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In terms of public opinion, new religious movements are considered controversial for a variety of reasons. Their social organization often runs counter to popular expectations by experimenting with communal living, alternative leadership roles, unusual economic dispositions, and new political and ethical values. As a result the general public views new religions with a mixture of curiosity, amusement, and anxiety, sustained by lavish media emphasis on oddness and tragedy rather than familiarity and lived experience. This updated and revised second edition of *Controversial New Religions* offers
