

RELIGION WATCH

A Newsletter Monitoring Trends In Contemporary Religion

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JEWISH-CATHOLIC RELATIONS BEING MENDED

After a period of decline, Catholic-Jewish relations are on the mend, according to recent reports. The Long Island newspaper, Newsday (October 1) reports that during a recent high-level conference in Prague, one Jewish leader said a "significant breakthrough in 1,900 years of Catholic-Jewish relations," took place when the Vatican acknowledged church complicity in anti-Semitism. After such setbacks as the conflict over the establishment of a convent and cross on the site of Auschwitz, the Vatican statement "brought about a sense of healing," says Eugene Fisher, director of Jewish-Catholic relations for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. The statement asked forgiveness for anti-Semitism and called upon Catholics to "take the initiative in reconciliation." Another Jewish leader says the conference established a climate where there is "mutuality, reconciliation and good will emerging, the likes of which I've never seen." The conference also focused on the growth of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe, as the Vatican promised to encourage teaching against prejudice in church schools in the region. Joint Jewish-Catholic committees will also be established in each of the Eastern European countries to deal with outbreaks of racism as they occur.

An editorial in the American Jesuit magazine America (October 6) also notes a growing number of "constructive dialogues, some quite formal and some informal, between Catholics and Jews at local, diocesan and international levels." The new friendliness is not just taking place on the official level; the editorial adds that "the new image and new attitude of which the Prague statement spoke have entered the bloodstream of the Catholic and Jewish communities." Catholic schools have pioneered in discouraging anti-Semitism, as recent studies--such as those by James S. Coleman of the University of Chicago-- have shown that students in Catholic schools have more positive attitudes toward those of other religions and races than do the students in public schools and non-Catholic private schools. Says one Jewish leader, "Studies have shown that a new generation of young Catholics and Jews has grown up which has never experienced the alienation, mutual suspicion and bigotry that so often poisoned earlier Catholic-Jewish relations."

The magazine adds that participants at a recent inter-faith conference in New York suggested now is the time to enlarge the common agenda of Catholics and Jews in the U.S. to include ethical and even theological issues. One such initiative took place last June when the U.S. bishops

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and the Synagogue Council of America released a statement proposing programs of moral education in public schools. But in the Los Angeles Times (October 13), Eugene Fisher and A. James Rudin write that "Many of the traditional Catholic-Jewish dialogue groups in the United States are failing to attract younger members. Interreligious relations continue to be a low priority for many Catholic and Jewish seminary students. And there are disturbing reports of increased anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe and on American college campuses." (America, 106 W. 56th St., New York, NY 10102-0002)

A PARADIGM SHIFT AWAY FROM ISRAEL FOR AMERICAN JEWS?

Jewish theologians and leaders appear to be coming closer to a consensus that a new phase of American Jewish identity is emerging that will de-emphasize traditional concerns with ethnicity, the Holocaust and Israel and focus more on spiritual concerns, according to the bi-weekly Jewish journal, Sh'ma (September 21, October 5 and October 19 issues). Editor Eugene Borowitz writes in the September 21 issue that the Jewish "ethos has shifted: the Holocaust-Israel symbols, for all their remaining potency, have lost their recent authority...The manifest cause of our disaffection is the no-longer bridgeable gap between the mythic and the real state of Israel..The trajectory of our mass disillusionment runs from Sabra and Shatila through the Intifada and the "Who is a Jew?" controversy to the recent huckstering to form a new Israeli administration. Only true believers can still envision today's State of Israel as our ethnic 'Spiritual Center.'" Borowitz adds that as the "American infatuation with things ethnic has passed," ethnicity will not be enough to keep the new generation of Jews in the faith. "Belief is now our major priority...Are we incidentally Jewish 'Unitarian' Americans or devoutly Jewish Jews who are also humanitarian Americans?"

Most respondents gave critical support to Borowitz's article, especially to the thesis that Israel-based concerns can no longer define American Jewish life and that theology and spirituality should be given priority in the American Jewish community. Writer Lawrence Hoffman says that American Jews have "entered a period that will either be marked by significant worship reform and the recovery of spirituality, or will be recognizable as the final marginalization of Judaism as a factor in Jewish identity, and the demise of the synagogue as a significant institution in American Jewish life." He adds that American Jews were too busy addressing concerns with ethnicity and Israel to learn from Protestants and Catholics working for spiritual and liturgical reform in the 1970s and '80s. But if Jews experience a similar spiritual renewal, it will have to work outside Orthodox Judaism so it impacts "mainline" liberal synagogues. Rabbi Balfour Brickner agrees with Borowitz's analysis, but writes that the Jewish community may not be equipped to handle such a spiritual revival; fewer and fewer Jews go to synagogue, the growing number of Jewish scholars are not being heard or read by the Jewish rank and file, and Jewish federations have not yet begun to think about implementing such programs.

