

# Academic Compromise in the Social Scientific Study of Alternative Religions

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**T**wo decades ago, Irving Louis Horowitz raised ethical issues and methodological concerns about social scientists' involvement in Unification Church conferences.<sup>1</sup> Many of his objections centered on issues of propriety concerning academic relationships with research subjects and the organizations that they studied. Horowitz was concerned, for example, about the quality of information that conference attendees received.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, he speculated about what forms of reciprocity and advocacy might result from scholars who benefited from Reverend Moon's expenses-paid largesse.<sup>3</sup> The debate between Horowitz and his critics on the topics of objectivity and ethical relationships between social scientists and the groups they study continued into the early 1980s, but then died down.<sup>4</sup>

Much has happened in the study of alternative religions and related groups since Horowitz publicly aired his concerns,<sup>5</sup> and a renewal and update of that debate is long overdue. Indeed, many of Horowitz's fears about academic objectivity being compromised have proven justified, with the passage of time amplifying the magnitude of the problems and the numbers of parties involved. Numerous groups beyond the Unification Church have learned the value of successfully courting academics<sup>6</sup> and, as a result, the social scientific study of new or alternative religions has suffered.

This article discusses recent developments in the social scientific study of religion in which academics became involved in religious organizations' efforts to gain social legitimacy. Knowingly or not, academics have involved themselves in undertakings that enhance the reputations of controversial religious ideologies at the expense of accepted social scientific procedures involving objective analysis and dissemination of research. Indeed, as Marybeth Ayella warned a half-decade ago, "[c]o-optation of the researcher can be a major problem for the unwary researcher, because he or she can become, without intent, a 'counter' in the ongoing stigma contest between cult and anticult."<sup>7</sup>

## **BIASED ACADEMIC STUDIES**

Two recent studies of controversial religions underscore problems of research and publication on groups that see academics as a means to acquire badly needed positive press.<sup>8</sup> In one case, the group had received years of negative publicity involving allegations that its children suffered sexual abuse under the auspices of doctrines that the leader himself developed and propagated.<sup>9</sup> As the organization was battling a court case in the United Kingdom that threatened to expose its earlier child rearing practices to public scrutiny,<sup>10</sup> group leaders contacted a scholar seeking “advice on how to combat the negative publicity and other attacks”<sup>11</sup> it was receiving around the world.<sup>12</sup> The resultant publication that the scholar co-edited (and published through his own publication business) includes chapters based on some researchers’ visits to various group homes in which they observed activities, interviewed members, and examined literature. The organization was so pleased with the findings that it uses the study as part of a public relations package that it sends to the media.<sup>13</sup>

Significant methodological problems, however, existed with aspects of the data collection and write-up, which made many of the findings about the group highly suspect.<sup>14</sup> First and foremost is the fact that this organization specifically designed what it internally called “media homes,”<sup>15</sup> which are the very sites that some of the researchers visited.<sup>16</sup> Hand-picked individuals living in these well-funded facilities went through rehearsals about how to portray themselves and the group to media, scholars, and others who might scrutinize them. Subsequently, former members have reported how these media homes operated, even describing the drills and rehearsals in which they participated.<sup>17</sup>

One former member, for example, who had lived at a media home described the place as “basically a nice, squeaky clean, polished-up home [which was] about as polished as you can get.”<sup>18</sup> Another former member provided insights about the “mega-preparation” that took place prior to visits from outsiders—such as moving out extra children, removing beds from overcrowded bedrooms, and placing single mothers elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> The media homes apparently had “only the best PR people there and the show troupes that needed to be there to sing, and the people who were, you know, prepared to talk and, you know, knew how to talk and wouldn’t, you know, slip up or whatever.”<sup>20</sup> The organization produced booklets about anticipated questions, and spokespersons learned how to respond to queries with appropriate answers.<sup>21</sup>

Spokespersons’ rehearsals of “questions and answers—what to say about this, and what to say about that” prevented their revealing sensitive information about the group.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, we know that the organization undertook efforts to destroy controversial publications when it realized

that some of its literature provided critics with ammunition about questionable practices in the group.<sup>23</sup> In essence, much of the information that some of the researchers wrote about was precisely what the organization wanted them to use.

