

On The Edge Of The Future Esalen And The Evolution Of American Culture Religion In North America

[#Esalen Institute](#) [#American cultural evolution](#) [#North American religion](#) [#Future of spirituality](#) [#Consciousness studies](#)

Explore the pivotal role of Esalen Institute in shaping the trajectory of American culture and religious thought. This deep dive examines how Esalen stood at the forefront, influencing the evolution of spirituality and society across North America, envisioning the future of human potential.

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On the Edge of the Future

An inside look at the history and influence of New Age's spiritual home.

Choosing Our Religion

The growth of the so-called Nones - people unaffiliated with religious institutions - has captivated religious and political leaders concerned with the implications of a 'decline of religion' in the United States. But most Nones are not non-believers, most were raised in religious households, and many have robust spiritual lives that intertwine with the lives of the religiously affiliated. 'Choosing Our Religion' explores the spiritual lives of Nones based on more than 100 intensive interviews across the United States and a survey of more than 1000 religiously affiliated and unaffiliated Americans. -- Provided by publisher.

Esalen

Jeffrey Kripal here recounts the spectacular history of Esalen, the institute that has long been a world leader in alternative and experiential education and stands today at the center of the human potential movement. Forged in the literary and mythical leanings of the Beat Generation, inspired in the lecture halls of Stanford by radical scholars of comparative religion, the institute was the remarkable brainchild of Michael Murphy and Richard Price. Set against the heady backdrop of California during the revolutionary 1960s, Esalen recounts in fascinating detail how these two maverick thinkers sought to fuse the spiritual revelations of the East with the scientific revolutions of the West, or to combine the very best elements of Zen Buddhism, Western psychology, and Indian yoga into a decidedly utopian vision that rejected the dogmas of conventional religion. In their religion of no religion, the natural world was just as crucial as the spiritual one, science and faith not only commingled but became staunch allies, and the enlightenment of the body could lead to the full realization of our development as human beings. "An impressive new book. . . . [Kripal] has written the definitive intellectual history of the ideas behind the

institute.”—San Francisco Chronicle “Kripal examines Esalen’s extraordinary history and evocatively describes the breech birth of Murphy and Price’s brainchild. His real achievement, though, is effortlessly synthesizing a dizzying array of dissonant phenomena (Cold War espionage, ecstatic religiosity), incongruous pairings (Darwinism, Tantric sex), and otherwise schizy ephemera (psychedelic drugs, spaceflight) into a cogent, satisfyingly complete narrative.”—Atlantic Monthly “Kripal has produced the first all-encompassing history of Esalen: its intellectual, social, personal, literary and spiritual passages. Kripal brings us up-to-date and takes us deep beneath historical surfaces in this definitive, elegantly written book.”—Playboy

The Secular Religion of Franklin Merrell-Wolff

In *The Secular Religion of Franklin Merrell-Wolff*, Dave Vliegenthart investigates the life and teachings of a twentieth-century American mystic, with implications for the socio-historical background of the ongoing grand narrative that asserts a widespread anti-intellectualism in modern American culture.

Inhaling Spirit

"This book follows up on recent findings that modern postural yoga is the outcome of a complex process of transcultural exchange and syncretism and digs even deeper, looking to uncover the disparate but entangled roots of contemporary yoga practice. In doing so, it proposes that some of what we call yoga, especially when it comes to North America and Europe, is only slightly genealogically related to pre-modern Indian yoga traditions. Rather, they are equally if not more grounded in Hellenistic theories of the subtle body, Western esotericism and magic, pre-modern European medicine, and late-nineteenth-century women's wellness programs. Marshalling these under the umbrella category of "harmonialism," the present book argues that they constitute a history of analogous practices that were gradually subsumed into the language of yoga. This allows us to fundamentally recontextualize the peculiarities of Western, and especially certain mainstream American form of yoga-their focus on aesthetic representation, their privileging of bodily posture and unsystematic incorporation of breathwork, and above all their overwhelmingly privileged female demographics. The initial chapters of the book lay out the basic shape and history of these concepts and practices, while the later chapters explore their development into a spiritualized form of women's physical culture over the course of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, including the ways in which they became increasingly associated with yoga"--

Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion

Mindfulness and yoga are widely said to improve mental and physical health, and booming industries have emerged to teach them as secular techniques. This movement is typically traced to the 1970s, but it actually began a century earlier. Wakoh Shannon Hickey shows that most of those who first advocated meditation for healing were women: leaders of the "Mind Cure" movement, which emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Instructed by Buddhist and Hindu missionaries, many of these women believed that by transforming consciousness, they could also transform oppressive conditions in which they lived. For women - and many African-American men - "Mind Cure" meant not just happiness, but liberation in concrete political, economic, and legal terms. In response to the perceived threat posed by this movement, white male doctors and clergy with elite academic credentials began to channel key Mind Cure methods into "scientific" psychology and medicine. As mental therapeutics became medicalized and commodified, the religious roots of meditation, like the social-justice agendas of early Mind Curers, fell by the wayside. Although characterized as "universal," mindfulness has very specific historical and cultural roots, and is now largely marketed by and accessible to affluent white people. Hickey examines religious dimensions of the Mindfulness movement and clinical research about its effectiveness. By treating stress-related illness individualistically, she argues, the contemporary movement obscures the roles religious communities can play in fostering civil society and personal wellbeing, and diverts attention from systemic factors fueling stress-related illness, including racism, sexism, and poverty.

Mind Cure

Article abstracts and citations of reviews and dissertations covering the United States and Canada.

America, History and Life

In 'Spirituality in the Flesh', Robert C. Fuller investigates how our sensory organs, emotional programs, sexual sensibilities, and neural structures shape religious phenomena.

Spirituality in the Flesh

"An academic memoir . . . addresses topics as diverse as Hindu Tantra, Christian mysticism, American counterculture, and the history of the paranormal." —Los Angeles Review of Books Over the course of his twenty-five-year career, Jeffrey J. Kripal's study of religion has had two major areas of focus: the erotic expression of mystical experience and the rise of the paranormal in American culture. This book brings these two halves together in surprising ways through a blend of memoir, manifesto, and anthology, drawing new connections between these two realms of human experience and revealing Kripal's body of work to be a dynamic whole that has the potential to renew and reshape the study of religion. Kripal tells his story, biographically, historically and politically contextualizing each of the six books of his Chicago corpus, from *Kali's Child* to *Mutants and Mystics*, all the while answering his censors and critics and exploring new implications of his thought. In the process, he begins to sketch out a speculative "new comparativism" in twenty theses. The result is a new vision for the study of religion, one that takes in the best of the past, engages with outside critiques from the sciences and the humanities, and begins to blaze a new positive path forward. A major work decades in the making, *Secret Body* will become a landmark in the study of religion. "Kripal presents us with a compilation of theories, cultural references and anecdotes making up an impassioned thesis about the future of religious studies and 'what human beings may become' . . . For all its eccentricities, Kripal's work is playful, engaging and original." —Times Higher Education

Secret Body

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mexicans and Americans joined together to transform the U.S.-Mexico borderlands into a crossroads of modern economic development. This book reveals the forgotten story of their ambitious dreams and their ultimate failure to control this fugitive terrain. Focusing on a mining region that spilled across the Arizona-Sonora border, this book shows how entrepreneurs, corporations, and statesmen tried to domesticate nature and society within a transnational context. Efforts to tame a 'wild' frontier were stymied by labour struggles, social conflict, and revolution. *Fugitive Landscapes* explores the making and unmaking of the U.S.-Mexico border, telling how ordinary people resisted the domination of empires, nations, and corporations to shape transnational history on their own terms. By moving beyond traditional national narratives, it offers new lessons for our own border-crossing age.

