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# REVIEW

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# Australian Religion Studies REVIEW

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## Special Feature: New Religious Movements and Alternative Spiritualities in Australia

*Guest edited by Adam Possamai*

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## **PREFACE**

As Lynne Hume pointed out in her recent article on New Religious Movements in Australia (*ARSR* 13:1), these new groups are now part of the Australian religious landscape. As an outcome of this presence, various responses to them have been expressed by social commentators coming from different backgrounds. This issue takes the position of acknowledging this presence in an academic and emphatic way. The eight refereed articles explore the diversity, and certain social impacts, of this new (or not so new) religious phenomena in Australia.

The authors in this edition, coming from different disciplines such as anthropology, history, religious studies and sociology, while not representing the whole vitality of this research field in Australia, offer a good array of articles covering Traditionalism, Witchcraft, New Age, Eco-Spirituality and Cult-Busters (part of the anti-cult movement). They also address specific issues such as globalisation, gender, consumer culture, identity, indigenous issues, social theory, and research methods. Apart from the review essay, all articles are alphabetically listed and do not follow any other logic.

This special issue would have not been possible without the help of many anonymous referees who spent a considerable amount of time going through the different manuscripts. I would like to thank them for their 'hidden' and valuable contribution.

This special issue reflects the growing field of study of New Religious Movements and Alternative Spiritualities in Australia. However, this field of research needs to be given more opportunities to express itself, and more work still remains to be pursued to research this religious/spiritual diversity.

Adam Possamai  
UWS