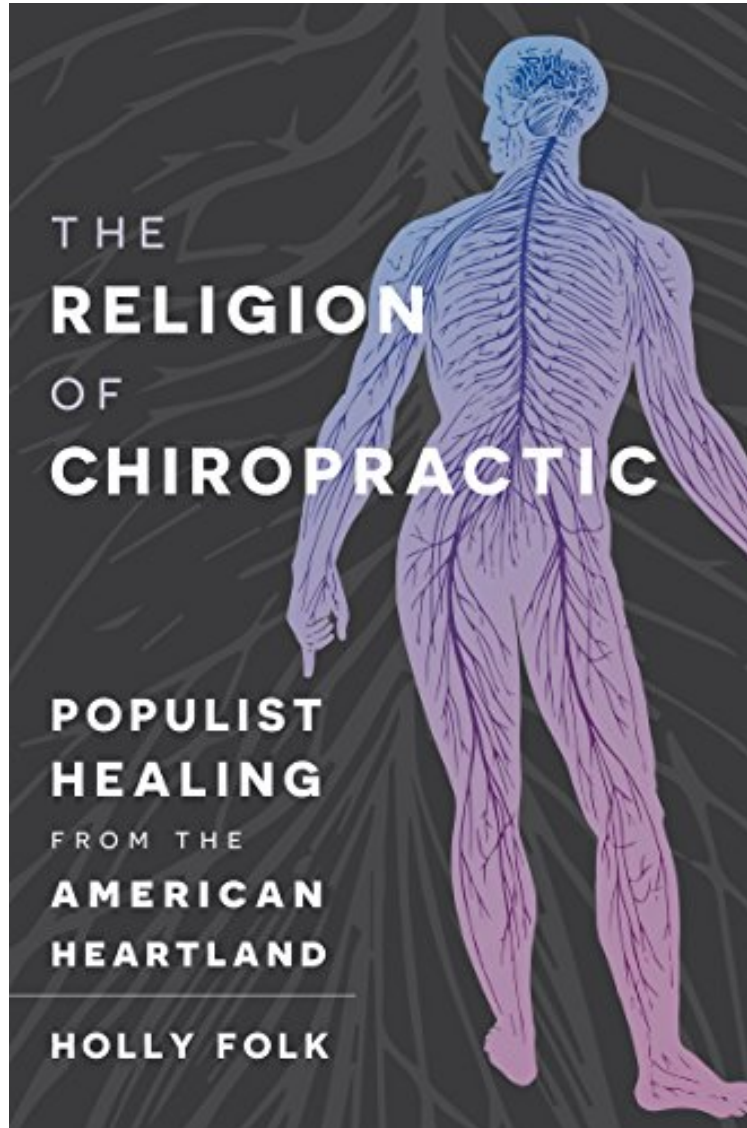


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Holly Folk : The Religion of Chiropractic: Populist Healing from the American Heartland before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Religion of Chiropractic: Populist

Healing from the American Heartland:

Chiropractic is by far the most common form of alternative medicine in the United States today, but its fascinating origins stretch back to the battles between science and religion in the nineteenth century. At the center of the story are chiropractic's colorful founders, D. D. Palmer and his son, B. J. Palmer, of Davenport, Iowa, where in 1897 they established the Palmer College of Chiropractic. Holly Folk shows how the Palmers' system depicted chiropractic as a conduit for both material and spiritualized versions of a "vital principle," reflecting popular contemporary therapies and nineteenth-century metaphysical beliefs, including the idea that the spine was home to occult forces. The creation of chiropractic, and other Progressive-era versions of alternative medicine, happened at a time when the relationship between science and religion took on an urgent, increasingly competitive tinge. Many remarkable people, including the Palmers, undertook highly personal reinterpretations of their physical and spiritual worlds. In this context, Folk reframes alternative medicine and spirituality as a type of populist intellectual culture in which ideologies about the body comprise a highly appealing form of cultural resistance.

Will be of interest to members of the chiropractic profession . . . but also to those interested in the history of medicine and those who examine sociological contexts. . . . Provocative and interesting.--Doody's Notes This brilliant and easily readable book may well become the standard for the treatment of the origins of chiropractic and its relationship with religion and spirituality for years to come.--Reading Religion Offering fascinating insights into the chiropractic movement, its leaders, changing etiologies, and wider significance, Holly Folk provides a robust and original interpretation of the chiropractic narratives. With the fascinating and sometimes bizarre stories of the Palmer family here set into an argument of broad interest to scholars of religion and lay readers alike, I find myself thinking about the Palmers through the lens of today's manifestations of populist rhetoric.--Pamela Klassen, University of Toronto Examining the spiritual elements that are foundational to chiropractic, as well as the physical practices for which chiropractic is best known, Holly Folk's critical history of chiropractic sets out new and previously uncharted territory within the larger context of American alternative medicine.--Timothy Miller, University of Kansas About the Author Holly Folk is associate professor of liberal studies at Western Washington University.