



Alan Watts-Here and Now: Contributions to Psychology, Philosophy, and Religion (SUNY series in Transpersonal and Humanistic Psychology)

Peter J. Columbus

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Considers the contributions and contemporary significance of Alan Watts.

Alan Watts—Here and Now explores the intellectual legacy and continuing relevance of a prolific writer and speaker who was a major influence on American culture during the latter half of the twentieth century. A thinker attuned to the spiritual malaise affecting the Western mind, Watts (1915–1973) provided intellectual and spiritual alternatives that helped shape the Beat culture of the 1950s and the counterculture of the 1960s. Well known for introducing Buddhist and Daoist spirituality to a wide Western audience, he also wrote on psychology, mysticism, and psychedelic experience. Many idolized Watts as a guru-mystic, yet he was also dismissed as intellectually shallow and as a mere popularizer of Asian religions (the “Norman Vincent Peale of Zen”). Both critical and appreciative, this edited volume locates Watts at the forefront of major paradigmatic shifts in Western intellectual life. Contributors explore how Watts’s work resonates in present-day scholarship on psychospiritual transformation, Buddhism and psychotherapy, Daoism in the West, phenomenology and hermeneutics, humanistic and transpersonal psychology, mysticism, and ecofeminism, among other areas.

“This volume, designed to rigorously reevaluate Watts in light of ensuing scholarship, is a nourishing addition to the small literature on this complex and enormously influential individual.” — PsycCRITIQUES

“Columbus and Rice have put together a volume that is well conceived, well written, well edited, and accessible to undergraduates as well as scholars.” — CHOICE

“Watts was a stunningly brilliant writer—far better than almost anyone writing then or now; he clearly had grasped ‘the essence of Zen.’ Every essay in this book throws new light on the relevance of his ideas for today, and the ones written by those who are also historical figures in the circles Watts moved in and wrote out of offer fascinating historical tidbits. I enthusiastically recommend this book.” — Jeffrey J. Kripal, author of *Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion*

Peter J. Columbus is Administrator of the Shantigar Foundation in Rowe, Massachusetts.

Donadrian L. Rice is Professor of Psychology at the University of West Georgia. They are also the coeditors of *Psychology of the Martial Arts*.

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