FATHERS, MOTHERS, MEMBERS, AND OUTSIDERS: ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL
POWER AND AUTHORITY RELATIONS IN THE PEOPLES TEMPLE AND THE
CHURCH UNIVERSAL AND TRIUMPHANT

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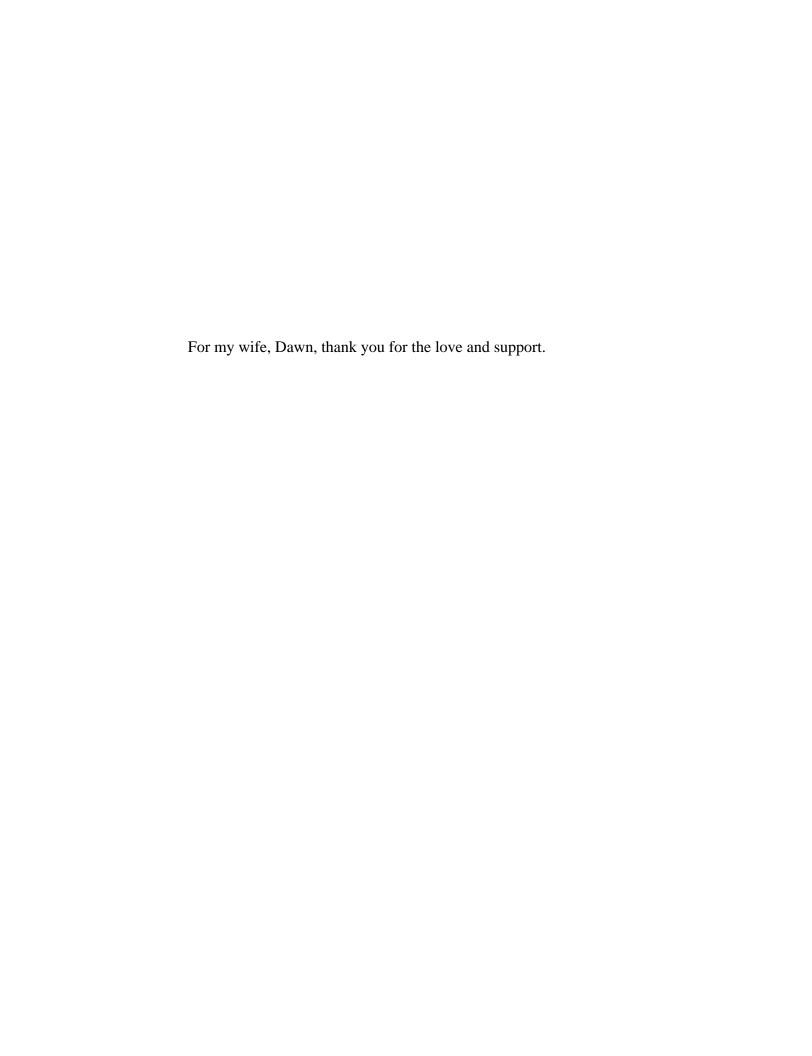Master of Arts

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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

FATHERS, MOTHERS, MEMBERS, AND OUTSIDERS: ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL POWER AND AUTHORITY RELATIONS IN THE PEOPLES TEMPLE AND THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL AND TRIUMPHANT

Presented by Jacob Lee Jones

A candidate for the degree of Master of Arts

And hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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For my wife, Dawn, thank you for the love and support.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The members of the Peoples Temple, a new religious movement that began in Indianapolis, Indiana in the mid 1950s, created Jonestown, an agricultural commune in Guyana. On November 18th, 1978, over 900 of the residents committed suicide. They gathered in the pavilion at the center of town and debated the community's options after some of their members attacked and murdered a delegation of visitors earlier that day. The people of Jonestown called the plan for their mass suicide-murder "white night."

In Paradise Valley, Montana, the members of Church Universal and Triumphant, another new religious movement that began in the Washington D.C. area in the late 1950s, pooled their resources to create bomb shelters to survive a predicted nuclear attack from the Soviet Union. The Messenger, who is the spiritual and social leader of the movement, received revelations from the Ascended Masters that a nuclear attack was going to occur on March 15 1990. On the predicted date the members of the Church Universal and Triumphant entered their shelters expecting a dramatic change in the world above, but the attack did not occur and the members had to deal with the ramifications of the Messenger's failed prediction. In this analysis, I refer to the night of March 15, 1990 as "shelter night" and unlike "white night," which was christened by the Peoples Temple members, "shelter night" is a label applied from outside of the movement. I chose the term "shelter night" to draw out the parallels between these movements and their events, which would facilitate easier comparison of aforementioned events.

When I began exploring "white night" and "shelter night" I was very interested in the power and authority relationships of the members during these events. My desire to examine the social power and authority interactions was inspired by the fact that there are many common assumptions about people who are members of new religious movements that subtly, or sometimes not so subtly, strip away the human element of those involved. These common assumptons often deny the autonomy of individuals. This simplistic categorization of the people in these movements denies them their agency, which can be a prominent element of seeing them as people. By seeing the dialectical nature of social power and authority within movements like the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant one can gain a better understanding of these movements and the people within them. Because this examination sees social power and authority as a dynamic and dialectical concept it necessitates the view that all parties engaged are complicit, at least in some manner, in social power and authority relationships and therefore ensures some element of agency for all of the people within these parties. The perspective of social power and authority as a relationship makes the consideration of the members as a community very easy because they are already being seen in relational terms.

The focus of this analysis concerns ideas of social power and authority in the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant. The common perception of power and authority in these movements often shows the leaders in absolute control and the members as automatons doing the leaders' bidding. By using a dialectical understanding of social power and authority this analysis will examine the relationships and interactions of the members of these movements in ways that illustrate how all

parties involved are invested in power and authority. This examination is not concerned

with the truth and/or veracity of the beliefs systems of the members in these movements.

Rather the goal of this analysis, stated very generally, is to examine the social power and

authority relationships of the members of the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal

and Triumphant.

The Peoples Temple was a new religious movement that was associated with

Pentecostalism and emphasized communal living, racial integration and socialism. Jim

Jones was a co-founder of this movement, which started in Indianapolis, IN during the

mid 1950s. The goals the movement during their time in Indianapolis, especially racial

integration, were met with resistance from multiple sources in and around Indianapolis.

During the late 1960's the Peoples Temple moved to Redwood, California, a small rural

town in northern California, in search of a more accepting environment for their social

and religious values.

While in California the movement experienced tremendous growth that resulted in

the establishment of additional churches in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas.

Also during this time, the Peoples Temple leased some land from the country of Guyana,

and built an isolated community there called Jonestown. Starting in the early 1970's and

on, the Peoples Temple came under pressures from multiple sources, the media, relatives

of members, and also U.S. Representative Leo Ryan. Because of these pressures, Jones

and most of the other members of the Peoples Temple moved to Jonestown to escape the

sources of these pressures. In mid-November 1978 Congressman Ryan, some people

from media, and some relatives of members came to Jonestown to investigate rumors of

mistreatment of members, e.g. being held against their will, allegations of abuse; verbal, physical, and sexual. On November 18th 1978, the last day of Ryan's visit events occurred that sparked his murder and also the murders of some of his delegation at an airstrip near Jonestown by armed members from Jonestown. After the attack at the airfield the members of Jonestown gathered in the town pavilion and discussed their options for dealing with the eventual repercussions of this attack. A vast majority of them pushed for a "revolutionary suicide," which culminated in "white night," the mass suicide-murder of most of the population of Jonestown.

The second movement examined in this analysis is the Church Universal and Triumphant (CUT), which is another new religious movement that started during the mid-twentieth century in America. In the late 1950s in the Washington D.C. area Mark Prophet started the Summit Lighthouse, which was the precursor to CUT. After Mark Prophet died from a stroke in 1973, his wife, Elizabeth Clare Prophet took over leadership of the movement by becoming the sole Messenger, a leadership position she had shared with her husband. Elizabeth then changed the movement's name to the Church Universal and Triumphant and restructured aspects of its membership. The members of CUT strove to create a spiritual community that could support their spiritual pursuits. To accomplish this goal they relocated a number of members to Montana to create a community that was more spiritually supportive and one that was removed from the perceived negative elements of the American society. . This community was named the Royal Teton Ranch, and in 1986 the members officially moved their headquarters to there, where it is still located today.

Beginning shortly before, continuing through and after their relocation to Montana, CUT went through a period of isolationism and survivalism. The movement became an isolated community that was deliberately separated from American society because it was seen as a degenerative influence upon the spirituals goals of the members. During this time, Elizabeth Prophet received revelations that spoke of an increased period of negative karma and these revelations culminated in the prediction of a nuclear attack upon the United States by the Soviet Union. The attack was predicted to occur on March 15, 1990. In order to survive this attack, the members of CUT spent tremendous amounts of time, effort, and money for the creation of bomb shelters. On March 16, 1990 the members of CUT emerged from their shelters with the realization that Prophet's predictions did not come true. The failure of the Messenger's predictions created potential problems with the members, because it eroded their trust in Prophet and therefore eroded her authority.

There are a number of similarities between these movements and the events of "white night" and "shelter night." These similarities can be compared to facilitate an analysis of the social power and authority interactions of the members in each group. The similarities between these movements that this analysis focused upon were the use of kinship terms, communal identity, external pressures upon both the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant. To accomplish the goals of this analysis more knowledge and understanding of power and authority was needed. Through the recommendations of my advisors I looked to Michel Foucault, Bruce Lincoln, and Pierre Bourdieu to help further develop my understandings of power, authority and social interactions between individuals and groups. Michel Foucault and his theories

concerning power and the dialectical relations between individuals and groups highly influenced this analysis, as did Bruce Lincoln's writings on authority and its performative elements and Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical constructions of social fields and habitus. Through the ideas and writings of these theorists it became apparent that power and authority could only be seen through the interactions of the members. Taking this lesson to heart I realized that more context about the members' relationships to each other and outsiders was necessary and through discussions with my advisor it became apparent that this context could be provided through an examination of the events of "white night" and "shelter night." By using these events as focal points I could examine the relationships and interactions of the members and discover concepts and ideas that were significant to each movement and helped to provide context for their relationships and interactions. This context, which was part of the worldview of the members in these movements, helped bring about greater understanding of the members' social power and authority interactions and relationships.

In some ways I started my exploration of these movements from a desire to better understand the events of "white night" and "shelter night" and it seems ironic that these events became tools to help me better understand social power and authority interactions in the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant. One of my goals when examining the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant was to approach the relationships and interactions of the members in these movements in manner that did not presuppose a specific normative standard. Rather I sought to identify key beliefs and concepts that were significant to each movement. Through an examination of the events of "white night" and "shelter night" significant ideas and

beliefs for the members were revealed, like the use of kinship terms, membership identity, and responses to external threats. These ideas and beliefs provided the context through which this analysis examined the power and authority interactions of the members with each other and with those outside of the movement. By using the events of "white night" and "shelter night" this analysis was able to discover significant constructs that were inherent to the movements themselves and not part of an exterior normative standard.

This analysis explores the social power and authority interactions within these movements through concepts that are inherent to the movements themselves and by examining these movements in this manner one could gain a better understanding of the relationships of the members with each other and those outside of the movement. From this perspective of increased understanding one is in a better position to engage these movements in a respectful manner and through methods that are less likely to threaten the members. Essentially, this project is examining the members of these movements, their ideas, beliefs, and values in an attempt to better understand social power and authority within the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant.

Methodology

Foucault holds a prominent place in my theory and methodology. His writings have greatly influenced the questions I ask about power and authority and therefore his theoretical presence can be felt throughout my analysis. His writings on power help to dispel simplistic and limiting views of it.

> Power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who 'do not have it'; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them. This means that these relations go right down into the depth of society, that they are not localized in the relations between the state and its citizens or on the frontier between classes and that they do not merely reproduce, at the level of individuals, bodies, gestures and behaviour, the general form of the law or government; that, although there is continuity (they are indeed articulated on this form through a whole series of complex mechanisms), there is neither analogy nor homology, but a specificity of mechanisms and modality.[1]

Foucault claimed that power is not simply something exerted by one party over another; it is a complex interaction between parties. By realizing that power is a complex entity, one can gain a greater understanding of how power exists in a relationship. One of the goals of this analysis is to use a more nuanced understanding of power and authority to examine the members' relationships within these movements, and Foucault's writings go a long way in helping to expand one's understanding of power and relationships.

Another important theme in Foucault's writings is the relationship between power and knowledge. Foucault discusses this relationship early on in <u>Discipline and Punish</u> where he states that we should abandon the traditional belief that power gets in the way of knowledge.

> We should admit rather that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.[2]

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[1] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books 1995) 27
[2] Ibid.

When power and knowledge come into play there must be three things: there must be the subject who knows, the object that is known, and *how* the object is being known by the subject.[3] The role of knowledge is obvious in this formula, but the role of power is a little more obscure; power resides in how the object is known by the subject. When an individual has knowledge of something then this individual is labeling the thing, and the act of labeling is a power interaction because the label carries the knower's expectations and responsibilities. For example, when the members of CUT refer to Elizabeth Prophet as Messenger, both parties are in a power knowledge relationship. The members are labeling and defining, at least in part, Prophet as the Messenger, and this is an act of power because the members are expecting Prophet to fulfill all of the responsibilities and expectations of Messenger.[4] This relationship can, and is, reversed, when Prophet refers to the members of CUT as her congregation; the members are expected to fulfill the responsibilities and obligations of the congregation. Therefore one must be cognizant of his or her use of knowledge and how this knowledge relates to and defines the object that this knowledge is referencing.

Foucault states that neither power nor knowledge can exist outside of action, where action in this sense is shorthand for *how* something is known and therefore affected by power.

> The exercise of power is not simply a relationship between 'partners,' individual or collective; it is a way in which some act on others. Which is to say, of course, that there is no such entity as power, with or without a capital letter; global, massive, or diffused; concentrated or distributed. Power exists only as exercised

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[3] Ibid. 28.
[4] The members of the Peoples Temple referring to Jim Jones as Father could be an equally effective example and is discussed in greater detail in the Peoples Temple chapter.

by some on others, only when it is put into action, even though, of course, it is inscribed in a field of sparse available possibilities underpinned by permanent structures.[5]

Therefore one cannot examine power in isolation because power does not exist by itself due to its relational nature. So when one examines power, it must be done through the understanding of one thing acting upon something else. Take the example provided above, without the members labeling, and therefore knowing, Prophet as Messenger there could not be any power knowledge interactions. To examine the power and authority relationships of members in these movements this analysis will examine the social power and authority of the members' relationships through these movements' uses of kinship terms, communal living, and external pressures and threats.[6]

Another key element of Foucault's theories found throughout his writings is his examination of how human beings are turned into subjects.[7] Building from the previous discussions of the power knowledge relationship, Foucault examines how human beings are turned into subjects through power knowledge relations, which subjugate the subject through the act of knowing.[8] This theme is powerfully demonstrated by Foucault in Discipline and Punish.

