



# Medicine, Magic and Religion (Routledge Classics)

*W.H.R. Rivers*

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## Medicine, Magic and Religion (Routledge Classics) W.H.R. Rivers

One of the most fascinating men of his generation, W.H.R. Rivers was a British doctor and psychiatrist as well as a leading ethnologist. Immortalized as the hero of Pat Barker's award-winning *Regeneration* trilogy, Rivers was the clinician who, in the First World War, cared for the poet Siegfried Sassoon and other infantry officers injured on the western front. His researches into the borders of psychiatry, medicine and religion made him a prominent member of the British intelligentsia of the time, a friend of H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell. Part of his appeal lay in an extraordinary intellect, mixed with a very real interest in his fellow man. *Medicine, Magic and Religion* is a prime example of this. A social institution, it is one of Rivers' finest works. In it, Rivers introduced the then revolutionary idea that indigenous practices are indeed rational, when viewed in terms of religious beliefs.

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