

kingdom of the cults

kingdom of the cults represents a pivotal concept in the study of comparative religion and apologetics, focusing on the analysis and understanding of various religious movements commonly classified as cults. This article delves into the origins, impact, and critical perspectives surrounding the kingdom of the cults, providing readers with an in-depth exploration of its historical development, key characteristics, and contemporary relevance. By examining prominent groups, the criteria for cult classification, and the influence of apologetic literature, this resource aims to offer valuable insights for students, researchers, and anyone interested in religious studies. Key topics include the definition of cults, notable movements, the role of apologetics, and the ongoing debates within theological circles. Whether you are seeking to understand the cultural significance or the controversies tied to the kingdom of the cults, this comprehensive guide is designed to inform and engage, encouraging further exploration into the complex world of new religious movements and their place in society.

- Definition and Historical Roots of Kingdom of the Cults
- Criteria for Identifying Cults in Comparative Religion
- Prominent Groups within the Kingdom of the Cults
- The Role of Apologetics and Influential Literature
- Cultural Impact and Public Perception
- Debates and Controversies in Cult Classification
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Definition and Historical Roots of Kingdom of the Cults

The phrase "kingdom of the cults" has become a staple in the discourse surrounding non-mainstream religious movements. Originating from the influential work of religious scholars, the term seeks to categorize and analyze groups that diverge significantly from historic Christianity. The concept gained prominence through comparative studies, which aimed to distinguish orthodox beliefs from those considered heterodox or unorthodox. Historically, the investigation into cults intensified in the 20th century, with the rise of new religious movements and growing concerns about doctrinal purity. Understanding the origin and evolution of the kingdom of the cults is

essential for contextualizing its current application in theological, academic, and public spheres.

Criteria for Identifying Cults in Comparative Religion

Defining Cults and New Religious Movements

In comparative religion, a cult is typically defined by its deviation from established doctrinal norms, its charismatic leadership, and its unique interpretation of sacred texts. This definition has evolved to include sociological and psychological elements, such as group isolation and authoritative control. The term "new religious movements" is often used interchangeably, though not all NRMs are classified as cults. The distinction hinges on doctrinal differences, organizational structure, and the movement's relationship to mainstream society.

Core Characteristics of Cults

- Exclusive or Secretive Beliefs
- Charismatic and Centralized Leadership
- Isolation from Mainstream Society
- Control over Members' Behavior and Thought
- Unique Interpretations of Sacred Texts
- Claims of Special Revelation or Authority

These characteristics help scholars and theologians systematically identify groups within the kingdom of the cults, distinguishing them from denominations or sects that maintain doctrinal alignment with established faith traditions.

Prominent Groups within the Kingdom of the Cults

Major Religious Movements Often Classified as Cults

Numerous groups have been examined under the lens of the kingdom of the cults, each exhibiting distinct beliefs and organizational structures. Some of the most discussed movements include Jehovah's Witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Christian Science, Scientology, and the Unification Church. These organizations have amassed significant followings and have become the subject of theological critique, sociological study, and public curiosity due to their divergence from orthodox Christianity.

Case Studies: Beliefs and Practices

Each group presents a unique set of doctrines and rituals that set them apart from mainstream Christian traditions. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses are noted for their rejection of the Trinity and unique translation of the Bible, while Mormons emphasize continuing revelation and additional scriptures. Scientology, founded by L. Ron Hubbard, introduces a blend of spiritual and psychological techniques, drawing attention for its secretive practices and celebrity adherents. The Unification Church, established by Sun Myung Moon, combines Christian motifs with novel teachings about messianic leadership. These case studies illustrate the diversity found within the kingdom of the cults.

The Role of Apologetics and Influential Literature

Apologetic Response to Cults

Apologetics plays a central role in the discourse surrounding the kingdom of the cults. Christian apologists aim to defend orthodox doctrine by critiquing the beliefs and practices of groups classified as cults. Through systematic analysis, they address theological errors, clarify biblical teachings, and offer guidance for those seeking to navigate religious pluralism. The apologetic approach emphasizes the importance of discernment and doctrinal fidelity in the face of competing worldviews.