> Generally speaking, all the authorities exercising individual control function according to a double mode; that of binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal); and that of coercive assignment, of differential distribution (who he is; where he must be; how he is to be characterized; how he is to be recognized; how a constant surveillance is to be exercised over him in an individual way, etc.). … All mechanisms of power

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[5] James D Faubion. ed. 2000. *Michel Foucault Power.* Translated by Robert Hurley and others. New York: New Press. 340.
[6] These are just a few of the possible actions or concepts that one could use to examine the social power and authority interactions of these members.
[7] Faubion 326.
[8] Ibid., 331.

which, even today, are disposed around the abnormal individual, to brand him and to alter him are composed of those two forms from which they distantly derive.[9]

It is easy to see the power relations in the act of labeling someone as mad, sick, criminal, and/or mother. As discussed previously, power and knowledge operate through the action of labeling. First a division is created and a normative claim implied through this division. For example compare mad/sane. Sane is the normative label and as such anything without this label is outside of the normative claim and hence mad; therefore anything outside of this norm is somehow deficient or wrong.

Once the labels have been applied, those in authority work towards further isolating and categorizing the individual. Isolation occurs through gathering knowledge about the individual and establishing how the individual relates to the normative standard supporting authority "(who he is; where he must be; how he is to be characterized…)." Once the individual's relationship to the normative standard is categorized then those in authority work to fit the individual into the normative standard in a way that best supports it. An example of this would be aptitude tests for kids. Once the kids have taken the test then those in charge of the school system decide where students would best fit within the school system. For example, the kids that have high scores will usually be placed in honors classes while the kids that score poorly will be place in remedial classes. Once within these classes the students are further classified and labeled, even down to the individual level.[10] Once the individual has been labeled then he or she has entered into a

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[9] Foucault, 199-200.

[10] One can claim that the students are labeled down to the individual label because the teachers know them by name and/or student number and while a name is not a label created by the schools it is one applied by

continuing discourse with those in authority. Essentially, the individual is confronted

with the label, which is how those in authority view her or him, and from there the

individual reacts to those applying the label. The individual's responses lie within a

continuum of responses, which has acceptance on one pole and rejection on the other.

This examination will use a Foucauldian conception of power to analyze the

interactions of the members of the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and

Triumphant. Both movements have several significant power interaction concepts in

common and these concepts can provide greater analytical depth by using the events of

"white night" and "shelter night" as context for these concepts. These concepts are

significant because of their relationship to the events of "white night" and "shelter night."

When reading about these events the concepts of kinship terms, communal desires, and

responses to external pressures repeatedly occur and used in ways that help reveal how

the members of these movements viewed these events, which relate to the power and

authority interactions of these members.

Bruce Lincoln's <u>Authority: Construction and Corruption</u> builds upon the idea of

authority existing as a discourse between those who are in positions of authority and

those who are not. The similarities between Lincoln's thoughts on authority and

Foucault's thoughts about power and authority are not by chance; Lincoln credits

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them, John Doe is a good student, intelligent and asks good questions but Jim Doe does not even try, all he
does is waste time, ours and his.

Foucault, and others, as being influential in his treatment of authority. Therefore, similar to Foucault, Lincoln's writings stress the dialectical nature of authority. [11]

> It [authority] is best understood in relational terms as the effect of a posited, perceived, or institutionally ascribed asymmetry between speaker and audience that permits certain speakers to command not just the attention but the confidence, respect, and trust of their audience, or—an important proviso—to make audiences act *as if* this were so. [12]

Similar to how Foucault described power, Lincoln sees authority not as a separate entity but as an interaction that can only exist through a relationship between two or more parties. Authority is an "asymmetrical" interaction where one party is given a privileged position by other parties or agents. This asymmetrical aspect does not mean that those without authority are powerless in this relationship because they must grant authority to the one holding it. Those with authority can only use it with those who have given it to them, whether explicitly or implicitly and thus authority has a dialectical nature. One can see that the acceptance of authority relies upon those who are not in a position of authority, or as Lincoln refers to them, the audience. [13] "Authority depends on nothing so much as the trust of the audience, or the audience's strategic willingness to act as if it had such trust." [14] Therefore, the dialectical aspect of authority rests upon the audience's trust of the speaker and speaker's reliance on the audience's willingness to trust the speaker.

Lincoln focuses on the performative elements of authority, and while his examples are drawn from literary works like Homer's <u>Iliad</u> and more contemporary

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[11] Lincoln states that his conception of authority draws from others' research, for example Pierre Bourdieu, Mikhail Bakhtin, Maurice Bloch just to name a few, see Lincoln p2 for more complete list.

[12] Bruce Lincoln. 1994. *Authority: Construction and Corrosion.* Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. 4.

[13] Lincoln uses this term because he is focusing upon public displays of authority, such as speeches, where he describes the authority interactions of the speaker and the audience.

[14] Lincoln, 8.

examples like United States Presidential speeches they all see authority as a social drama where those exercising it are playing to the audience and therefore must be cognizant of how receptive the audience is to their performances. Rather than focusing on written text this analysis focuses on the social drama of the members' relationships to each other and those outside of their movement and how those with authority must live up to specific expectations if they wish to maintain the trust of their audience.

In viewing authority as a social drama one must realize that it is more than just speaking; one must "observe that the exercise of authority not only involves but often depends upon the use of nonverbal instruments and media: the whole theatrical array of gestures, demeanors, costumes, props, and stage devices through which one may impress or bamboozle an audience."[15] An obvious occasion for utilizing this approach to authority is during the sermons and public speaking events of these movements, but this methodology can be applied to a greater range of experiences than just public speaking and sermons. Essentially any interaction where authority exists can be viewed with this lens. Using Lincoln's methodology for examining authority I will explore in detail two events: the members of the Peoples Temple's discussion of their options after the murder of Ryan and the others at the airfield and the efforts of Prophet to gain new members when several thousand left the movement after the failed prediction of the nuclear attack. Both of these events provide great examples of how authority is a dialectical interaction. In chapter 2, this analysis explores how the roles of two prominent speakers, Jim Jones and Christine Miller, during the Peoples Temple members' discussion of their options for responding to the murders and attacks at the airfield. Both Jones and Miller use different

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[15] Ibid., 5.

tactics to engage the other members and secure their trust and acceptance. As the discussion progresses one can see Miller slowly lose the trust and acceptance of the audience and therefore she slowly loses authority in that interaction. In chapter 3, Elizabeth Clare Prophet engages potential members from a common ground found between the beliefs and values of CUT members and those of potential members, with what some may refer to as new age beliefs and values. By starting from this common ground Prophet is starting from a position that can more easily secure the trust and acceptance of these potential members and therefore make it more likely that they will trust and accept her. Both of these examples demonstrate how Lincoln's tools can be a priceless addition in the analysis of social authority.

When examining the social power and authority interactions within new religious movements there may be some questions about how to examine the members' claims to divine power and authority. These claims, whether they are Jim Jones's claims that he was god, Elizabeth Clare Prophet's claims of revelations given to her by ascended cosmic beings, or essentially any member's appeal to higher authority for justification, are just that, appeals to a higher authority and should be outside of the academic realm of judgment. An entry point in dealing with claims to divine authority is to see that this claim has a social element to it. Lincoln addresses this question in his book Authority: Construction and Corruption:

> I would begin by observing that religious claims are the means by which certain objects, places, speakers, and speech-acts are invested with an authority, the source of which lies *outside the human*. That is, these claims create the appearance that their authorization comes from a realm beyond history, society, and politics, beyond the terrain in which interested and situated actors struggle over scarce resources. Among these resources figures prominently one that is

both a prize and a weapon in such struggles: the capacity to speak a consequential speech and to gain a respectful hearing.[16]

Even if someone is operating with a claim to divine authority they must still engage in social relationships which have a component of social authority and power. It is this social component that this analysis will examine in the power and authority interactions within these movements. Working from this perspective does not mean that the analysis will neglect to examine how those in authority have claimed divine authority as means of justification for their social power and authority roles, but it does eliminate questions concerning the truth and validity of these movements' beliefs and values from the analysis of their social power and authority interactions.

Pierre Bourdieu and his concept of social fields, as presented in his works The Logic of Practice and Practical Reason, provided another facet to my analysis. By utilizing Bourdieu's theories one can add clarity to an analysis of the social structure of groups and their interactions with people outside of the group. Throughout these works of Bourdieu's the concept of field plays a prominent role. Bourdieu defines fields as consisting of rituals or practices that have a particular logic and rationality to them. Belief in a field is an inherent element of participating in it.[17] In The Logic of Practice Bourdieu claims that one is either born into a field or is slowly initiated into it.

To know is to be born with, and the long dialectical process, often described as 'vocation', through which the various fields provide themselves with agents

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[16] Ibid., 112.
[17]Pierre Bourdieu. 1990. *The Logic of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. 66-8. There are varying degrees of belief in a field that lie along a continuum with complete and total belief at one end and a belief in the field so long as the individual can prosper from this belief.

equipped with the *habitus*[18] needed to make them work, is to the learning of a game very much as the acquisition of the mother tongue is to the learning of a foreign language.[19]

Therefore there are two methods of inclusion, with respect to fields: being born into one, or "by a slow process of co-option and initiation which is equivalent to a second birth."[20] There exists a social space between fields that is defined by each field's inherent difference from each other.[21]

> To each class of positions there corresponds a class of habitus (or tastes) produced by the social conditioning associated with the corresponding condition and through the mediation of the habitus and its generative capability, a systematic set of goods and properties, which are united by an affinity of style.[22]

Therefore, within each field is a set of tastes, which also includes beliefs and values, which Bourdieu refers to them as "the habitus." The individuals within each field are conditioned to appreciate and interpret his or her field's habitus as the proper or correct set of tastes, beliefs, and values. The people within a particular field see the habitus of that field as the only viable tastes, beliefs, and values, to the exclusion of all others. A field is sustained through acts of conditioning meant to inculcate the people within it to the field's habitus. This act of conditioning is not obvious but operates inconspicuously.

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[18] "Habitus are generative principles of distinct and distinctive practices … habitus are also classificatory schemes, principles of classification, and principles of vision, and division, different tastes." (Bourdieu, 1998, p8). Also Bourdieu's conceptualization of the term *habitus* invokes images of cycles of mutually created definitions where practices inform the *habitus* and the *habitus* informs practices, see Bourdieu, 1990, 52-54.

[19] Ibid., 67.

[20] Ibid., 68.

[21] Pierre Bourdieu. 1998. *Practical Reason.* Translated by Gisele Sapiro, Randal Johnson, Richard Nice and Loic Wacquant. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. 6.

[22] Ibid., 7-8.

The people within the field usually do not question the habitus of their field and as a result its habitus are seen as natural preferences or the logical choice for all human beings. An example may help to illustrate this point more clearly. The Church Universal and Triumphant believes that humanity is threatened by extraterrestrial beings, whose goals are to prevent the spiritual development of human beings. An individual born into CUT will most likely never question the belief in extraterrestrial beings because it is seen as the logical and natural belief, or in stronger language as the only possible belief, and from this field's perspective those who do not believe in these being are seen as living outside of the logical and natural belief system of the CUT field[23], and therefore the habitus of those outside of CUT seems illogical to those inside of CUT. Essentially, the habitus of the field is seen, by those in the field, as the only possible tastes, beliefs, and values for all human beings and not just that of those people within that particular field.

The conditioning of people within fields to see their habitus as the only correct habitus raises the question of interactions between fields. How do two individuals from different social backgrounds, or fields, interact with each other? Bourdieu claims that the greater the difference between fields the less contact can occur between individuals from these fields, and when contact does occur it is usually tense and often the individuals are at odds with one another because of their different habituses.[24] Therefore the greater the similarities are between fields the greater the potential for contact and vice versa.

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[23] Those living in the CUT field could take this even further because of their inculcations into the CUT habitus it becomes synonymous with the habitus of all human beings and any who do not have these habitus are somehow not human beings.
[24] Ibid., 10.

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The more immersed one is in a field the more natural and logical is its habitus. "For example, one of the privileges associated with the fact of being born in a game is that one can avoid cynicism since one has a feel for the game…."[25] Bourdieu uses the example of tennis in his book <u>The Logic of Practice</u> so that when one is playing tennis he or she is not usually focused on the validity of the rules, but accepts them as given or as the natural way of playing tennis and eventually, one has played the game long enough, the rules move into the background and that person is no longer aware of how to play tennis, but he or she just plays it.[26] Therefore, when one is born into the game or field, how to play the game or how to interact within the field is self-evident to the point of being unconscious interactions. There are some fields that are seen as exclusive and when within one of these the individuals usually reject fields that are competing with the habitus of the first field. An example of this may be found in the Peoples Temple, where those outside of their movement, or field, were seen as being participants in the oppressive and degrading capitalistic and racist society of the United States. The members of the Peoples Temple believed that they understood the negative aspects of American society and because of this understanding they were able to act in way that did not support the negative elements of American society. Therefore, if an individual belongs to a field that necessitates non-involvement in another field then the actions of all the people from the other field can be seen as irrational and this can help to reinforce the identity of those in the field. This was the case with the Peoples Temple, because they were able to define themselves against the image of the capitalistic and racist society of the United States.

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[25] Ibid., 79.
[26] Bourdieu, 1992 66-7.

I will be examining social power and authority interactions of the people within these movements as illustrated through the use of specific concepts, e.g. the use of kinship terms, desire for communal living, and need for protection and preservation. By analyzing social power and authority interactions I will be gaining a greater understanding of the relationships that existed between the people of these movements.

My analysis will use the events of "white night" and "shelter night" as focal points through which to examine specific concepts and practices of these movements in order to better understand the social power and authority interactions, and also the relationship between the members, in each of these movements. By examining key concepts and ideas in these movements, i.e. kinship terms, socialism, communal living, the desire to achieve spiritual goals, and how the members of these movements reacted to external pressures and threats, this analysis is able to explore the relationships of the members of these movements and their social power and authority interactions through the focal lenses of "white night" and "shelter night."

Chapter 2: The Peoples Temple & White Night

The Peoples Temple was a new religious movement whose origins can be traced back to Indianapolis, Indiana in the mid-1950s. In 1955, James Warren Jones, his wife Marceline Jones and others founded the Wings of Deliverance. This movement's "articles of incorporation affirmed basic Pentecostal and Holiness doctrine, with a creed of temperance, abstinence from narcotics and alcohol, modesty, the Christian virtues, and

that mainstay of the frugal Jones, 'resisting the temptations of worldly gains and material goods.'"[27] The Wings of Deliverance quickly outgrew their first building and sought a larger venue to accommodate their growing membership. Jones and the others rented a larger building and once the movement had relocated to this new building they changed their name from the Wings of Deliverance to the Peoples Temple Full Gospel Church, which emphasized the movement's social justice orientation. [28]

The members of the Peoples Temple were focused on social issues, like racism, sexism, ageism, etc., and because of these goals the members of the Peoples Temple were at odds with many in the Indianapolis area. Integration was an especially dividing issue. During the late 1950s and early 1960s Jim Jones and the other members of the Peoples Temple faced hardship and persecution for their work on these social issues, which eventually led them to relocate their movement to California to find a more accepting environment. In the summer of 1965, the movement relocated to Redwood Valley, California with approximately 75 members, including Jones and his family.[29] After their relocation the members of the Peoples Temple experienced a time of slow congregational growth until the late 1960s when the movement became more popular. Due to this popularity the Peoples Temple began to expand into the more populated urban areas of California, like Los Angeles and San Francisco, and built additional churches in these areas. Throughout their time in California, the members of the Peoples Temple continued their work on social issues.

