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New Age spirituality

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Abstract

"Gods of the New Age," a popular film on the New Age Movement, opens with scenes from India, emphasizing the close affinity between New Age spirituality and Hindu

spirituality. Such an analogy utterly fails to catch the true flavor of New Age spirituality—a form of spirituality that is permeating all aspects of contemporary American life. This religious "revival" is every bit as influential as other religious revivals in American history—perhaps more so.

The New Age Movement does draw from Eastern mysticism, but in all its diversity, is also very eclectic. It draws heavily from Christianity, from other world religions, and from all forms of spiritualism and the occult. As such, New Age spirituality is anything but new. Its forms of worship and beliefs are ancient, and its manifestations can be found in every generation of church history. The present New Age "revival" has served to fill the spiritual vacuum left by modern science and technology and by secular humanism. Although it

rises out of the Eastern cults of the 1960s, it is basically the old occult made respectable. No longer do the practitioners ply their trade in back alleys and store-fronts. The "revival" has spread to the affluent and educated sectors of society, and the setting of its weekend seminars is posh hotels or mountain retreats. Nevertheless, the basic religious tenets have changed very little from those of past centuries. Thus, to understand this contemporary "revival" in America it is helpful to look at prior forms of New Age spirituality.

Keywords

New Age movement;
United States -- Religion -- 20th century

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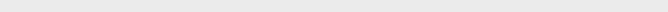
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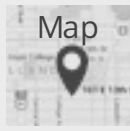
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