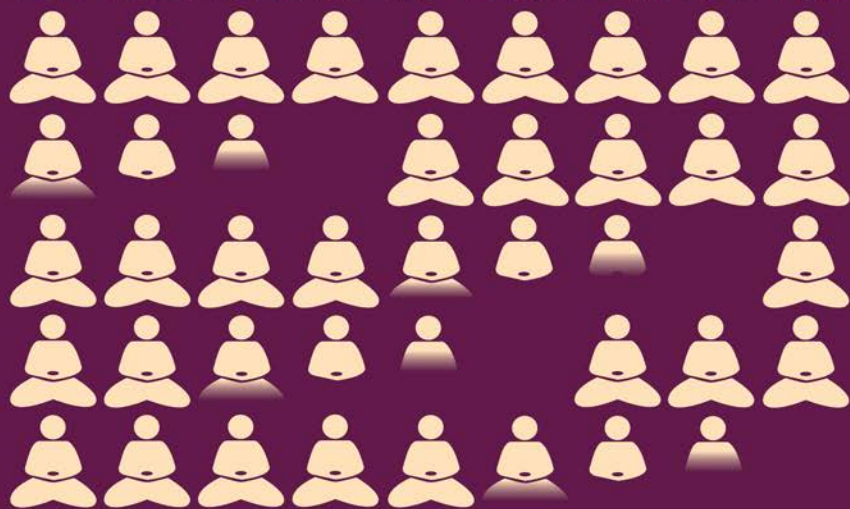


# AGENTS *of* DISCORD

DEPROGRAMMING, PSEUDO-SCIENCE,  
AND THE AMERICAN ANTICULT MOVEMENT



*Anson Shupe*  
*Susan E. Darnell*

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This volume is dedicated

To Toby and Molly, who have served as creative lieutenants more than they know

A.S.

To my precious children Michael Joseph Darnell and Jennifer Ellen Darnell that they might better understand corruption and the wisdom of choices in a world of temptation and confusion

S.E.D.



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## Preface

We are students, scholars and activists who became caught up in an intense, volatile, sometimes violent struggle for the definition of religious freedom in not just North America but also worldwide. This is a controversy now spanning generations and many religious groups. Our personal biases in favor of religious libertarianism, or liberty, will quickly be apparent to readers. Legal adults have been abducted, imprisoned, discriminated against, persecuted even at the end of the twentieth century, and into the twenty-first, because of their religious beliefs. In the spirit of the late critical sociologist C. Wright Mills, we do not pretend to be dispassionate about our subject, but we do claim a measure of objectivity.

This book is heavily referenced. Most of our sources are professional and technical books, legal depositions and court documents, media reports and interviews. Ultimately we can document every claim made (and have often done so in court). Readers wanting further information may want to consult the endnotes per each chapter. Naturally, since the controversy of religious practice and fear we analyze has been ongoing for over three centuries, not all sources are still in print. And our referenced legal documents are not always readily available at one's local library. But as we enter the Third Millennium, that is what computers, the Internet, and interlibrary loan services are for.



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# Glossary of Terms

## North American Organizational Acronyms

**ACM**—The Anticult Movement, designation for a broad counter-social movement made up of various organizations both in North America and on other continents that has opposed unconventional and new religious movements. ACM organizations have been suspicious of the motives and purposes of the latter's leaders and followers, generally viewing them as subversive to the well-being of society and possibly dangerous to the followers. That is the view of the *secular* wing of the movement. A *religious* wing, composed of various strands of Judeo-Roman Catholic-Protestantism, views many new religious movements as heretical, faith-damaging, and even Satanic.

**AFF**—The American Family Foundation, a non-profit, tax-exempt research and educational organization, founded in 1979. Its primary purpose has been to hold conferences and issue “white paper” reports, books, a journal entitled *The Cult Observer*, and other publications, all critical—many mainstream social scientists would say biased or ethnocentric—of a broad variety of unconventional and new religious movements.

**CFF**—Citizens Freedom Foundation, the first and largest anticult organization during the 1970s and early 1980s. Based in California, it first openly (and later more subtly) encouraged deprogramming as a solution to the “mind control” problem for certain individuals and lobbied politicians to investigate, prosecute and repress new religious movements.