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[27]John R Hall. 2004. *Gone from the Promised Land: Jonestown in American Cultural History.* 2nd Edition. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers. 26.
[28]Mary McCormick Maaga. 1998. *Hearing the Voices of Jonestown.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 2.
[29] Ibid.

The mid 1970s was also marked by the creation of an agricultural commune in Guyana. The settlement in Guyana held a significant place within the worldview of the members because it represented a step towards a communal society, which would allow them to enact their social goals. Another way that the settlement was significant to the members of the Peoples Temple was how it created an opportunity to remove themselves from the perceived negative elements of the capitalistic and oppressive society of the United States. In 1974 the Peoples Temple began a slow migration to the commune in Guyana, which would eventually become Jonestown; the settlement began with a small group of members who began the process of clearing the land for the development.[30] From 1974 until November 1978 a large number of members migrated to Jonestown. The vast majority, over 900 people, migrated to the settlement in late 1977.[31] The last round of migration to Guyana was prompted by the negative pressures and threats that the Peoples Temple received from the press, government, and anti-cult groups.

In mid-November 1978 U.S. Representative from California, Leo Ryan, media representatives, and members of an anti-cult group named the Concerned Relatives, which was made up of former members of the Peoples Temple and relatives of current members, visited Jonestown to investigate rumors of mistreatment of members. The group from the Concerned Relatives alleged that some members were being held against their will and that they were the victims of verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. On November 18th 1978, the last day of Ryan's visit events occurred that sparked the murder

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[30] Ibid., 3.
[31] Jonathan Z Smith. 1982. *Imagining Religion.* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. 107.

of Ryan and members of the group with him at an airstrip near Jonestown followed by the mass-suicide/murder of most of the population of Jonestown.

"White night," the name of the Peoples Temple's mass-suicide/murder occurred on November 18th 1978 in Jonestown Guyana. The events leading up to "white night" began with Representative Ryan's delegation being allowed to enter Jonestown on the 17th of November 1978. This group was met by Marceline Jones and they were given a formal tour, entertainment, and a meal. During the night of the 17th, "at 11:00 p.m. a note was handed to Don Harris, the NBC correspondent, reading: 'Vernon Gosney and Monica Bagby. Please help us get out of Jonestown.'"[32] The next day, November 18 1978, Harris told Jim Jones that there were some people who would like to leave with Ryan's delegation; in fact another 14 people came forward expressing their desires to leave with Ryan's group.[33] As the Ryan delegation and the Jonestown members were sorting out the logistics of who was staying and who was leaving Don Sly, the former husband of a woman who had defected and joined the Concerned Relatives, attacked Ryan with a knife. While Ryan was not harmed in the attack, it did represent an end to the delegation's visit.[34] The Ryan delegation and the defectors got into trucks and headed towards the airfield near Jonestown. At the airfield when they were in the process of boarding the planes several men arrived from Jonestown and opened fire.[35] The gunmen had killed five people and wounded another ten during their attack at the airfield. They

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[32] Maaga, 5 who is citing Rieiterman and Jacobs 1982, 503.
[33] Ibid., 5.
[34] Hall, 276.
[35] Maaga, 5.

had killed Representative Leo Ryan, NBC reporter Don Harris, cameraman Bob Brown, San Francisco *Examiner* photographer Greg Robinson, and defector Patricia Parks.[36]

Back in the Jonestown settlement around 6:00 p.m. the Peoples Temple members gathered in the settlement's pavilion to discuss the movement's course of action after the murder of Ryan and the others. The "white night" began with Jim Jones addressing the members of Jonestown. He explained that the group was in danger because of the attack and murder of Representative Ryan, and that they would never be left alone after this, so the only option left was to commit a revolutionary act, a revolutionary suicide.[37] This event had been practiced a few times before that night.[38] Some members gathered various tranquilizers, including Valium, Penegram, chloral hydrate, and combined them with potassium cyanide in a vat of Fla-Vor-Aid to create the poisoned beverage used in the suicide ritual. Historian of religion, J.Z. Smith provides a concise description of the aftermath of "white night."

> When it was over, 914 people had died, most by taking a fruit drink mixed with cyanide and tranquilizers; most apparently died voluntarily. (Four individuals, including Jones, died of gunshot wounds. The bodies of some 70 individuals showed puncture wounds which suggest that they were injected with poison—whether voluntarily or not cannot be determined. Two hundred and sixty infants and small children had been administered poison, most by their parents. Dogs, livestock, and fishponds had been poisoned as well.)[39]

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[36] Hall, 279.

[37] There is a full audio recording of Jim Jones's address to the members of Jonestown at http://www.archive.org/audio/audio-details-db.php?collectionid=ptc1978-11-18.flac16&collection=opensource_audio.

[38] Lincoln, C. Eric & Mamiya, Lawrence H. 2004. Daddy Jones and Father Divine: The Cult as Political Religion. In *Peoples Temple and Black Religion in American*, ed. by Rebecca Moore, Anthony B. Pinn and Mary R. & Sawyer, 28-46. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. The members of the Peoples Temple had held "practice" trials of the "white night," where they would gather in the pavilion to listen to Jim Jones and then they would be asked to line up and drink a from a vat of fruit drink. Later in this chapter there is a note from one of the members after one of these trials 41.

[39] Smith, 108.

It is important to note that there are some inconsistencies between different sources with respect to the number of dead and how many died from gunshot wounds. J.Z. Smith reports that four died of gunshot wounds, while David Chidester reports the number as three and Mary Maaga reports that it was only two.[40] One of the reasons that such inconsistencies can exist is that there were only seven autopsies done on the 917 bodies and therefore a vast majority of dead were not examined.[41] Not all of the members participated in "white night." There were 85 people who survived "white night;" several families and individuals escaped into the jungle, the Jonestown basketball team was in Georgetown, Guyana for a basketball tournament, and Hyacinth Thrash, a 76 year-old member slept through the whole event.[42]

Drawing upon both Foucault and Lincoln, this analysis uses "white night" as a focal point to locate significant concepts, like kinship terms, socialism, communal living, and external pressures and threats, that provide the context and action necessary for examining the social power and authority interactions of the members.

The next section will examine the role of and use of kinship terms by the members of the Peoples Temple. The role and use of kinship terms helps to establish relationship roles between the members of the Peoples Temple and explore how these roles create responsibilities and expectations between the members of the movement.

As discussed above, integration was a significant goal for the members of the Peoples Temple and its significance for Jones family can be seen in how Jim and

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[40] Maaga, 6. Maaga is citing David Chidester 1988, 161 and J. Z. Smith 1982, 108.
[41] Ibid., 6. Maaga is citing Moore 1988.
[42] Ibid,. p6.

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Marceline made their immediate family a model of integrationist beliefs. Jim and Marceline, both white, had created a multi-ethnic family through the adoption of an African American child, and two Asian American children, in addition to Jones's own biological son. By adopting kids of different ethnicity the Joneses were putting their integrationists' beliefs into a practical reality and their example was further reflected by their congregation.

Just as the Jones family was a model of integration, so too was the congregation of the Peoples Temple. During their days in California, the early 1970s, the Peoples Temple membership was 80-90% Black, while the church's leadership was predominately white and usually consisted of female members.[43] The racial diversity of the congregation is an important element in the examining the social power and authority interactions of the members and while the asymmetrical representation of this racial diversity in the leadership are important to acknowledge and can be a significant aspect in studying the dynamics between members and leadership this is not the primary focus of this analysis. This analysis is focusing upon the members of the Peoples Temple's desire for integration and how this desire is supported through the members' beliefs in socialism. To gain greater insight of the racial dynamic of this movement I have used some of Anthony Pinn's writings from Peoples Temple and Black Religion in America. I have found his ideas to be very helpful in thinking about the movement and race and also in conceptualizing the Peoples Temple within American religions in general.

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[43]Anthony B Pinn. 2004. Peoples Temple as Black Religion: Re-imagining the Contours of Black Religious Studies. In *Peoples Temple and Black Religion in America*, ed. by Rebecca Moore, Anthony B. Pinn and Mary R. & Sawyer, 1-27. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. 13. The racial diversity of the movement while in Guyana remained consistent with its California demographics, which make sense due to the isolationist beliefs of the movement during that time.

Often when the Peoples Temple has been studied from the perspective of black religion it has been contrasted with the Black Church, where one represents what the other is lacking.[44] Anthony Pinn states that "the criteria for an interpretation of Peoples Temple must be altered, recognizing instead the nature of the experience within that community without the Black Church as the litmus test for authenticity of religious encounters."[45] Pinn also claims, along the same vein, that the Peoples Temple should not be defined solely by its leadership but it should be allowed to stand on its own as a Black religious movement or a Black religious modality.[46] When one allows the Peoples Temple to stand on its own as a modality of Black religion it creates a conceptual space that allows more elements of this complex and multifaceted movement to be examined on their own. This perspective enables one to acknowledge and include the diversity of membership within the Peoples Temple. The membership of the Peoples Temple was not solely poor and impoverished blacks but there were a number of liberal black bourgeoisie who joined the congregation and they may have done so because they were alienated by the politically conservative nature of the Black Churches.[47] By seeing the Peoples Temple as a Black religious modality a conceptual space is created for people who may not be part of the Black Church but still desire to be part of a religious community.

Borrowing and extrapolating from Pinn's example, this examination will focus on the Peoples Temple as a modality of American religion. By treating this movement as a

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[44] Refer to Lincoln and Mayima 31, and Hall 71 for examples of scholars discussing the elements of Black religion present in the Peoples Temple by comparing it to the "traditional" Black Church.
[45] Ibid,. 9.
[46] Ibid., 10 & 13.
[47] Hall, 71. The content of Hall's statement makes a good point about the diversity of the Peoples Temple membership and how the movement's ideology seemed to speak to people from diverse backgrounds. But it is also an example, albeit a subtle one, of how the Black Church is held up as a norm and other forms of black religion are seen in contrast to the Black Church.

modality of "American religion" a conceptual space is created in which the multiple

facets of the Peoples Temple can be studied in such a manner that does not presuppose a

normative group and therefore does not dismiss aspects of the movement because they do

not conform to the standards of the normative group. Through an examination of the

Peoples Temple as a modality of American religion this group's connections to other

traditions is acknowledged, but the group's ability to create its own form of worship is

recognized. This method creates a greater probability that the concepts chosen to

examine social power and authority, for example kinship terms and community identity,

ring true with the movement and therefore are better suited to the exploration of the

members' social power and authority interactions.

Kinship terms

Kinship terms and ideas about family were important elements within the Peoples

Temple. The other members referred to Jim and Marceline Jones as Father and Mother

or by other synonymous terms.[48] The use of these terms is not unique to the Peoples

Temple but is prevalent throughout many different religious traditions, and is especially

prevalent in Christianity. One of Jones's influences in the use of parental labels was

Father Divine. In the late 1950s Jones paid several visits to Father M. J. Divine at his

Peace Mission in Philadelphia.[49] Jones was impressed by the way Father Divine's group

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[48] The scope and effects of the relationship created by the use of familial terms will be discussed later in this section.
[49] Hall, 50-1.

was organized and also by the regard they held for Father Divine and one can see this influence on Jim Jones in his adoption of the title of "Father" or "Dad" for Jones.[50]

The use of kinship terms was deeply ingrained in how the Peoples Temple viewed each other. Examining the use of the terms from a Foucauldian perspective reveals significant actions built into the use of this language, such as the creating, maintaining, and refining of these relationships. The expectations and responsibilities associated with these relationships are also embedded in the language. According to both Foucault and Lincoln, all of these elements are needed to examine social power and authority interactions of the members in Peoples Temple.

Beginning with the term "father," one can see how the use of this term creates specific types of relationships between the members of the Peoples Temple. It is important to note that the use of kinship terms in religious movements is not without precedence. Eric C. Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya discuss the tradition for and significance of the use of kinship terms, specifically the use of "Father" and "Dad," in Christianity.

> This use of paternalistic terminology is of course not unusual in the Christian tradition where "father" or some synonymous term is a common designation for "pastor." … In the black cults a leader who became Father or Daddy was more than a mere pastor. He represented absolute authority and commanded absolute obedience. It was this power of the black cult leader which fascinated Jones and which he determined to emulate.[51]

There are a number of ways to look at Jones's adoption of the labels of "Father" or "Daddy." One is to see it as a blatant attempt to assume the role of a black cult leader for

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[50] Lincoln & Mamiya, 39. Jones also asked his parishioners to call Marceline Mother Jones (Lincoln & Mamiya, 39).
[51] Lincoln & Mamiya, 39-40.

an unauthentic reason that focused upon the totalitarian power of the position it offered.[52]

Another perspective on Jones's adoption of these labels is to view him as using the

lexicon of black religious traditions and entering into a dialogue with his parishioners, a

vast majority of whom were black. Even though Jones was white, he often referred to

himself as black. He claimed to be a black messiah and to have experienced the

oppression that black people experienced and therefore proclaimed himself as one of their

number. Most likely the truth lies in both explanations. Jones can be seen as both

seeking a position of social power and authority, using diverse means to accomplish this

goal, and also as someone who saw himself as black and sharing in the experiences of his

congregation.

As stated earlier the purpose of this analysis is not to examine the sincerity of

Jones or the other members of the movement but rather their relationships with the each

other. Regardless of Jones's motivation, the use of the term "Father" or "Dad" created a

relationship between himself and his congregation. Drawing on Foucault's writings

about the relationship of power and knowledge, one can see that this dialogue mandates

the means of relationship, the effectiveness of this relationship, and also the meaning of

this relationship. Thus terms like "Father" or "Dad" within this context create

expectations of and responsibilities for both parties and these expectations and

responsibilities can only have meaning within the context of the relationship between the

two parties. The application of a kinship term or label creates a relationship between the

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[52] There are numerous references in Lincoln and Mamiya's article linking Jim Jones to the demonic, to Nazis and various other labels that immediately call into question their article. That being said it does provide some interesting elements that can be used to further the examination of power, authority, and new religious movements.

labeler and the labelee. Therefore, as Jones is called "Father" or "Dad" by the members of the Peoples Temple, they are expecting him to fulfill his responsibilities as "Father" and "Dad, and due to the dialectical nature of this relationship the members are also expected to fulfill their responsibilities to the "Father" as his children.

Another aspect of the paternalistic labels is that they create relationships between the members of the Peoples Temple because they are all sons and daughters of Jones, and therefore they are all siblings. Labels like "father," "mother," "brother," and "sister" create and reaffirm relationships between people. By using these kinship terms the members of the Peoples Temple create a family within the movement. These relationships require maintenance and elements of this maintenance can be seen in the reinforcement and refinement of the expectations and responsibilities of the parties involved in these relationships. The use of kinship terms creates, maintains, and adapts the relationship between one individual and another through the mutually defined and refined understanding of the term or label being used.

