There is a lot to be learned from cults

When the rebellion and the needs of youth are coupled with the systematic recruitment procedures of many cultic groups, the results are often predicta-ble — membership in the cultic beliefs and lifestyle increases.

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Rabbi A. James Rudin and his wife. Marcia, who have recently published "Prison or Paradise? The New Relig-ious Cults," estimate there are 3 mil-lion past and present cult members in this country.

It has not been that long since par-ents and traditional religion were won-dering how to involve young people in failth-entered concerns. And now the same folks are asking what the draw-ing card is in this religious phenome-non. One might argue that the phenom-enon is not as religious as it is psycho-logical.

In a telephone interview, Rabbi Ru-din suggested that some of the ingred-ients include the age-old rebellion of youth, a degree of ignorance, and a need for identify, friendship and com-munity. He also suggsted that the sys-

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tematic recruitment tactics of many cultic groups play directly into these

WE MIGHT ATTEMPT to dissuade youthful adherents with logical argu-ments. We may even try to frighten them with stories of the Jonestown tragedy. However, logic is not the basis of their attraction.

Young people need to feel important. They need to feel wanted, and they need a sense of direction. In their ex-treme, they would even like someone else to make their decisions. Perhaps the cults are more aware of this than is traditional religion. The cultic recruiters seem to fill the

bill on a variety of counts. For one, they offer a sense of importance - the prospective convert is made to feel im-portant from the first contact.

One young person who was recently recruited toil me that he never felt so much like he belonged. I wonder how many young adults have that kind of feeling about their churches and syna-gogues. Running a young adult pro-gram and inviting young adults to be an essential and on-going part of a faith community are not necessarily the same thing.

A community of believers who have lit-tle more than a catechism or Sunday school understanding of the faith they profess do not have much to offer in this regard. WE MAY scream that young people do not come flocking to our churches and our synagogues. But reaching out and touching them where they are may I find most young adults embarrass-ed when asked questions about their faith. They are able to label it, but are

moral perspectives

Rev. Robert Schaden

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very inept at explaining it. Perhaps we who are called to be the explainers had better do some homework on what to give and how to give it.

THE APPEAL to a sense of direction is another area at which we might take a harder look. Granted, young people need to make their own decisions and their own faith commitments.

However, we who claim to have a vi-able faith might well make a more se-rious effort to give them a basis for making those decisions.

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Molly Ann Beitner of Southfield and Arpo Yemen of West Bloomfield were among six recent gubernatorial ap pointments to the state Workers' Com-pensation Appeal Board.

Oakland pair

on Workers' Comp board

(S.F.Ro-7C)(0)17A

Terms, subject to Senate confirma-tion, expire Feb. 1, 1985. An attorney who also serves as a "member of the Judicial Qualifications" Committee of the state bar, Mrs. Beincer was first appointed in 1973. She is a general public member.

so a general public member. Yemen was a member of the appeal-board from 1968 to 1975, when he was appointed 20th District Court judge. He was appointed to the appeals board ' again in 1977 for a four-year term and will also serve as a general public rep-resentative.

Also reappointed were Robert Hos-tettler of Utica, K. Michael Miller of Fowlerville and Michael Gillman of Okemos.

Appointed to a new term as a repre-sentative of the general public was Karl Benghauser, who is employed in workers' compensation programs for the Michigan Department of Labor.





The cults do not grow by putting ad-vertisements in the yellow pages and then waiting for young people to show up at their programs. Somehow, the yellow pages approach does not create the same sense of importance that comes with a personal approach cou-pled with on-going contact.