



The Encyclopedic Sourcebook of New Age Religions

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In the late 1980s, the New Age movement became the focus of both media attention and widespread ridicule as some of the more outlandish aspects of the movement, such as channeling and the use of crystals for healing, briefly piqued the public's curiosity. While the movement was at its height, scholars of religion generally sneered at what was perceived to be a daffy, shallow craze, and ignored it as a subject of serious study. Professor James R. Lewis was among the first to examine this growing religious phenomenon scientifically. In previous books, he has investigated the New Age as the most visible manifestation of a significant spiritual subculture, the roots of which reach back to Theosophy, Spiritualism, and New Thought. The present collection pursues this theme, bringing together some of the best recent scholarship on new religions.

Since the height of its popular influence the New Age has declined in strength but has given rise to a plethora of new denominations all shaped by New Age ideas and spirituality. Reflecting the emergence of this new denominational structure, the core chapters of this book focus on specific groups. Other chapters examine the movement's historical roots. A unique feature of Dr. Lewis's work is his inclusion of extensive selections from New Age literature, thus allowing readers to experience firsthand the unusual perspectives of the various groups.

This is a fascinating examination of a significant and persistent religious and social phenomenon.

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