As Foucault claims, an exploration of power and authority needs to include how power and authority are constructed and used by the people involved. Therefore the examination of how these people use kinship terms and the consequences of their use establishes an opportunity to further investigate the social power and authority interactions of the members. While the use of kinship terms is a significant aspect of the Peoples Temple movement and provides excellent information about specific types of members' interactions, other avenues of inquiry are needed to round out the analysis of social power and authority interactions between these members.

Socialism, Communalism and membership

The worldview of the members of the Peoples Temple while they lived in Jonestown was informed by a dichotomous perspective, which saw the world in the terms of insiders/members and outsiders/strangers. The use of kinship terms is just one of several prominent methods used to denote who were members and therefore part of the family. Another defining characteristic of membership in the Peoples Temple was belief and commitment to a communal lifestyle. The settlement at Jonestown was seen as step towards the Peoples Temples' goals for an ideal society. Due to the members' investment in a communal lifestyle there was great effort made by members to offer services to each other. From the earliest days of the movement members would stay after services and help others with various concerns, ranging from advice about how to handle an automobile accident to welfare eligibility. The church's social workers even managed members' dealings with welfare bureaucracy.[53] As these examples illustrate, the members of the Peoples Temple continued to be involved in the social concerns of each other throughout their time in California and Jonestown, reinforcing the communal goals of the movement.

The communal aspect of Jim Jones's ministry was supported by two different ideological perspectives: religious and social communalism. Jones used various passages from the Bible to emphasize Christian beliefs that supported communalism.[54] An example of one such passage is Acts 4.34-5, "There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was

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[53] Hall, 82.
[54] Ibid., 18-9.

sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need."

For Jones and the Peoples Temple members this portrayal of the early Christian

movement was an example of a socialist ideal and they treated it as a goal to strive

towards. Jones wed passages from the Bible supporting communalism to the ideals of

communism and socialism and used this foundation to create the ideology of the Peoples

Temple.

Jones's ideas about social communalism were derived from his various

experiences with communism and Marxism. Lynetta Jones, Jim's mother, was very

influential in how Jones saw and interacted with the world.   She viewed society through

the terms of class struggle and at one of her jobs during Jim's childhood she "not only

earned a wage but also helped organize workers in the class struggle of labor by night."[55]

Lynetta's influence can be seen in Jim's continued interest in social involvement and

activism throughout his adult life. After this early exposure to communism and Marxism,

Jim continued to explore the concepts of communism and socialism.   When Jim and

Marceline moved to Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1951, they became involved in Communist

communities and rallies in the area. After these experiences, Jones worked to include

more communist and socialist ideals into his ministry. Socialism and communism would

continue to be prevalent elements in the Joneses' and the Peoples Temples' beliefs and

practices.

Because Jones combined religion and Marxism, some Marxists may not see him

as being true to Marxist ideology. "From the standpoint of Marxists, Jones could best be

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[55] Ibid., 5.

described as a 'crude communist' who had little theoretical understanding of the labor

theory of value, class conflict, or a host of other issues that Marxists use as touchstones

for their debates and strategies."[56] Therefore, Jones's connection to Marxism seems to be

a loose one at best and he focuses more upon the communal ideal of communism rather

than the more theoretical elements.   Some have seen Jones's marriage of Marxism and

religion as an inherent incompatibility in his beliefs. This belief is due to the traditional

Marxist claim that religion most often perpetuates the alienation of the masses from their

labor by supporting the system of the oppressors and that to truly liberate human beings

one must accept the truth of her or his circumstances. Due to Jones's lack of theoretical

engagement in Marxism, Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya view the tension

between Marxism and religion within Jones's beliefs as elements of manipulation and

pragmatism on Jones's part and they imply that this gives further evidence of Jones's

disingenuous motives.[57] This is a great example of how Jones and the other members of

the Peoples Temple pulled together seemingly incompatible beliefs to create their own

ideology.

Lincoln and Mamiya are basing some of their assertions about Jones and his

intentions on the fact that his ministry is based on two supposedly incompatible beliefs.

They imply that if Jones was rational then he could not truly believe both, and because of

this incompatibility he acted disingenuously towards his congregation.[58] Yet for Jones

and the Peoples Temple members, this incompatibility did not seem to exist, because

religion and socialism were means to a fully realized personhood. David Chidester

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[56] Ibid., 26.
[57] Lincoln & Mamiya, 43.
[58] Ibid., 43-4.

describes the Peoples Temple as demythologizing religion and re-mythologizing socialism.[59] According to Chidester, this process denied, in the least, the relevance and, at the most, the existence of the "sky God" of Christianity and in its place posited the "Divinity of Socialism."[60] The "Divinity of Socialism" was seen as a practical god that was committed to total equality: no rich or poor, no races, and everything held in common.[61] Within the Peoples Temple's ideology the "Divinity of Socialism" was held in contrast to the Divinity of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, which was seen as creating all of the differences that the "Divinity of Socialism" and the members of the Peoples Temple were fighting against.[62] In this way the members of the Peoples Temple created a religious socialism that drew upon the traditions and beliefs of both Christianity and communism.

While the Peoples Temple denied the benevolence of the divine in Christianity, it did incorporate elements from it, especially from Pentecostalism. Examples of these ideological borrowings by the Peoples Temple were faith healings, discerning through the revelation of personal information about people in the congregation, and prophesying. These elements played a large part in Jones's ministry and were some of the foundational values of the Peoples Temple. However, to view Jones and the Peoples Temple as a simple outgrowth of Pentecostal beliefs and values is to overemphasize the connection and the influences of the Pentecostal church upon Jones and his ministry. Jones's relationship to Christianity, and Pentecostalism specifically, was dynamic and complex

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[59] Chidester, 63.
[60] Ibid., 57.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid., 54-5.

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because he changed and adapted the Pentecostal theology to his own views. Jones and

the Peoples Temple not only denied the benevolence of the Christian God, or Sky-God as

Jones referred to it, they also recast Jesus as the divinity of socialism, placing emphasis

on his social works over his connection to the Sky-God of Christianity.[63] Jones adopted

Pentecostalism's wide spread millennial expectations of a messiah bringing about a

golden age, but he used this to proclaim his own divinity and the potential divinity in

others.[64]

> When Jones declared himself to be Jesus Christ, fully God and fully human, his
> claim could be rendered as the assertion that he was the living embodiment of a
> socialist revolution for justice. Christians were still seeking, Jones argued, the
> white "Goldilocks Jesus" of myth. But Jesus was not white; this was one of the
> many lies of the King James Bible. The real Jesus was an incarnation of
> socialism, a militant revolutionary, a black liberalist. The same Principle of
> socialism, revolution, and black liberation, Jones insisted, was incarnated in Jim
> Jones.[65]

Jones and the members of the Peoples Temple recast Jesus into the framework of their

theological socialism and in doing so they emphasize and embellish elements of the Jesus

mythology that supported the socialist goals of the Peoples Temple. Jones believed that

if one was filled with the spirit or divinity of socialism then this person actually was god

and could perform miraculous things, like healings, psychic predictions, and other

elements that are prominent in the Pentecostal tradition, all of which Jones used to

proclaim his elevated status.[66]

The use of kinship terms or labels and the commitment to a communal and

socialist lifestyle were some of the earmarks of membership in the Peoples Temple. By

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[63] Ibid., 60.
[64] Hall, 18.
[65] Chidester, 60.
[66] Hall, 18 & Chidester, 61.

focusing upon these practices and concerns one learns a great deal about what the

members of the Peoples Temple held dear and how they viewed the world around them.

Through an analysis of how the members of the Peoples Temple viewed those outside of

their church one can see elements of how they saw their place in the world. Jonestown

became a refuge from the perceived threats and deficiencies of American society. Within

this settlement Jones and the members of the Peoples Temple could create the community

that they wanted. Membership in this community was defined through familial labels,

communal living, communist and socialist ideals, and through contrast with those outside

of the community.

Worldview and External Pressures and Threats

Jonestown was the Peoples Temple's effort to create a community apart from the

perceived negative effects of mainstream American society. The settlement in Guyana

held a significant place within the members' worldviews because it represented a step

towards a communal society that would allow them to enact their social goals.

Jonestown offered the members of the People Temple a place to remove themselves from

what they saw as the negative aspects of the American society. Some of the most

prominent negative aspects were capitalism, racism, sexism, classism, and ageism. These

were seen as intrinsic elements of America's capitalistic society, which in turn was

understood to be inherently dehumanizing to minorities, women, and the poor.[67] The

classification of people in American society was not viewed as a neutral system but rather

as one that worked in favor of a system of white domination, which created a system of

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[67] Chidester, 63-4.

oppression.[68]   The members of Peoples Temple sought to step outside of that system.[69]

Membership in the Peoples Temple meant that a person was aware of the inherent

dehumanization of the American social system.   Therefore, the members of the Peoples

Temple sought to limit participation in the American social system. People outside of the

movement were often seen as participants (even if they were unwitting ones) in the

dominant power structures of American society and therefore were examples for the

members to define themselves against.

In Foucauldian terms, from the point of view of the Peoples Temple members,

those outside of the movement were seen as being simultaneously a part of and subjected

to the dominant power structure of American society. Negative components were built

into this dominant power structure; these components would often demarcate particular

groups of people and reinforce the division of the American population into subsets.

Some examples of these components are racism, sexism and classism, which demarcate

people with specific features into groups that are then measured against a prevailing

normative group (which may or may not exist).

Even though these groups are seen as marginalized from the assumed normative

standard, a relationship still exists between the alienated groups and American society.

The components mentioned above can be seen as a type of shorthand that establishes how

the demarcated group relates to the normative standard.   These relationships manifest

themselves in the interactions of the people within the group and those outside of the

group. As the people within these different groups interact with each other these

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[68] Ibid., 69.
[69] Ibid., 69.

components come into play through the use of labels, like racial slurs. The meanings of these labels are not static but are dynamic and change according to whomever is using them. The longer these labels are used the more their meanings change. That being said, the power of a label does not always lie in the hands of the normative standard, but can be co-opted by the group that the label is meant to signify and therefore demarcate. There have been examples throughout history where a group has taken a label applied to them and then redefined it so that instead of the label being a derogatory term it has become an empowering one.

The members of the Peoples Temple provide an example of how a group can take a derogatory term and by redefining it can become a positive one, even a badge of honor. For Jones it was good to be called a "nigger." The term was used as badge of honor among the members of the Peoples Temple because it signified someone who realized that he or she was imposed upon by the dominant power structure of the white capitalist American society and that he or she was not a part of this power structure.[70] Jones's conception of "nigger" was not racially focused, though it did draw upon the racial distinctions made by the dominant white society. In line with his communist roots Jones based the term "nigger" more on class and the shared experience of oppression by the white dominated capitalist society of the U.S.A. than the more traditional racial understanding of the term.[71] To realize that one was a "nigger" was to realize his or her marginalized position with respect to American society. Therefore by co-opting the conception of "nigger" as a marginalized subset of American society, Jones used the term

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[70] Ibid., 71.
[71] Ibid.

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to separate or demarcate the members of the Peoples Temple from the people who were still a part of American society.[72] The members of the Peoples Temple took the word "nigger" and forged a positive and unifying meaning for the word that simultaneously signified both their exclusion from American society and their unity in the shared experiences of oppression.

The co-opting of the term "nigger" by the members of the Peoples Temple is just one example that illustrates how groups can take a derogatory term and use it as a positive label, which reaffirms the groups' beliefs and values. The marginalized group may reject only the elements of society that are relevant to the label or they may reject the whole of society and start over in an environment away from the parent society in an attempt to distance themselves from the perceived adverse effects of the parent society. The Peoples Temple members focused upon all of the negative elements in American society and used them to support their own group identity. By doing this the members of the Peoples Temple could say, "American society is racist but not us here in the Peoples Temple, we do not judge someone by her or his skin color but see all human beings as equal." Essentially American society became a foil against which the members could construct an identity. This comparison presented them with an opportunity to simultaneously define who they were and who they were not.

One of the results of defining their identity through comparisons with the perceived negative elements of American society was the conceptual distance it created between the members of the Peoples Temple and those who were still a part of American

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[72] Ibid., 71-2.

society. Their act of comparison created a dichotomous view of the world, where the members of the Peoples Temple were on one side and those outside of the movement were on the other. The isolationist tendencies of this movement were epitomized in their creation of and migration to the Jonestown settlement. The members reinforced their self-identity through the use of kinship terms, focus on communal living, and socialist ethics that supported their integrationist beliefs and values. Then the members reinforced their dualistic perspective by focusing upon those negative elements in American society and used these elements to further reinforce their ideology of socialism and racial equality. These elements also supported their desire to isolate themselves from American society. The next section of this analysis will focus on a few specific external sources of pressure all of which reinforced the Peoples Temples' isolationist views: the press, government, and anti-cult movements, which included relatives of members. These sources of pressure were seen as ideological threats to the community because of their perceived potential to destroy the movement.

These external pressures were seen by the members as the opposite of their values and as such the outsiders' values were thought to threaten and undermine the members' ideology, which would undermine significant elements that made them a community. During the movement's time in California it was featured in numerous exposés by the press. This scrutiny increased through the early to mid 1970s. During this time most of the stories focused on whether or not the rumors and accusations of abuses were true, but they were not aimed at bringing about the end of the movement. Usually these stories were met with protests from the members of the Peoples Temple; in one instance 150 Peoples Temple members took buses to the *San Francisco Examiner*'s main office to

protest for three days against a story the *Examiner* had printed and demanded that no further stories be published.[73] For a time, these tactics worked to keep most of the negative stories about the movement out of the press, but eventually these tactics no longer worked and the pressure from the press increased.

In 1977 the pressures from the press seemed to culminate in the *New West Magazine*'s exposé, which contained interviews with former members and alleged physical, sexual, and financial abuse within the movement and this time the usual protests and letter writing did not stop the story from being printed.[74] In response to this story the movement began preparations to relocate to their agricultural commune in Guyana. This article sparked intense news coverage of Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple and also drew the interest of many other press agencies, e.g. *San Francisco Examiner, Mendocino Grapevine,* and the Santa Rosa *Press-Democrat*, who all began to investigate the Peoples Temple with the assumption that it was a dangerous cult.[75] In response to the pressures from the press, the members of the Peoples Temple relocated to Jonestown and by doing this they created an environment where they could protect themselves from perceived threats of the press. From the Peoples Temple's perspective the press was just one element of many that were threatening their ideology and their community.

Another source of pressure felt by the Peoples Temple was the Concerned Relatives who were formed in the mid-1970s. This group included family members of current Peoples Temple members and also former members who wanted to expose the

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[73] Hall, 115.
[74] Maaga, 3-4.
[75] Hall, 186-7.