Impact of Key Publications

One of the most influential works in this field is Walter Martin's book "The Kingdom of the Cults," which provides a detailed examination of various movements and their theological deviations. The book has shaped the

conversation about cults for decades, serving as a reference point for both scholars and lay readers. Other notable resources include writings by Josh McDowell and Hank Hanegraaff, which further explore the complexities of cult classification and apologetic engagement. These publications have contributed to the widespread understanding and critique of non-traditional religious groups.

Cultural Impact and Public Perception

Media Representation and Societal Influence

The kingdom of the cults has had a significant impact on public perception of new religious movements. Media coverage often highlights controversies, legal battles, and sensational stories, shaping societal attitudes toward groups classified as cults. Documentaries, news reports, and fictional portrayals can influence public understanding, sometimes perpetuating stereotypes or misunderstandings. Despite these challenges, many groups continue to thrive, adapt, and seek legitimacy within the broader religious landscape.

Influence on Religious Dialogue and Policy

The classification of cults influences religious dialogue and policy formation, especially regarding religious freedom, parental rights, and community standards. Governments and advocacy organizations may intervene when allegations of abuse, manipulation, or illegal activity arise. These interventions reflect ongoing debates about the balance between protecting individual freedoms and ensuring societal safety. The cultural impact of the kingdom of the cults is evident in legislative actions, educational initiatives, and interfaith discussions.

Debates and Controversies in Cult Classification

Challenges of Defining Cults

The process of classifying a group as a cult is fraught with controversy. Critics argue that the term is often used pejoratively, leading to stigmatization and misunderstanding. Theological, sociological, and psychological criteria may vary, resulting in inconsistent application. Scholars continue to debate the ethical implications of labeling groups, emphasizing the need for careful analysis and respect for religious diversity.

Ethical Considerations and Human Rights

Human rights advocates highlight the potential for abuse and discrimination when groups are labeled as cults. Concerns include freedom of belief, freedom of assembly, and protection from religious persecution. The intersection of cult classification and human rights underscores the importance of nuanced, evidence-based discussion, balancing the need for accountability with respect for pluralism.

Contemporary Relevance and Ongoing Discussions

Modern Trends in New Religious Movements

The landscape of the kingdom of the cults continues to evolve in response to globalization, technological advances, and shifting cultural norms. New movements emerge, often leveraging digital platforms to connect with followers and disseminate teachings. Scholars monitor these developments, analyzing the impact on religious identity, social cohesion, and interfaith relations. Contemporary relevance is seen in the ongoing dialogue about spiritual authenticity, authority, and the boundaries of religious expression.

Future Directions in Scholarship and Practice

Ongoing discussions focus on refining the criteria for cult classification, improving public education, and fostering respectful engagement across religious divides. The field is marked by interdisciplinary collaboration, drawing insights from theology, anthropology, psychology, and law. As society grapples with complex questions about belief and belonging, the study of the kingdom of the cults remains a vital area of inquiry, shaping academic research and practical outreach.

Frequently Asked Questions about Kingdom of the Cults

Q: What does the term "kingdom of the cults" mean?

A: The term "kingdom of the cults" refers to a conceptual framework used in comparative religion and apologetics to categorize and analyze religious

movements that significantly diverge from mainstream Christian doctrine.

Q: Who first popularized the concept of the kingdom of the cults?

A: The concept was popularized by Walter Martin through his influential book "The Kingdom of the Cults," which systematically examined various religious groups and their theological differences from orthodox Christianity.

Q: What are some common characteristics of groups classified as cults?

A: Common characteristics include exclusive beliefs, charismatic leadership, isolation from mainstream society, strict control over members, unique interpretations of sacred texts, and claims of special revelation.

