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The Search for a Woman-Centered Spirituality (The Cutting Edge: Lesbian Life and Literature Series)

Annette J. Van Dyke

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"[A] bridge-building book [that] illuminates the interconnections among feminist creators from multi-cultural mainstream traditions; one that creates bonds of sisterhood. Annette Van Dyke makes us aware of the way in which feminist spirituality unites women, even when the material conditions of their lives foster divisions."
—Gloria Feman Orenstein, University of Southern California, author of *The Reflowering of the Goddess*

Alongside the boom in feminist and lesbian scholarship and activism of the last twenty years, there has evolved a distinctive spiritual tradition focused on and revolving around women. This spirituality finds its roots in a number of different traditions, including the Native American, African American, and Euro American traditions. Central to these disparate traditions is the focus on a goddess figure, the centrality of the female principle, and the mending of the separation between mind and body.

Weaving the strands of women's spirituality from different cultures together, Annette van Dyke here addresses the commonalities among these rich traditions. Examining the work and writings of such figures as Leslie Marmon Silko, Paula Gunn Allen, Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Starhawk, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Sonia Johnson, and Mary Daly, Van Dyke illustrates how these writers and activists outline a journey toward wholeness - a "curing ceremony" - that allows them to reclaim their spirituality from the deadening influence of patriarchal religions. Taken together, their work contributes to a vision of a world based on a female principle, one which exemplifies a lesbian-feminist ethic.

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