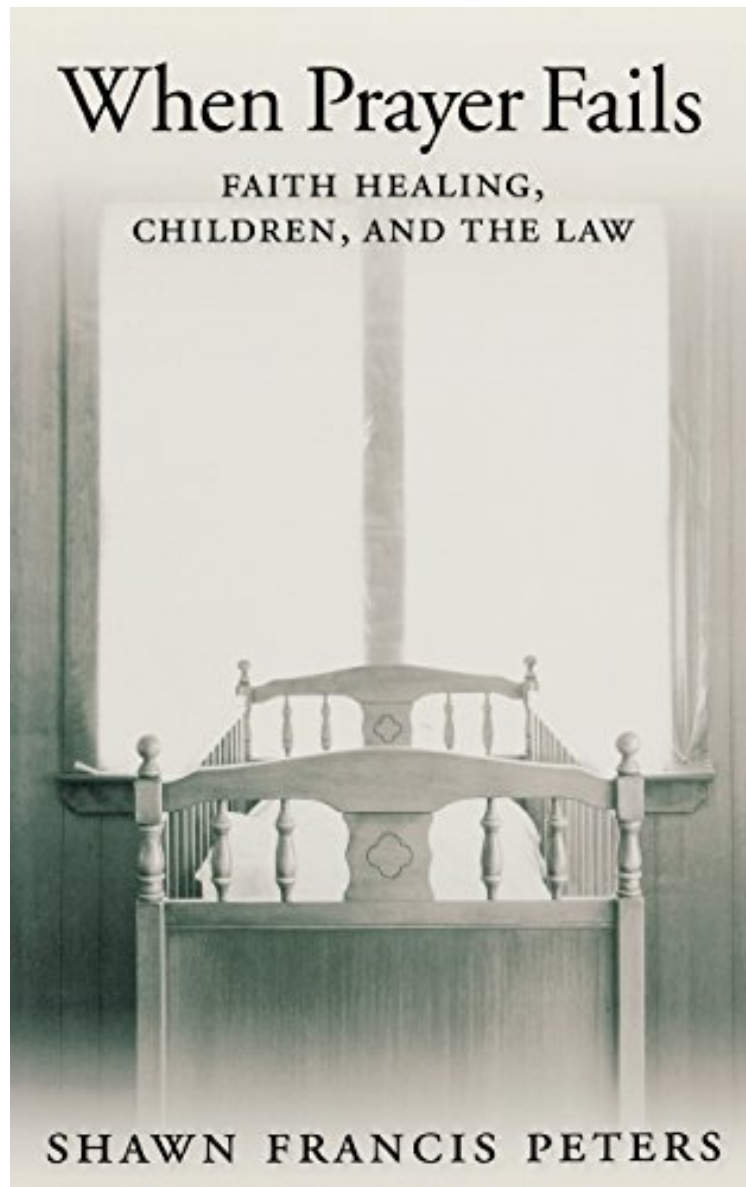


(Download) When Prayer Fails: Faith Healing, Children, and the Law

## When Prayer Fails: Faith Healing, Children, and the Law

*Shawn Francis Peters*

*audiobook / \*ebooks / Download PDF / ePub / DOC*



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#1768971 in Books Shawn Francis Peters 2007-11-14 Original language: English PDF # 1 6.30 x .80 x 9.30l, 1.08 #File Name: 019530635X272 pages When Prayer Fails Faith Healing Children and the Law | File size: 30.Mb

**Shawn Francis Peters : When Prayer Fails: Faith Healing, Children, and the Law** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When Prayer Fails: Faith Healing, Children, and the Law:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A must read for anyone interested in faith healing and children  
By George J. Bryjak  
In *When Prayer Fails*, Shawn Francis Peters sheds light on an important but little known aspect of American religiosity. The theme of this book as well as the scope of the issues examined are spelled out in the first chapter: "Harrowing incidents of religion-based medical neglect - in which parents, adhering to the doctrines of their faiths, refuse to furnish medical care to their ailing children - are not unique to a single church or a particular geographical area. Since the late nineteenth century, this phenomenon has imperiled the youngest most vulnerable members of a variety of religious faiths in every region of the United States. From Massachusetts to California, hundreds of children have died...in agony, and aided by little more than the ardent bedside prayers of their parents and fellow church members." Peters does an excellent job compiling case histories of faith healing and children and placing them in a socio-historical-legal perspective. In the tenth and final chapter, "We Need to Change the Statute - The Promise (and Limits) of Statutory Reform," he provides a detailed view of the legal issues and battles fought between those who would increase the legal protections for children against religion-based medical neglect, and the religious forces that would maintain the status quo. *When Prayer Fails* is a thoroughly researched, well written book on an important subject that has received far too little attention from both social scientists and the media. For anyone interested in faith healing and children it's a must read.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Excellent treatment of a fascinating, but largely unknown problem  
By Scrubmonkey  
This book discusses the practice of religious healing in various forms, focusing mainly on those practices that deprive children of medical treatment. It covers not only Christian Science, but also several lesser known churches, nearly all of which exist in some form today. It contains a wealth of historical information on faith healing, including its theological foundation in Christianity, the legal conflict between faith healing and child abuse, and efforts to remove religious exemptions from child neglect laws. For me, the most interesting part discusses modern attempts to prove the efficacy of prayer in medicine. The potential buyer is warned that the subject matter can be quite disturbing. The author presents a long series of grisly examples in which children suffered horrible deaths for lack of basic medical treatment. They span approximately the last 150 years and include some very recent cases. The book is very well written, though at times it gets a little repetitive. For example, after the first few mentions, the reader no longer needs to be reminded about the healing techniques mentioned in the epistle of James or that CHILD is an advocacy group. It is a very quick, but also gut-wrenching, read that presents numerous intellectual challenges.