The reappraisal of Israel and Zionism in American Jewish life has been taking place in other quarters of Judaism as well. The lead article in the summer issue of Judaism, a quarterly published by the American Jewish Congress, argues that the Zionist concept of Israel's centrality in Jewish life "needs to be reexamined and abandoned, because it is neither

historically accurate nor ideologically persuasive." Writer David Gordis, vice president of the University of Judaism, rejects the Zionist position that Israel is the "exclusive" arena for working out Jewish history, that the Diaspora lacks a Jewish authenticity, and that the only legitimate option for Jews is "aliyah"-- immigration to Israel. He adds that "Israelis...find it impossible to understand that American Jews are not simply grateful to America for its hospitality. Rather, they are patriotic Americans with feelings of love, loyalty and commitment to the country." Gordis calls for a "post-Zionist model for contemporary Jewish life" which would appreciate the "variety of settings in which Jews live..." (Sh'ma, Box 567, Port Washington, NY 11050; Judaism, 15 E. 84th St., New York, NY 10028)

NEW RATING RENEWING CHRISTIAN ACTIVISM IN ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY?

The recent move by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) to make a new classification for X rated movies may be moving Protestant and Catholic churches back into involvement and activism in the American entertainment industry, according to Between The Lines (October 23), a conservative "watchdog" newsletter on the news media and Hollywood. Church leaders were almost the only ones to dissent on the dropping of the X rating in favor of the NC-17 rating in order to give a greater showing of adult-oriented films. The U.S. Catholic Conference and the National Council of Churches issued a joint statement blasting the new rating system, saying that the change is not in the "best interest of the community" and that the motion picture association "caved in to the commercial interests of those who are attempting to get sexually exploitative material into general theatrical release."

Such criticisms and involvement by the churches were regular fare for the churches before the late 1960s. The newsletter adds that the ratings system began in 1968 when the National Council of Churches and the Catholic League of Decency folded up their watchdog operations in Hollywood. "The MPAA ratings board was founded in an effort to head off the creation of dozens of state and local movie rating systems that would play havoc with the movie industry." The most dramatic development from the new classification will be the popular backlash. "Look for the church--both Protestant and Catholic--to begin second-guessing its abandonment of the entertainment industry 25 years ago," the newsletter predicts. (Between The Lines, 7095 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 627, Hollywood, CA 90028)

NEW BOOK SIGNALING WARMING OF RELIGION/POLITICS FREEZE IN U.S.?

With the kind of reviews that the book, "For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future," (Beacon Press. \$24.95), has been receiving, one could suspect that something is changing in the polarized debate between religious left and right. The book, by economist Herman Daly and liberal Protestant theologian John B. Cobb, blends ecological concern and free market theories with process theology (which teaches, among other things, that God is more imminent than transcendent and suffers along with the world). So far the Christian left's Christianity & Crisis, which has long been partial to socialism and welfare state economies, and the New Age newsletter New Options have given the book very positive reviews. More

noteworthy is that the neoconservative Religion & Democracy newsletter (October) applauded "For the Common Good" for "re-examining neoclassical economic assumptions" and its concern for "genuine stewardship," although criticizing some of its ecological views. The newsletter says that the book will enjoy a wide audience among economists and "oldline/ecumenical churches that are searching for a new economic paradigm." The book's reception could signal a less polemical mood in the religion and politics/economics debate of the 1990s, although new divisions may be forming over such issues as ecology. (Religion & Democracy, 1331 H St., N.W., Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005-4706).

GREEN MOVEMENT STILL DIVIDED ON SPIRITUALITY

The Green movement is experiencing continued division over the role of religion in its ranks, according to World magazine (October 13). The six-year-old movement, stressing environmentalism, non-violence and political and economic decentralization, recently held its nationwide meeting where it narrowly approved a plank on spirituality despite criticism from other Greens that religion has no place in the movement. The draft of the spirituality plank was drawn up by a United Methodist minister, a Catholic, a Quaker, an atheist, a Pagan, a Buddhist, a Hindu and a Native American. Because the Greens seek consensus in decision making, a 75 percent affirmative vote was required to adopt planks in the platform. The spirituality plank was passed with a 78 percent vote.