A review of this study raised the important methodological issue of “impression management” by this group and others whose members know that they are being examined and studied.<sup>24</sup> Citing Erving Goffman’s concept of impression management,<sup>25</sup> the reviewer reminded readers about how groups work together as teams to prevent exposure of damaging information to outsiders—including, presumably, researchers.<sup>26</sup> Very similar problems, however, occurred in a second study that this scholar and his co-editor undertook, this time after organizing a team of researchers from various academic disciplines.

In mid-summer of 1993 many of the contributors to this first volume participated in a study of another group’s facility in the American northwest. This organization was also suffering from negative media coverage and poor public relations and wanted to improve its image in the press, which may explain why it accepted an independent scholar’s offer to organize a team to study it.<sup>27</sup> Of particular concern were allegations that this organization had amassed a weapons arsenal as part of its preparation for Armageddon, which its leader predicted might happen.<sup>28</sup> Although the organization denied these weapons allegations, the husband of the leader was arrested in 1987 for attempting to make an illegal arms purchase.<sup>29</sup> Issues concerning arms and controversial religions were on the public’s mind since the disaster at Waco, and many people predicted that any governmental intervention against the group likely would result in another shoot-out. At the same time, the Internal Revenue Service had removed the group’s tax exempt status, which threatened to cost the organization millions of dollars.<sup>30</sup>

“Most [researchers] were unable to stay for more than a few days” on the group’s property while the organization held an annual festival and conference between 25 June and 4 July 1993.<sup>31</sup> As was the case in the previous study that we mentioned, the principal scholar overseeing the project co-published a collection of essays in book form with the press that he operated. The group under study was so pleased with the results that it interviewed some of the participating researchers in an organizational newspaper<sup>32</sup> and, as happened with the other study, used the book as part of its public relations package.

We know a great deal about the internal dynamics of this second study because two members of the research team spent their time conducting “a study of the study.” The two social scientists were critical of the study’s research questions, research design, and methodology—concluding that these weaknesses prevented researchers from getting at what was going on behind the scenes.<sup>33</sup> Not surprisingly, therefore, the study failed to elucidate the issues that made the group

controversial—excessive commercialism, use of organizational funds to pay off a civil penalty against the leader, and arms violations.<sup>34</sup> Ironically, nine days after the researchers concluded their visit, a lawyer for the organization stated “in a letter to [the] Justice Department, ‘the church wants to accept responsibility for weapons. . . .’”<sup>35</sup>

Although some of the essays on both groups seem academically sound, overall assessment of the two collections is that they failed to examine crucial aspects of their target organizations.<sup>36</sup> These studies bring to mind the concerns raised by Horowitz that the Unification Church might use positive findings from questionable research that it sponsored in order to attempt to legitimize itself.<sup>37</sup> As a consequence, the study of religion suffers in numerous ways.

Academics who do not know about the controversies surrounding these studies may try to fit their results into larger, theoretical statements, essentially building their models and theories on what amounts to a foundation of sand. Current members who themselves have questions about aspects of group operations or ideology may judge themselves inaccurate or at fault in the face of these previously published “expert” opinions. Similarly, disaffected former members may be driven further into silence or confusion by the statements of researchers that categorically dismiss or disregard the experiences that former members had while living in the groups. Courts, the media, and social services may be misled by the findings, and the groups’ leaders may never be held accountable for questionable or harmful actions. Indeed, academic respectability is diminished when the media or other investigators uncover the information that the supposedly expert researchers miss or ignore.<sup>38</sup> In sum, superficial research can have very real and harmful effects.

## **LOBBYING AND “FRONT” GROUPS**

Not to be overlooked is that the two edited volumes discussed thus far were carried out under the auspices of what was purported to be a research and information organization that operated outside of educational or academic oversight. Indeed, a member of one of the studied groups appears to have been involved with the formation of the research organization.<sup>39</sup> As an independent entity operated by an independent scholar, normal academic obligations such as ethics reviews, pressures to publish in peer review publications, and protection of the identities and confidentiality of sources are unenforceable. Moreover, independence from educational or academic institutions likely means that neither the research organization nor its principal researchers have secure salaries, making researchers more susceptible to financial pressure from the groups that they examine. Objective scholarship possibly

becomes the victim of immediate financial and social pressures, and scholars may drift into operations that resemble paid lobbying. Indeed, secret documents from one group revealed that it had actively run what it called a “front group” operation during the 1970s, which was an organization comprised of impressively credentialed people whose opinions on alternative religions benefited the controversial sponsoring group itself.<sup>40</sup>