A Republic of Mind and Spirit

The soul, which dominated many intellectual debates at the beginning of the twentieth century, has virtually disappeared from the sciences and the humanities. Yet it is everywhere in popular culture—from holistic therapies and new spiritual practices to literature and film to ecological and political ideologies. Ignored by scholars, it is hiding in plain sight in a plethora of religious, psychological, environmental, and scientific movements. This book uncovers the history of the concept of the soul in twentieth-century Europe and North America. Beginning in fin de siècle Germany, Kocku von Stuckrad examines a fascination spanning philosophy, the sciences, the arts, and the study of religion, as well as occultism and spiritualism, against the backdrop of the emergence of experimental psychology. He then explores how and why the United States witnessed a flowering of ideas about the soul in popular culture and spirituality in the latter half of the century. Von Stuckrad examines an astonishingly wide range of figures and movements—ranging from Ernest Renan, Martin Buber, and Carl Gustav Jung to the Esalen Institute, deep ecology, and revivals of shamanism, animism, and paganism to Rachel Carson, Ursula K. Le Guin, and the Harry Potter franchise. Revealing how the soul remains central to a culture that is only seemingly secular, this book casts new light on the place of spirituality, religion, and metaphysics in Europe and North America today.

A Cultural History of the Soul

"In this thoughtful book, Ken Woodward offers us a memorable portrait of the past seven decades of American life and culture. From Reinhold Niebuhr to Billy Graham, from Abraham Heschel to the Dalai Lama, from George W. Bush to Hillary Clinton, Woodward captures the personalities and charts the philosophical trends that have shaped the way we live now." —Jon Meacham, author of *Destiny and Power* Impeccably researched, thought-challenging and leavened by wit, *Getting Religion*,

the highly-anticipated new book from Kenneth L. Woodward, is ideal perfect for readers looking to understand how religion came to be a contentious element in 21st century public life. Here the award-winning author blends memoir (especially of the postwar era) with copious reporting and shrewd historical analysis to tell the story of how American religion, culture and politics influenced each other in the second half of the 20th century. There are few people writing today who could tell this important story with such authority and insight. A scholar as well as one of the nation's most respected journalists, Woodward served as Newsweek's religion editor for nearly forty years, reporting from five continents and contributing over 700 articles, including nearly 100 cover stories, on a wide range of social issues, ideas and movements. Beginning with a bold reassessment of the Fifties, Woodward's narrative weaves through Civil Rights era and the movements that followed in its wake: the anti-Vietnam movement; Liberation theology in Latin America; the rise of Evangelicalism and decline of mainline Protestantism; women's liberation and Bible; the turn to Asian spirituality; the transformation of the family and emergence of religious cults; and the embrace of righteous politics by both the Republican and Democratic Parties. Along the way, Woodward provides riveting portraits of many of the era's major figures: preachers like Billy Graham and Jerry Falwell; politicians Mario Cuomo and Hillary Clinton; movement leaders Daniel Berrigan, Abraham Joshua Heschel, and Richard John Neuhaus; influential thinkers ranging from Erik Erikson to Elizabeth Kubler-Ross; feminist theologians Rosemary Reuther and Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza; and est impresario Werner Erhardt; plus the author's long time friend, the Dalai Lama. For readers interested in how religion, economics, family life and politics influence each other, Woodward introduces fresh a fresh vocabulary of terms such as "embedded religion," "movement religion" and "entrepreneurial religion" to illuminate the interweaving of the secular and sacred in American public life. This is one of those rare books that changes the way Americans think about belief, behavior and belonging.

Getting Religion

Yoga. Humanistic Psychology. Meditation. Holistic Healing. These practices are commonplace today. Yet before the early 1960s they were atypical options for most people outside of the upper class or small groups of educated spiritual seekers. Esalen Institute, a retreat for spiritual and personal growth in Big Sur, California, played a pioneering role in popularizing quests for self-transformation and personalized spirituality. This "soul rush" spread quickly throughout the United States as the Institute made ordinary people aware of hundreds of ways to select, combine, and revise their beliefs about the sacred and to explore diverse mystical experiences. Millions of Americans now identify themselves as spiritual, not religious, because Esalen paved the way for them to explore spirituality without affiliating with established denominations. The American Soul Rush explores the concept of spiritual privilege and Esalen's foundational influence on the growth and spread of diverse spiritual practices that affirm individuals' self-worth and possibilities for positive personal change. The book also describes the people, narratives, and relationships at the Institute that produced persistent, almost accidental inequalities in order to illuminate the ways that gender is central to religion and spirituality in most contexts.