But one atheist Green says some members have already dropped out of the movement because of the spirituality emphasis at previous meetings, adding that New Age rituals and proselytizing "turns some people off." The National Catholic Reporter (September 28) quotes one drafter of the spirituality plank as saying that proponents "strongly felt its time to reintroduce spirituality into politics." Part of the plank says "Greens support practices and policies which enhance the sense of interconnectedness (such as prayer, meditation, therapy, wilderness experience, art and music)." The plank adds that "Greens support the freedom of all peoples to worship or not in the way that they choose," and that "Greens uphold the separation of church and state." (World, P.O. Box 2330, Asheville, NC 28802; National Catholic Reporter, P.O. Box 419281, Kansas City, MO 64141)

SOLEMN ASSEMBLIES MOVEMENT GROWING, BRINGING EVANGELICAL UNITY

A movement of pastors gathering together for intensive sessions of confession and repentance is growing and gaining influence among American evangelical church leaders, according to a special report supplement in the National & International Religion Report (October 8). These gatherings are known as "solemn assemblies" and have been especially prevalent among Southern Baptists and evangelical pastors in the Pacific Northwest region. Solemn assemblies are similar to prayer meetings, but pastors specifically meet in order to pray for renewal and revival in their areas, sometimes engaging in extensive weeping and confessing of denominational divisions and back-biting. The movement began about one year ago with the Southern Baptists and is said to have triggered church renewal and growth in small towns, such as Cameron, Texas and Rosewell, N.M. Today the trend is quietly gaining in emphasis and importance among

denominational leaders. Over 30 leaders from various denominations will participate in a gathering this month in Atlanta which will follow the solemn assembly model.

These gatherings have acquired an ecumenical dimension in the Pacific Northwest, where about 500 pastors in Oregon and Washington from all Protestant denominations have been involved. The assemblies were promoted by Multnomah School of the Bible in Portland, Ore., specifically to bring a revival to a region which has consistently registered the lowest level of church attendance in the U.S. Churches in other regions are now inquiring about duplicating such efforts. So far, the solemn assemblies have encouraged a new unity among churches and leaders of different denominations, according to the report. There have also been reports of pastors in Southern cities and Western towns repenting of racial prejudice against blacks and Indians. One specialist in evangelism says the solemn assemblies resemble other movements leading to religious revivals in the past, and that the gatherings show that evangelicals are entering a "post-denominational" era of church unity. (National & International Religion Report, P.O. Box 21433, Roanoke, VA 24018)

LIBERAL CATHOLIC PARISHES, PRIESTS INCREASINGLY INDEPENDENT

Liberal Catholic priests are increasingly developing small faith-communities and sidestepping the church hierarchy in running parishes, according to the National Catholic Reporter (October 19). Reporter Tim Unsworth visited parishes across the country and found a common pattern among priests: "they are making pastoral decisions, many of which were normally reserved to chancery [or diocesan] officials...Parishes are becoming small dioceses." Unsworth sees this attitude developing among older priests (the average age of priests today is 55) who doubt the credibility of official church positions, such as those against birth control and remarriages after divorce, and hierarchical church discipline. Pastors are reported to skirt church laws on annulments of marriages ("No, I don't file annulment papers anymore [with the diocese]...we do it all in-house," says one pastor), wedding and funeral rules and confession. With one-on-one confessions dwindling, some of these priests are permitting group reconciliation as a substitute for this practice.

There is a lack of confidence in traditional church structures among such priests and an emphasis on a "family consciousness" and small communities where parishioners meet for the eucharist, church teaching, Bible study and social action. One parish opened five "base communities"--with one in a shoe store-- to reach out to inactive members. While the "underground church" movement--where Catholics worshipped outside of traditional parishes during the 1960s and 70s-- with a few exceptions, "has vanished...the traditional parish structure and ways of governing are changing rapidly from the ground up," writes Unsworth. He adds that small communities have not yet received the church's official seal of approval (but not much discouragement either), because it realizes it can't control such diverse groups. In Unsworth's travels he found a common source of influence and inspiration among these dissenting priests-- Andrew Greeley, the controversial sociologist-priest-novelist. Greeley's many books apply sociological research to parish life, often downplaying official teachings, and were described as giving the "best job description of the pastor," by one priest.