## ACADEMICS AND LEGAL ISSUES

Among the many important reasons for scholars to conduct ethically and methodologically rigorous research is that these scholars likely will get approached to be expert witnesses in court cases involving their target organizations or members.<sup>41</sup> Disgruntled former members often bring suit against their former spiritual leaders for a variety of reasons, some of which are quite serious in nature.<sup>42</sup> Increasingly, however, the controversial groups themselves are bringing lawsuits against an array of perceived enemies.<sup>43</sup> Most immediately, researchers can serve as expert witnesses, thereby having direct opportunities to influence judicial outcomes, either for or against the groups.<sup>44</sup> Because academic testimony is so valuable, social scientists of religion may become pawns in high stakes games,<sup>45</sup> as appears to have happened in a recent prominent case.<sup>46</sup>

The 1995 case in question involved an attempt by one group to silence a critical organization in the countercult movement through a civil court decision.<sup>47</sup> An expert for the plaintiff, who deservedly is one of the most respected researchers in the sociology of religion, provided testimony and conclusions about the countercult organization.<sup>48</sup> Much of the case revolved around the actions of a person whom the court considered to have been a “contact person” for the countercult organization. Apparently, however, she was listed as representing a *different* organization on the local Crisis Clinic hotline that gave her number to a concerned inquirer seeking information about getting relatives out of a so-called “cult.”<sup>49</sup> Although the academic expert had not interviewed anyone from the countercult organization since 1979 and had not worked on the countercult movement in general for approximately six years prior to his testimony, he testified to his conviction that the organization was involved in illegal deprogramming.<sup>50</sup> His testimony probably was a factor that led to a negative decision against the countercult organization, and the organization’s subsequent bankruptcy.

When, however, a major American news investigative program examined the case over two years later, it discovered that the signatory to one of the most damaging affidavits against the countercult organization had renounced his previously sworn statement.<sup>51</sup> In

addition, the program discovered that a private investigator had reported that he could not find any evidence concerning the countercult organization's alleged illegal deprogramming activities.<sup>52</sup> The case, therefore, against the countercult organization was weak, even though an appeals court affirmed the judgment against it.<sup>53</sup> The possibility exists that the controversial organization used the academic to further its own aspirations, which involved the destruction of its opponent.<sup>54</sup>

One of the more surprising legal interventions by scholars involves the support of a dozen academics for efforts by a controversial organization to keep its upper level documents secret.<sup>55</sup> Drawing examples from a wide range of religious and secular organizations and groups, these academics insist that secrecy has been a crucial aspect of religions for millennia, so a contemporary organization's attempts to keep secret some of its most important theological positions should be respected by the courts and others. This position, however, potentially damages scholarship by denying access to documents that researchers need to conduct analyses. Indeed, academics should realize that organizations frequently use secrets to cover instances of manipulation and abuse, which are activities that researchers should be keen to uncover and analyze. It is worth repeating, therefore, the position articulated by Horowitz almost twenty years ago:

Sociological analysis is highly revelatory in character. Social research opens up to public scrutiny and criticism the innermost secrets of religious organization. This is the inevitable ground upon which sociological and religious analysis must differ. . . . [Hence] the criteria involved in the pursuit of religion and in that of science are different.<sup>56</sup>

The fact that some very prominent social scientists are supporting efforts to deny their colleagues access to important documents reveals the extent to which parts of the academic community are willing to subvert legitimate areas of research in order for religious groups to retain the power of secrecy.<sup>57</sup> As a consequence of this position, religious groups gain an unprecedented level of informational control over the academics who wish to examine them.

## CONCLUSION

Alternative religions have learned the value of endorsements by, and support from, academics and other researchers. Endorsements and support may assist organizations in their attempts to construct positive public images, and academic opinions may assist controversial religions in meeting organizational goals (including the destruction of enemies). In the process, however, social science suffers, with public relations and

advocacy replacing objective research and publication of results. As a result of diminished objectivity on the part of a few social scientists, colleagues receive conclusions of questionable accuracy, courts hear and read opinions that may not be scholastically rigorous, and publications that are not flattering to religious subjects may get suppressed. Scholars who compromise objectivity or academic integrity threaten to diminish the reputation of social science within the academy and among informed members of the public. Indeed, an understated but scornful comment (cloaked in Latin) by the respected analyst of journalism, Mark Silk, indicates that our reputation already has diminished in the eyes of some. After mentioning that scholars may be dependent upon the groups they study for financial support and access to both members and documents, Silk alluded to a book title by John Henry Newman (1801-1890) in concluding, "reporters can perhaps be forgiven for disregarding the conventional *apologia pro culta sua* [*sic*: a defense on behalf of one's own cult] of [new religious movement] scholars."<sup>58</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Irving Louis Horowitz, "Science, Sin, and Sponsorship," in *Science, Sin, and Scholarship: The Politics of Reverend Moon and the Unification Church*, ed. Irving Louis Horowitz (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), 261-82.