The American Soul Rush

With over four million copies in print, Paramahansa Yogananda's autobiography has served as a gateway into yoga and alternative spirituality for North American practitioners since 1946. Balancing traditional yoga, metaphysical spirituality, and a flair for the stage, Yogananda inspired countless people to practice Yogoda, his own brand of yoga. His method combined the spiritual and superhuman aspirations of Indian traditions with the health-oriented sensibilities of Western practice. Because the Yogoda program does not rely on recognizable postures and poses, it has remained under the radar of yoga scholarship. Biography of a Yogi examines Yogananda's career and Yogoda in the wider context of the development of yoga in the twentieth century. Focusing on Yogis during this early period of transnational popularization, Foxen highlights the continuities in the concept of the Yogi as superhuman and traces the transformation of yoga from a holistic and spiritual practice to its present-day postural practice.

The Brill Dictionary of Religion

The term "mysticism" has never been consistently defined or employed, either in religious traditions or in academic discourse. The essays in this volume offer ways of defining what mysticism is, as well as methods for grappling with its complexity in a classroom. This volume addresses the diverse literature

surrounding mysticism in four interrelated parts. The first part includes essays on the tradition and context of mysticism, devoted to drawing out and examining the mystical element in many religious traditions. The second part engages traditions and religio-cultural strands in which "mysticism" is linked to other terms, such as shamanism, esotericism, and Gnosticism. The volume's third part focuses on methodological strategies for defining "mysticism," with respect to varying social spaces. The final essays show how contemporary social issues and movements have impacted the meaning, study, and pedagogy of mysticism. *Teaching Mysticism* presents pedagogical reflections on how best to communicate mysticism from a variety of institutional spaces. It surveys the broad range of meanings of mysticism, its utilization in the traditions, the theories and methods that have been used to understand it, and provides critical insight into the resulting controversies.

Biography of a Yogi

The sacred consciousness that prevailed in antiquity is the key to unlocking our future • Shows how scientific consciousness, which gives primacy to the sense of sight, estranged us from the participatory spiritual consciousness of antiquity • Explores the vital importance of the imagination in reconnecting us to the spirit world *The Future of the Ancient World* sheds new light on the evolution of consciousness from antiquity to modern times. The twelve essays in this book examine developments in human consciousness over the past five thousand years that most history books do not touch. In ancient times, human beings were finely attuned to the invisible world of the gods, spirits, and ancestors. Today, by contrast, our modern scientific consciousness regards what is physically imperceptible as unreal. Our experience of the natural world has shifted from an awareness of the divine presence animating all things to the mere scientific analyses of physical attributes, a deadened mode of awareness that relies on our ability to believe only in what we can see. In these richly illustrated and wide-ranging essays that span the cultures of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, and the early Christian period, Jeremy Naydler shows how the consciousness that prevailed in ancient times may inspire us toward a future in which we once again reconnect with invisible realms. If the history of consciousness bears witness to the loss of visionary and participatory awareness, it also shows a new possibility--the possibility of developing a free and objective relationship to the spirit world. Naydler urges us not only to draw inspiration from the wisdom of the ancients but to carry this wisdom forward into the future in a renewed relationship to the spiritual that is based on human freedom and responsibility.

Teaching Mysticism

Love uncovers the forgotten life and times of Pierre Bernard, the colorful, enigmatic character who introduced hatha yoga to America, in this surprising, sometimes comic story.

Choice

This volume collects essays under four categories: religious traditions, religious life, emotional states, and historical and theoretical perspectives. They describe the ways in which emotions affect various world religions, and analyse the manner in which certain components of religious represent and shape emotional performance.