AMERICAN BISHOPS' CRACK DOWN ON PRO-CHOICE POLITICIANS A FAILURE?

The American Catholic bishop's move to clamp down on Catholic politicians who support abortion rights [reported in the July/August RW] has largely failed, according to the Wall Street Journal (October 16). "Catholic politicians favoring abortion rights have held their ground, sometimes in the face of threats of excommunication, and they are winning. Moreover, as Election Day nears, criticism of their position by the bishops has become so muffled it is rarely heard," writes James M. Perry. Some examples of such a development would include New York Governor Mario Cuomo, who was singled out for special criticism by Cardinal John O'Connor, but is expected to score the biggest landslide victory in his state's history; in California, seven of the state's 11 Catholic members of the U.S. House of Representatives continue to support abortion rights, "and they are all expected to win easily."

Theologian Richard McBrien says there is "no evidence of a single Catholic candidate in America facing defeat because of pressure he has been put under by the bishops." Much of the problem with the bishop's strategy lies in the fact that American Catholics are not far apart from all other voters on the issue of abortion. A Wall Street Journal/NBC poll presented in the article shows that 57 percent of Catholics don't think abortions should be illegal in contrast to 60 percent of all voters. Observers say that the bishops have decided to mute its campaign against dissenting politicians in the past month. They have instead focused on the strategy of restricting the use of parish and school facilities to such politicians to air their views.

CURRENT RESEARCH Recent Findings on Religious Attitudes and Behavior

* While there has been much recent attention to the resurgent interest in religion and spirituality among American baby boomers, there are noteworthy differences in belief within this generation, according to a special report in the recently released Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches. The study, conducted by sociologist Wade Clark Roof of the University of California at Santa Barbara, reports that the younger part of the baby boomer generation--which were born in the 15 year period from the late 1940s to the early 1960s--are returning to religion in greater numbers than their older counterparts. Roof found that married boomers without children are the least religious segment of the post-World War II birth boom. Age was found to be a major division among the baby boomers in determining kinds of belief and practice. In general, the younger boomers are more involved in traditional organized religion and tend to participate in the conservative trend of the 1980s. Older boomers shaped by the civil rights and counterculture movements of the '60s tend to be less conservative and are more likely to be involved in alternative religious forms, according to Roof. (Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, NCC, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115)

* In analyzing recent statistics about the beliefs and practices of young American Catholics sociologist John Coleman came across "an unexpected finding"-- contrary to common wisdom, American evangelicals are more likely to lose church members to the Catholic Church than vice versa. Writing in the Catholic magazine Commonweal (September 14) on data

collected on young Catholics (those between 18-29), Coleman found that most young converts to Catholicism come "overwhelmingly" from evangelical-fundamentalist groups (45.2 percent), next from liberal Protestantism (35.5 percent), and, lastly, from the unaffiliated (12.9 percent). Coleman found that only 18.5 percent of Catholics defect to evangelical groups, while 20.7 percent go to moderate Protestant denominations and 18.6 move to liberal Protestant denominations. But the Catholic Church still loses more Catholics than it gains through conversion--for every five persons who leave, 1.2 join the church. (Commonweal, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038)

* While a record number of Americans are saying that they are committed to Christ, a recent study finds little difference in the behavior of born-again Christians before and after their conversion experiences, according to the National & International Religion Report (October 8). Last month RW reported on a Gallup survey which showed that a record 74 percent of adults said they have made a commitment to Christ (although the surveyors noted that the findings didn't indicate the nature and depth of such commitment). Now, however, a survey conducted by the Roper Organization found that behavior in each of three major categories-- use of illegal drugs, driving while intoxicated, and marital infidelity-- actually deteriorated after the born-again experience for many people. Four percent of respondents said they had driven while intoxicated before being born again, while 12 percent had done so after their conversion. "Illegal drugs: 5 percent before, 9 percent after; illicit sex: 2 percent before, 5 percent after." One leader of the evangelical High Adventure Ministries, for which the survey was conducted, says that "We've reached a point [in our Christianity] where there is little or no distinction between what we say and what we do." (National & International Religion Report, Box 21433, Roanoke, VA 24018)

