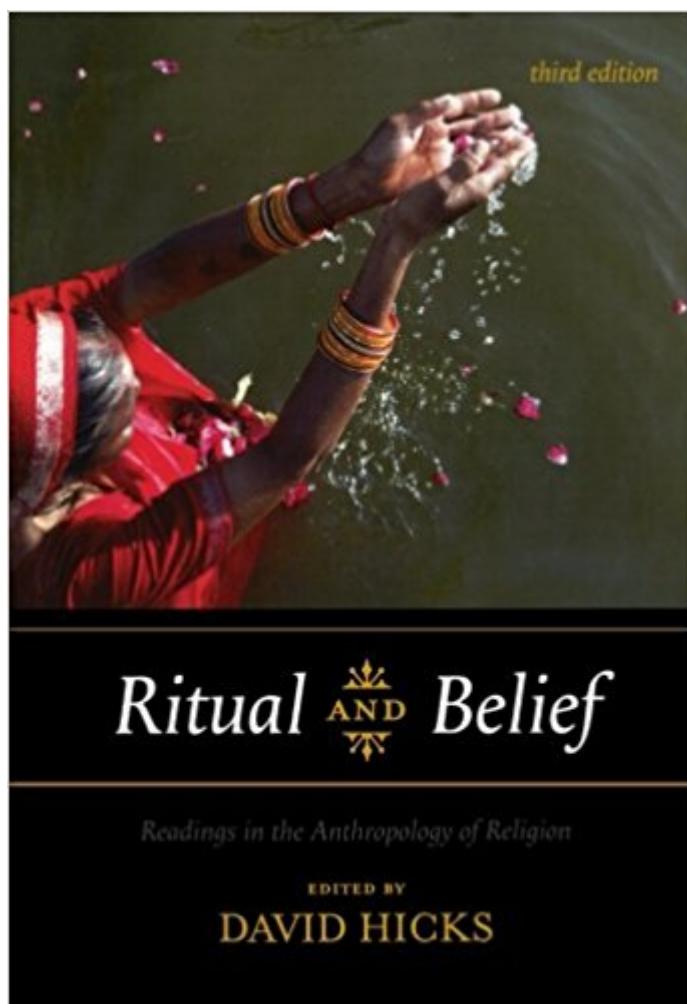


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# Ritual And Belief: Readings In The Anthropology Of Religion



## Synopsis

Ritual and Belief: Readings in the Anthropology of Religion is a collection of 41 readings in religion, magic, and witchcraft. The choice of readings is eclectic: no single anthropological approach or theoretical perspective dominates the text. Theoretical significance, scholarly eminence of the author, and inherent interest provide the principal criteria, and each reading complements its companion chapters, which are pedagogically coherent rather than ad hoc assemblages. Included among the theoretical perspectives are structural-functionalism, structuralism, Malinowskian functionalism, cultural materialism, and cultural evolutionism; also included are the synchronic and diachronic approaches. The book offers a mixture of classic readings and more recent contributions, and the 'world religions' are included along with examples from the religions of traditionally non-literate cultures. As diverse a range of religious traditions as possible has been embraced, from various ethnic groups, traditions, and places.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

David Hicks has a magician's touch in blending essential readings in the history of an anthropological approach to religion with an array of cross-cultural case studies that draw on the earlier theorists and display the diversity of not only religious beliefs and rituals but of ethnographic interpretation itself. Distilling the large corpus of anthropological literature on religion, past and present, is no easy task. All anthologies suffer from a relevance half-life, but Professor Hicks is to be commended for building on the pillars of past scholarship with the best recent research in the field

and from the field. I plan to use the third edition and look forward to the innovations to be expected in a fourth, and why not a fifth. (Daniel Martin Varisco, Hofstra University; author of *Islam Obscured: The Rhetoric of Anthropological Representation*) As an instructor of students new to the field of Religious Studies, I have found David Hicks' anthology *Ritual and Belief* to be an invaluable tool in the classroom. The wide array of selections from different disciplines gives the students a taste of what it means to be a scholar of religion. The new edition only further enhances the text as a resource for my students. (Sarita Tamayo-Moraga, Santa Clara University) For the instructor who uses an anthology of readings either instead of an integrated text or as a supplement to one, this collection is well worth considering. No two instructors are likely to choose the same set of readings for a course in the anthropology of religion but this set has many of the classics. It can also be recommended for anyone wishing to sample what anthropologists have had to say about religion over the years. (Robert L. Winzeler)

David Hicks is professor of anthropology at the State University of New York, Stony Brook.

I bought this as a reader for my Sacred Traditions class, it is by far my favorite "textbook" and probably the cheapest as well. A few of the excerpts were dry (and racist because you know cultural anthropology) but overall was a good read and fairly respectful.

Very difficult read. It was hard to grasp the information in the way it was presented. I can only describe the book as scientific and dry.

Certain chapters are somewhat difficult to slog through due to archaic or highly technical language, but it's adequate to its intended purpose.

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