The Future of the Ancient World

This collection of essays by leading scholars explores the present, dynamic state of metaphysical religion in America. It includes chapters that: put survey data on this growing group in context; clarify definitional issues in the study of spirituality in general and metaphysical spirituality in particular; and assess the networks, conferences, rituals, festivals, retreat centers and periodicals recently developed by metaphysicals. The contributors discuss characteristic practices of mental healing and meditation, and show the reach of metaphysical ideas into public spaces and popular media cultures. One particular chapter also addresses the growing controversy over the legitimacy of metaphysical individuals and movements that appropriate elements of Native American and Asian religious beliefs and practices to enrich or sustain their own practice. This rich collection appeals to students, researchers, professionals and the layperson interested in knowing more about the history and more importantly the direction that American metaphysical religion is taking.

American Book Publishing Record

This is not just another book, so much as a new way of seeing the world and our way of being in it. Groundbreaking, and profoundly optimistic, this is the only book to investigate how mysticism can inspire cultural and political renewal. At heart, *The Mystical State* looks toward the future, toward what is possible on the other side of the difficult times that confront us, and how we can envision and encourage cultural emergence. In *The Mystical State*, Arthur Versluis delves into the origins of modernity and what led to the crises of our time. But he also looks to the future, and in particular, to how spirituality can inform cultural and political life in new and illuminating ways. "Arthur Versluis's *The Mystical State: Politics, Gnosis and Emergent Cultures*, asks a question long overdue in the study of mysticism: what are the political implications of direct mystical experience and thinking? His analysis ranges freely over both ancient and modern thought and experience. His focus on Western thought, ancient and modern, is a welcome respite from the tendency to focus on Eastern meditation and philosophy among scholars of mysticism. His exploration of the marginalized is especially important. And by focusing on the road not taken when Gnosticism was repudiated long ago, he dares to imagine what a new culture and state that's centered on the mystical might look like: the end of gigantism, the re-framing of life and value, and a form of political authority centered in value. It is a courageous and thought provoking book, and should open the door to a series of questions important in our struggling world." Robert K. C. Forman, author of *Mysticism, Mind, Consciousness* and numerous other books on mysticism. It's simply amazing Each page is a feast to both my mind and soul Miguel Conner, editor of *Voices of Gnosticism* A wonderful book . . . fascinating I highly recommend that people buy it and read it as soon as possible. I can't say enough about it. William Kennedy, Sphinx Radio Praise for Other Works by Arthur Versluis: "At a time when the religions of the world are meeting on a spiritual level and in a global context, it is crucial that the Christian West rediscover its often forgotten inner or esoteric wisdom. Arthur Versluis skillfully guides the reader to recover the wide range of this rich heritage." Ewart Cousins, general editor, *World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest* "A collection of very precious clues to the sources of the Western spiritual tradition, pointing to the hidden currents both in history and in our own selves." Jacob Needleman, author of *The American Soul* and *The Heart of Philosophy*

The British National Bibliography

Sarah Pike traces the history of New Age and Neopagan religions in the United States from their origins in the nineteenth century to their reemergence in the 1960s counterculture. She also considers the differences and similarities between the New Age and Neopagan movements as well as the antagonistic relationship between these two practices and other religions in America, particularly Christianity. Covering such topics as healing, gender and sexuality, millennialism, and ritual experience, she offers a sympathetic yet critical treatment of religious practices often marginalized yet soaring in popularity. Her book is a rich analysis of these spiritual worlds and social networks and questions why these faiths are flourishing at this point in American history.

The Great Oom

Yoga classes and Zen meditation, New-Age retreats and nature mysticism—all are part of an ongoing religious experimentation that has surprisingly deep roots in American history. Tracing out the country's Transcendentalist and cosmopolitan religious impulses over the last two centuries, *Restless Souls* explores America's abiding romance with spirituality as religion's better half. Now in its second edition, including a new preface, Leigh Eric Schmidt's fascinating book provides a rich account of how this open-road spirituality developed in American culture in the first place as well as a sweeping survey of the liberal religious movements that touted it and ensured its continued vitality.