Peoples Temple as a dangerous cult and Jim Jones as a sham.[76] This group was

confrontational in how they interacted with the Peoples Temple. The Concerned

Relatives sought to expose Jim Jones as a manipulative fraud and bring about the

dissolution of the Peoples Temple movement. In effect, the Concerned Relatives bet that

they could drive Jones to foolish and insane acts that would be his own undoing while

causing no harm to others within the movement, because the Concerned Relatives

believed that the threat of mass death was Jim Jones's biggest bluff.[77] The Concerned

Relatives used a variety of tactics to achieve their goals to dissolve the Peoples Temple.

They focused on using demonstrations and lawsuits, and they also launched themselves

into a full-fledged "anti-cult" movement often drawing the attention of the press. The

Concerned Relatives adopted "mind programming" as the motif for explaining why their

relatives stayed in Jonestown, and they were no longer only concerned with "rescuing"

their relatives, most of whom rejected the "concerned relatives" efforts to "save" them.

The Concerned Relatives saw Jonestown as a "concentration camp," and the "anti-cult"

movement wanted to "dismantle" it. The Concerned Relatives demanded nothing less

than Jonestown ceasing to exist as a bounded communal society.[78] The increasingly

confrontational interactions between the Peoples Temple and the Concerned Relatives

was one of the sources of momentum towards the eventual confrontation that ended in

deaths of over 900 people.

    The third source of pressure that this analysis will examine is political pressure,

and the political pressure culminated with Leo Ryan, a U.S. Representative from

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[76] Maaga, 4.
[77] Hall, 232-3.
[78] Ibid.

California, and his visit to Jonestown. A member of Ryan's constituency, Robert

Houston, whose son was involved in the movement, brought the Peoples Temple to

Ryan's attention in the spring of 1977.[79] As the frenzy of the press investigations began

to increase, so too did Ryan's interest in the Peoples Temple. Ryan had a history of

involvement with media concerning high profile topics. In the 1960s he spent a day as a

teacher in Watts and he also spent a day as an inmate in Folsom prison; both events were

portrayed as investigations into the conditions of these areas and Ryan received

widespread media coverage from these events.[80] Ryan seemed to approach his

investigation into Peoples Temple from a similar manner to these previous investigations.

So on November 1st 1978, Ryan sent a letter to Jones and the other residents of

Jonestown requesting permission to visit and in response, the Jonestown residents sent

him a petition on 9th of November, which refused his request.[81] Despite this petition

Ryan and his group, which included "two congressional staff members, two reporters,

and a news photographer from San Francisco, four journalists from NBC, including a

camera crew, a freelance writer, and fourteen members of the Concerned Relatives," left

New York on the 14th of November for the international airport in Georgetown Guyana.[82]

The arrival of Ryan and his delegation to Jonestown marked the beginning of the

end of the Peoples Temple. As described above, Ryan's delegation was made up of

elements from each of the sources of pressure discussed previously. Despite the

members of the Peoples Temple's attempts to stop Ryan and his delegation from visiting,

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[79] Maaga, 4.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 5.
[82] Ibid.

they arrived at Jonestown. Each of these groups was seen as a threat to the members of the Peoples Temple and their community's existence. During the Ryan delegation's visit the members' felt as if they need to "preserve" their movement and this eventually led to "white night."

White night as preservation of the community

"White night" can be seen as a response to the need to "preserve" the identity, integrity, and goals of the members of the Peoples Temple from the threats of external pressures. Jonestown can be seen as a physical manifestation of the ideology of the Peoples Temple. After the attack on and murder of Ryan and members of his delegation, the members of the Peoples Temple realized that their community was going to come under greater scrutiny by the very institutions they had been at odds with throughout 1970s. Jones and others stated that the movement could not survive the ramifications of the attacks upon and deaths of Ryan and members of his delegation.[83] Jones claimed that the inevitable investigations would lead to the dissolution of the movement and that it was better to commit revolutionary suicide and die with the community and its ideology intact rather than having it destroyed through the removal of members of the movements. While it was Jones and the leadership of the Peoples Temple that broached the topic of suicide to the community, it was the community that had to agree to suicide and perform the act. "White night" was a community commitment that was accepted and performed by the majority of the members of the Peoples Temple.

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[83] Ibid., 148-9.

On the night of November 18th, 978 members of the People Temple gathered in the pavilion to discuss the movement's options for dealing with the aftermath of the attacks on and deaths of Ryan and members of his delegation. It is important to note that the decision for "white night" was not universally accepted by all the members of the Peoples Temple. Christine Miller spoke up during the discussion and voiced her concerns about the plan for "white night." She discussed options other than suicide with Jones and the gathered members in the pavilion; she asked if it was too late to try and go to Russia instead of committing suicide.[84] Jones responded to Miller that Russia was not an option because murder had been committed and the U.S. government would not allow them to defect and the Soviet Union most likely would not allow them entry into the country after the murders.[85]

Lincoln's concepts about the social drama aspect of authority provide greater insight into the social power and authority interactions of the members of the Peoples Temple during this discussion. The members of the Peoples Temple and Jones allowed Miller to speak for a time but she began to lose the acceptance of the audience. According to Lincoln's model, Miller lost the trust and acceptance of Jones and the rest of the members and because of this her authority was eroded. During the discussion, Jones reacted to Miller's questions in numerous ways, all of which drew upon the social drama element of authority and further emphasized the other members' acceptance of his leadership and authority. He called all of the members his children, which reinforced both

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[84] Ibid., 148. Maaga included an appendix that has a transcript of the "White Night." Jones had told the people of Jonestown that Soviet Union had offered to send a plane to Jonestown if they ever wanted to defect to the Soviet Union and Miller was wondering if this was still an option.
[85] Ibid., 149.

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his role as father and leader and reinforced the identity of family within the community. Jones also claimed the mantle of a prophet by issuing various predictions. Two examples were that one of the airplanes was going to be forced to crash on the way back to Georgetown and that Russia would not come to the aid of the members.[86] In the background one can hear applause as he used these tactics to dismiss Miller's suggestions and slowly the audience's acceptance of her was eroded. Eventually the audience, or more appropriately the community, turned against Miller and took away her speaking authority. As this encounter proceeded more people became involved in the discussion. Some of the members of the community addressed Miller directly and others addressed the audience in general. All brought up points that further eroded Miller's authority. These other members told Miller that Jones was right and that she needed to accept this decision because it was the only one that would preserve the community against the threats to its existence and its ideology. Jones and the other vocal member were working against Miller's authority in front of the audience and by using these tactics they helped to erode the audience's trust and acceptance of Miller.

Eventually, the combined pressure of Jones and the other members convinced Miller to accept suicide as the only option that would maintain the integrity of Jonestown. Throughout his speech Jones makes continual reference to how the community of Jonestown needed to stand as one, and how if "they" came to ask for those who shot the Congressman, the community would not give them up because they all were equal and

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[86] Ibid., 148. Jones claimed that the plane would crash because Larry Layton had pretended to defect so that he could be in position to bring the plane down. Layton was not able to bring the plane down.

they all were one.[87] Essentially Jones was making the case that their socialist beliefs

would not allow them to turn one of their own over the U.S. government for prosecution.

In the end, the act of mass suicide-murder seems to be a way of emphasizing the beliefs

and values of the Peoples Temple, which reinforces the community's identity against the

threat of dissolution. Therefore, according to Jones's statement, if the Peoples Temple

turned over the individuals who attacked Ryan and the others then they would be denying

their ideological beliefs and undermining one of the essential elements of the community.

By committing suicide together, as a revolutionary act, the Peoples Temple could feel

they stood as one, as a family, and not be divided by the investigations of outsiders.

By viewing the mass suicide-murder as the members of the Peoples Temple

viewed it, as a revolutionary act "preserving" the ideology of movement, one can better

understand how the option of mass suicide-murder was viewed as a viable and even

preferred response to the pressures and threats facing the members of the Peoples

Temple. Hall cites a note written by a member of Jonestown after one of the practice

"white nights" that gives some insight into how the option of mass suicide-murder was

seen by some of the Peoples Temple members.

> If the potion we drank had been the real thing, then it would have been the end of
> Dad's pain. He would not have to suffer for us anymore. Just like last night, the
> more he talked the more pain in his tongue. The rest of the people would be in
> peace with our loving leader if it was the real thing there would be no more pain
> and no more suffering. We would be in peace today. That would have been the
> best way to die. Everyone would have to go to the pavilion. There would be no
> more toots of the horn or talking about strategy. If it was real, of course we
> would have been free. We would have died the best way. Any other way we
> wouldn't be sure if it would work or not and we would have suffered. I know

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[87] Ibid., 151.

> Dad wouldn't let us suffer like that. Thank you Dad for the test and not letting us suffer. Thank-you Dad.[88]

This note mentions how if it had been "the real thing" then "Dad's pain" would have ended and all would have been "in peace" with their "loving leader." These phrases bring to the foreground the familiar themes of kinship terms and the importance of unity within the community.

The author also mentions how if it had been real then they would have been "free" and in "peace." These word hint at how significant the ideas of peace and freedom were for the movement and how "white night" seems to have been viewed as the only way to ensure that the movement was "free" from the threats of these external pressures and the only way to be sure to create and maintain the "peace" within the community, which the members viewed as being won by and maintained through their ideological commitment. The idea of being at "peace" is derived from how the Peoples Temple members saw themselves, American society, and the relationship between them. Chidester describes this perception in Salvation and Suicide as "The Peoples Temple was a space defined by the atmosphere of love, healing, and socialism. The atmospheric pressure of American civil space, however was symbolized as a kind of imprisonment under the oppression of a totalizing, extensive fascist power. American civil space was like a prison."[89] Jonestown was an attempt to escape this prison and create a society that supported the member's beliefs and goals and to create a sphere of peace. The Ryan delegation was seen as an intrusion of the very things the people of Jonestown were trying to escape and the attacks upon the Ryan delegation would have opened the door

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[88] Hall, 282. Hall cites this from the *San Francisco Examiner* 12/17/78.
[89] Chidester, 89.

for more involvement from American society and therefore destroyed the movement's goals of peace, unity and freedom through the involvement of the negative elements of the American society. During his discussion with the Jonestown community Jones even says "The world (inaudible) suffers violence, and the violent shall take it by force. If we can't live in peace, then let's die in peace."[90] This statement is met with applause from the community. The members may have believed that if they submitted to the external pressures and gave up those responsible for the murder of Ryan and his delegation then they would have betrayed their ideology and their community. Therefore suicide, from the perspective of the members of the Peoples Temple, seemed like the only option for peace, because all other options, at least from the perspective of the Jonestown community, seemed to lead towards the violent destruction of the movement.

Conclusion

The focal point of "white night" reveals how the significant concepts of kinship terms, socialism, communalism, and external pressures all affect the social power and authority relationships of the members of the Peoples Temple. The construction, reinforcement, and refinement of community identity can be seen in how the members use kinship terms. The use of labels like mother and father creates a relationship between the labeler and the labelee. For the members of the Peoples Temple, kinship terms are also important in how they can reveal the members' responsibilities and expectations of each other through the relationship created by the use of these terms. These relationships carry specific responsibilities and expectations, which exist in a

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[90] Maaga, 147.

dynamic state that is constantly being reinforced and refined as the parties involved interact with each other.

Similar to the use of kinship terms, communalism, socialism, and the beliefs and practices supported by them also create responsibilities and expectations in the members' relationships with each other. A paramount belief for the Peoples Temple members was the equality of all human beings and how each person should be treated properly regardless of race, class, sex, or age. The members' beliefs and practices assert that all human beings were created equal and this was based in their understandings of Pentecostalism, communalism, and socialism. Integration and equality were some of the founding ideas in the creation of Jonestown and because of this the settlement became a symbol of the movements' goals and ideology. Therefore the Peoples Temple members' reactions to the pressures and threats represented by the press, Representative Ryan, and the Concerned Relatives are more easily understood once one realizes the significance of the settlement, and this understanding also helps to explain why the members of the Peoples Temple reacted to these threats in the way that they did.

The Peoples Temple members responded to these pressures by first attacking the source and symbol of pressures and threats, which was Ryan and his delegation, and then they turned their concern to the maintenance of their ideology, their community, their family. The decision to commit mass suicide-murder was made at the group level and not made solely by the leadership with the rest of the membership following blindly. This decision was discussed by the members of the Peoples Temple and they were able to voice their opinions for or against this strategy. During this discussion there was a

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dissenting voice, Christine Miller's, who wanted to explore different options; she questioned the decision for "white night" and wondered if it was the only viable option available to the movement. This analysis used this discussion as an example of the complex nature of the social power and authority. As we have seen previously in this chapter, the significance of concepts like kinships terms, communal living, socialism and external threats demonstrated their prominent role during this discussion. All of these concepts played important roles throughout the debate and they were key elements of the social power and authority relationships of the members during this discussion.

This analysis has used significant concepts to examine social power and authority within the Peoples Temple movement. These concepts were demonstrated as such through the interactions of the members of the Peoples Temple during their time in Jonestown and their importance culminated in the decision to participate in "white night." Through the context and understanding gained by examining these concepts one is able to explore the social power and authority relationships during the members' time in Jonestown and in their discussion during their final night and come to a greater understanding of may have motivated the people of Jonestown to commit this act.

Chapter 3: The Church Universal and Triumphant

The Church Universal and Triumphant (CUT) is a new religious movement that started during the mid-twentieth century in the United States. During the late 1950s Mark Prophet started the Summit Lighthouse, which eventually became CUT, in the

Washington D.C. area. The Church Universal and Triumphant can trace many of its

traditions directly back to Guy Ballard and the I AM movement of the early 20th

century.[91] Two of the more significant practices that CUT inherited from the I AM

movement were revelations from cosmic beings and the practice of decreeing. Ballard's

movement had adopted the practices of revelation and decreeing from the Theosophical

Society and New Thought movement respectively. The former, which started in late

nineteenth century, taught that revelations were teachings and messages from a group of

beings known by multiple names, such as The Great White Brotherhood, The Masters of

Wisdom, or Ascended Masters (this is the named most frequently used by members of

CUT). According to CUT traditions these cosmic beings often lived many human lives

until their souls evolved to the point where they could unite with God. Many of the

Ascended Masters are believed to have been prominent religious personalities from

various traditions throughout the world, like the Buddha, Jesus Christ and many others.[92]

The second prominent element that CUT inherited from the I AM movement was

the practice of decreeing, which had its roots in the New Thought Movement. The

practice of decreeing is similar to an affirmative prayer that aims to affect the physical

world through the spiritual, but these two differ in how the change occurs. An

affirmation simply asserts that the physical world should mirror the perfect spiritual

world, while the practice of decreeing demands that the cosmic powers create the desired

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[91] The I AM movement was a religious movement founded by Guy and Edna Ballard during the early 1930s. The movement's name is derived from the story of the Moses and burning bush in Exodus 3.14, where Moses inquires to whom is he speaking and "I Am that I am" is the response, which is believed to be the name of God.

[92] DeHaas, 24.

conditions by changing the physical world to be like the spiritual.[93] Both revelations and

the practice of decreeing were used by the members of CUT during the "shelter night"

and therefore they play a role in the examination of social power and authority

interactions among the members.