<sup>2</sup> Horowitz, "Science, Sin, and Sponsorship," 270.

<sup>3</sup> Horowitz, "Science, Sin, and Sponsorship," 261-71, 280.

<sup>4</sup> In 1983, for example, a journal for the social scientific study of religion, *Sociological Analysis*, devoted a major part of the Fall issue to a symposium on scholarship and sponsorship.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, James T. Richardson, "Reflexivity and Objectivity in the Study of Controversial New Religions," *Religion* 21 (1991): 305-18; Thomas Robbins and Roland Robertson, "Studying Religion Today: Controversiality and 'Objectivity' in the Sociology of Religion," *Religion* 21 (1991): 319-37.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen A. Kent, "Deviance Labeling and Normative Strategies in the Canadian 'New Religion/Counter-cult Debate,'" *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 15, no. 4 (1990): 393-416.

<sup>7</sup> Marybeth Ayella, "'They Must Be Crazy': Some of the Difficulties in Researching 'Cults,'" in *Researching Sensitive Topics*, eds. Claire M. Renzetti and Raymond M. Lee (London: Sage, 1993), 121.

<sup>8</sup> James R. Lewis and J. Gordon Melton, eds., *Church Universal and Triumphant in Scholarly Perspective* (Stanford, CA: Center for Academic Publication, 1994); James R. Lewis and J. Gordon Melton, eds., *Sex, Slander, and Salvation: Investigating the Family/Children of God* (Stanford, CA: Center for Academic Publication, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> For some background regarding a dispute between this scholar and one of the authors (Kent), see Albert Mobilio, "Children of a Lusty God," *Lingua Franca* (July/August, 1994): 16-19; Stephen A. Kent, Editor's Introduction to "Lustful Prophet: A Psychosexual Historical Study of the Children of God's Leader, David Berg," *Cultic Studies Journal* 11, no. 2 (1994): 135-88.

<sup>10</sup> The case began on 18 February 1992, when the court made a child (whose mother was a Family member) a ward of the court. Alan Ward, *W 42 1992 Judgement in the British High*

*Court of Justice: Family Division* (19 October 1995): 4. After reviewing extensive court and expert evidence, the judge in the British case did in fact conclude, "[t]here is, therefore, overwhelming evidence that the high leadership within [this group] has been guilty of child sexual abuse" (Ward, *Judgement in the British High Court of Justice*, 120).

<sup>11</sup> Lewis and Melton, eds., *Sex, Slander, and Salvation*, vi.

<sup>12</sup> During the early 1990s, for example, police in Argentina ("Officials Study Cult Evidence," *Edmonton Journal*, September 5, 1993, A6; "Argentine Court Releases Cult Members Charged With Sexual Abuse," December 14, 1993, A6), Australia (Luke Morfesse, "Sect Children in Custody," *The West Australian*, May 16, 1992, 3), France ("Police in France Raid Sect Which Advocates Free Love," *Edmonton Journal*, June 11, 1993, A5; "Children of French Sect Taken into Care," *Times* [London], June 12, 1993, 15), and the United Kingdom (Maurice Chittenden and Maria Laura Avignolo, "The Day the 'Martians' Woke Up," *Sunday Times* [London], September 5, 1993, 12) raided several of the organization's homes from which they removed the children to custodial facilities. Allegations against adult members included child sexual abuse, enslavement, and kidnapping. Following the collapse of the cases for lack of evidence, state authorities eventually returned the children to their homes. The organization issued a special news release containing excerpts from several official judgments which stated that in all cases the charges were unsubstantiated ("The Family' Vindicated in Every Case!" *World Services* [Zurich, Switzerland: World Services, (n.d.) 1994], 2).

<sup>13</sup> The organization also includes a video among its public relations material. The video contains interviews with what the organization calls "leading authorities in the fields of sociology, psychology, education and religion" (The Family, *Insight* [Video], 1994: coverleaf). Comments that some of the experts made suggest that they based at least part of their evaluations on observations made in the group's media homes.