**CAN**—Cult Awareness Network, a later Chicago-based reincorporated incarnation of CFF, established in 1985. CAN continued CFF's function of promoting only negative information about new religious movements through the mass media, annual conferences, and published literature as well as serving as a referral clearinghouse for

persons seeking to hire deprogrammers to remove loved ones from such movements.

**CEFM** – (National Ad Hoc) Citizens Engaged in Freeing Minds, a grass-roots poorly funded group formed in 1976 to attempt to become the first national anticult coalition. It literally operated out of the home of a Grand Prairie, Texas businessman and economically collapsed in 1977.

**ICEP** – International Cult Education Program,. A short-lived joint spin-off of the Cult Awareness Network and the American Family Foundation during the early 1990s. There is little evidence that it independently became an influence in North America, Europe, or other countries.

**NRMs** – New Religious Movements, some literally newly formed in North America and others imported from other countries (particularly Asia) or at least unconventional, that hold non-mainstream beliefs as judged by the standards of current North American religious culture. In the eyes of some they pose challenges or even threats to that culture. (See Cult)

**COG**—The Children of God, a fundamentalist “Jesus Movement” sect of the mid-1960s now known as The Family. The movement is worldwide in its membership, missionary and humanitarian work but, because of its communal lifestyle and certain past sexual practices inspired the first modern anticult group: Free the Children of God (FreeCog) during the early 1970s. FreeCog later expanded to become the Citizens Freedom Foundation (CFF).

**UM**—Unificationist Movement (a.k.a., Unificationist Church or The Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity). This group, with never more than 3,500 to 7,000 members in the United States, was founded in 1954 in South Korea by industrialist-evangelist Sun Myung Moon. Moon has preached that he was selected by Jesus Christ and God Almighty to complete Jesus’ ultimate (but failed) goal: to create a perfect family and found the Kingdom of God on Earth. Moon’s own publicizing of his message and the anticult movement’s targeting of him as America’s leading cult leader (with subversive political ambitions) made him that countermovement’s *bête noir* during the 1970s and 1980s.

### General Definitions

**Anticultists**—Persons associated with the anticult movement and/or sympathetic to the goals of monitoring and restricting new reli-

gious movements. In post-World War Two North America they have represented a broad range of activists: from *players* or *mavericks* who have acted independently and unaccountably as critics of new religious movements or even as vigilantes to help remove persons from those movements to *operatives* who have been more integrated into the anticult movement as speakers and critics to *managers* who have been formal leaders and staff members of organizations such as the Cult Awareness Network to *consultants* who assist and service the anticult movement, such as accountants and attorneys, to *experts* who have been various professionals, often academics, who have lent their names to support the cause of anticultism.

**Brainwashing/mind control**—The theory that there exist arcane, rarely understood techniques to enable nefarious persons to “capture” individual free will and render persons extremely suggestible to another’s wishes. This possibility was considered worthy of study by German and American governments during the 1930s and explored (without much success) by the post-World War Two Central Intelligence Agency, (See Programming.)

**Cult**—In social science the initial form of a religion, characterized by charismatic personal leadership, small size, minimal organization and unconventional or novel beliefs.

**Cult Apologists**—A derogatory term employed by anticultists to refer to scholars and civil libertarians whose research conclusions and views disagree with the anticult movement’s own suspicions or conclusions, to wit, that many religious movements are necessarily subversive to society and dangerous to individuals who join them.

**Denomination**—A mature sect that has survived a breakaway period from a larger mainstream religious group and has accommodated successfully to mainstream pluralism and now is relatively noncontroversial. (See Sect.)

**Deprogramming**—The practice of removing a member of a so-called “cult,” however identified as such, forcibly if need be, to talk that person out of remaining a member and convincing him or her to return to more conventional non-“cult” life; believed by its supporters to be a legitimate new therapy to counteract unconventional religions’ practice of brainwashing or “programming.”

**Exit Counseling**—During the late 1980s, after considerable publicity about their coercive abduction/forcible constraint tactics used to dissuade certain religious groups’ members from remaining in their groups, deprogrammers held meetings to professionalize themselves



(seeking, for example ethical guidelines to control behavior toward unwilling clients during deprogrammings) and reshape their public image. Part of this effort involved renaming their role to become “exit counselors” in the anticult movement. The goal of exit counseling, however, has always been the same as that of deprogramming: to convince the religion member to abandon his/her group. (See Deprogramming.)