Q: Why is cult classification controversial?

A: Cult classification is controversial because it can lead to stigmatization, misunderstanding, and potential infringement on religious freedom, making it essential for scholars to apply criteria thoughtfully and respectfully.

Q: Which religious groups are often discussed within the kingdom of the cults?

A: Groups frequently discussed include Jehovah's Witnesses, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Christian Science, Scientology, and the Unification Church.

Q: How does apologetics interact with the kingdom of the cults?

A: Apologetics involves defending orthodox Christian beliefs by critically examining the doctrines and practices of groups considered cults, often using systematic analysis and key publications.

Q: What impact has the study of cults had on society?

A: The study of cults has influenced public perception, media representation, legal policies, and interfaith dialogue, shaping how society understands and responds to non-mainstream religious movements.

Q: Are all new religious movements considered cults?

A: No, not all new religious movements are considered cults; classification depends on doctrinal deviation, organizational structure, and social impact.

Q: How do scholars approach the ethical challenges of cult classification?

A: Scholars approach ethical challenges by emphasizing evidence-based analysis, respect for religious diversity, and consideration of human rights issues.

Q: What trends are shaping the future of the kingdom of the cults?

A: Trends include the emergence of new digital-based movements, interdisciplinary research, and a focus on nuanced, respectful engagement in the study and classification of religious groups.

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Kingdom of the Cults: Unpacking the Allure and Dangers of Charismatic Leadership

Introduction:

Have you ever wondered about the seemingly unshakeable grip certain leaders hold over their followers? The term "Kingdom of the Cults" isn't just a sensationalist phrase; it represents a complex reality where charismatic individuals, often wielding religious or ideological authority, exert profound influence over the lives of their adherents. This post delves into the fascinating and often disturbing world of cults, exploring the psychological mechanisms that drive their formation and the dangers they pose to individuals and society. We'll examine the characteristics of cult leaders, the tactics they employ, and the potential pathways to escape their influence. Get ready to explore the captivating, yet perilous, landscape of the Kingdom of the Cults.

H2: Understanding the Dynamics of Cults:

Cults, unlike mainstream religions or social groups, often display a unique set of characteristics. These characteristics, while not always present in every group labeled a cult, contribute to a pattern of manipulation and control.

H3: The Charismatic Leader:

At the heart of most cults lies a charismatic leader who commands unwavering loyalty. This individual often possesses exceptional oratory skills, a compelling vision, and a knack for manipulating emotions. Their personality is often larger than life, bordering on messianic, fostering an almost god-like reverence among followers. This charisma isn't simply charm; it's a carefully cultivated persona designed to inspire devotion and obedience.

H3: Isolation and Control:

Cults frequently employ tactics to isolate members from outside influences. This isolation might involve discouraging contact with family and friends, controlling access to information (including the internet and mainstream media), or physically relocating members to secluded communities. This control extends to many aspects of daily life, from diet and clothing to relationships and career choices.

H3: The Power of Belief and Cognitive Dissonance:

The beliefs within a cult often require a significant leap of faith, frequently clashing with established societal norms or scientific understanding. Members who experience cognitive dissonance—the discomfort of holding conflicting beliefs—are often pressured to reconcile their doubts by strengthening their commitment to the cult's ideology. This can lead to a vicious cycle of increasing dependence and unquestioning obedience.

H2: The Tactics of Manipulation:

Cults rarely operate overtly; instead, they utilize subtle and sophisticated methods to maintain control.

H3: Love Bombing and Manipulation:

New recruits are often subjected to "love bombing," a period of intense affection and attention designed to win their trust and commitment. This initial phase quickly gives way to manipulation, with subtle pressures to conform to the group's norms and relinquish individual autonomy.

H3: Fear and Guilt Inducement:

Fear and guilt are powerful tools employed to keep members in line. Leaders might paint a picture of an impending apocalypse or catastrophe, suggesting that only through complete devotion to the cult can members find salvation or protection. Guilt is often used to shame members who express doubt or attempt to leave.