<sup>14</sup> Robert Balch, Review of *Sex, Slander, and Salvation: Investigating the Family/Children of God*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 35 (March 1996): 72.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen Kent, Interview with Cheryl [pseudonym], February 12, 1996. Place not given to protect anonymity of informant.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, Gustav Niebuhr, "'The Family' and Final Harvest," *The Washington Post*, June 2, 1993, A1; downloaded from <WashingtonPost.com: The Cult Controversy> (March 26, 1998); Susan J. Palmer, "Heaven's Children: The Children of God's Second Generation," in *Sex, Slander, and Salvation*, eds. Lewis and Melton (Stanford, CA: Center for Academic Publication, 1994), 1-26.

<sup>17</sup> Beyond identifying some informants as former members, we do not label them either as "apostates" or anything else.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Kent, Interview with Cheryl [pseudonym], February 9, 1996.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Kent, Interview with Lorna [pseudonym], January 16, 1996. Place not given to protect anonymity of informant.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Family Services, "Heavenly Security-Part I" (Zurich, Switzerland: Family Services, DO [Disciples Only], January 1989): 1-36; "Contending for the Faith: How to Handle Accusations, Controversies and Concerns!" (Zurich, Switzerland: Family Services, DO [Disciples Only], July 1992): 1-48; "Wise Witnessing Replies," (Zurich, Switzerland: Family Services, July 1992).

<sup>22</sup> Stephen Kent, Interview with Cheryl [pseudonym], February 9, 1996.

<sup>23</sup> World Services, "The Pubs [Publications] Purge!: An Urgent Advisory to All Family Homes" (Zurich, Switzerland: World Services, June 1991): 2.

<sup>24</sup> Balch, Review of *Sex, Slander, and Salvation*, 72.

<sup>25</sup> Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday/Anchor, 1959).

<sup>26</sup> Balch, Review of *Sex, Slander, and Salvation*, 72.

<sup>27</sup> Lewis and Melton, eds., *Church Universal and Triumphant*, viii-xi.



<sup>28</sup> "Papers Detail CUT Arms Deals," *Billings Gazette*, 1 July 1993, 1A, 13A. See also Karin Ronnow, "IRS Responds to CUT Appeal," *Livingston Enterprise*, 30 March 1993, 1; Ronnow, "Feds Track CUT Weapons Activity," *Livingston Enterprise*, 30 June 1993, 1; Ronnow, "Papers Give Details of 'Survival' Club," *Livingston Enterprise*, 1 July 1993, 3.

<sup>29</sup> Scott McMillion, "Critics Say Arsenal Belonged to Church," *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, 14 March 1995, 1, 10.

<sup>30</sup> *United States of America [USA] and Bruce M. Philipson, Internal Revenue Agent vs. Church Universal and Triumphant [CUT], Inc. and Edward L. Francis, its Vice President*, "Second Declaration of Petitioner Bruce M. Philipson," Civil No. MCV-91-18-BLG-JDS (United States District Court: District of Montana, [July] 1991), 2. In 1994, the IRS restored CUT's tax exemption except for the period between 1 May 1988 and 30 April 1990, and "the church agreed not to own or store weapons and to dispose of any existing weapons. . ." ("Survivalists Swap Guns for Tax Status," *The Washington Post*, 4 June 1994, A4).

<sup>31</sup> Robert W. Balch and Stephan Langdon, "How the Problem of Malfeasance Gets Overlooked in Studies of New Religions: An Examination of the AWARE Study of the Church Universal and Triumphant," in *Wolves Within the Fold*, ed. Anson Shupe (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998): 196-97, see 195.

<sup>32</sup> "Study Debunks Anti-Church Myths," *Royal Teton Ranch News*, April 1994, 1, 11.

<sup>33</sup> Balch and Langdon, "How the Problem of Malfeasance Gets Overlooked in Studies of New Religions," 192.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 198-199; see Scott McMillion, "Guru Ma's Pleadings Answered—CUT Members Come Through with \$720,000," *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* (January 25, 1994): 1.

