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**RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY**

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*Religious  
Restlessness*

"Alienation and Apostasy" by Wade Clark Roof, in *Society* (May-June 1978), Box A, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.

The rising popularity of many new religious and quasi-religious groups in America reflects a larger disarray. Many Americans are abandoning their earlier religious identities, writes Roof, a University of Massachusetts sociologist.

Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center show that religious defection is occurring primarily among the young (the proportions for liberal Protestants, Jews, and Catholics average about 15 percent among the 18-25 age group), but that Americans of all ages are less inclined to identify themselves as members of a religious community than was the case 20 years ago. (Some 6.7 percent of Americans now describe themselves as having no religious affiliation, compared with 2.7 percent in 1957.)

Religious defection is most prevalent among college-educated males living in the West and Northeast. But income level, employment, and marital status appear to make little difference in defection rates. Rather than being marginal people, says Roof, "young defectors are prone to come from affluent, middle-class families and are likely to be married and hold jobs."

Disenchantment with established churches occurs far more frequently among those who embrace the so-called "new morality" and a permissive attitude toward marijuana, abortion, homosexuality, sexual behavior, and protest activity.

Roof doubts that the new morality will replace the old or that religious defection will increase sharply in the near future. In fact, defection may have "bottomed out" among the very young even as it spreads through society as a whole. To a considerable extent, the long-term future of the main-line religious institutions depends on how well they can adjust to changing values and lifestyles.

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**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

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*Positive Impacts  
of Negative Ions*

"Ions in the Air" by Albert P. Krueger and Sheelah Sigel, in *Human Nature* (July 1978), Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 10702, Des Moines, Iowa 50340.

Scientists have long recognized that certain natural phenomena—radioactive elements in the soil, cosmic ray activity, the shearing of water molecules in waterfalls, and persistent winds like the *foehn* in Germany and the *mistral* of France—can influence the formation of air