H3: Thought Reform and Brainwashing:

While the term "brainwashing" is often misused, cults do employ techniques to reshape their members' thinking. These techniques can involve repetitive indoctrination, sleep deprivation, and emotional manipulation, leading to a gradual erosion of critical thinking and independent thought.

H2: Escaping the Kingdom of the Cults:

Leaving a cult can be a dangerous and challenging process. Members often face intense pressure from the group, including threats, ostracism, and even physical violence. However, there are resources available to help individuals navigate this difficult transition.

H3: Seeking External Support:

Support groups, therapists specializing in cult deprogramming, and family members can provide invaluable assistance during the escape and recovery process. Building a support network outside of the cult is crucial for maintaining mental health and regaining a sense of self.

H3: Rebuilding Identity and Independence:

After escaping a cult, individuals often need to rebuild their sense of self and their independence. This process can involve therapy, education, and the re-establishment of healthy relationships with family and friends. It's a journey that requires patience, understanding, and unwavering self-compassion.

Conclusion:

The "Kingdom of the Cults" represents a complex and disturbing phenomenon, illustrating the power of charismatic leadership and the vulnerability of individuals to manipulation. Understanding the tactics employed by cult leaders and the psychological mechanisms that draw people in is crucial for preventing future exploitation and supporting those who have escaped. By raising awareness and providing resources, we can help individuals break free from the grip of these destructive groups and rebuild their lives.

FAQs:

1. Are all charismatic leaders cult leaders? No, not all charismatic leaders are cult leaders. Many inspiring leaders motivate and influence positively without employing manipulative tactics. The key difference lies in the methods used to maintain control and the impact on followers' autonomy.
2. How can I identify a potentially dangerous group? Look for signs of isolation, unquestioning obedience to a single leader, manipulation, control over information, and an us-versus-them mentality.
3. What if a loved one is involved in a cult? Maintain open and non-judgmental communication. Seek professional guidance from therapists or support groups specializing in cult dynamics. Avoid confrontation; focus on building a supportive relationship.
4. Is deprogramming effective? The effectiveness of deprogramming is debated. While some find it helpful, others find it traumatic. A more holistic approach focusing on rebuilding independence and critical thinking is often preferred.
5. Where can I find help for someone leaving a cult? Numerous organizations and support groups specialize in assisting individuals leaving cults. A simple online search for "cult recovery resources" will provide a wealth of information and contact details.

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individual use. Book jacket.

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mechanics—the cult leaders and followers, and the world and culture that gave birth to both. Parcast's work in analyzing dozens of case studies has revealed patterns: distinct ways that cult leaders from different generations resemble one another. What links the ten notorious figures profiled in *Cults* are as disturbing as they are stunning—from Manson to Applewhite, Koresh to Raël, the stories woven here are both spellbinding and disturbing. *Cults* is more than just a compilation of grisly biographies, however. In these pages, Parcast's founder Max Cutler and national bestselling author Kevin Conley look closely at the lives of some of the most disreputable cult figures and tell the stories of their rise to power and fall from grace, sanity, and decency. Beyond that, it is a study of humanity, an unflinching look at what happens when the most vulnerable recesses of the mind are manipulated and how the things we hold most sacred can be twisted into the lowest form of malevolence.

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the entire Bible is found in knowing the differences among the eight kingdoms, but especially these two—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. When readers finish reading this book, they will assuredly know the difference.

kingdom of the cults: *The Challenge of the Cults and New Religions* Ron Rhodes, 2009-08-30
Cults and New Religions Aren't Hard to Find They're in your neighborhood . . . your workplace . . . your school . . . maybe even your family. Cults are flourishing across America. Chances are, you've encountered one, perhaps even know someone who is involved in a cult. Can you discuss knowledgeably the critical differences between Christianity and the teachings of Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Scientology, the New Age movement, Hindu-based cults, and other prominent groups and religious movements? In this essential resource, preeminent cult authority Ron Rhodes explains what cults are, why they are cause for concern, and why in the 21st century, as never before, their numbers and memberships are exploding nationally and worldwide. Drawing on his extensive experience as a cult researcher, Rhodes offers to-the-point, cutting-edge information on twelve major cults and new religions: Mormonism Jehovah's Witnesses Mind Sciences New Age Movement Church of Scientology Hindu-based Cults Unification Church Baha'i Faith Unitarian Universalism Oneness Pentecostalism Masonic Lodge Satanism Learning the distinctives of these groups will equip you to deal with any of the thousands of other less significant cults you may encounter. *The Challenge of the Cults and New Religion* includes Color photos Scripture Index Subject Index Glossary Bibliography And your resources don't end at the last page. You can supplement your knowledge whenever you choose by visiting the author's Web site at www.ronrhodes.org for free, thorough, up-to-the-minute information on each cult discussed in the book. If you're concerned for the temporal and eternal welfare of others, *The Challenge of the Cults* is a must. It will help you confront the deception of false Christs and lying doctrines with the clear, well-grounded truth of biblical Christianity.

kingdom of the cults: *The Supreme Gods of the Bosporan Kingdom* Yulia Ustinova, 2015-08-27
This is the first systematic study of the cults of the Bosporan Kingdom, which existed in South Russia in the first centuries AD. The research is based on a variety of sources: archaeological evidence and inscriptions, largely unknown to the non-Russian readers, as well as historical and literary texts. The religion of the Bosphorus is viewed in this monograph as a blend of Greek and indigenous Iranian traditions. Its first part is dedicated to the cult of Celestial Aphrodite. The second part examines the controversial cult of the Most High God and its alleged Jewish affinities. The book, illustrated with thirty figures, is an important contribution to the understanding of the religious life in Greek colonies, and the history of Eastern Mediterranean in Late Antiquity.

kingdom of the cults: Cults, Religion, and Violence David G. Bromley, J. Gordon Melton, 2002-05-13
This explores the question of when and why violence by and against new religious cults erupts and whether and how such dramatic conflicts can be foreseen, managed and averted. The authors, leading international experts on religious movements and violent behavior, focus on the four major episodes of cult violence during the last decade: the tragic conflagration that engulfed the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas; the deadly sarin gas attack by the Aum Shinrikyo in Tokyo; the murder-suicides by the Solar Temple in Switzerland and Canada; and the collective suicide by the members of Heaven's Gate. They explore the dynamics leading to these dramatic episodes in North America, Europe, and Asia, and offer insights into the general relationship between violence and religious cults in contemporary society. The authors conclude that these events usually involve some combination of internal and external dynamics through which a new religious movement and society become polarized.

kingdom of the cults: *God Is Not Great* Christopher Hitchens, 2008-11-19
Christopher Hitchens, described in the London Observer as "one of the most prolific, as well as brilliant, journalists of our time" takes on his biggest subject yet—the increasingly dangerous role of religion in the world. In the tradition of Bertrand Russell's *Why I Am Not a Christian* and Sam Harris's recent bestseller, *The End Of Faith*, Christopher Hitchens makes the ultimate case against religion. With a close and erudite reading of the major religious texts, he documents the ways in which religion is a

man-made wish, a cause of dangerous sexual repression, and a distortion of our origins in the cosmos. With eloquent clarity, Hitchens frames the argument for a more secular life based on science and reason, in which hell is replaced by the Hubble Telescope's awesome view of the universe, and Moses and the burning bush give way to the beauty and symmetry of the double helix.

