



Teaching New Religious Movements (AAR Teaching Religious Studies)

David G. Bromley

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Since its inception around 1970, the study of New Religious Movements (NRMs) has evolved into an established multidisciplinary field. At the same time, both the movements and the scholars who study them have been the subjects of intense controversy. In this volume, a group of senior NRM scholars who have been instrumental in the development of the field will offer pivotal essays that present the basics of NRM scholarship along with guidance for teachers on classroom use. The book is organized topically around subjects that are both central to the study of NRMs and likely to be useful to non-specialists. Part I contains examinations of the definitional boundaries of the area of study, varying disciplinary perspectives on NRMs, unique methodological/ethical problems encountered in the study of NRMs, and the controversies that have confronted scholars studying NRMs and the movements themselves. Part II examines a series of topics central to teaching about NRMs: the larger sociocultural significance of the movements, their distinctive symbolic and organizational features, the interrelated processes of joining and leaving NRMs, the organization of gender roles in NRMs, media and popular culture portrayals of the movements, the occurrence of corruption and abuse within movements, and violence by and against NRMs. Part III provides informational resources for teaching about NRMs, which are particularly important in a field where knowing the biases of sources is crucial. With its interdisciplinary approach, the volume provides comprehensive, accessible information and perspectives on NRMs. It is an invaluable guide for instructors navigating this scholarly minefield.



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