**Programming**—The purported ability of a new religious group’s leader or missionaries to implant unconscious thought to undermine the free will of a potential convert, whether by hypnosis or some little understood presumed process of “mind control” or “brainwashing.”

**Sect**—In social science a protest reform-mind splinter group that breaks away from a larger church tradition to return to (in its members’ views) the purer, original “cult” phase.

**Thought Reform Consultant**—A term representing a second attempt by deprogrammers in the 1990s to recast their image (after seeking their new identities as “exit counselors”) toward a more professional status. It is still in use.

### **Social Movement Terms**

**SME**—Social Movement environment, the broadest level and cultural-societal background, such as religious pluralism in the United States

**SMI**—Social Movement Industry, an areas of society where like-minded, parallel organizations work toward the same goal.

**SMO**—Social Movement Organization, a particular organization within the SMI that identifies its specific goals and methods.

**SMP**—Social Movement Participant, a person who joins in and supports an SMO.

**SMECON**—Social Movement Economy, or how the SMO raises its financial and other resources needed to exist and carry out its mission.

# 1

## Introduction

A modestly educated man with a criminal past proclaims himself the Prophet of the God of the Jews. He possesses a charismatic personality and begins to attract followers. He first sexually seduces women in his movement and then claims rights of privileged sexual access to all the wives of men in the movement (while preaching the inferiority of women to men). He collects the financial assets of his followers, enjoying a comfortable lifestyle while they exist in communal poverty. At one point, he is held by civil authorities on possible murder charges. He is given to long-winded, thundering sermons to his followers, speaking of the coming Kingdom of God, the last days of this existence and his unique ability to interpret hidden prophecy in biblical scriptures.

Does this description read something like David Koresh, late leader of the (mostly) deceased Branch Davidians at the Mt. Carmel compound in Waco, Texas circa Spring 1993?

It might, but the above details are actually of a carpenter named Robert Matthews who served jail time for assault in the 1830s. He began calling himself Mattias and, during an age of tremendous religious innovation in this country, formed a cult that did some very unconventional things. Mattias even reportedly tried to win influence with Joseph Smith, his contemporary prophet from New York state, who founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.<sup>1</sup>

As Philip Jenkins documents in his book *Mystics and Messiahs: Cults and New Religions in American History*, charismatic, world-transforming-portending leaders like Mattias (and their attending flocks) have been legion in North American history. So have been their opponents. Jenkins emphasizes the continuities of both “cult” and “anticult” phenomena in American history, including our own era. He observes that “there is no period, including colonial times, in which we cannot find numerous groups more or less indistin-

## 2 Agents of Discord

guishable from the most controversial movements”<sup>2</sup> and, on the “normality” of new religious movements (hereafter NRMs) Jenkins adds, “far from being a novelty, cults and cultlike movements have a very long history on American soil. Extreme and bizarre religious ideas are so commonplace in American history that it is difficult to speak of them as fringe at all.”<sup>3</sup>

In this volume we do not intend to retread the familiar ground of religious fear, prejudice, discrimination, competition and conflict involving NRMs in North America. All these dimensions have been researched extensively by social historians on such groups as Roman Catholics, Shakers, Quakers, Mormons, Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists, to name a few. Our focus instead will be on modern organized efforts to oppose and restrict NRMs, now known in the sociology of religion as the post-World War Two countercult or anticult movement (hereafter the ACM).

In particular this book describes and analyzes one incorporated organization within the ACM; the Cult Awareness Network (hereafter the CAN). In that sense we offer a social movement’s biography. For a time the CAN was one of the two largest national ACM groups, having surmounted the problems of economic exigency and public apathy that drove most local and regional ACM attempts at mobilization into extinction. It was not typical of all modern ACM groups, most of which have been law-abiding, in that at times (despite protestations otherwise) the CAN actively promoted the abduction and coercive deprogramming of so-called cult members.