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A heartbraking crime thoroughly exposed.  
By M. McGuire  
An eye-opener, an epiphany, a series of shocks--times to cry and times for anger; they're all in this clearly written scholarly book which provides much more than I expected. In recent years, I've read about several appalling cases of child deaths from faith-healing, but I had no idea what the background was or what its legal history was. The author reveals the irrational views of the faith-healing religious sects, the gruesome consequences for the child victims, and the often ineffective legal efforts to deal with it. I was shocked to learn the source of modern legal exemptions, for religious "healing," to child abuse laws. I thank Peters for thoroughly exposing this disgusting mess. One thing I would have appreciated would be, at least, a summary page about how adults treat themselves with faith-healing. Do they just pray when they have strokes, heart attacks, cancer, gallstones,...? Through pure religious fanaticism, they're committing themselves to what could be a hellish death. Even though they're doing it to themselves--and I support their right to do this--it's still part of the misery that can be credited to faith-healing nonsense. The philosophic question begging for answers is about individual rights in general and child rights in particular. Religious liberty is often used to defend these actions, but there is no way that religious liberty can mean the liberty to act towards other people according to whatever religious--or any other beliefs--one happens to hold; that would mean anarchy and no rights would be protected. People can believe whatever they want, but, most certainly, cannot do whatever they want. The book has 11 pages of bibliography. When there's an appropriate opportunity for an online comment, I'll certainly link to this book.

Relying on religious traditions that are as old as their faith itself, many devout Christians turn to prayer rather than medicine when their children fall victim to illness or injury. Faith healers claim that their practices are effective in restoring health - more effective, they say, than modern medicine. But, over the past century, hundreds of children have died after being denied the basic medical treatments furnished by physicians because of their parents' intense religious beliefs. The tragic deaths of these youngsters have received intense scrutiny from both the news media and public authorities seeking to protect the health and welfare of children. *When Prayer Fails: Faith Healing, Children, and the Law* is the first book to fully examine the complex web of legal and ethical questions that arise when criminal prosecutions are mounted against parents whose children die as a result of the phenomenon known by experts as religion-based medical neglect. Do constitutional protections for religious liberty shield parents who fail to provide adequate medical treatment for their sick children? Are parents likewise shielded by state child-neglect faith laws that seem to include exemptions for healing practices? What purpose do prosecutions really serve when it's clear that many deeply religious parents harbor no fear of temporal punishment? Peters offers a review of important legal cases in both England and America from the 19th century to the present day. He devotes special attention to cases involving Christian Science, the source of many religion-based medical neglect deaths, but also considers cases arising from the

refusal of Jehovah's witnesses to allow blood transfusions or inoculations. Individual cases dating back to the mid-19th century illuminate not only the legal issues at stake but also the profound human drama of religion-based medical neglect of children. Based on a wide array of primary and secondary source materials - among them judicial opinions, trial transcripts, police and medical examiner reports, news accounts, personal interviews, and scholarly studies - this book explores efforts by the legal system to balance judicial protections for the religious liberty of faith-healers against the state's obligation to safeguard the rights of children.

"What happens when strong commitments to religious freedom and child protection clash? In this carefully researched and gracefully written book, Shawn Peters tells the tragic stories of children whose parents and spiritual leaders sacrificed them in the name of God. Drawing on a wide range of examples--from Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Pentecostals to the little-known Peculiar People--Peters empathetically shows how the legal system has struggled to adjudicate the conflicting claims of believers and prosecutors." --Ronald L. Numbers, University of Wisconsin-Madison "For more than a century, prosecutors have tried to bring to justice those who honestly believed that only God can heal, who rejected any recourse to doctors, and whose children died tragically and painfully as a result. Peters' wonderful narrative is scrupulously fair to both the faithful and the forces of law and medicine. This is a fascinating, thorough, and beautifully written story of the clash between the way of life of a religious minority, and the legal order of the society in which they lived." --Lawrence Friedman, Stanford University "As Shawn Peters demonstrates with vivid and disturbing detail, the relationship between religion and child welfare in America is hardly straightforward. Examining the history of how judges and juries have decided between parents' rights to religious freedom and their responsibility for medical neglect of their dead children, Peters argues that such extreme cases may be only the tip of the iceberg of religiously based rejection of medicine in the U.S. Historians of American culture will welcome this carefully balanced and well-researched history, and its portrayal of the enormous respect for religion that pervades the American judicial system." --Amanda Porterfield, author of *Healing in the History of Christianity* "Peters' accounts of the legal battles in numerous states present an incisive analysis of the extent to which the "universal" rights of parents and children are contingent on local politics and the power of lobbying. In this way, he provides a vivid, almost anthropological account of the juridification of US Society." --Times Higher Education "A concise book on a compelling topic... Peter's lucid examination of the cases makes for fascinating reading. Not of least importance, the young and vulnerable victims at the center of the heart-wrenching stories he relates should compel our concern with this topic." --Journal of American History "Peter's book is...an excellent resource on faith-based healing, or lack thereof, and the law. It is expertly written and will be of interest both to First Amendment scholars as well as to non-academic readers with an interest in religious liberties, the care of children and the law. ...[S]tudents will also be drawn into Peters' excellent writing and storytelling throughout his account. I highly recommend the book." --Law and Politics Book "[An] important book." --The Humanist "Peters presents a compelling portrait of the tragic extremities of faith healing with more persistence." --Church History About the Author Shawn Francis Peters teaches writing and U.S. history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison