

= Mark Satin =

Mark Ivor Satin (born November 16 , 1946) is an American political theorist , author , and newsletter publisher . He is best known for contributing to the development and dissemination of three political perspectives ? neopacifism in the 1960s , New Age politics in the 1970s and 1980s , and radical centrism in the 1990s and 2000s . Satin 's work is sometimes seen as building toward a new political ideology , and then it is often labeled " transformational " , " post @-@ liberal " , or " post @-@ Marxist " . One historian calls Satin 's writing " post @-@ hip " .

After emigrating to Canada at the age of 20 to avoid serving in the Vietnam War , Satin co @-@ founded the Toronto Anti @-@ Draft Programme , which helped bring American war resisters to Canada . He also wrote the Manual for Draft @-@ Age Immigrants to Canada (1968) , which sold nearly 100 @, @ 000 copies . After a period that author Marilyn Ferguson describes as Satin 's " anti @-@ ambition experiment " , Satin wrote New Age Politics (1978) , which identifies an emergent " third force " in North America pursuing such goals as simple living , decentralism , and global responsibility . Satin spread his ideas by co @-@ founding an American political organization , the New World Alliance , and by publishing an international political newsletter , New Options . He also co @-@ drafted the foundational statement of the U.S. Green Party , " Ten Key Values " .

Following a period of political disillusion , spent mainly in law school and practicing business law , Satin launched a new political newsletter and wrote a book , Radical Middle (2004) . Both projects criticized political partisanship and sought to promote mutual learning and innovative policy syntheses across social and cultural divides . In an interview , Satin contrasts the old radical slogan " Dare to struggle , dare to win " with his radical @-@ middle version , " Dare to synthesize , dare to take it all in " .

Satin has been described as " colorful " and " intense " , and all his initiatives have been controversial . Bringing war resisters to Canada was opposed by many in the anti @-@ Vietnam War movement . New Age Politics was not welcomed by many on the traditional left or right , and Radical Middle dismayed an even broader segment of the American political community . Even Satin 's personal life has generated controversy .

= = Early years = =

Many mid @-@ 1960s American radicals came from small cities in the Midwest and Southwest , as did Satin : he grew up in Moorhead , Minnesota , and Wichita Falls , Texas . His father , who saw combat in World War II , was a college professor and author of a Cold War @-@ era textbook on Western civilization . His mother was a homemaker .

As a youth , Satin was restless and rebellious , and his behavior did not change after leaving for university . In early 1965 , at age 18 , he dropped out of the University of Illinois to work with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Holly Springs , Mississippi . Later that year , he was told to leave Midwestern State University , in Texas , for refusing to sign a loyalty oath to the United States Constitution . In 1966 he became president of a Students for a Democratic Society chapter at the State University of New York at Binghamton , and helped recruit nearly 20 % of the student body to join . One term later he dropped out , then emigrated to Canada to avoid serving in the Vietnam War .

Just before Satin left for Canada , his father told him he was trying to destroy himself . His mother told the Ladies ' Home Journal she could not condone her son 's actions . Satin says he arrived in Canada feeling bewildered and unsupported . According to press accounts , many Vietnam War resisters arrived feeling much the same way .

= = Neopacifism , 1960s = =

= = = Toronto Anti @-@ Draft Programme = = =

As 1967 began , many American pacifists and radicals did not look favorably on emigration to Canada as a means of resisting the Vietnam War . For some this reflected a core conviction that effective war resistance requires self @-@ sacrifice . For others it was a matter of strategy ? emigration was said to be less useful than going to jail or deserting the military , or was said to abet the war by siphoning off the opposition . At first , Students for a Democratic Society and many Quaker draft counselors opposed promoting the Canadian alternative , and Canada 's largest counseling group , the Anti @-@ Draft Programme of the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA) ? whose board consisted largely of Quakers and radicals ? was sympathetic to such calls for prudence . In January 1967 its spokesman warned an American audience that immigration was difficult and that the Programme was not willing to act as " baby sitters " for Americans after they arrived . He added that he was tired of talking to the press .

When Mark Satin was hired as director of the Programme in April 1967 , he attempted to change its culture . He also tried to change the attitude of the war resistance movement toward emigration . His efforts continued after SUPA collapsed and he co @-@ founded the Toronto Anti @-@ Draft Programme , with largely the same board of directors , in October 1967 . Instead of praising self @-@ sacrifice , he emphasized the importance of self @-@ preservation and self @-@ development to social change . Rather than sympathizing with pacifists ' and radicals ' strategic concerns , he rebutted them , telling The New York Times that massive emigration of draft @-@ age Americans could help end the war , and telling another reporter that going to jail was bad public relations .

Where the Programme once publicized the difficulties of immigration , Satin emphasized the competence of his draft counseling operation , and even told of giving cash to immigrants who were without funds . Instead of refusing to " baby sit " Americans after they arrived , Satin made post @-@ emigration assistance a top priority . The office soon sported comfortable furniture , a hot plate , and free food ; within a few months , 200 Torontonians had opened their homes to war resisters and a job @-@ finding service had been established . Finally , rather than expressing indifference to reporters , Satin courted them , and many responded , beginning with a May 1967 article in The New York Times Magazine that included a large picture of Satin counseling Vietnam War resisters in the refurbished office . Some of the publicity focused on Satin as much as on his cause . According to historian Pierre Berton , Satin was so visible that he became the unofficial spokesman for war resisters in Canada .

Satin defined himself as a neopacifist or quasi @-@ pacifist ? flexible , media @-@ savvy , and entrepreneurial . He told one journalist he might have fought against Hitler . He was not necessarily opposed to the draft , telling reporters he would support it for a defensive army or to help eliminate poverty , illiteracy , and racial discrimination . He avoided the intellectual framework of traditional pacifism and socialism . Sometimes he spoke with emotion , as when he described the United States to The New York Times Magazine as " [t] hat godawful sick , foul country ; could anything be worse ? " Sometimes he spoke poetically , as when he told author Jules Witcover , " It 's colder here , but you feel warm because you know you 're not trying to kill people . " Instead of identifying with older pacifists , he identified with a 17 @-@ year @-@ old character from the pen of J. D. Salinger : " I was Holden Caulfield " , he said in 2008 , " just standing and catching in the rye . "

The results of Satin 's approach were noticeable : the Programme went from averaging fewer than three visitors , letters , and phone calls per day just before he arrived , to averaging 50 per day nine months later . In addition , the American anti @-@ war movement became more accepting of emigration to Canada ? for example , author Myra MacPherson reports that Satin 's Manual for Draft @-@ Age Immigrants to Canada could be obtained at every draft counseling office in the U.S. However , Satin 's approach was distressing to the traditional pacifists and socialists on the Programme 's board . The board clashed with Satin over at least 10 political , strategic , and performance issues . The most intractable may have been over the extent of the publicity . There were also concerns about Satin 's personal issues ; for example , one war resister claims to have heard him say , " Anonymity would kill me " . In May 1968 , the board finally fired him .

= = = Manual for Draft @-@ Age Immigrants to Canada = = =

Before Satin was fired , he conceived and wrote , and edited guest chapters for , the Manual for Draft @-@ Age Immigrants to Canada , published in January 1968 by the House of Anansi Press in partnership with the Toronto Anti @-@ Draft Programme . The Programme had issued brochures on emigration before ? including a 12 @-@ page version under Satin 's watch ? but the Manual was different , a comprehensive , 45 @,@ 000 @-@ word book , and it quickly turned into an " underground bestseller " . Many years later , Toronto newspapers reported that nearly 100 @,@ 000 copies of the Manual had been sold . One journalist calls it the " first entirely Canadian @-@ published bestseller in the United States " .

The Programme was initially hesitant about producing the Manual , which promised to draw even more war resisters and publicity to it . " The [board] didn 't even want me to write it " , Satin says . " I wrote it at night , in the SUPA office , three or four nights a week after counseling guys and gals 8 to 10 hours a day ? pounded it out in several drafts over several months on SUPA 's ancient Underwood typewriter . " When it finally appeared , some leading periodicals helped put it on the map . For example , The New York Review of Books called it " useful " , and The New York Times said it contains advice about everything from how to qualify as an immigrant to jobs , housing , schools , politics , culture , and even the snow . After the war , sociologist John Hagan found that more than a third of young American emigrants to Canada had read the Manual while still in the United States , and nearly another quarter obtained it after they arrived .

The Manual reflected Satin 's neopacifist politics . Commentators routinely characterized it as caustic , responsible , and supportive . The first part of the Manual , on emigration , suggests that self @-@ preservation is more important than sacrifice to a dubious cause . The second half , on Canada , spotlights opportunities for self @-@ development and social innovation . According to Canadian social historian David Churchill , the Manual helped some Canadians begin to see Toronto as socially inclusive , politically progressive , and counter @-@ cultural .

Inevitably , the Manual became a lightning rod for controversy . Some observers took issue with its perspective on Canada ; most notably , The Cambridge Companion to Canadian Literature criticizes its " condescending tone " in describing Canada 's resources . Elements in the U.S. and Canadian governments may have been upset by the Manual . According to journalist Lynn Coady , the FBI and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) attempted to wiretap the House of Anansi Press 's offices . In addition , Anansi co @-@ founder Dave Godfrey is convinced a 10 @-@ day government audit of the press was generated by FBI ? RCMP concerns . Many people did not want the Programme to encourage draft @-@ eligible Americans to emigrate to Canada , and Satin routinely denied that the Manual encouraged emigration . But few observers believed him , then or later . The first sentence of an article in The New York Times from 1968 describes the Manual as " a major bid to encourage Americans to evade military conscription " . Canadian essayist Robert Fulford remembers the Manual as offering an enthusiastic welcome to draft dodgers . Even a House of Anansi Press anthology from 2007 concedes that the Manual is " coyly titled " .

Satin was fired from the Programme soon after the appearance of the second edition of the Manual , which had a print run of 20 @,@ 000 . His name was removed from the title page of most subsequent editions . According to a study of the Manual by critic Joseph Jones in Canadian Notes & Queries , a literary journal , some later editions experienced a falloff in quality . Nevertheless , Jones says the Manual stands as an icon of its age . It has made significant appearances in at least five novels , including John Irving 's A Prayer for Owen Meany , and it continues to be pored over by historians , social scientists , and graduate students .

= = = Confessions of a Young Exile = = =

Until the 1990s , literary critic William Zinsser says , memoir writers tended to conceal their most personal and embarrassing memories . In the 1970s Satin wrote a memoir revealing many such memories as a neopacifist activist during the years 1964 ? 66 , Confessions of a Young Exile , published by Gage , a Toronto publishing house soon to merge with Macmillan of Canada . Confessions is " a remarkable exercise in self @-@ exposure " , playwright John Lazarus says in a

review . " The insights into the hero 's motives and fears are so honest , and so mortifyingly true , that it soon becomes evident that the [naive] tone is deliberate . "

To some reviewers , Satin appears to have had a political goal ? encouraging activists to establish common ground with ordinary North Americans on the basis of their shared confusion and humanity . For example , Jackie Hooper , writing in *The Province* , argues that the purity of motives projected by many pacifist activists is unconvincing , and recommends Satin 's more complex view : " Satin 's emigration wasn 't dictated totally by his idealism . More often than not , he talked himself into radical positions ... as a result of trying to impress his peers or his girlfriend , or rebelling against middle @-@ class parental authority " .

Some reviewers were unenthusiastic . For example , Dennis Duffy , writing in *The Globe and Mail* , describes Satin 's memoir as a " story about a young man who doesn 't grow up " . In addition , Satin 's publisher began having reservations about him . Many years later , the *Toronto Star* reported that the publisher decided not to let Satin do any publicity for the book , because of his potentially offensive views .

= = New Age politics , 1970s ? 1980s = =

= = = New Age Politics , the book = = =

As the 1970s began , the New Left faded away , and many movements arose in its wake ? among them the feminist , men 's liberation , spiritual , human potential , ecology , appropriate technology , intentional community , and holistic health movements . After graduating from the University of British Columbia in 1972 , Satin immersed himself in all these movements , either directly or as a reporter for Canada 's underground press . He also took up residence in a free @-@ love commune . " One fierce winter 's day " , he says , " ... it dawned on me that the ideas and energies from the various ' fringe ' movements [were] beginning to generate a coherent new politics . But I looked in vain for the people and groups that were expressing that new politics (instead of merely bits and pieces of it) " . Satin set out to write a book that would express the new politics in all its dimensions . He wrote , designed , typeset , and printed the first edition of *New Age Politics* himself , in 1976 . A 240 @-@ page edition was published by Vancouver 's Whitecap Books in 1978 , and a 349 @-@ page edition by Dell Publishing Company in New York in 1979 . It is now widely regarded as the " first " , " most ambitious " , or " most adequate " attempt to offer a systemic overview of the new post @-@ socialist politics arising in the wake of the New Left . Some academics say it offers a new ideology .

At the heart of *New Age Politics* is a critique of the consciousness we all supposedly share , a " six @-@ sided prison " that has kept us all trapped for hundreds of years . The six sides of the " prison " are said to be : patriarchal attitudes , egocentricity , scientific single vision , the bureaucratic mentality , nationalism (xenophobia) , and the " big city outlook " (fear of nature) . Since consciousness , according to Satin , ultimately determines our institutions , prison consciousness is said to be ultimately responsible for " monolithic " institutions that offer us little in the way of freedom of choice or connection with others . Some representative monolithic institutions are : bureaucratic government , automobile @-@ centered transportation systems , attorney @-@ centered law , doctor @-@ centered health care , and church @-@ centered spirituality .

To explain how to break free of the prison and its institutions , Satin develops a " psychocultural " class analysis that reveals the existence of " life- " , " thing- " , and " death @-@ oriented " classes . According to Satin , life @-@ oriented individuals constitute an emerging " third force " in post @-@ industrial nations . The third force is generating a " prison @-@ free " consciousness consisting of androgynous attitudes , spirituality , multiple perspectives , a cooperative mentality , local @-@ and @-@ global identities , and an ecological outlook . To transform prison society , Satin argues , the third force is going to have to launch an " evolutionary movement " to replace ? or at least supplement ? monolithic institutions with life @-@ affirming , " biolithic " ones . Some representative biolithic institutions are : deliberative democracy as an alternative to bureaucratic government ,

bicycles and mass transit as an alternative to the private automobile , and mediation as an alternative to attorney @-@ centered law . According to Satin , the third force will not have to overthrow capitalism , since Western civilization ? not capitalism ? is said to be responsible for the prison . But the third force will want to foster a prison @-@ free New Age capitalism through intelligent regulation and elimination of all subsidies .

The reaction to New Age Politics was , and continues to be , highly polarized . Many of the movements Satin drew upon to construct his synthesis received it favorably , though some took exception to the title . Some maverick liberals and libertarians are drawn to the book . It was eventually published in Sweden and Germany , and European New Age political thinkers came to see it as a precursor of their own work . Others see it as proto @-@ Green . Ever since its first appearance , though , and continuing into the 21st century , New Age Politics has been a target of criticism for two groups in the United States : conservative Christians and left @-@ wing intellectuals .

Among conservative Christians , there are cultural , political , and moral objections . Attorney Constance Cumbey warns that the book can be " seductive " to those who lack an adequate Biblical education . Theologians Tim LaHaye and Ron Rhodes are convinced Satin wants a centralized and coercive world government . Moral philosopher Douglas Groothuis says Satin 's vision is unsound because it lacks an absolute standard of good and evil . Among left @-@ leaning academics , criticism focuses on Satin 's theoretical underpinnings . Political scientist Michael Cummings takes issue with the idea that consciousness is ultimately determining . Science @-@ and @-@ society professor David Hess rejects the idea that economic class analysis should give way to psychocultural class analysis . A lengthy , systemic critique of New Age Politics , by communication studies professor Dana L. Cloud , accuses it of employing a " therapeutic rhetoric [] generated to console activists after the failure of post @-@ 1968 revolutionary movements and to legitimate participation in liberal politics " .

= = = Organizing the New World Alliance = = =

After U.S. President Jimmy Carter pardoned Vietnam War resisters in 1977 , Satin began giving talks on New Age Politics in the United States . His first talk received a standing ovation , and he wept . Every talk seemed to lead to two or three more , and " the response at New Age gatherings , community events , fairs , bookstores , living rooms , and college campuses " kept Satin going for two years . By the second year he began laying the groundwork for the New World Alliance , a national political organization based in Washington , D.C. " I went systematically to 24 cities and regions from coast to coast " , he told the authors of the book *Networking* . " I stopped when I found 500 [accomplished] people who said they 'd answer a questionnaire ? on what a New Age @-@ oriented political organization should be like ? what its politics should be , what its projects should be , and how its first directors should be chosen . " .

The New World Alliance convened its first " governing council " meeting in New York City in 1979 . The 39 @-@ member council was chosen by the questionnaire @-@ answerers themselves , out of 89 who volunteered to be on the ballot . Political scientist Arthur Stein describes the council as an eclectic collection of educators , feminists , businesspeople , futurists , think @-@ tank fellows , and activists . One of the council 's announced goals was to break down the division between left and right . Another was to help facilitate a thorough transformation of society . Satin was named staff member of the Alliance .

Expectations ran high among supporters of a post @-@ liberal , post @-@ Marxist politics , and the governing council did initiate several projects . For example , a series of " Political Awareness Seminars " attempted to help participants understand and learn to work with their political opponents . In addition , a " Transformation Platform " attempted to synthesize left- and right @-@ wing approaches to dozens of public policy issues . But within three years the Alliance fell apart , unable to establish stable chapters in any major cities . Author Jerome Clark suggests the cause was the Alliance 's commitment to consensus @-@ building in all its groups and projects ; within months , he notes , one member was complaining that the Alliance had turned into a " diddler 's cult " . Another

explanation focuses on the failure ? or inability ? of the hyper @-@ democratic questionnaire process to select an appropriate governing council .

Satin was devastated by the decline of the Alliance , and engaged in unhappy bouts of public criticism and self @-@ criticism . " We would rather be good than do good " , he told editor Kevin Kelly . " We would rather be pure than mature . We are the Beautiful Losers . " As time went on , though , the Alliance came to be regarded positively by many observers . For example , author Corinne McLaughlin sees it as one of the first groups to offer an agenda for the new transformational politics . In an academic text , political scientist Stephen Woolpert acknowledges it as a precursor of North American Green parties .

= = = New Options Newsletter = = =

After four or five New World Alliance governing council meetings , Satin became tired of what he saw as empty rhetoric , and decided to do something practical ? start a political newsletter . He raised \$ 91 @,@ 000 to launch the venture , from 517 people he had met on his travels , and within a few years had built it into what think @-@ tank scholar George Weigel described as " one of the hottest political newsletters in Washington [, D.C.] [It] has gotten a fair amount of [national] attention , and perhaps even some influence , because it self @-@ consciously styles itself ' post @-@ liberal ' . " Satin published 75 issues of New Options from 1984 to 1992 , virtually half a million words . He wrote nearly all the articles . In 1989 New Options received Utne Reader 's first " Alternative Press Award for General Excellence : Best Publication from 10 @,@ 000 to 30 @,@ 000 Circulation " . In 1990 The Washington Post identified New Options as one of 10 periodicals spearheading " The Ideology Shuffle " . Twenty @-@ five of its articles were published as a book by a university press .

Satin wanted New Options to make the visionary perspective of New Age Politics seem pragmatic and realizable . He also wanted New Options to spread the New Age political ideology more effectively than the New World Alliance had done . To those ends , he challenged traditional views across the political spectrum , and he expanded the scope of politics to include subjects like love and relationships . In her book Do You Believe in Magic ? , culture critic Annie Gottlieb says New Options offered :

an explosive short course in political possibility What are the best books and groups in the consumer empowerment (not " protection ") and neighborhood self @-@ reliance movements ? Who is working on practical , compassionate , populist alternatives to the welfare state and the big @-@ business state ? What is the best way to cut the budget deficit ? What can we learn from the Sri Lankan Sarvodaya (local self @-@ help) and Polish Solidarity movements ? Each issue presents ideas , names and addresses , and a crossfire of reader debate .

" I think the reason New Options works is it has a particular tone " , Satin told one reporter . " It 's as idealistic as many of us were in the 1960s , but ... without the childishness " .

New Options owed its rise to more than just content and tone , however . Positioning was also a factor . The New Age political movement was cresting in the 1980s , and it needed a political periodical . Satin 's book New Age Politics had helped define the movement , and the New Options advisory board ? a collection of prominent post @-@ liberal thinkers ? gave the newsletter further credibility . At the outset it included Lester R. Brown , Ernest Callenbach , Fritjof Capra , Vincent Harding , Willis Harman , Hazel Henderson , Petra Kelly , Amory Lovins , Joanna Macy , Robin Morgan , John Naisbitt , Jeremy Rifkin , Carl Rogers , Theodore Roszak , Kirkpatrick Sale , Charlene Spretnak , and Robert Theobald , and over the years it added such figures as Herman Daly , Marilyn Ferguson , Jane Jacobs , Winona LaDuke , and Robert Rodale .

New Options did not succeed in all quarters . Jules Feiffer , for example , often seen as being on the liberal @-@ left , called it " irritating " and " neo @-@ yuppie " . Jason McQuinn , often seen as a radical , objected to what he perceived as its relentless American optimism . George Weigel , often seen as a conservative , said it consisted largely of a cleverly repackaged leftism . Satin himself turned out to be one of the newsletter 's critics . " I could have edited New Options forever " , he wrote in 2004 . " But , increasingly , I was becoming dissatisfied with my hyper @-@ idealistic

politics " . His experiences in the U.S. Green politics movement contributed to that dissatisfaction .

= = = " Ten Key Values " of the U.S. Green Party = = =

By the mid @-@ 1980s , Green parties were making inroads all over the world . A slogan of the West German Greens was , " We are neither left nor right ; we are in front " . Some observers , notably British Green Party liaison Sara Parkin , saw the New World Alliance and New Options Newsletter as Green entities . Others saw the early Greens as one expression of New Age politics . In 1984 , Satin was invited to the founding meeting of the U.S. Green politics movement , and he became a founding member . The meeting chose him , along with political theorist Charlene Spretnak , to draft its foundational political statement , " Ten Key Values " . Some accounts recognize futurist and activist Eleanor LeCain as a co @-@ equal drafter . The drafters drew on suggestions recorded on a flip chart during a marathon plenary brainstorming session , as well as on suggestions received by Satin and Spretnak during the meeting and for many weeks afterward .

The original " Ten Key Values " statement was approved by the Greens ' national steering committee and released in late 1984 . The values in the original statement are : Ecological Wisdom , Grassroots Democracy , Personal and Social Responsibility , Nonviolence , Decentralization , Community @-@ based Economics , Postpatriarchal Values , Respect for Diversity , Global Responsibility , and Future Focus . One unusual aspect , say many observers , is the way the values are described ; instead of declaratory statements full of " shoulds " and " musts " , each value is followed by a series of open @-@ ended questions . " That idea ... came from Mark Satin " , Spretnak told scholar Greta Gaard in 1997 . Its effect , says sociologist Paul Lichterman , was to promote dialogue and creative thinking in local Green groups across the U.S.

The original values statement was , and remains , controversial . U.S. Green Party co @-@ founder John Rensenbrink credits it with helping to unify the often contentious Greens . However , party co @-@ founder Howie Hawkins sees it as just a watered @-@ down , " spiritual " , and " New Age " version of the German Greens ' Four Pillars statement . Greta Gaard says it fails to call for the elimination of capitalism or racism . Looking back after 20 years , Green activist Brian Tokar said that " the voice of the original [values] questions is distinctly personal ? and aims to avoid fundamental conflicts with elite social and cultural norms . " A " modified " list of the Ten Key Values became part of the U.S. Greens ' political platform . However , all the open @-@ ended questions were replaced by declaratory sentences , and the U.S. Greens have come to be regarded as a party of the left , rather than one seeking to be neither left nor right .

Satin himself quit the Greens in 1990 . He gave a featured speech at the U.S. Green gathering in 1987 urging them to avoid hyper @-@ detailed platform writing and other projects and specialize in one thing ? running people for office who endorse the Ten Key Values . But the speech failed to persuade . After the Green gathering in 1989 , he urged them to abandon hippie @-@ era fears of money , authority , and leadership . After the 1990 gathering he complained " I 've been Pure before , " an allusion to his time in the New World Alliance . According to Greta Gaard , he then bid farewell to the Greens , but recognized it as a loss : " Whatever I may think of their internal battles and political prospects , the Greens are My People . Their life choices are my life choices ; their failings mirror my own . " Within a year of voicing those words , he stopped New Options Newsletter and applied to law school .

= = Radical centrist politics , 1990s ? 2000s = =

= = = Radical Middle Newsletter = = =

The 1990s are remembered , by many in the West , as a time of relative prosperity and satisfaction . According to some historians , visionary politics appeared to be on the decline . However , even after Satin entered New York University School of Law in 1992 , he expressed no desire to abandon his project of helping to construct a post @-@ liberal , post @-@ Marxist ideology . He did admit to

being disillusioned with his approach . " I knew my views (and I personally) would benefit from engagement with the real world of commerce and professional ambition " , he wrote .

After graduating in 1995 , Satin worked for a Manhattan law firm focusing on complex business litigation . He also wrote about financial and legal issues . He did not dislike his work , but felt he was " sleepwalking " because he was not doing what he loved , writing about visionary politics . With six former law school classmates , he began planning a political newsletter that could accommodate all he was learning about business and law . In 1998 he returned to Washington , D.C. , to launch Radical Middle Newsletter .

As the title indicates , it sought to distance itself from New Age politics . If the term " New Age " suggests utopianism , the term " radical middle " suggests , for Satin and others , keeping at least one foot firmly on the ground . Satin attempted to embrace the promise but also the balance implied by the term . One feature story is entitled " Tough on Terrorism , and Tough on the Causes of Terrorism " . Another feature story attempts to go beyond polarized positions on biotechnology . Another argues that corporate activity abroad can best be seen as neither inherently moral nor inherently imperialistic , but as a " chance for mutual learning " . The board of advisors of Radical Middle Newsletter signaled Satin 's new direction . It was politically diverse , and many of its members sought to promote dialogue or collaboration across ideological divides . By the end of 2004 it included John Avlon , Don Edward Beck , Jerry H. Bentley , Esther Dyson , Mark P. Painter , Shelley Alpern of the Social Investment Forum , James Fallows of the New America Foundation , Jane Mansbridge of the Harvard Kennedy School , John D. Marks and Susan Collin Marks of Search for Common Ground , and William Ury , co @-@ author of Getting to Yes .

Radical Middle Newsletter proved controversial . Many responded positively to Satin 's new direction . A professor of management , for example , wrote that unlike Satin 's former newsletter , Radical Middle spoke about " reality " . Scholarly books began citing the newsletter . In a book on globalization , Walter Truett Anderson said Radical Middle " carries the encouraging news of an emerging group with a different voice , one that is ' nuanced , hopeful , adult ' It is essentially a willingness to listen to both sides of the argument . " But three objections were often heard . Some critics accused Satin of misguided policy proposals , as when peace studies scholar Michael N. Nagler wrote that the article " praising humanitarian military intervention as the ' peace movement ' of our time , is nothing short of an insult ... to the real peace movement " [emphasis in original] . Other critics accused Satin of abandoning his old constituency , as when author and former New Options advisor David Korten chided him for consciously choosing pragmatism over idealism . There were also accusations of elitism , as when the executive editor of Yes ! magazine said Satin favored globalization because it appealed to his interests and those of his " law school buddies " .

New Options Newsletter was based on the theories set forth in New Age Politics . But Satin 's approach to his radical middle project was eclectic and experimental . His contribution to radical centrist political theory , the book Radical Middle , was not published until 2004 , the newsletter 's sixth year . Until then , the only glimpse Satin gave of his larger vision appeared in an article he wrote for an academic journal .

= = = Radical Middle , the book = = =

Satin 's book Radical Middle : The Politics We Need Now , published by Westview Press and Basic Books in 2004 , attempts to present radical centrism as a political ideology . It is considered one of the two or three " most persuasive " or most representative books on the subject , and it received the " Best Book Award " for 2003 and 2004 from the Section on Ecological and Transformational Politics of the American Political Science Association . It also generated ? like all of Satin 's works ? criticism and controversy .

Satin presents Radical Middle as a revised and evolved version of his New Age Politics book , rather than as a rejection of it . Some observers had always seen him as a radical centrist . As early as 1980 , author Marilyn Ferguson identified him as part of what she called the " Radical Center " . In 1987 , culture critic Annie Gottlieb said Satin was trying to prompt the New Age and New Left to evolve into a " New Center " . But the revisions Satin introduces are substantial . Instead of defining

politics as a means for creating the ideal society , as he did in New Age Politics , he defines radical middle politics as " idealism without illusions " ? more creative and future @-@ oriented than politics @-@ as @-@ usual , but willing to face " the hard facts on the ground " . Rather than arguing that change will be brought about by a third force , he says most Americans are already radical middle ? " we 're very practical folks , and we 're very idealistic and visionary as well . "

Although Satin argues in New Age Politics that Americans need to change their consciousness and decentralize their institutions , in Radical Middle he says they can build a good society if they adopt and live by Four Key Values : maximize choices for all Americans , give every American a fair start , maximize every American 's human potential , and help the peoples of the developing world . Instead of finding those values in the writings of contemporary theorists , Satin says they are just new versions of the values that inspired 18th @-@ century American revolutionaries : liberty , equality , pursuit @-@ of @-@ happiness , and fraternity , respectively . He calls Benjamin Franklin the radical middle 's favorite Founding Father , and says Franklin " wanted us to invent a uniquely American politics that served ordinary people by creatively borrowing from all points of view . "

In New Age Politics , Satin chooses not to focus on the details of public policy . In Radical Middle , however , Satin develops a raft of policy proposals rooted in the Four Key Values . (Among them : universal access to private , preventive health insurance , class @-@ based rather than race @-@ based affirmative action , mandatory national service , and opening U.S. markets to more products from poor nations .) In New Age Politics , Satin calls on " life @-@ oriented " people to become radical activists for a New Age society . In Radical Middle , Satin calls on people of every political stripe to work from within for social change congruent with the Four Key Values .

Satin 's mandatory national service proposal drew significant media coverage , in part because of his status as a draft refuser . Satin argues that a draft could work in the United States if it applied to all young people , without exception , and if it gave everyone a choice in how they would serve . He proposes three service options : military (with generous benefits) , homeland security (at prevailing wages) , and community care (at subsistence wages) . On Voice of America radio , Satin presented his proposal as one drawing equally from the best of the left and the right . On National Public Radio , he emphasized its fairness .

Radical Middle provokes three kinds of responses : skeptical , pragmatic , and visionary . Skeptical respondents tend to find Satin 's beyond @-@ left @-@ and @-@ right policy proposals to be unrealistic and arrogant . For example , political writer Charles R. Morris says " Satin 's nostrums " echo the " glibness and overweening self @-@ confidence ... in Roosevelt 's brain trust , or in John F. Kennedy 's . " Similarly , the policy director of the Democratic Leadership Council says Satin 's book " ultimately places him in the sturdy tradition of ' idealistic ' American reformers who think smart and principled people unencumbered by political constraints can change everything . "

Pragmatic observers tend to applaud Satin 's willingness to borrow good ideas from the left and the right . But these respondents are typically more drawn to Satin as a policy advocate ? or as a counterweight to partisan militants like Ann Coulter ? than they are to him as a political theorist . For example , Robert Olson of the WorldFuture Society warns Satin against presenting the radical middle as a new ideology .

Visionary respondents typically appreciate Satin 's work as a policy advocate . But they also see him as attempting something rarer and , according to spiritual writer Carter Phipps , richer ? raising politics to a higher level by synthesizing truths from all the political ideologies . Author Corinne McLaughlin identifies Satin as one of those creating an ideology about ideologies . She quotes him :

Coming up with a solution is not a matter of adopting correct political beliefs . It is , rather , a matter of learning to listen ? really , listen ? to everyone in the circle of humanity , and to take their insights into account . For everyone has a true and unique perspective on the whole . [Many] years ago the burning question was , How radical are you ? Hopefully someday soon the question will be , How much can you synthesize ? How much do you dare to take in ?

= = Later life = =

Life changed for Satin after writing and publicizing his Radical Middle book . In 2006 , at the age of 60 , he moved from Washington , D.C. , to the San Francisco Bay Area to reconcile with his father , from whom he had been estranged for 40 years . " With the perspective of time and experience , " Satin told one reporter , " I can see [my father] was not altogether out to lunch . " Later that year Satin discovered his only life partner . He describes it as " no accident " .