Mark Prophet died in 1973 and his wife, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, took over

leadership of the Summit Lighthouse and changed its name to the Church Universal and

Triumphant. The movement officially moved its headquarters to Montana in 1986, where

it is still located today. In late 1989 and early 1990 Elizabeth Clare Prophet predicted

that the world was in a time of increased negative karma that would result in a nuclear

attack on the United States by the Soviet Union. Due to this prediction CUT began

extensive preparations to survive the attack, such as creating bomb shelters, and stock

piling supplies.

Jocelyn DeHaas has described the individual members' responses to Prophet's

revelations regarding the nuclear prediction:

> Prophet declared a "dangerous period" for nuclear attack in March and April
> 1990. Hundreds of Church members from around the United States and overseas
> came to Montana in early 1990. Called by Prophet to come to Montana if they
> could and if they wanted to, many faithful responded. Many others stayed in
> their homes but were vigilant in prayer. Those who came to Montana worked
> long and hard on the construction of the shelters to get them ready in time.[94]

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[93] Melton p5

[94]Jocelyn H DeHaas. 1994. The Mediation of Ideology and Public Image in the Church Universal and
Triumphant. ed. by James R. and Melton, J. Gordon Lewis. *Syzygy: Journal of Alternative Religion and
Culture:* Church Universal and Triumphant in Scholarly Perspective, no. Special Issue: 21-38. 29.

Prophet first predicted that the disaster would begin on October 2 1989, and when it did

not occur she predicted a second date of March 15, 1990.[95] Due to these perceived

threats, Prophet prompted the members of CUT to begin increasing their focus on

survival, with special emphasis on surviving a nuclear exchange. All the members, who

could do so, moved to the Royal Teton Ranch where they prepared for the attack by

creating underground shelters and they also used the practice of decreeing in the hope of

preventing a nuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In November 1988 construction began on the Mol Herron shelter, which was H

shaped, designed to sustain up to 750 people for several years, and cost around $3 million

to build.[96] A similar, but smaller in scale, shelter was built in the subdivision of

Glastonbury, a housing development area for CUT members located near the Royal

Teton Ranch.[97] The creation and preparation of these shelters required tremendous

amounts of time, energy, and resources. On March 15 1990, a large number of CUT

members gathered in the bomb shelters in anticipation of the predicted event. The next

day they emerged from their shelters to find that the predicted attack did not occur and

they had to deal with the ramifications of the unrealized predictions.

Similar to the methods used in the previous chapter this analysis will approach

power and authority in the Church Universal and Triumphant by using "shelter night" as

a focal point for examining the interactions of the members and their use of kinship

labels, insider/outsider labels, pressures from outside of the movement and recruitment of

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[95]Bradley C Whitsel. 2003. *The Church Universal and Triumphant: Elizabeth Clare Prophet's Apocalyptic Movement.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. 108-9.
[96] Ibid., 105.
[97] Ibid.

new members after "shelter night." Therefore this chapter will first examine the use of

kinship terms in CUT, and then it will focus upon the concepts of members and outsiders

and the pressures and threats presented by both. Finally, the event of "shelter night" and

its fallout will be examined as a focal point of all of these previous issues. This analysis

demonstrates how these elements can be used to examine the construction and

maintenance of the power and authority interactions in CUT members' relationships.

In the previous chapter I extrapolated from Pinn's conception of the Peoples

Temple as a Black religious modality and I posited the treatment of the Peoples Temple

as a modality of American religion. In a similar fashion I treat the Church Universal and

Triumphant as another modality of American religion. Treating CUT as a modality of

American religion allows for the analysis to address multiple elements of the movement,

but in a way that does not hold this movement to the standards of a normative group. Just

as treating the Peoples Temple as a modality of American religion did not remove it from

its context in relation to other movements, neither does this conceptual move isolate CUT

from those movements and traditions that influenced it, but rather presents an opportunity

to see CUT in its own conceptual space.

Kinship terms

The uses of the kinship terms within the Church Universal and Triumphant are

especially prominent when the members address Elizabeth Prophet using maternal labels.

Paternal and maternal labels are an integral element of the members' beliefs about

balance and polarities, and therefore are prominent elements of their worldview. Balance

is an essential component of how the members of CUT see the world and also in how

they understand their spiritual goals. [98] The desire to achieve a balance of polarities can

be seen as one of the movement's more significant challenges in the current age. J.

Gordon Melton describes this desire for balance in his article exploring the spiritual

tradition of CUT:

> the particular challenge for each individual is to raise up the feminine principle;
> i.e. to master the energies appropriate to the life of the soul, the feminine aspect
> of each individual, often spoken of as the inner mastery of the planes of matter,
> and then to wed the soul to the Universal Christ consciousness in a balancing
> action of Alpha (spirit) and Omega (matter), representative of the fusion of the
> energies in God, who is both Father and Mother. [99]

This passage highlights the tremendous emphasis members place on balance and

harmony and how paternal and maternal labels are used to express these ideas. The

balance of polarities is crucial to the Church Universal and Triumphant's worldview and

spiritual goals. Therefore, to achieve union with God, CUT members must balance the

aforementioned aspects within themselves.

Not only are kinship terms loaded with the spiritual significance of the CUT

worldview, they also carry with them social power and authority implications similar to

those illustrated in the Peoples Temple chapter. The members of CUT often refer to

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[98] "Our understanding of life and the universe is that all things are in polarity: plus/minus,
Alpha/Omega, yin/yang, masculine/feminine. The worlds of Spirit and Matter are in polarity as
two manifestations of God's universal presence. In this relationship, Spirit assumes the positive-
yang-masculine polarity, and Matter assumes the negative-yin-feminine polarity. Thus, we have
used masculine pronouns to refer to God and feminine pronouns to refer to the soul, the part of
ourselves that is evolving in the planes of Matter. Also, in order to avoid the sometimes
cumbersome or confusing expressions of gender-neutral language, we have occasionally used
masculine pronouns to refer to the individual. These usages are not intended to exclude women."
(From the copyright page of Mark and Elizabeth Clare Prophet's Paths of Light and Darkness.)
[99] J. Gordon Melton. 1994. The Church Universal and Triumphant: Its Heritage and Thoughtworld. Ed. by
James R. & Melton, J. Gordon Lewis. *Syzygy: Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* Church
Universal and Triumphant in Scholarly Perspective, no. Special Issue: 1-20. 18.

Elizabeth Clare Prophet as "Mother" or "Guru Ma."[100] The use of these kinship terms

creates relationships between the members and reinforces how they should interact with

each other and also what to expect from each other. Just as with the Peoples Temple,

when CUT members use kinship terms they are inscribing these terms upon each other

and creating relationships with each other. Essentially, when the members are using

kinship terms they are remaking themselves into sons and daughters of Prophet and

siblings of the each other. This remaking entails the responsibilities and expectations of

the labels. Therefore the person inscribed with the label "mother" must act in accordance

with the responsibilities and expectations that the members have for whomever is in the

role of mother and vice versa.

Another similarity between the uses of kinship terms for these movements is how

the terms themselves are indicative of their worldviews. Not only do Jones and Prophet's

use of parental labels tie them to their respective movements' beliefs and roots, Christian

and both Christian and Eastern religious traditions respectively: the use of these terms

also reinforces the familial elements of these movements. The use of kinship terms for

both movements represents a condensed theoretical framework that ties the leader into

the belief system of the movement and also illustrates the leader's position within that

belief system. Therefore, through the use of terms like "Father" and "Mother" the

members of the these movements are able to quickly intuit the role of "Father" or

"Mother" and the expectations and responsibilities of these labels. Also by calling Jones

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[100]James R Lewis. 1994. Introduction: Of Tolerance, Toddlers, and Trailers: First Impressions of Church Universal and Triumphant. Ed. by James R. & Melton, J. Gordon Lewis. *Syzygy: Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* Church Universal and Triumphant in Scholarly Perspective, no. Special Issue: vii-xiv. x.

"Father" and Prophet "Mother" the members are placing themselves into the structure of the movement and giving tacit acceptance to their roles as the sons and daughters of these leaders. Essentially, the members of these movements are binding themselves together as a family through their use of kinship terms.

Members and Membership Levels

Before moving to Montana, CUT's headquarters and a number of members lived in California on an old college campus. J. Gordon Melton provides a brief description of CUT's move to Montana.

> In 1977, it purchased the 218-acre former campus of Thomas Aquinas College near Malibu, California, and moved all its offices to the new site, renamed Camelot, in 1978. The Malibu site soon proved too confining to the growing movement and in 1981, 12,000 acres were purchased in southwestern Montana, north of Yellowstone National Park.[101]

Then in 1986 CUT formally moved its headquarters to the Royal Teton Ranch in Paradise Valley Montana.[102] The movement has purchased more land in the surrounding areas since it has relocated to Montana and there have been concerns about the organization's impact upon Yellowstone National Park and much of the contention that the movement has faced in Montana has been over environmental concerns, due to the its close proximity to Yellowstone National Park. There have been accusations of dumping sewage onto land near the Yellowstone River, a documented fuel spill in 1990 that leaked approximately 21,000 gallons of diesel fuel and 11,500 gallons of gasoline into soil, and some concern over the impact of their development on the movements of wildlife in the

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[101] Melton, 16.
[102] Ibid.

area.[103] As of 1993, the Church Universal and Triumphant had about 25,000 acres in

Paradise Valley and there were an estimated 650 to 700 members who lived at the Royal

Teton Ranch.[104] "CUT has now [circa 1997] offered to do a 'land swap,' allowing the

church to consolidate some of its vast, undeveloped land holdings, while removing

certain environmentally sensitive parcels of land from the prospect of development."[105]

The number of members in CUT is hard to determine, but there are some

estimates; in 1980 the media estimated that there were over 25,000 members, about 5,000

devoted members at the Communicant level and about 20,000 on the mailing list.[106]

Other estimates of the number of members living in Paradise Valley Montana are 2,500

people as of 1990.[107] Jones's data on the membership levels of the participants reflects

some of the difficulty of quantifying the level of engagement of CUT members. In the

1993, Jones's data was 1% did not answer, 1% were Pearls Readers, 11% were Keepers

of the Flame, 9.67% were Communicant level and 77.33% involved in multiple levels.[108]

What Jones's and the others' data hints at is the difficulties of examining the

membership of the movement, this difficulty exists for a number of reasons. First, the

number of members in CUT is somewhat of a mystery because CUT claims that there is a

biblical injunction against counting people, which is mostly likely an allusion to 2

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[103] DeHaas, 29-31.
[104] Melton, 19.
[105] John M. Bozeman. 1998. Radical Reorganization in the Church Universal and Triumphant. *Nova Religio* 1, no. 2: 293-301. 295. Unfortunately, I was unable to discover if this deal was ever completed.
[106] Whitsel, 59. Whitsel is citing The *Los Angeles Times* February 1, 1980. A more in depth explanation of the different levels of membership will follow is later in this chapter
[107] DeHaas, 23. DeHaas is citing *The Bozeman Chronicle* March 30, 1990:8. Also this number may be a little high because this was during the shelter period when many members came to Paradise Valley to survive a predicted nuclear event in the movement's bomb shelters. See Tables 3-7 in Appendix 3 for some demographic information about the members gathered during a summer retreat at the Royal Teton Ranch in 1993.
[108] Jones, 43. See Table 7

Samuels 24 where David takes a census and then this action is linked to a plague.[109] The

second reason that it is difficult to assess or quantify membership numbers is due to

different levels of membership, which seem linked to different levels of commitment.

This is especially true when considering that the members of CUT can have different

levels of involvement and different areas of residence, which are spread throughout

Montana, the United States, and the world. Membership in CUT is stratified into 5

levels. Whitsel provides a summary of the five levels and what they mean.

> In addition to the reconstituted Keepers of the Flame[110] (now the first, most
> accessible category), which by the early 1970s had become the membership core
> of the Summit Lighthouse, the new levels included in ascending order:
> Communicants (the first at which one becomes a full member), Sons and
> Daughters of Dominion, Council of the One Hundred and Forty-Four, and Elders
> of the church. Under the redesigned groupings, only the Keepers of the Flame
> were not required to tithe their income.[111]

Each level represents different commitments, different responsibilities, and different

benefits, all of which will be discussed later in this chapter. Whitsel goes on to say that

the higher level members enjoy special privileges, such as exclusive church services at

teaching centers and conferences, though they must also perform church-service-related

duties, such as distributing literature and information materials.[112] At the pinnacle of the

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[109] This interjection is only mentioned indirectly and therefore I sought help from Dr. DesRosiers for likely passages that may be used to support CUT position. I would like to thank Dr. DesRosiers for the help.
[110] Mark Prophet created the Keepers of the Flame while the movement was known as the Summit Lighthouse. During Mark Prophet's time this was a select group that were seen as being more committed to the teachings of Mark Prophet and had take some of his classes. Therefore when Elizabeth Prophet reorganized the CUT movement the Keepers of the Flame became the entry level category or the most basic commitment to the movement. For more explanation about the Keepers of the Flame see Whitsel p30-32.
[111] Whitsel, 38.
[112] Ibid., 39.

membership levels, in both social and spiritual power and authority, is the Messenger, a position held first by Mark Prophet and later Elizabeth.[113]

The Messenger represents the highest position within the Church Universal and Triumphant and as such is accorded with increased authority and responsibilities. The Prophets are seen as "The Messengers" for the Ascended Masters or the Great White Brotherhood and as such they are seen as holding a special place within the CUT hierarchy. Whitsel describes the special place the Messenger holds:

> Also viewed as part of the spirit of the Great White Brotherhood were those "unascended" beings who successfully balanced the majority of the karma they incurred during previous earthly embodiments. Having rendered themselves free of most of their karma, the Prophets (as co-Messengers for the Great White Brotherhood) occupied an elevated place in the group's ascending hierarchy of being. As the exclusive representatives for the Ascended Masters, the Prophets assumed an intermediary position between the membership and the group pantheon of spiritual deities.[114]

The Prophets are described as maintaining a position that is one of the most highly regarded within earthly existence. The regard of this position is further supported by the ascension of Mark Prophet as the Ascended Master Lanello immediately after his death.

A helpful approach for examining the stratified hierarchy of membership levels is to seeing each level as a concentric circle, like a hill on a topographical map, where the largest and outer most circle represents the broadest and most general affiliation with CUT and its belief system. In this analogy the largest circle represents the entry level

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[113] Initially, Mark was considered the sole Messenger of the movement, but he and Elizabeth eventually shared the position of Messenger for a short time before Mark's death in 1973. After Mark's passing Elizabeth became the sole Messenger of the Church Universal and Triumphant.

[114] Ibid., 35. Whitsel cites a 1980 memorandum by CUT that declares that The Messenger has balanced 100 percent of her karma.

membership title, Keepers of the Flame.[115] Because each membership level builds from

the previous one all members of CUT are within the Keepers of the Flame circle.