kingdom of the cults: Under the Banner of Heaven Jon Krakauer, 2004-06-08 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • From the author of *Into the Wild* and *Into Thin Air*, this extraordinary work of investigative journalism takes readers inside America's isolated Mormon Fundamentalist communities. • Now an acclaimed FX limited series streaming on HULU. "Fantastic.... Right up there with *In Cold Blood* and *The Executioner's Song*." —San Francisco Chronicle Defying both civil authorities and the Mormon establishment in Salt Lake City, the renegade leaders of these Taliban-like theocracies are zealots who answer only to God; some 40,000 people still practice polygamy in these communities. At the core of Krakauer's book are brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a commandment from God to kill a blameless woman and her baby girl. Beginning with a meticulously researched account of this appalling double murder, Krakauer constructs a multi-layered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, polygamy, savage violence, and unyielding faith. Along the way he uncovers a shadowy offshoot of America's fastest growing religion, and raises provocative questions about the nature of religious belief.

kingdom of the cults: Terror, Love and Brainwashing Alexandra Stein, 2016-11-03 Written by a cult survivor and renowned expert on cults and totalitarianism, *Terror, Love and Brainwashing* draws on the author's 25 years of study and research to explain how almost anyone, given the right set of circumstances, can be radically manipulated to engage in otherwise incomprehensible and often dangerous acts. Illustrated with compelling stories from a range of cults and totalitarian systems, from religious to political to commercial, the book defines and analyses the common and identifiable traits that underlie almost all these groups. It focuses on how charismatic, authoritarian leaders control their followers' attachment relationships via manipulative social structures and ideologies so that, emotionally and cognitively isolated, they become unable to act in their own survival interests. Using the evolutionary theory of attachment to demonstrate the psychological impact of these environments, and incorporating the latest neuroscientific findings, Stein illustrates how the combined dynamic of terror and 'love' works to break down people's ability to think and behave rationally. From small local cults to global players like ISIS and North Korea, the impact of these movements is widespread and growing. This important book offers clarity and a unique perspective on the dynamics of these systems of control, and concludes with guidance to foster greater awareness and prevention. It will be essential reading for mental health professionals in the field, as well as policy makers, legal professionals, cult survivors, and their families, as well as anyone with an interest in these disturbing groups. Students of social and developmental psychology will also find it fascinating.

kingdom of the cults: Jehovah's Witnesses Walter Martin, 1968-07-01 Cult scholar Walter Martin traces the ancestry of Jehovah's Witnesses back to the fourth century Arians who believed that Jesus Christ was merely the first and greatest of God's creations. He presents the main teachings of the Witnesses and carefully compares them with Scripture.

kingdom of the cults: Belief and Cult Jacob L. Mackey, 2025-01-28 A groundbreaking reinterpretation that draws on cognitive theory to show that belief wasn't absent from—but rather was at the heart of—Roman religion *Belief and Cult* argues that belief isn't uniquely Christian but was central to ancient Roman religion. Drawing on cognitive theory, Jacob Mackey shows that despite having nothing to do with salvation or faith, belief underlay every aspect of Roman religious practices—emotions, individual and collective cult action, ritual norms, social reality, and social power. In doing so, he also offers a thorough argument for the importance of belief to other non-Christian religions. At the individual level, the book argues, belief played an indispensable role in the genesis of cult action and religious emotion. However, belief also had a collective dimension. The cognitive theory of Shared Intentionality shows how beliefs may be shared among individuals, accounting for the existence of written, unwritten, or even unspoken ritual norms. Shared beliefs

permitted the choreography of collective cult action and gave cult acts their social meanings. The book also elucidates the role of shared belief in creating and maintaining Roman social reality. Shared belief allowed the Romans to endow agents, actions, and artifacts with socio-religious status and power. In a deep sense, no man could count as an augur and no act of animal slaughter as a successful offering to the gods, unless Romans collectively shared appropriate beliefs about these things. Closely examining augury, prayer, the religious enculturation of children, and the Romans' own theories of cognition and cult, *Belief and Cult* promises to revolutionize the understanding of Roman religion by demonstrating that none of its features makes sense without Roman belief.