* Legal battles over church-state issues rose more sharply than usual in the last year, according to the Portland Oregonian newspaper (October 20). In a survey of church-state conflicts in court conducted by Americans United for the Separation of Church and State it was found that there were 192 cases occurring in 46 states from September 1989 to August 1990, up from 118 in 38 states in the previous 12 months. The varying disputes ranged from conflicts over graduation ceremony prayers to disputes over a Christian symbol in a city seal. The cases were also more widespread, occurring in nearly every state, with the most in New York and California.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOXY INCREASINGLY SUFFERING DEFECTIONS

As The Soviet Union struggles with nationalist divisions, Russian Orthodoxy is feeling similar tensions as members protest the church's control throughout the USSR. Since the end of 1989, the Russian Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union has "experienced a dramatic drop in the number of its adherents, with a significant percentage of its total membership defecting to the newly-recognized Ukrainian Catholic Church and the revived Ukrainian Autocephalous Church. Rough estimates detailing the number of defections to the revived church groups are thought to be as high as five million, or nearly 10 percent of the total membership of the Russian Orthodox Church..." according to News Network International (October 9), a news service focusing on religious freedom. The five-million member Ukrainian Catholic (or "Uniate") church, which was forcibly absorbed by the Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin, was granted autonomy last year. The one million member-Ukrainian

Autocephalous or Ukrainian Orthodox Church--unlike the Catholic Church--is made up all former members of the Russian Orthodox Church. It is also believed that many Russian Orthodox in Belorussia are leaving their church to join the revived Belorussian Catholic Church in the Republic of Belorussia. One Soviet church observer places the number of Russian Orthodox parishes lost to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as 500, although he notes that many new Orthodox churches have also been reopened in the Eastern Ukraine.

Widespread discontent with the Russian Orthodox leadership is the main cause for what is believed to be an irreversible loss of membership, according to one dissident. But the church has adopted measures to counter the membership loss, such as granting greater independence to Belorussian and Ukrainian branches and encouraging more moderate leadership. The National Catholic Register (August 26) reports that the Russian Orthodox Church may experience more defections to the Russian Orthodox Church in Exile (known as Russian Synod Abroad). The New York-based Synod broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church (also known as the Moscow Patriarchate) over its accommodation with communism 70 years ago. Under glasnost there have been a small but growing number of Orthodox parishes joining the Synod, mainly due to protest over Orthodox church leaders' collaboration with communism and their failure to acknowledge such involvement. (News Network International, P.O. Box 28001, Santa Ana, CA 92799; National Catholic Register, 12700 Ventura Blvd., Suite 200, Studio City, CA 91604)

BUDDHISM IN CRISIS IN RURAL JAPAN

The survival of Buddhism in rural Japan is being threatened by the exodus of country dwellers to cities, according to the Catholic newsmagazine 30 Days (November). In a study carried out by Japan's Institute of Contemporary Research, it was found that Buddhist temples are closing rapidly in rural areas. The situation is especially critical in such areas as the Prefecture of Yamanashi, which is about 60 miles from Tokyo. In this area 80 percent of the temples have no resident monks. The report adds that "Many Buddhist sects risk extinction because of the rate at which the countryside is being abandoned." The Nichiren sect [known in the West as the fast-growing Soka Gakkai sect of Buddhism] now has 5,000 temples throughout Japan, a number that could be reduced to 3,000 in the near future if the situation continues, according to the report. (30 Days, 2515 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94118)

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Religion Watch

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TIME-DATED MATERIAL — PLEASE RUSH

FINDINGS & FOOTNOTES

— A Bi-Monthly Supplement of Religion Watch —

November/December 1990

PRESS NOTES

* The Science & Religion News packs a lot of information into its 12 small pages, providing a unique resource for those wanting to keep track of the interplay between the scientific and religious worlds. The quarterly newsletter, published by the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, manages to provide brief reviews of books on science and religion, scan notable periodical articles on the subject, highlight upcoming conferences and other projects and editorialize on science/religion matters in each issue. The newsletter appears to take a moderate Christian position on most issues--while allowing for other views-- arguing for a basic relationship between scientific knowledge and theology. A subscription is \$8. Send to: Science & Religion News, 65 Hoit Rd., Concord, NH 03301.

* Just as the 1980s have ended there is already a book that provides a knowledgeable reading of American religion during that decade. Erling Jorstad's "Holding Fast/Pressing On: Religion in America in the 1980s," locates the major trends in a decade's worth of religious news. Such trends and movements as Catholic and mainline social activism, the New Christian Right, televangelism, denominational divisions, popular culture and religion and the New Age movement all receive thorough coverage (with helpful references). Although Jorstad could have written more on Judaism and such emerging world religions as Islam in the U.S., "Holding Fast/Pressing On," should be read by those wanting a firmer grasp of recent religious developments. The book is available for \$14.95 from Praeger Publishers, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881.