In 2009 Satin revealed he was losing his eyesight as a result of macular edema and diabetic retinopathy . He stopped producing Radical Middle Newsletter but expressed a desire to write a final political book . From 2009 to 2011 he presented occasional guest lectures on " life and political ideologies " in peace studies classes at the University of California , Berkeley . In 2015 he produced a " 40th Anniversary Edition " of his book New Age Politics .

= = Assessment = =

Satin has been a controversial public figure since the age of 20 . Assessments of his significance vary widely .

Some observers see him as an exemplary figure . David Armstrong , for example , in his study of independent American journalism , presents Satin as an embodiment of the " do @-@ it @-@ yourself spirit " that makes an independent press possible . Futurists Jessica Lipnack and Jeffrey Stamps portray Satin as a pioneer " networker " who spent two years riding the bus across the U.S. in an attempt to connect like @-@ minded thinkers and activists . Marilyn Ferguson , author of The Aquarian Conspiracy , says that by engaging in a lifelong series of personal and political experiments with few resources , Satin is playing the role of the holy " Fool " for his time .

Other observers stress the freshness of Satin 's political vision . Social scientists Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson , for example , argue that Satin anticipated the perspectives of 21st century social movements better than nearly anyone . Humanistic psychologist John Amodeo says Satin is one of the few political theorists to grasp the connection between personal growth and constructive political change . Ecofeminist Greta Gaard claims that Satin " played a significant role in facilitating the articulation of Green political thought " . Peace researcher Hanna Newcombe finds a spiritual dimension in Satin 's politics . Political scientist Christa Slaton 's short list of " nonacademic " transformationalists consists of Alvin and Heidi Toffler , Fritjof Capra , Marilyn Ferguson , Hazel Henderson , Betty Friedan , E. F. Schumacher , John Naisbitt , and Mark Satin .

Some see Satin as a classic example of the perpetual rebel and trace the cause back to his early years . For example , author Roger Neville Williams focuses on the harshness and " paternalistic rectitude " of Satin 's parents . Novelist Dan Wakefield , writing in The Atlantic , says Satin grew up in a small city in northern Minnesota like Bob Dylan but did not have a guitar to express himself with . According to historian Frank Kusch , the seeds for rebellion were planted when Satin 's parents moved him at age 16 from liberal Minnesota to still @-@ segregated Texas .

Although many observers praise or are intrigued by Satin , many find him dismaying . Memoirist George Fetherling , for example , remembers him as a publicity hound . Literary critic Dennis Duffy calls him incapable of learning from his experiences . Green Party activist Howie Hawkins sees him as a political opportunist . The Washington Monthly portrayed him in his 50s as a former New Age " guru " , and Commonweal compares reading him to listening to glass shards grate against a blackboard .

Other observers see Satin as an emotionally wounded figure . For example , historian Pierre Berton calls him a " footloose wanderer " and says that he hitchhiked across Canada 16 times . Culture critic Annie Gottlieb , who attributes Satin 's wounds to his struggle against the Vietnam War , points out that even as a successful newsletter publisher in Washington , DC , he paid himself the salary of a monk .

The major substantive criticisms of Satin 's work have remained constant over time . His ideas are sometimes said to be superficial ; they were characterized as childish in the 1960s , naive in the 1970s , poorly reasoned in the 1980s and 1990s , and overly simple in the 2000s . His ideas have also occasionally been seen as not politically serious , or as non @-@ political in the sense of not being capable of challenging existing power structures . His work is sometimes said to be largely

borrowed from others , a charge that first surfaced with regard to his draft dodger manual , and was repeated to varying degree by critics of his books on New Age politics and radical centrism .

Satin has long been faulted for mixing views from different parts of his political odyssey . In the 1970s , for example , Toronto Star editor Robert Nielsen argued that Satin 's leftist pacifism warps his New Age vision . Three decades later , public @-@ policy analyst Gadi Dechter argued that Satin 's New Age emotionalism and impracticality blunt his radical @-@ centrist message . At 58 , Satin suggested his message could not be understood without appreciating all the strands of his personal and political journey :

From my New Left years I took a love of political struggle . From my New Age years I took a conviction that politics needs to be about more than endless struggle ? that responsible human beings need to search for reconciliation and healing and mutually acceptable solutions . From my time in the legal profession I took an understanding (and it is no small understanding) that sincerity and passion are not enough ? that to be truly effective in the world one needs to be credible and expert . ?

Many Americans are living complicated lives now ? few of us have moved through life in a straight line . I think many of us would benefit from trying to gather and synthesize the difficult political lessons we 've learned over the course of our lives .

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= = = Books = = =

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