyes of staff, especially chaplains. While the chaplaincy programs (a traditional name no longer in use at all of the facilities she visited) and the staff (a group that often includes both students and volunteers in addition to professional chaplains) that comprise them remains the most visible conduits of religion and spirituality their limited number ensures that a great deal of religious and spiritual experience happens outside of the presence of a chaplain. Through exchanges with physicians, nurses, chaplains and other medical staff; as a result of her own personal observations; and through a detailed analysis of both, Cadge provides a look into a previously unexplored world finding that religion and spirituality are alive and very active in large secular hospitals.While professional chaplains and those charged with providing religious and spiritual care to those in health-care settings are most likely to be attracted to Paging God, it is an insightful and important read for all who care about either healthcare or religion/spirituality.

Just started reading book, but takes a institutionalized look at how various cultures quietly value spiritual care during times of health crisis. A must read for all healthcare providers

While the author is trained in social analysis, there are frequent occasions where she misinterprets an interior reality for a group from her exterior position. This is the post-modern challenge of privileged interpretation, but it is, nonetheless a real issue. For example, the accuracy and integrity of a white, male, evangelical Protestant interpretation of Marian celebrations involving Roman Catholic Hmong Vietnamese would likely be flawed because the interpreter does not have the same kind of access to the lived or experiential interpretation.

I read this as a professional chaplain. I found the author to be very repetitive. Information was shared over and over again and became a bit tedious. The point of view of this author does a fairly clear job of describing part of the work of a chaplain. She does not explore some of the more cutting edge models of the professional chaplain's work and ministry.

THis was recommended as a good way to enhance skills as a leader. It might be true, I just havn't gotten around to it yet.

I couldn't get through the book. I was looking for a more personal touch to hospital chaplaincy, but this book is filled with history and numbers. If that's what your'e looking for, then this is the book for you.

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