kingdom of the cults: *Encyclopedia of World Religions, Cults & the Occult*, 2006 The *Encyclopedia of World Religions, Cults and the Occult* analyzes sects, cults, the occult, non-Christian world religions, secret societies and atheistic beliefs and then highlights their dangers and compares them with the truth of Scripture. Religions and cults that claim to be Christian but function in a manner grossly contrary to Scripture are also exposed.

kingdom of the cults: *From the Cult to the Kingdom* Dubb Alexander, 2021-10-19 Your God given identity, purpose, and destiny are irrevocable. The adventure waiting for you in *The Kingdom* is the opportunity to discover these truths and actively align with them. Along the way, one should never underestimate the powerful role that the Kingdom principle of redemption will play in this process. The prophetic promise first uttered by Kim Clement that, Your place of pain shall become your place of reign, serves as a powerful theme that runs throughout every page of *From the Cult to The Kingdom*. Dubb Alexander's personal story is one of ultimate redemption and emphatically points to the hand of a good, kind, and loving heavenly Father working behind the scenes to take everything that the enemy meant for evil and masterfully working it for the good of an entire nation. Follow the compelling journey of a young man from the streets of Dallas as he navigates through the controlling abuse of a cult in Waco, TX, discovers the truths of *The Kingdom*, and ultimately steps into his destiny of bringing the strategies of Heaven to heads of state around the world.

kingdom of the cults: *Mormonism* Walter Martin, 1968 An analysis of this current heresy. Based upon primary sources.

kingdom of the cults: *Combatting Cult Mind Control* Steven Hassan, 1990 Describes the psychological techniques cults use to indoctrinate their members and discusses deprogramming.

kingdom of the cults: *Ancient Mystery Cults* Walter Burkert, 1989-10-15 The foremost historian of Greek religion provides the first comprehensive, comparative study of a little-known aspect of ancient religious beliefs and practices. Secret mystery cults flourished within the larger culture of the public religion of Greece and Rome for roughly a thousand years. This book is neither a history nor a survey but a comparative phenomenology, concentrating on five major cults. In defining the mysteries and describing their rituals, membership, organization, and dissemination, Walter Burkert displays the remarkable erudition we have come to expect of him; he also shows great sensitivity and sympathy in interpreting the experiences and motivations of the devotees.

kingdom of the cults: *Cults Inside Out* Rick Alan Ross, 2014 A look at the world of cults and information about the intervention process.

kingdom of the cults: *Losing Reality* Robert Jay Lifton, 2019-10-15 A definitive account of the psychology of zealotry, from a National Book Award winner and a leading authority on the nature of cults, political absolutism, and mind control In this unique and timely volume Robert Jay Lifton, the National Book Award-winning psychiatrist, historian, and public intellectual proposes a radical idea: that the psychological relationship between extremist political movements and fanatical religious cults may be much closer than anyone thought. Exploring the most extreme manifestations of human zealotry, Lifton highlights an array of leaders—from Mao to Hitler to the Japanese apocalyptic cult leader Shōkō Asahara to Donald Trump—who have sought the control of human minds and the ownership of reality. Lifton has spent decades exploring psychological extremism. His pioneering concept of the Eight Deadly Sins of ideological totalism—originally devised to identify brainwashing (or thought reform) in political movements—has been widely quoted in writings about cults, and embraced by members and former members of religious cults seeking to understand their

experiences. In *Losing Reality* Lifton makes clear that the apocalyptic impulse—that of destroying the world in order to remake it in purified form—is not limited to religious groups but is prominent in extremist political movements such as Nazism and Chinese Communism, and also in groups surrounding Donald Trump. Lifton applies his concept of malignant normality to Trump's efforts to render his destructive falsehoods a routine part of American life. But Lifton sees the human species as capable of regaining reality by means of our protean psychological capacities and our ethical and political commitments as witnessing professionals. Lifton weaves together some of his finest work with extensive new commentary to provide vital understanding of our struggle with mental predators. *Losing Reality* is a book not only of stunning scholarship, but also of huge relevance for these troubled times.