* The difficulties in surveying New Age periodicals is in grasping just what exactly makes up the New Age movement. Since defining the New Age by clear-cut teachings is problematic, Findings & Footnotes will examine New Age publications by the method of association-- in other words, those that keep company with other leaders and organizations often considered to make up the movement. It should be noted that this review is selective, reviewing those publications that point to the general trends and contours of the movement.

The New Age press is said to be flourishing. Along with a sizeable national press, the past five years have seen a growth of regional New Age publications, according to Carol Kramer, a long-time watcher of the New Age press. Nationally, the NEW AGE JOURNAL (342 Western Ave., Brighton, MA 02135. Bimonthly. \$24 per year) is often considered the flagship magazine of the New Age. But the mystical forms of spirituality associated with the New Age are featured far less than health and "well-being" topics. In a recent article on writing spiritual autobiographies, Christian writer Dan Wakefield was featured more than any New Age practitioners. One observer of the New Age press told F&F that today the journal offers more of a traditional liberal perspective on social issues

than a distinctly New Age view. EAST WEST (17 Station St., Box 1200, Brookline, MA 02147. Monthly \$24) is said to be the oldest of the New Age publications, started in the early 1970s. The magazine has the mainstream look of New Age Journal, and has kept its long-time concern with the relation of spirituality and health, with the accent on the latter (the health emphasis appears to be the strongest element in the New Age mix today).

Readers can get a better understanding of the diversity of New Age practices, techniques and beliefs through reading the magazine BODY MIND SPIRIT (225 Hope St., Providence, RI 02906. Bimonthly. \$15). Considered one of the largest New Age publications with 150,000 subscribers, the magazine features the more recognized and commercialized features of the New Age-- from crystals (which have been losing their popularity lately) to yoga. The magazine takes a first-hand testimonial approach to the New Age. The BRAIN/MIND BULLETIN (4717 N. Figueroa St., P.O. Box 42211, Los Angeles, CA 90042. M. \$35) covers another part of the New Age as it monitors current brain-mind research and its relation to spirituality and wholistic health (for instance, it recently reported on the relation of self-esteem to physical well-being). The newsletter is edited by Marilyn Ferguson, one of the architects of the New Age through her book, "The Aquarian Conspiracy."

The next grouping of publications can be considered the "soft" end of the New Age in that they feature the social implications of several New Age ideas (such as a holistic view of life) rather than the spiritual practices and teachings of more purist New Age groups. The UTNE READER (1624 Harmon Pl., Minneapolis, MN 55403. Bimonth. \$24) digests articles from other publications with an eye towards social change as well as non-traditional forms of spirituality. While the magazine is a good place to find information from less "mainstream" media, its social agenda is a blend of the political left with the New Age. NEW OPTIONS newsletter (Box 19324, Washington, DC 20036. M. \$25) prefers the label "post-liberal," as it attempts to provide an alternative political perspective in Washington. The newsletter, which provides a running account of New Age organizations, has its emphasis on ecology, a decentralized economy and a general New Age spirituality (such as the interconnectedness of all things) that brings it close to the Green movement. THE SUN (107 N. Roberson St., Chapel Hill, NC 27516. M. \$28) is a favorite of New Age-oriented intellectuals and could be considered the literary counterpart to New Options, as it features essays, short stories and poetry that are non-traditional and unpredictable-- from an appreciation of the Amish to interviews with Eastern religious leaders.

Much of the New Age came out of the counter-culture of the 1960s, but the above publications have moved toward the social mainstream. What would be considered counter-cultural in the movement today? The WHOLE EARTH REVIEW (Box 38, Sausalito, CA 94966. Quarterly \$20) could provide part of the answer, as it provides a catalog of fringe trends, ideas and products often relating to ecology and non-traditional spirituality (although there is a recent emphasis on high-tech developments). TRAJECTORIES (Permanent Press, P.O. Box 700305, San Jose, CA 95170. Q. \$20) has moved far away from the Green emphasis, promoting what it calls the "head revolution." Edited by writer and cult figure Robert Anton Wilson, Trajectories is part of a growing New Age counterculture, as it covers brain machines, computer-generated "virtual reality" (see July/August RW) and new psycho-pharmaceuticals that create mystical states and challenge traditional beliefs.