The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion

In its most general sense, the term "Spiritual but Not Religious" denotes those who, on the one hand, are disillusioned with traditional institutional religion and, on the other hand, feel that those same traditions contain deep wisdom about the human condition. This edited collection speaks to what national surveys agree is a growing social phenomenon referred to as the "Spiritual but Not Religious Movement" (SBNRM). Each essay of the volume engages the past, present and future(s) of the SBNRM. Their collective contribution is analytic, descriptive, and prescriptive, taking stock of not only the various analyses of the SBNRM to date but also the establishment of a new ground upon which the continued academic discussion can take place. This volume is a watershed in the growing academic and public

interest in the SBNRM. As such, it will be vital reading for any academic involved in Religious Studies, Spirituality and Sociology.

The Writers Directory

How can the West rediscover its authentic spirit? Exploring the period from 1899 to 1945 – from the end of the US frontier and the writing of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* to the conclusion of World War II and the dropping of the atom bomb – Luigi Morelli traces the events that led the United States to become the world's dominating imperial force. America, he demonstrates, is deeply connected to Britain, Germany and Eastern Europe, particularly Russia. Yet despite their tragic collective histories, there is hope for the future – if only America can claim its true task. Searching for the Spirit of the West challenges many of the falsehoods that pass for mainstream history. Utilizing a wealth of documented evidence from the research of overlooked historians, economists, social and spiritual thinkers, the author takes a symptomatic view of the past, revealing hidden, longer-term trends. This approach offers a new understanding of events such as the rise of Nazism, the Great Depression, the new Deal, and even the roles of banking and clandestine 'brotherhoods' in world history. Morelli also appraises *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in parallel with America's cultural achievements. Through imagination, L. Frank Baum's contemporary fairy-tale enables us to intuit the true mission of the West and its potential contribution to world culture, now and in the future.

The Future of Metaphysical Religion in America

This text explores the major new or unconventional religions and spiritual movements in America that exist outside the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The Mystical State

Warren Felt Evans (1817–1889) converted to Methodism while at Dartmouth College, became a minister, and spent his Methodist years as a spiritual seeker. His two extant journals, edited and annotated by Catherine L. Albanese, appear in print for the first time and reveal the inner journey of a leading American spiritual pilgrim at a critical period in his religious search. A voracious reader, he recorded accounts of intense religious experience in his journals. He moved from the Oberlin perfectionism he embraced early on, through the French quietism of Madame J. Guyon and Archbishop Fénelon, then into Swedenborgianism, spiritualism, and mind cure with distinct theosophical overtones. His carefully documented journey is suggestive of the similar journeys of the religious seekers who made their way into the burgeoning metaphysical movement at the end of the 19th century—and may shed light too on today's spirituality.

New Age and Neopagan Religions in America

Groovy Science paints a decidedly different picture of the sixties counterculture by uncovering an unabashed embrace of certain kinds of science and technology. While many rejected science and technology that struck them as hulking, depersonalized, or militarized, theirs was a rejection of Cold War-era missiles and mainframes, not science and technology per se. We see in these pages the long-running annual workshops on quantum physics at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California; aerospace engineers turning their knowledge of high-tech materials to the short board revolution in surfing; Timothy Leary's championing of space colonization as the ultimate high; and midwives redirecting their medical knowledge to launch a home-birth movement. Groovy Science gathers intriguing examples like these from across the physical, biological, and social sciences and charts commonalities across these many domains, highlighting shared trends and themes during one of the most colorful periods of recent American history. The result reveals a much more diverse picture of how Americans sought and found alternative forms of science that resonated with their social and political goals."

Restless Souls

Presents the first systematic analysis of the structure and beliefs of the New Age movement, and the historical emergence of "New Age" as a secularized version of Western esoteric traditions.