kingdom of the cults: *The Cult Film Reader* Mathijs, Ernest, Mendik, Xavier, 2007-12-01 An invaluable collection for anyone researching or teaching cult cinema ... The Cult Film Reader is an authoritative text that should be of value to any student or researcher interested in challenging and transgressive cinema that pushes the boundaries of conventional cinema and film studies. Science Fiction Film and Television A really impressive and comprehensive collection of the key writings in the field. The editors have done a terrific job in drawing together the various traditions and providing a clear sense of this rich and rewarding scholarly terrain. This collection is as wild and diverse as the films that it covers. Fascinating. Mark Jancovich, Professor of Film and Television Studies, University of East Anglia, UK It's about time the lunatic fans and loyal theorists of cult movies were treated to a book they can call their own. The effort and knowledge contained in The Cult Film Reader will satisfy even the most ravenous zombie's desire for detail and insight. This book will gnaw, scratch and infect you just like the cult films themselves. Brett Sullivan, Director of Ginger Snaps Unleashed and The Chair The Cult Film Reader is a great film text book and a fun read. John Landis, Director of The Blues Brothers, An American Werewolf in London and Michael Jackson's Thriller Excellent overview of the subject, and a comprehensive collection of significant scholarship in the field of cult film. Very impressive and long overdue. Steven Rawle, York St John University, UK Whether defined by horror, kung-fu, sci-fi, sexploitation, kitsch musical or 'weird world cinema', cult movies and their global followings are emerging as a distinct subject of film and media theory, dedicated to dissecting the world's unruliest images. This book is the world's first reader on cult film. It brings together key works in the field on the structure, form, status, and reception of cult cinema traditions. Including work from key established scholars in the field such as Umberto Eco, Janet Staiger, Jeffrey Sconce, Henry Jenkins, and Barry Keith Grant, as well as new perspectives on the gradually developing canon of cult cinema, the book not only presents an overview of ways in which cult cinema can be approached, it also re-assesses the methods used to study the cult text and its audiences. With editors' introductions to the volume and to each section, the book is divided into four clear thematic areas of study - The Conceptions of Cult; Cult Case Studies; National and International Cults; and Cult Consumption - to provide an accessible overview of the topic. It also contains an extensive bibliography for further related readings. Written in a lively and accessible style, The Cult Film Reader dissects some of the biggest trends, icons, auteurs and periods of global cult film production. Films discussed include Casablanca, The Rocky Horror Picture Show, Eraserhead, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Showgirls and Ginger Snaps. Essays by: Jinsoo An; Jane Arthurs; Bruce Austin; Martin Barker; Walter Benjamin; Harry Benshoff; Pierre Bourdieu; Noel Carroll; Steve Chibnall; Umberto Eco; Nezih Erdogan; Welch Everman; John Fiske; Barry Keith Grant ; Joan Hawkins; Gary Hentzi; Matt Hills; Ramaswami Harindranath; J.Hoberman; Leon Hunt; I.Q. Hunter; Mark Jancovich; Henry Jenkins; Anne Jerslev; Siegfried Kracauer; Gina Marchetti; Tom Mes; Gary Needham; Sheila J. Nayar; Annalee Newitz; Lawrence O'Toole; Harry Allan Potamkin; Jonathan Rosenbaum; Andrew Ross; David Sanjek; Eric Schaefer; Steven Jay Schneider; Jeffrey Sconce; Janet Staiger; J.P. Telotte; Parker Tyler; Jean Vigo; Harmony Wu

kingdom of the cults: *The Kingdom of the Cults* Walter Martin, 1992-04-01 Describes the history and teachings of cults, sects, and Eastern religions in the United States, and compares each one's beliefs with those of the Christian Church

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