<sup>35</sup> Quoted in the "Weapons Timeline" for 1993 in McMillion, "Critics Say Arsenal Belonged to Church," 10. Despite this acceptance of responsibility by the organization, the editors published a study in which the researcher offered that he "found no illegal weapons nor any indication of illegal conversions of weapons, above nor below ground" (Moorman Oliver, Jr., "Church Universal and Triumphant: A Law Enforcement Perspective," in *Church Universal and Triumphant*, eds. Lewis and Melton, 144). The issues concerning the IRS, however, involved organization members using false names and addresses when purchasing weapons, along with tax-exempt organizational money contributing to the purchases. The issue of organizational money related to one of the gun purchaser's use of a corporate credit card to cover expenses while on his gun-buying trip (Scott McMillion, "Showdown: CUT vs IRS," *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, 30 May 1991, 8).

<sup>36</sup> Balch, *Review of Sex, Slander, and Salvation*; Balch and Langdon, "How the Problem of Malfeasance Gets Overlooked in Studies of New Religions." For, however, a positive review of the AWARE study of CUT, see Derek H. Davis, *Review of Church Universal and Triumphant in Scholarly Perspective*, *Journal of Church and State* 37 (1995): 157-58.

<sup>37</sup> Horowitz, *Science, Sin, and Scholarship*, 271-278; see also Marlene Mackie and Merlin B. Brinkerhoff, "Moonie Conferences: Dialog or Duplicity?" *Update* 7, no. 3 (September 1983): 22-37.

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, Ian Reader, "Aum Affair Intensifies Japan's Religious Crisis: An Analysis," *Religion Watch* 19, no. 9 (July/August 1995): 1-2; T. R. Reid, "U.S. Visitors Boost Cause of Japanese Cult," *The Washington Post*, 9 May 1995, A3; Teresa Watanabe, "Alleged Persecution of Cult Investigated," *Los Angeles Times*, 6 May, 1995, A5.

<sup>39</sup> *AWARE (Association of World Academics for Religious Education)*, "Important Press Conference," [Fax], (Los Angeles, CA: AWARE, 9 November 1992).

<sup>40</sup> *APRL [Americans Preserving Religious Liberty] Newsletter*, "New Name, Same Organization," (Oakland, CA: APRL, January 1982); Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Cedars, L. A. Inventories, Evidence #10042: PR General Categories of Data Needing Coding," [Documents obtained during FBI search of Cindy Raymond's office, from black metal four drawer file cabinet designated as 2M], 8 July 1977, 97, 104; Clinton MacSherry, "Divine Intervention," *City Paper* [Baltimore, Maryland], 15 May 1992, 16.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, "Giving Cults a Good Name," *Esquire*, June 1997, 20; Larry D. Shinn, "Cult Conversions and the Courts: Some Ethical Issues in Academic Expert Testimony," *Sociological Analysis* 53, no. 3 (Fall 1992): 273-85.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, *Church Universal and Triumphant [CUT], Inc. vs. Gregory Mull*, "Cross Complaint for Damages," No. C 358191 (Superior Court of the State of California: Los Angeles County, 11 May 1981): 1-12; *[CUT] and Elizabeth Clare Prophet vs. Linda Witt*, "Appeal from a Judgment of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Alfred L. Margolis, Judge," No. C 358191 (Court of Appeal of the State of California: Second Appellate District, Division Five: Superior Court, 10 April 1989): 1-32.

<sup>43</sup> Tom Brune, "Judgment May KO Anti-Cult Group, Deprogrammer," *Chicago Tribune*, 15 October 1995, 1; Claude Iosso, "Plans for Cult-Buster Trial Hotly Debated," *The Daily World*, 28 December 1993, 1; Raymond L. M. Lee and Susan E. Ackerman, "Farewell to Ethnography? Global Embourgeoisement and the Disprivileging of the Narrative," *Critique of Anthropology* 14, no. 4 (1994): 339-54.

<sup>44</sup> Shinn, "Cult Conversions and the Courts."

<sup>45</sup> See, for example, Church of Scientology International, "The Cult Awareness Network: Anatomy of a Hate Group," *Freedom Magazine: Public Service*, n.d. [1994/1995?]; Church of Scientology International, "Cult Awareness Network: The Serpent of Hatred, Intolerance, Violence and Death," A Special Report from *Freedom Magazine*, 27, no. 2 (1995): 2-35.

<sup>46</sup> See, Laurie Goodstein, "Anti-Cult Group Dismembered as Former Foes Buy Its Assets," *The Washington Post*, December 1, 1996, A1, A22.

<sup>47</sup> Jennifer Bjorhus, "Man Wins \$5 Million in Deprogramming Suit," *The Seattle Times*, 30 September 1995, A6; Susan Hansen, "Did Scientology Strike Back?" *The American Lawyer*, June 1997, 62-70.