Such opposition movements are as much a predictable fixture of religious pluralism as are the NRMs themselves.<sup>4</sup> This fact has not always been obvious to those caught up in the fray. Each age, Jenkins reminds us, thinks it is uniquely being overrun with menacing, anti-social, questionable religious groups and, for similar reasons, “reinvents the wheel” of religious alarm:

Just as no era lacks its controversial fringe groups, so no era fails to produce opponents to denounce them; anti-cult movements are also a long-established historical phenomenon. Anti-cult rhetoric is strikingly constant, or is at least built upon a common core of allegations and complaints. When an emerging group today is denounced as a cult, its critics are employing, consciously or not, a prefabricated script some centuries in the making, incorporating charges that might originally have been developed long ago against a wide variety of movements.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, issues of the legitimacy and toleration of NRMs persist into the twenty first century and cannot be expected to disappear soon,

not just in the United States and Canada but in Europe as well. As we shall show, Italy, Germany, France and Russia, among other countries, are experiencing the same tensions that have characterized NRMs' appearances in North American religious pluralism. These "cults" or "sects" have been accused of harboring subversive motives, employing under-handed techniques of "mental manipulation" to gain and retain members and seeking financial enrichment for leaders at the expense of followers.

There is an irony in this NRM/ACM conflict that neither side would have appreciated several decades ago. Anson Shupe and David G. Bromley, two veteran chroniclers of the controversy, looking back over a quarter century, have reported that

...neither side expected this protracted protest against new religious movements to last: either because a damaging image of the anti-cult movement as an intolerant, anti-constitutional, vigilante movement would have been successfully promoted by its opponents; or because, thanks to the ACM's mobilization of public officials and law enforcement agencies, health professionals, academics and public opinion, the "innovative" NRMs would have been broken up, prosecuted and deported.<sup>6</sup>

After over three decades neither side has prevailed.

### **The Current Wave of NRMs**

So many pundits and social observers have navel-gazed during the second half of the twentieth century and ruminated about the causes of social movements involving everything from war discontent, the environment and civil rights to fashion statements and spirituality that here we need only distill cultural analyses of the origins of modern NRMs down to a few brief paragraphs.

#### *The Age of Aquarius*

NRMs, as Jenkins and others have emphasized, are a constant in North American culture. We've always had them and almost certainly always will. But for a variety of reasons discussed elsewhere in detail, the secular sociopolitical movements of the 1960s had dissipated in strength by the 1970s when the NRMs managed to come into their own.<sup>7</sup> Robert Bellah, for instance, wrote of a "crisis of meaning" in which "the inability of utilitarian individualism to provide a meaningful pattern of personal and social existence" became increasingly apparent to many adults.<sup>8</sup> Sociologists Bromley and Shupe followed up on this logic: "As the cultural crisis continued, established institutions were discredited, and political solutions were

#### 4 Agents of Discord

not forthcoming, many youths sought solutions in religious movements which offered thoroughgoing critiques of traditional value systems.”<sup>9</sup>

Some of the discontent made its way to ultra-conservative Christian sects, such as the Children of God, the Alamo Foundation, various Jesus communes (rural and urban), the International Churches of Christ or The Way International. Some questing persons gravitated to Eastern groups and the latter’s gurus, swamis and adepts. (These leaders found American society easier to penetrate after the 1965 repeal of the Oriental Exclusion Act and the end of the universal military draft in the early 1970s.) The largest of the Asian groups included Transcendental Meditation, the Divine Light Mission, Nichiren Shoshu and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, among many others.

Still other seekers tried more sophisticated, cerebral examples of spiritual technologies, aligning themselves with modernity, such as est and Synanon. And others approached the “generative milieu” of the diffuse “human potential movement” of therapeutic technologies, like est, for affluent persons reluctant to think of themselves as “sick.”<sup>10</sup>

In sociologist Thomas Robbins’ words, “by the middle 1970s new religions had become a highly conspicuous feature of the (American) religious system.”<sup>11</sup> However, as Robert Wuthnow has cautioned, a poll of 1000 sixteen-year-old-and-above youths in the San Francisco Bay Area (the epicenter for NRMs) during the 1970s found that only a relatively tiny percentage of individuals actually had dabbled in, or became members of, any NRM.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, such groups did achieve high and exotic visibility, which undoubtedly contributed to the later concerns held by families whose offspring and relatives joined them.

Perhaps it all can be attributed to post-World War II baby-boomer angst and disillusionment with capitalist materialism. Perhaps it was also a product of expanded opportunities for liberal hedonism and personal rebellion, or conversely, a search for order, closure and discipline. But in any event there literally developed a “market” for new religious currents catering to some unknown but significant number of eager, exploratory “consumers” in American society turning their backs on traditional religious “brands” and looking for the novel.<sup>13</sup>

*Are They All Cults?*

To postulate an anticult movement presupposes there are tangible groups some persons can identify in agreed-upon fashion and label “cults.” To be sure there are, and have been such, groups but how many depends on how one defines them. Let us deal with this issue at the outset since the labeling process has never been all that precise. Many opponents of NRMs have tried laboriously and inclusively to define what constitutes a cult and a cult leader. They have cited individual characteristics such as leaders’ concentration of influence and loyalty, their wealth, their followers’ communal and proscribed lifestyles and so forth. But as Bromley and Shupe stated several decades ago, “The range of groups termed cults is quite arbitrary, depending on how one defines “normal” religion. Many definitions of cults tell you more about the critics than about the groups in question.”<sup>14</sup> In fact, any religious or quasi-religious leader—from the Pope to popular Protestant evangelists to pop-music icons—could be tagged as a “cult leader” by various ACM definitions. As Philip Jenkins pessimistically concludes on this definitional matter, “It is all but impossible to define cults in a way that does not describe a large share of American religious bodies, including some of the most respectable.”<sup>15</sup> The following chapters will show how the ACM, both in the United States and abroad, has created an increasingly expanding definitional net into which almost anyone can be portrayed as either a “cult victim” or “cult leader.”

Social science researchers of NRMs conservatively define a “cult” as a relatively small group, with culturally unique beliefs deviating from majority society, led by a charismatic leader. Many are exclusivist and “high-demand” in terms of the amounts of time members are expected to surrender to group activities. Originally the term had a neutral meaning. Jesus and the Twelve Disciples, the Buddha and his first disciples or Charles Manson and his small destructive band, would equally qualify as cults. Many contemporary scholars of religion no longer use the term, fearing its misuse as a cover for prejudice or hostility. Instead they prefer the less inflammatory phrase “new religious movements” (although many of the groups opposed by the ACM are not really so new, such as Japanese Nichiren Shoshu Buddhism or followers of the Hindu god Krishna).

Outside social science, the term “cult” has been one of the most overused words in the English language. It has become a code-word

for any unconventional religion or philosophy of which one disapproves. Thus, Jewish groups, such as the American Jewish Committee, abhor attempts by Christians to convert them and brand Jews for Jesus (an evangelical mission made up of Christianized Jewish converts) as a “cult” alongside Unificationists, Krishnas and Scientologists. Southern Baptists and other evangelical Christians (who do not consider Jews for Jesus a cult) instead see it as a legitimate, appropriate mission for Christianized Jewish converts to provide them with the opportunity for salvation as opposed to eternal damnation. Many mainstream evangelical groups would include within their “cult” category not just violent, self-destructive groups like the Order of the Solar Temple, the Heaven’s Gate group and Jim Jones’ Peoples Temple but also nonviolent, older religions like the Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Christian Scientists. Some fundamentalist Protestants feel comfortable adding to the list all forms of yoga, martial arts like Tae Kwon Do (Korean-style karate), aikido and kung-fu (because of their non-Christian philosophical origins), and any form of visual imagery or meditation. The late Walter R. Martin, a well-known evangelical writer and radio personality, counted Zen Buddhism (one of Japan’s older and most respected forms of Buddhism) among cultic groups,<sup>16</sup> while Bob Larson, another popular fundamentalist author and media personality, has thrown in not only martial arts, yoga and UFOs, but also all of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism and Islam.<sup>17</sup> Dave Hunt, another prolific Christian writer, has even taken on the *Star Wars* movie series, declaring that Obi-wan Kenobi is essentially a warlock (albeit one practicing “white” or good magic as opposed to Darth Vader’s “black” or evil magic) and that The Force is actually a Satanic concept.<sup>18</sup>

Sociologically, most cults are short-lived. They usually either take seed, thrive and go on to become what we know as larger religious traditions, such as Islam, Christianity or Buddhism, or they disintegrate and fade away (though that process may take generations). Successful cults are relatively few in number. The majority fail for any number of reasons. Perhaps the cult is persecuted into extinction, or the leader dies before provision for a successor can be worked out (thus shattering the fragile bonds among the followers), or the leader becomes somehow discredited in the followers’ eyes. To be sure, horror happens. Not all cults are benign. In recent years our most spectacular cases of cult-like groups coming to grisly ends have been exemplified in the murder-suicides of over 900 persons in the

