



From Slogans To Mantras: Social Protest and Religious Conversion in the Late Vietnam Era (Religion and Politics)

Stephen Kent

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This book takes a provocative look at the early 1970s - an often overlooked yet colorful period when the Vietnam War and student protests were on the wane as new religious groups grew in size and visibility. Certainly, religious strains were evident through postwar popular culture from the 1950s Beat generation into the 1960s drug counterculture, but the explosion of nontraditional religions during the early 1970s was unprecedented. This phenomenon took place in the United States (and at the edges of American-influenced Canadian society) among young people who had been committed to bringing about what they called "the revolution" but were converting to a wide variety of Eastern and Western mystical and spiritual movements. Stephen Kent maintains that the failure of political activism led former radicals to become involved with groups such as the Hare Krishnas, Scientology, Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, the Jesus movement, and the Children of God. Drawing on scholarly literature, alternative press reportage, and personal narratives, Kent shows how numerous activists turned from psychedelia and political activism to guru worship and spiritual quest as a response to the failures of social protest - and as a new means of achieving societal change.

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