<sup>48</sup> *Scott vs. Ross, et al.*, "Deposition of Anson David Shupe, Jr.," No. C94-0079 (United States District Court: Western District of Washington at Seattle, 19 July 1995): 1-172; *Scott vs. Ross, et al.*, "Transcript of Proceedings: Testimony of Anson David Shupe, Jr.," No. C94-79C (United States District Court: Western District of Washington at Seattle, 26 September 1995) Vol. 4: 18-79.

<sup>49</sup> The recent appeals court decision affirming the judgment against the countercult organization made a factual error when it stated that the mother of the young man who eventually underwent an "unsuccessful deprogramming" "contacted Shirley Landa after a referral from the Seattle Community Service hotline. Landa was involved in various 'anti-cult' activities and worked as CAN's Washington state 'contact.' A 'contact' is 'an unpaid volunteer who is available in given areas to speak to members of the public on behalf of CAN'" (*Scott vs. Ross, et al.*, "Opinion by Judge Beezer," No. CV-94-00079-JCC [U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Western District of Washington at Seattle], 8 April 1998: 3209). In fact, no organization existed by the name of Seattle Community Service. The organization that did make the referral to Landa is named the Crisis Clinic, which (now) shares its database with Crisis Line and Community Information Line. Apparently the Crisis Clinic database did not have her listed as a CAN representative. As far as we can determine (from speaking with several staff members of the Crisis Clinic), Landa's current listing with the Seattle organization as a cult resource person has not changed for years. Her only organizational affiliation on the current data base is with a group called "Parents Awareness/Citizens Freedom Foundation," which has no affiliation with CAN. Even though the name would imply that Landa's local group was connected with the Citizens Freedom Foundation (CAN's immediate predecessor), CAN did not have a Seattle affiliate. Landa was a CAN contact person *only* when the national CAN office referred a caller to her (probably to save on the caller's telephone bills), but in this case the initial call for help by a relative of the (eventually "unsuccessfully deprogrammed") young man went straight to the Crisis Clinic. At no time was the national CAN office involved.

<sup>50</sup> *Scott vs. Ross, et al.*, "Deposition of Anson David Shupe, Jr.," 83-85, 86-87; see also, *Scott vs. Ross, et al.*, "CAN's Reply Brief in Support of Motion to Exclude Expert," No. C94-79C

(United States District Court: Western District of Washington at Seattle, 7 September 1995): 1-6.

<sup>51</sup> *CBS News*, "CAN: The Cult Awareness Network," *60 Minutes* 30, no. 15, 28 December 1997, 19-20.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Scott vs. Ross, et al.*, "Opinion by Judge Beezer."

<sup>54</sup> Hansen, "Did Scientology Strike Back?"; see also William W. Horne, "The Two Faces of Scientology," *The American Lawyer* (July/August 1992): 74-82.

<sup>55</sup> *Church of Scientology International vs. Steven Fishman and Uwe Geertz*, "Declaration of J. Gordon Melton in Support of Brief of Amicus Curiae on Remand Issue of Confidentiality of Religious Scriptures," No. 91-6426 HLH [Tx] (United States District Court: Central District of California, November 28, 1994): 4 pp.

<sup>56</sup> Irving Louis Horowitz, "Universal Standards, Not Uniform Beliefs," *Sociological Analysis* 44 (Fall, 1983): 181.

<sup>57</sup> Georg Simmel, "Secrecy," in *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, trans. and ed. Kurt H. Wolff, (London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1950), 330-44.

<sup>58</sup> Mark Silk, "Journalists' Attitudes Toward New Religious Movements," *Review of Religious Research* 39, no. 2 (December 1997): 141. The allusion is to Newman's *Apologia pro vita sua* [*A Defense of His Own Life* (1864)], in which he defended his quest for truth that led him to convert to Catholicism from Anglicanism. When Silk replaced Newman's word, *vita*, with *culta*, gender problems in the grammar occurred that make literal translation impossible. Silk informed one of the authors that he meant "argument on behalf of their cult" or "justification of their cult" (Mark Silk email to Stephen A. Kent, 10 March 1998). Our translation is a variant on what Silk proposed. We express gratitude to Massimo Introvigne for pointing out problems in Silk's Latin phrase, and to Kelly McFarlane for helping clarify various grammatical issues and translation options.



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