



Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion in the Media (Revised First Edition)

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Western popular culture is saturated with ideas drawn from religious institutions and a variety of other forms of awareness. In an age that many view as secular, news accounts are replete with sensationalist stories about inexplicable supernatural events. The Occult, mythology, vampires, zombies, ghosts and apparitions, and paranormal activity are but a few of the supernatural or cosmological themes and images that make themselves felt in everyday life.

Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion in the Media represents a unique effort to capture a cross-section of these events in media reportage and analyze them through the lens of anthropology. The essays selected for this text, which are drawn from a variety of news media and online sources, are clustered around important themes and discussed in terms of their impact on society. They illustrate how “classic” observations and theory made by social and cultural anthropologists have “real world” application in the here-and-now of everyday American life. This is an ideal supplemental text for introductory and general education courses on “the anthropology of religion,” yet it is accessible to an educated public.

Liam D. Murphy is an Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at California State University, Sacramento. He is the author of many articles and research papers on religion, politics, and identity, published in such peer-reviewed journals as the *Journal of Ritual Studies*, the *Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Europe*, *Anthropology in Action*, and the *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*. He is also co-author (with Paul A. Erickson) of *A History of Anthropological Theory* (UTP Higher Education, 1998; 2003; 2008) and co-editor (with Paul A. Erickson) of *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory* (UTP Higher Education, 2001; 2006; 2010). A specialist on religion in Northern Ireland, Murphy is also the author of *Believing in Belfast: Charismatic Christianity After the Troubles* (Carolina Academic Press, 2010).

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