



# Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion (SUNY Series, Issues in the Study of Religion)

By Russell T. McCutcheon

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A lively critique of the study of religion in the modern academy, one that makes the scholar of religion a cultural critic rather than a caretaker of a religious tradition or a guru dispensing timeless wisdom.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

McCutcheon makes a strong case that the study of religion is deeply flawed, and that there are important ramifications for current society and politics in these flaws. Agree or disagree with it, this book provokes the reader to think. McCutcheon's work stands alone as a critique of the pathologies of Religious Studies.

Timothy Murphy, Case Western Reserve University

Critics Not Caretakers represents a new paradigm in the study of religion. All serious students of theory and method in Religious Studies will need to come to terms with McCutcheon's stimulating and challenging critique of the mainstream tradition. William E. Paden, author of Religious Worlds: The Comparative Study of Religion"

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#### **From the Back Cover**

Argues that the study of religion must be rethought as an ordinary aspect of social, historical existence, a stance that makes the scholar of religion a critic of cultural practices rather than a caretaker of religious tradition or a font of timeless wisdom. From a general introduction written for a wide audience and a theoretical essay that outlines the basis of an alternative, socio-rhetorical approach to studying religion, the book moves on to a series of dispatches from the theory wars, each of which uses the work of such writers as Karen Armstrong, Walter Burkert, and Benson Saler as a point of entry into wider theoretical issues of importance to the field's future. The author then examines the socio-political role of this brand of critical scholarship--a role that differs dramatically from the type of sympathetic caretaking generally associated with scholars of religion who feel compelled to "go public." Concluding the work is a consideration of how scholars as teachers can address issues of theory and critical thinking in the undergraduate classroom. Written with verve, Critics Not Caretakers provides a viable alternative for all those dissatisfied with the covertly political, liberal humanist approach that currently dominates the study of religion.

#### **About the Author**

Russell T. McCutcheon is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Southwestern Missouri State University and the author of *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse on Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*.

### **Users Review**

#### **From reader reviews:**

**Joseph Cobble:**

The ability that you get from Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion (Sunny Series, Issues in the Study of Religion) is the more deep you searching the information that hide inside words the more you get serious about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to recognise but Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion (Sunny Series, Issues in the Study of Religion) giving you excitement feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in selected way that can be understood simply by anyone who read this because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having this particular Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion (Sunny Series, Issues in the Study of Religion) instantly.

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