Peoples Temple at Jonestown, Guyana; the bizarre UFO-castration suicides of Heaven's Gate members; and the murder-suicides of members of the Order of the Solar Temple in both Canada and Switzerland. But those were self-destructive, atypical groups. In North American society, pledged to protect the religious liberties of all religious groups, public apathy and rejection, rather than persecution or pathologically self-destructive urges, spell the demise of most cults.

Thus, in one way or another, the odds of any single group encountering the right combination of circumstances and surviving down the years are slim at best.

It is difficult to determine any reliable final figure of just how many cults exist in the United States, particularly if we rely on the ACM and hostile religious critics for our numbers. James and Marcia Rudin, two outspoken anticult authors, cite various estimates to show that between two and three million Americans have become involved as members in anywhere from one to three thousand such groups.<sup>19</sup> The former Cult Awareness Network frequently offered the figure of over 3,000 "destructive cults" operating in this country. On the other hand, when sociologists Rodney Stark, William S. Bainbridge and Daniel P. Doyle applied the specific organizational definition of cults to J. Gordon Melton's *Encyclopedia of American Religions* (a comprehensive source of *all* known religious groups in the United States), they discovered only 501 groups that could reasonably be labeled cults.<sup>20</sup> Their study revealed that the ACM statistics of cult membership have likely been a political, rather than an empirical, tool.

In sum, the term "cult" has in popular and non-scholarly venues been applied to a host of so many groups, many with little organization or doctrinal characteristics in common, and almost always with distinctly negative connotations, that we, too, abandon its usage here except with reference to the language of participants in the religious controversy we analyze. Were many of the NRMs that originated during the "Age of Aquarius" technically cults in a sociological sense? Undoubtedly some were. But many others, which the modern ACM has opposed for over thirty years, probably were not.

### **The Cult Awareness Network: Agents of Discord**

In 1953 Ralph Lord Roy published his classic book *Apostles of Discord*. It was a thoroughly documented account of Protestant fringe groups (what today would be called parachurch organizations) en-



couraging fascism and virulent anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism and anti-communism. This movement of “organized malcontents who zealously seek to promote hate and disruption under the banner of the Christian faith”<sup>21</sup> was personified in speakers and writers such as Gerald Winrod, Gerald L. K. Smith, and Carl McIntire.

We have paralleled Roy’s title with *Agents of Discord* for, in many ways, the function (i.e., consequence) of the CAN was similarly to cultivate disquiet and anxiety over NRMs, mobilize those sentiments and promote a public acceptance to suspend civil liberties for members of certain minority religious groups. Furthermore, spokespersons for the ACM groups, and the CAN in particular, in the United States have literally acted as agents—or to push the simile further—as missionaries carrying the “mind control” message abroad, with significant implications for civil liberties in other societies. But, we ask, has the ACM been a “hate movement” in the same style of the groups that Roy exposed?

It is difficult to answer with certainty. Valerie Jenness and Kendal Broad in *Hate Crimes: New Social Movements and the Politics of Violence* define hate crime as “bias-motivated violence” and imply a certain liberal political correctness underlying the recognition and endorsement of such definitions in the current academic “social problems marketplace.”<sup>22</sup> However, the very concept of a hate group or hate crime is slippery. To a certain extent it depends on one’s reciprocal definition of the person or group or issue that/who is presumably hated; whether abortion, domestic violence against women or racism. And does it make sense to lump together angry cells of militants who fight abortion by bombing facilities providing abortion services, together with protesting families who non-violently march on the anniversary of *Row v. Wade*, as all members of a hate movement? Where do legitimate disagreement and hateful opposition separate? Most social movements display a range of activism and passion and, again, identifying the hate part is not clear.

