



Living Spirit, Living Practice: Poetics, Politics, Epistemology

Ruth Frankenberg

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In *Living Spirit, Living Practice*, the well-known cultural studies scholar Ruth Frankenberg turns her attention to the remarkably diverse nature of religious practice within the United States today. Frankenberg provides a nuanced consideration of the making and living of religious lives as well as the mystery and poetry of spiritual practice. She undertakes a subtle sociocultural analysis of compelling in-depth interviews with fifty women and men, diverse in race, ethnicity, national origin, class, age, and sexuality. Tracing the complex interweaving of sacred and secular languages in the way interviewees make sense of the everyday and the extraordinary, Frankenberg explores modes of communication with the Divine, the role of the body, the importance of geography, work for progressive social change, and the relation of sex to spirituality.

Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and other practitioners come together here, speaking in terms both familiar and surprising. Whether discussing an Episcopalian deacon, a former Zen Buddhist who is now a rabbi, a Chicano monastic, an immigrant Muslim woman, a Japanese American Tibetan Buddhist, or a gay African American practicing in the Hindu tradition, Frankenberg illuminates the most intimate, local, and singular aspects of individual lives while situating them within the broad, dynamic canvas of the U.S. religious landscape.

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