Being Spiritual but Not Religious

In this final work of his American trilogy, Nicholas Hagger focuses on the unified World State it is America's secret destiny to create, and on the world's divided culture that impedes its creation. Throughout world culture there are conflicting and entrenched metaphysical and secular approaches that permeate all its main disciplines, including history, philosophy and science, literature and comparative religion. In each discipline there is a tussle between the traditional religious view, which is supported by the 4.6 billion of the world's 7.3 billion population that follow a religion, and the secular and social approach associated with humanism and the scientific reductionism of Hawking and Dawkins, which sees the universe as a random accident. Hagger argues that it is America's secret destiny to bring in a democratic, UN-based, partly federal World State that can unify humankind. The conflict between metaphysical and secular approaches can be healed within a new reconciling philosophy that unites both outlooks, Universalism, which is already making an impact in the US. The key to this reconciliation is focusing on the scientific view of the order in the universe, and on the experience of the common essence which resides in all religions (the belief in the ordering Light), and on the traditional view of order in the seven disciplines of world culture. This reconciliation can reunify each discipline and therefore world culture, and create world unity. Restoring the metaphysical vision of order in world culture can strengthen America's harmonizing of humankind within a World State based on political Universalism.

Searching for the Spirit of the West

This title is part of UC Press's Voices Revived program, which commemorates University of California Press's mission to seek out and cultivate the brightest minds and give them voice, reach, and impact. Drawing on a backlist dating to 1893, Voices Revived makes high-quality, peer-reviewed scholarship accessible once again using print-on-demand technology. This title was originally published in 1978.

Religious and Spiritual Groups in Modern America

The result of a collaborative, multiyear project, this groundbreaking book explores the interpretive worlds that inform religious practice and derive from sensory phenomena. Under the rubric of "making sense," the studies assembled here ask, How have people used and valued sensory data? How have they shaped their material and immaterial worlds to encourage or discourage certain kinds or patterns of sensory experience? How have they framed the sensual capacities of images and objects to license a range of behaviors, including iconoclasm, censorship, and accusations of blasphemy or sacrilege? Exposing the dematerialization of religion embedded in secularization theory, editor Sally Promey proposes a fundamental reorientation in understanding the personal, social, political, and cultural work accomplished in religion's sensory and material practice. *Sensational Religion* refocuses scholarly attention on the robust material entanglements often discounted by modernity's metaphysic and on their inextricable connections to human bodies, behaviors, affects, and beliefs.

The Spiritual Journals of Warren Felt Evans

Entheogens and the Development of Culture makes the radical proposition that mind-altering substances have played a major part not only in cultural development but also in human brain development. Researchers suggest that we have purposely enhanced receptor sites in the brain, especially those for dopamine and serotonin, through the use of plants and fungi over a long period of time. The trade-off for lowered functioning and potential drug abuse has been more creative thinking--or a leap in consciousness. Experiments in entheogen use led to the development of primitive medicine, in which certain mind-altering plants and fungi were imbibed to still fatigue, pain, or depression, while others were taken to promote hunger and libido. Our ancestors selected for our neural hardware, and our propensity for seeking altered forms of consciousness as a survival strategy may be intimately bound to our decision-making processes going back to the dawn of time. Fourteen essays by a wide range of contributors—including founding president of the American Anthropological Association's Anthropology of Religion section Michael Winkelman, PhD; Carl A. P. Ruck, PhD, Boston University professor of classics and an authority on the ecstatic rituals of the god Dionysus; and world-renowned botanist Dr. Gaston Guzman, member of the Colombian National Academy of Sciences and expert on hallucinogenic mushrooms—demonstrate that altering consciousness continues to be an important part of human experience today. Anthropologists, cultural historians, and anyone interested in the effects of mind-altering substances on the human mind and soul will find this book deeply informative and inspiring. From the Trade Paperback edition.

Groovy Science

In this book, Glenn R. Mosley chronicles the history of the movement, including biographical sketches and the philosophies of pioneers and influential leaders linked to the movement's development and growth. These include Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, the founders of Unity; Ernest Holmes, founder of the Science of Mind; Mary Baker Eddy, founder of the Church of Christ Science; Ralph Waldo Trine, philosopher, mystic, teacher, and early mentor of New Thought; Joel Goldsmith, founder of The Infinite Way, among others.

New Age Religion and Western Culture

A volume of philosophical dialogues dating from 1980 and having a transcendentalist dimension which embraces evolution from a religious standpoint.

The Secret American Destiny

Experimentation in American Religion