Therefore, there is a common acceptance of the general CUT belief system. The rules and

logic of this system are self-apparent to the members of CUT and as such they are not

usually called into question. Each circle represents a specific set of CUT beliefs and

values. As a person progresses through the successive levels of membership the levels

become more exclusive and the boundaries between the levels more obviously defined

through specific church responsibilities and attending special church services. As the

circles get smaller and closer to the center they represent a greater exclusivity and

increased dedication to the CUT belief system and therefore a greater acceptance of the

CUT worldview. As the members of CUT move through the successive levels of

membership they also become more set within the CUT worldview, or the rules and

assumption of the CUT worldview are no longer noticed but have moved into the

background of the member's awareness.

Elizabeth Clare Prophet, as The Messenger, is at the pinnacle or the center of

these circles. As stated before, the Messenger is believed to have balanced 100% of her

karma, and has elected to stay embodied on this plane to help others achieve union with

God. The Messenger represents the utmost position of authority on this plane of

existence. All of these elements–balanced karma, revelations and decrees–demonstrate

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[115] The analysis of the membership levels is influenced by Bourdieu's writings concerning social fields and habitus. Also, I am considering the Keeper of the Flame as the entry level membership position in the CUT hierarchy because I want to maintain a focused consideration of the power and authority relationships of the members of CUT. Despite the fact that the case could be made that the people who read the Pearls of Wisdom, the newsletters published by CUT, could be considered members of CUT, their affiliation with the movement seems to be limited to receiving the newsletters and a general acceptance of the basic beliefs of CUT.

aspects of the Messenger's power and authority. Despite the fact that the Messenger is the top position of power and authority on Earth this position must be supported by the members in the lower echelons of the movement, and their support is provided through their trust and acceptance of the Messenger. It is through this support that the members of CUT validate and authorize the Messenger's position. Therefore they, too, are in a position of power and authority because these are relational terms and they need at least two parties to exist. When viewing the power and authority interactions within CUT from a dialectical perspective, then, one can see that the Messenger is reliant upon the other members and the members are reliant upon the Messenger. Each party must be able to address the needs and demands of the other and adapt their relationships to account for these needs and because of this a delicate balance must be achieved that addresses the needs of both parties, without unduly infringing upon either parties needs.

The membership of the Church Universal and Triumphant is a stratified but unified community. There are multiple levels of membership and each leads to increasing levels of engagement and responsibility. Despite the stratified membership levels the use of kinship labels seems to reinforce the movement's unity, and creates the sense of a large family led by "Guru Ma." Another element that helps to unify the members is aspects of its worldview, especially ideas concerning threats and pressures from outside of the movement. Similar to the Peoples Temple, the Church Universal and Triumphant perceived itself as being under constant pressure from sources outside of the movement and these perceived pressures helped to create a unified identity, which solidified the members' commitment to each other and the movement.

Worldview and External Pressures and Threats

Once the Church Universal and Triumphant moved to the Royal Teton Ranch in Paradise Valley Montana it assumed the shape of a cloistered spiritual community. This move, much like that of the Peoples Temple to Jonestown, represented a psychological break with American society, which was seen as a negative influence upon the members and was believed to limit their ability to achieve their spiritual goals.[116] Devoted members moved to the Royal Teton Ranch and served as staff members; the ranch soon became the permanent home of more than 600 members of CUT.[117] Similar to the varying levels of membership, there seems to be a correlation, at least from the members' perspective, between devotional commitment of the members to the movement's beliefs and worldview and where they live.[118] Assuming that most devoted people live on or near the headquarters then the individuals living closest to the movement's headquarters are going to experience a greater reinforcement of the CUT worldview because they are surrounded by elements that reinforce their worldview and avoid elements that do not reinforce it.

In the 1980s and the early 1990s CUT members experienced a highly insular period and they focused on separating themselves from American society. "Prophet, as the singular focus of religious authority in the movement, issued the directives that placed CUT in its defensive posture. Her leadership function extended to virtually every aspect of the group's existence, including the way the outside world was perceived."[119] Prior to

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[116] Ibid., 47.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid., 59.
[119] Ibid., 56.

the relocation of CUT headquarters to the Royal Teton Ranch in Montana and continuing

after, the leadership of the Church Universal and Triumphant continually sought

separation from American society.

> What was largely unknown outside of the church, however, was that the core
> membership had developed a style of thought that increasingly directed it to turn
> inward, away from a surrounding culture considered "dangerous" and "impure,"
> as a means of survival. The ideas that shaped this response to the outside are
> found in CUT's survival literature of the period and in the statements of
> Elizabeth Clare Prophet.[120]

Prophet was concerned about the members of CUT being in a position to survive a

meltdown of the American society. The members' concern regarding survival of the

movement can be seen reaching its pinnacle with Prophet's predictions of a nuclear

attack. Prophet's concerns were derived from two sources. First she claimed the

Ascended Masters were warning her about an impending negative karmic cycle and the

Royal Teton Ranch was seen as place from which the movement could more productively

work towards counteracting the negative karma.[121] Second, CUT saw American society

moving towards disaster due to the threats of the Soviet Union and world communism

and the members of CUT were worried because they saw American society as

increasingly unprepared to deal with this threat. [122] Therefore the relocation of the

movement's headquarters to Montana achieved two goals because it distanced the

movement from the perceived negative effects of American society and it provided a

remote location where the movement could prepare for and work against these threats.

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[120] Ibid., 70.
[121] Ibid., 80-1.
[122] Who and what the Nephilim are will be discussed later in the chapter.

The writings published by the movement from this time reveal a membership that is worried and threatened by those outside of the community, especially those of extraterrestrial origins and those complicit with the extraterrestrials' goals of world domination.[123] The Church Universal and Triumphant's worldview is predicated upon a dichotomous split between good/light versus evil/dark. The extraterrestrial threats, which are often seen as the harbinger of darkness, are known as the Nephilim and Watchers. The Prophets, in their book Paths of Light and Darkness, describe the fall of the Nephilim and the Watchers (also referred to as the "sons of God"), who are a group of angels cast out of heaven, and the Nephilim and then discuss how both groups are embodied into corporeal forms.[124]

> Sentenced to earthly life, the angels thereafter became as mortal men. From the original prototype, they have cloned and carbon-copied an oppressive godless power elite. These fallen ones, together with the progeny of the Nephilim, have continued to embody on earth without interruption for at least half a million years.
>
> These facts, although exposed in the forgotten manuscripts of the Book of Enoch and mentioned occasionally throughout the Old and New Testament Scriptures, have been concealed from the children of the Light for thousands of years by deliberate design.[125]

The Nephilim are from a reference in Genesis 6.4. "The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went in to the daughters of humans who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown."[126] The movement's mythos posits the Nephilim and the Watchers as extremely

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[123] Ibid., 74. Extraterrestrial refers to both angelic and alien beings.

[124] The Prophets state that the fall of the Nephilim is different from that of the Watchers because the Nephilim were made to fall and the Watchers fell of their own accord. Prophet, 237.

[125] , Mark L. Prophet & Elizabeth Clare Prophet. 2005. *Paths of Light and Darkness.* Corwin Springs, Montana: Summit University Press. 237.

[126] HarperCollins Study Bible NRSV

intelligent and potent beings, which are part of a conspiracy to take control of the earth.
[127] CUT's mythology regarding the Nephilim and the Watchers reveals a movement that

perceives itself and the world threatened by outsiders. These perceived threats helped to

solidify the communal identity of the movement and help to reinforce their worldview.

CUT members saw themselves as the children of Light, who were one of the

counterforces to darkness, and as such they had to be ready to survive anything to ensure

that the Light could continue. From this perspective it is easier to understand the actions

of CUT during the shelter period, during which the members devoted copious amounts of

time and money into the creation of shelters and the stockpiling of supplies to survive the

predicted attack.

Shelter Night and its aftermath

In the days leading up to March 15 the members of CUT prayed and spent some

nights in the shelters as practice for the real event. During the nights spent in the shelters

before March 15 the members in the shelters would spend time decreeing and praying to

avert the attack.[128] On March 15 all the members who had reserved a spot in the shelters

took refuge. When they emerged the next day to discover that the attack had not

occurred they were relieved but the failed prediction had to be explained in way that did

not disrupt their worldview. They offered several explanations. One was that the event

had not been a prediction but really more of a warning of increased probability. Another

explanation was that through all of the preparation, the decreeing, listening to and acting

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[127] In the Prophets' book <u>Paths of Light and Darkness</u> there is an endnote that discusses the phrase "sons of God" and how some versions of the Greek Septuagint translate this phrase as "angels of God." This is important because it fits with CUT mythology of a group of beings that have been judged as unworthy of reunion with God and fall into the category of evil other. See Appendix 2 for entire endnote.
[128] Whitsel, 109-10.

upon the warnings from the Ascended Masters the members of CUT helped prevent the event from occurring. Some of the leadership also claimed that the sheltering on March 15 was a surprise practice event and that they in fact did not expect an attack to occur.[129]

Elements of the leadership also claimed that despite the fact that the predicted event did not occur the world was still in an era of negative karma and therefore a threat was still present; the prediction was not wrong but only postponed.[130] There seems to be evidence to suggest that the membership and leadership of CUT fully expected an attack to occur and only downplayed the inevitability of the prediction after its failure. For example, one can see the sincerity of the members' belief in the inevitability of the attack through the large number of members who came to the Royal Teton Ranch for shelter and the long hours and hurried work schedule to complete the shelters by the predicted date.[131] These preparations were evident enough that even those outside of the movement noticed them. When authors Gary Shepherd and Lawrence Lilliston interviewed the priest of a local Catholic school three years after the unrealized event, the priest expressed that he had had concerns about some of the CUT children being overworked because they were helping to set up the shelters in time for the predicted date.[132] The priest also said that some of the younger children seemed very upset at the prospect of

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[129] Ibid., 112-4.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid., 118.
[132] Gary Shepherd & Lawrence Lilliston. 1994. Children of the Church Universal and Triumphant: Some Preliminary Impressions. Ed. by James R. & Melton, J. Gordon Lewis. *Syzygy: Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* Church Universal and Truimphant in Scholarly Perspective, no. Special Issue: 67-96. 72.

having to live underground for a number of years and because they would miss their friends who would not be in the shelters with them.[133]

While it is difficult to say with 100% certainty that CUT expected an attack, from this evidence there does seem to be good circumstantial evidence that they did. When the attack did not occur reconciliation was needed between what was predicted and what actually occurred. Therefore there was a potential for Prophet to lose the trust of some of the members. A number of members left CUT shortly after Prophet's unrealized prediction. It seems safe to assume that the members who left CUT at that point no longer supported Prophet's authority because she had lost their trust and acceptance.

Bruce Lincoln's ideas concerning the social drama of authority provides insight into how an unrealized prediction can affect the social power and authority of the predictor. A failed prediction erodes the trust and acceptance of the audience or community, which are the foundations of social power and authority, and this necessitates efforts to regain the acceptance and trust of those listening to and believing in the predictor's predictions. The leadership's explanations (i.e. decreeing, heeding the Ascended Masters' warning and downplaying the predicted inevitability of the event) all helped to reconcile the prediction with reality and they can be seen as examples of Prophet's and others' attempts to regain the trust that was lost due to the unrealized prediction. By demonstrating how the actions of the members of CUT thwarted the predicted attack, Prophet explained why the unrealized prediction did not occur. This explanation was still within the worldview of the members of CUT and thereby this

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[133] Ibid.

explanation reintegrated the unrealized prediction into the CUT worldview and had the potential to reaffirm the trust and acceptance Prophet may have lost. Therefore by explaining why the prediction did not occur through the CUT worldview Prophet is able to regain and/or maintain the acceptance and trust of, at least some of the members, and maintain her place of authority.

Despite Prophet's and the others' explanations, a number of members left the movement after the unrealized prediction. "Disillusioned CUT members fled Paradise Valley in droves after the nuclear disaster failed to happen. By some accounts, half of the three to four thousand CUT adherents who had come to Montana from 1986 until the time of the emergency call suddenly left the area once expectations for a massive Soviet strike dissipated."[134] Some of the reasons that people left CUT was because Prophet lost their trust and acceptance and therefore they were no longer willing to grant her a position of authority. Due to the number of members that left the movement after the shelter period the remaining members began a concerted effort to draw in new recruits and thus marked a new era of the Church Universal and Triumphant.

Prophet pushed the recruitment of new members both domestically and internationally, with specific focus in South Korea and Russia in 1994.[135] Later in 1996, Prophet and a twelve person entourage began a 33 day recruitment tour of six Latin American countries meant to reinvigorate CUT membership.[136] During this tour, Prophet gave talks about karma, reincarnation, and focused on the Ascended Masters' revelations

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[134] Ibid., 115.
[135] Ibid., 134.
[136] Ibid., 139.

that emphasized these topics. "Recognizing that a potential seedbed of recruits existed in several non-church-affiliated New Age groups in the region, Prophet emphasized her message of human transcendence and the arrival of the Aquarian Age to approving audiences familiar with these general New Age concepts."[137] These recruitment efforts were an active courting of people who were interested in and may have held New Age beliefs, which Prophet and others saw as a potential gateway to new membership in the Church Universal and Triumphant and new membership was a way to ensure the preservation of the movement. Prophet did not endorse all aspects of the New Age movement; she spoke out against what she saw as its self-absorbed nature because it did not lend itself to the advancement of humanity.[138] Given the communal orientation of the movement and from what we have seen with the members' use of kinship terms, CUT focused upon the creation of tight knit community that would work towards reunion with God by supporting each other. Therefore she criticized aspects of New Age teaching that foster an individualist approach to "enlightenment."

CUT recruitment efforts provide another instance to examine the social power and authority interactions in the relationships between CUT's leadership and the potential members using the conceptual tools provided by Foucault, Lincoln, and Bourdieu. By emphasizing elements of CUT's beliefs that were more in line with New Age values, Prophet was beginning a dialogue with potential members who had to decide whether or not CUT membership was for them. The beginning of this process was marked by Prophet seeking the acceptance and trust of the potential members. This is a perfect

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[137] Ibid., 140. Whitsel is citing a CUT Newsletter *Royal Teton Ranch News* (spring-summer 1996): 5-7.
[138] Ibid., 142. Whitsel is citing interviews that he had with Prophet

example of Lincoln's claim that the speaker needs to win the acceptance and trust of the audience and remain in a position of authority. Prophet attempted to do this by emphasizing specific CUT beliefs (or in Bourdieu's language, specific habitus of the CUT field) that were similar to those of the new age movements. By doing this she was addressing the influence and power that the potential members have in this relationship; by emphasizing aspects of CUT ideology that would have been appealing to these potential members. Although the potential members have influence and power it can only extend so far because there are some fundamental beliefs and ideas that Prophet and the established members of CUT will not change or compromise, which is also the case of the potential members. Eventually a potential member will either accept the most basic and essential elements of CUT's worldview and become a Keeper of the Flame, or he or she will not accept the beliefs of the movement and this individual will not become a member.