Various studies of extreme right wing militia organizations, such as Christian Identity and Aryan Nations, reveal these groups to resemble those of the movement which Roy described, and there may be justification for calling them hate groups.<sup>23</sup> But there is also the detectable scent of relativist conventional wisdom in the labeling of an unpopular group by the majority according to this “they hate/we only hate hate” logic. Of course, many Americans reject racial and religious bigotry, so groups that reject racial-ethnic-

religious pluralism are, by popular definition then, “hateful.” With groups opposed to NRMs, things are more murky, particularly when we inspect the ranks of its supporters, many of whom were more confused, fearful and misled than hateful, and relatively few of whom were overtly violent.

To complicate matters, one author who accepts the social reality of hate groups notes that

...the hate movement in the United States has taken on a new, modern face. The strength of the contemporary hate movement is grounded in its ability to repackage its message in ways that make it more palatable, and in its ability to exploit the points of intersection between itself and prevailing ideological canons. In short, the hate movement is attempting to move itself into the mainstream of United States culture and politics.<sup>24</sup>

Certainly the two largest ACM organizations that we will analyze, primarily the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) and only secondarily the American Family Foundation (AFF), have, by some scholarly standards, presented stereotypical images and rhetoric in their literature on NRMs and possibly inflamed persons to perform extreme actions. They have aggressively tried to attach themselves to the mantle of scientific respectability, as the last author would have predicted. And a jury in the state of Washington did consider the CAN a hate group according to that state’s legal definition and, as a result, ruled against the CAN in a benchmark civil suit (*Scott v. Ross et al.*—see chapter 5) with far-reaching implications.

But to label any organization part of a hate movement because of its actions presupposes that the labeler knows for a certainty individual members’ and leaders’ motives in acting and that these are prejudicial or biased. What the ACM actors’ motives we do have some insight into involve mixtures of genuine familial concern for loved ones that have led them to contact the ACM groups for information, support and help (what we will be referring to later as Tier I involvement), on the one hand, and careerism/financial gain (or Tier II involvement), on the other. While one could make a strong case for ethnocentrism, or sheer opportunism at times, underlying much ACM activism, raw hateful bias as a primary motive seems a shallow foundation for understanding the ACM overall.

Thus, we do not intend to muddy the analytic waters by claiming the CAN or the entire ACM to be a hate movement. The very concept has been applied to racial minority victimization almost exclusively, not religion, though we sympathize with the question raised

by Jenness and Broad: "...Why is it that only some minority constituencies have been conceived and institutionalized as victims of hate crimes, while others have gone unnoticed?<sup>25</sup> Indeed, until now, why not religious minorities?

We propose a more fruitful and parsimonious way to understand much of the ACM's ideology and policies by regarding these as rooted simply in what social psychologist Gordon W. Allport termed "the normality of prejudgement" and "the principle of least effort." In essence, human beings tend toward cognitive laziness and minimal information, parsimoniously sorted into a minimal number of categories, that renders social reality simple in an otherwise complex world. Writes Allport:

As a rule monopolistic categories are easier to form and to hold than are differentiated categories. While most of us have learned to be critical and open-minded in certain regions of experience we obey the law of least effort in others. ...Life is just too short to have differentiated concepts about everything....Our point is merely that life becomes easier when the category [e.g., *cults*] is not differentiated. To consider every member of a group as endowed with the same traits saves us the pain of dealing with them as individuals.<sup>26</sup>

This stance removes the issue of bias-motivation underlying the CAN actions and points more to cognitive reasoning. We do not mean to reduce those activities and initiatives to a mere psychological level, only to deal on a more sociological level that is empirically verifiable, i.e., that in its publications and proclamations the ACM's spokespersons and writers have generally shown gross oversimplification of differences among subcultures and operations of NRMs as well as the social psychological processes of NRM recruitment/retention. The CAN, in its extensions of those oversimplifications, simply crossed over the line into the realm of illegalities. As chapters 3 and 5 will demonstrate, the CAN and quasi-independent deprogrammers have, at times, been so indiscriminate as to which NRM members required "intervention" and which groups deserve scrutiny, that hate or pure directed bias toward any specific group is an unreliable indicator of the CAN operatives' motives. At the minimum, the ACM's and the CAN's proponents have become postermodels for Allport's principle of least effort.

A last note relevant to this section: Allport, psychology's premier expert on prejudice, concluded in his book's introduction that

When we speak of prejudice we are likely to think of "race prejudice. This is an unfortunate association of ideas, for throughout history human prejudice has had little