This interaction provides an excellent example of Foucault's claim that power and authority are dialectical relationships, because Prophet emphasized specific beliefs to engage the potential members but she also deemphasized aspects of New Age beliefs, specifically, what she saw as the more individualistic and self-absorbed elements of this ideology. By doing so, Prophet sought recruits that held similar beliefs, values and tastes to CUT and therefore with a worldview similar to the worldview of the current members, which would make the transition into the movement progress more smoothly. The dialogue between these groups adapted and refined what it meant to be a member of CUT because each party, the established CUT membership and the new membership, emphasized and deemphasized elements that played off of the expectations of the other

group. Eventually, some potential members would accept the CUT beliefs and values, which were being refined by this dialogue, and once these potential members had become members proper then the dialectical nature of the relationships became more subtle. The subtlety of this dialectical relationship is due, in part to, the mutual acceptance of CUT beliefs and values because, ideally, there are fewer differences in what each member sees as the essential beliefs and values of CUT membership and therefore there are potentially fewer substantial changes being made to the CUT belief system.

Conclusion

This examination used "shelter night" and its aftermath as a focal point to examine the social power and authority interactions in the relationships of the members of the Church Universal and Triumphant. Similar to the Peoples Temple, a number of significant concepts, kinship terms, the members' worldview, membership levels, and external pressures and threats, were used to provide greater context about the members' relationships, especially during the more isolated shelter period. Through the context provided by these concepts this analysis explored the social power and authority relationships of the members shortly before, during and after "shelter night."

As this and the previous chapter have examined, the use of kinship terms created specific types of relationships between different parties, and these relationships entail specific responsibilities and expectations. Both the members of the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant used kinship terms when addressing each other and by doing so they create a specific type of relationship between each other. Therefore, when the members of CUT refer to Elizabeth Prophet as Mother they created a

mother/child relationship between Prophet and themselves and they also created sibling

relationships between each other. The exploration and analysis of the social power and

authority relationships of the members benefits greatly from the context of these

relationships.

This examination also used ideas about the members' worldview and levels of

membership to further illustrate elements of the social power and authority interactions in

the relationships of the members. A significant aspect of the members' worldview was

the importance of isolating the movement during the "shelter period" to ensure the

protection of their community, which was also their family. CUT members anticipated a

time of negative karma and they saw themselves as defenders of humanity against dark

forces. These forces sought to hinder the spiritual advancement of humanity, and CUT

members saw themselves as the protectors of humanity and therefore believed that it was

imperative for the well-being of humanity that the CUT members survive. Therefore the

members of CUT began preparations to survive the predicted negative karmic cycle to

ensure their continued existence.

The members' preparations to survive this negative karmic cycle began with the

relocation of their headquarters to Montana, but turned toward more survivalist activities

as the Messenger's predictions became more dire, i.e. predicting nuclear attacks.

Therefore the members of CUT began the creation of bomb shelters and stock piling

supplies in order to be prepared for the worst. During this time the members were seeing

the world from a dualistic perspective of good versus evil. By coupling this perspective

with their isolated location, the members were creating an environment that would

support and reinforce their worldview. Through understanding the role of kinship terms, community identity, and the perceived pressures from outsiders during this time it becomes easier to see what may have motivated the members of CUT to expend so much of their personal resources in the creation of their bomb shelters to survive the predicted nuclear attack.

After the predicted event failed to occur some members of CUT left the movement and this can be understood as Prophet losing their trust and acceptance. Even though some members left, many members did not and some of the reasons for their staying can be understood through a dialectical understanding of the power and authority relationships of the members. Essentially, the trust and respect of the Messenger, and the movement in general, needed to be reinforced. To accomplish these tasks, Prophet and other explained how certain actions taken by the movement prevented the attack from occurring. These actions were explained in a manner that reinforced the members' worldview and helped to maintain the Messenger's position of social power and authority within the movement.

In the mid-1990s CUT began an effort to recruit new members. This effort sought them through the common beliefs between the CUT worldview and that of the New Age worldviews, for example reincarnation. The process of recruiting new members illustrates the complex nature of the social power and authority interactions between the members of CUT and the potential members. During the recruitment activities Prophet can be seen as emphasizing specific CUT beliefs and doctrine that may appeal to one interested in New Age beliefs. By emphasizing these beliefs Prophet is

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tailoring her message to her audience and in doing so she implicitly acknowledges their ability to grant her authority, which hinges on the potential members trusting and accepting her. The potential members are left with a choice to trust and accept Prophet and join CUT, or they could not trust her and not join the movement. If the potential member becomes an actual member then the essence of what it means to be a member of CUT is in the process of undergoing a dialectical redefinition as both parties, the current members and the new members, subtlety change the beliefs, tastes, and values of CUT, which changes what it means to be a member of CUT.

Chapter 4: Discussion and Conclusion

This project started by examining two similar events, "white night" and "shelter night" and through these events this examination identified specific concepts that could be used to illustrate the social power and authority interactions of the members' relationships within the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant. Once these specific concepts were identified they were used to provide greater context about the social power and authority interactions in the members' relationships. The more context about the members and their relationships that one can find the better one is able to understand the actions and decisions of the people within these movements, which directly affects the examination of the their social power and authority relationships. This examination sees social power and authority as being dialectical and relational concepts that can only be studied through the interactions of two or more things. This

conception of social power and authority was derived from the concepts and methodology of Michel Foucault, Bruce Lincoln and Pierre Bourdieu. Each of these theorists has added different elements to this study's ability to examine social power and authority through context and understanding.

According to Foucault, power is not an independent entity but rather is a result of an interaction between parties and therefore it is a relational concept. Because power is a relational concept it is necessary to study it through the use of specific concepts or acts within these movements. It is for this reason that I have focused on key concepts like kinship terms, socialism, communal living, and responses to external threats. These concepts were realized as significant to the members of these movements within the context of "white night" and "shelter night." Another element important to this examination is the Foucauldian understanding of the relationship between power and knowledge, how the two are intertwined and how one cannot be used without the other. This can best be seen in the kinship sections of chapters 2 and 3 where the use of these terms is analyze in greater detail. Essentially, when a kinship term is used it can be seen as an act of labeling, which includes a power relation through the created relationship between the labeler and labelee. To understand the power relations in the use of kinship terms one must first understand the use and context of these terms, which can be found in how the use of these terms creates responsibilities and expectations between the labeler and labelee. Once this context is understood then one can better see the power relation between the parties involved.

Similar to power, Lincoln conceives of authority as a dialectical and relational concept, which is best seen through interactions of the involved parties. One of the ways of examining authority through these interactions is to treat it as a performative relationship between those involved. The performative element of authority builds from its relational nature but also includes the fact that those in authority must have the trust and acceptance of those who are not in authority. A position of authority rests directly upon the trust and acceptance of those whom the position has authority over. Therefore the one in authority must always be aware of how those not in authority are reacting to her or his actions. Also, the one in authority can use a variety of different methods to retain the trust and acceptance of those who are granting her or him authority. By coupling Foucault's ideas about power to Lincoln's ideas about the performative elements of authority one is able to see a network of connections throughout the membership of these movements, which can best be analyzed through specific concepts within these movements.

Bourdieu's ideas about social fields and habitus were used as a way to understand these social movements and their reactions to others. The members' habitus help to determine how they will interact with the world and therefore can be extremely important in examining social power and authority interactions, which can only be examined through actions and the use of concepts. These actions and key concepts are important elements in the individual's worldview and they can help illuminate the habitus of the members' social fields and as such they are where power and authority interactions can be found. A great example of how Bourdieu's theories have influenced this analysis can be seen in chapter 3 during the examination of the CUT membership levels. By

combining elements of Bourdieu's theories with those of Foucault and Lincoln this

examination created concepts of power and authority that were dialectical, relational and

could only be examined through the interactions of the members. The context of these

interactions was needed to ensure that this examination analyzing the social power and

authority of these members in manner that did justice to these people.

In the background of this examination there has been an effort to dispel some of

the commonly held ideas about new religious movements, especially ideas concerning the

ability of the members to think and act for themselves. There are many common

assumptions about people who are members of new religious movements that subtly, or

sometimes not so subtly, strip away the human element of those involved. These

common assumptions often deny the autonomy of individuals and often reduce them to

automatons. This simplistic categorization of the people in these movements denies their

agency, which can be a prominent factor in seeing them as less than human. By seeing

the dialectical nature of social power and authority interactions within movements like

the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant one can gain greater

insight into movements and the people within them. This is important because a better

understanding of the members of new religious movements may have gone a long way in

preventing the tragedy of Jonestown, or even Waco. Due to this examination's

understanding of social power and authority as dynamic and dialectical concepts it

necessitates the view that all parties engaged in these interactions are complicit, at least in

some manner, in the social power and authority relationships. Thus, this understanding

of social power and authority ensures some element of agency for all of the people within

these parties. As this project has previously discussed, the relational aspect of power and

authority is inherent in the writings of Foucault and Lincoln and the perspective of social power and authority as a relationship further reinforces the image of these members as a community, and the in cases of the Peoples Temple and CUT, a large extended family.

Kinship terms

One of the more prominent concepts that this examination focuses upon is the use of kinships terms. An analysis of the use of kinship terms reveals another level of connection between the members of the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant. The use of these labels are important elements in both of these movements, especially the use of paternal and maternal labels for the leadership, and the examination of these movements as extended families offers a significant avenue of inquiry into their social power and authority relationships. As discussed previously in chapters 2 and 3, the use of these labels creates specific expectations of and responsibilities for all the parties involved in the familial relationships. Rather than seeing these movements solely as isolationist new religious movements or as secluded religious communities one can add more contextual depth to the description of the members and their relationships by including the familial aspect of these relationships.

As this examination has previously discussed the use of kinship terms creates a bond between two parties and these connections entail specific responsibilities for both parties. To call another person mother, father, brother, sister, etc., illustrates an element of the relationship between the parties involved and as such it creates expectations of the parties. Mothers are expected to act like mothers, father as father and so on; although the exact details of how a mother is supposed to act varies between different groups of

people according to their beliefs and values. The relationship between parties established

by the use of kinship terms is dynamic because the expectations of each party are

continually asserted and redefined according to the interactions of the parties involved in

the relationship. The expectations of those involved in the relationship change as the

relationship changes over time, therefore the parties are engaged in a type of dialogue

that continually refines and shapes the expectations of those in a relationship. The

refining and shaping of the expectations illustrates a dialectical aspect of these

relationships because each party brings expectations of the other to the table and through

interaction, whether implicit or explicit, the acceptability of these expectations are

asserted or denied and the parties involved strive to fulfill these expectations.[139] When

Jones is referred to as "Father" and Prophet as "Mother" they are expected to fulfill these

roles according to their respective traditions. Therefore the use of these terms sets

expectations in how Jones and Prophet can act within the role of "Father" and "Mother"

and just as these terms set expectations for Jones and Prophet they also set expectations

for the members to be sons and daughters to Jones and Prophet in their roles as "Father"

and "Mother." The use of parental kinship terms also establishes a relationship between

the members because they become siblings to each other. Similar to the parent/child

relationship discussed above these sibling relationships also entail expectations and are

shaped and refined through a similar dialectical process. Thus the framework of the

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[139] It should be noted that not only does one party have expectations of the other party the first party also has expectations of itself, and part of the dialectical relationship between the parties is how expectations of oneself and the expectations of another overlap and deviate from each other and vice versa from the other party's perspective. Therefore as the parties interact with each other the expectations of each are continually shaped and refined through these interactions. As both parties change over time so too does their relationship, therefore these processes are never really complete because the dialogue never concludes but continues throughout the life of the relationship.

family can be seen in these movements through their use of these kinship terms. An examination of these terms and how they are used offers insight into the members' expectations of each other, which is a step in the right direction towards understanding the context of social power and authority interactions of the members within these movements.

This examination has analyzed the use of kinship terms by these movements to gain further insight into the dialectical nature of their social power and authority interactions. Both movements cast themselves in the image of family through the use of these labels. By focusing upon the concept of family one is able to see and appreciate these movements' relationships with greater understanding. While the examination of this concept proved invaluable to this analysis it can only be used because of these movements' use of kinship terms and the use of this concept in the examination of other movements may not be as appropriate. By coupling this concept with these movements' worldviews, especially how the members conceived of members and outsiders, then greater context and hopefully greater insight can be found into the members' social power and authority interactions.

Insider/outsider issues

Both the Peoples Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant's worldviews were influenced by their dualistic perspectives concerning who were and were not members of these movements. Much of the Peoples Temple and CUT's writing during their more isolated periods reflect a great concern with protecting their communities from the threats and pressures from outside of their movements. Building from this

dichotomous view of membership it is important note that these movements' ideas about membership were complex and cannot be reduced to a checklist of criteria. Therefore the concepts focused upon by this analysis should not be considered necessary and sufficient markers of membership but more like prominent elements of the members' worldview that reinforce inclusion in these movements. For example, the Peoples Temple chapter used beliefs in socialism, desire for equality, and a desire for a communal society to peek into the worldview of the members of the Peoples Temple, and the CUT chapter explored the members' desire for an isolated community, which helps reinforce their spiritual goals, and the complex system of membership levels to see how these elements helped to reinforce ideas of membership within this movement.

By focusing on these prominent elements in the members' worldviews this analysis was able to explore how these elements helped to reinforce a sense of belonging within these movements. The commitment of the members to the ideals of their respective movements marked their level of engagement in the worldview of these movements. The elements listed above were most prominent during these movements' more isolated periods and because of this there may have been more emphasis placed on what it meant to be a member of these movements. The communal ideal of the Peoples Temple was foundational to the worldview of members and the Jonestown settlement may have been perceived as a physical manifestation of this worldview. Similarly, the CUT members' relocation of their movement's headquarters to Montana was a commitment to a more isolated community. This isolated community was built so that the members could help each other to attain their spiritual goals while avoiding the distraction and perceived negativity of American society. The relocation also had a

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second goal in that it provided the members with a better probability of survival in the chance of a nuclear attack. Both movements created isolated communities that sought to reinforce their worldviews, and they also sought to distance themselves from the outside world, which was seen as corrupt and harmful to the members. Therefore, significant emphasis was placed on elements that helped illustrate membership in these movements and also reinforced their worldviews.

Pressures & Threats

Both the Peoples Temple and CUT sought to limit their exposure to American society because they believed it had a corrosive effect on their members and their communities. The Peoples Temple saw American society as dominated by negative elements, such as capitalism, racism and sexism; all of these things were anathema to their beliefs and goals. Similar sentiments concerning American society can be seen in the Church Universal and Triumphant's relocation to Montana, despite the overtly patriotic views of CUT. CUT saw the Cold War as a political manifestation of the cosmic battle between good (the United States) and evil (the Soviet Union).[140] Despite the U.S.A.'s position as a force of good, Prophet claimed that American society was in a state of moral decline similar to that of Rome's.[141] Therefore it was perceived milieu of decline and failure of American society's that CUT was attempting to escape by isolating themselves in Montana. Through relocation and isolation these movements were working to create an environment where their worldviews were reinforced and a measure of protection was offered from the perceived pressures that threatened these movements.

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[140] Whitsel, 4.
[141] Ibid., 82.

The Peoples Temple and The Church Universal and Triumphant reacted to their respective threats in similar ways through isolation and unification. Essentially, these closed communities sought to limit the involvement of those from outside of their movements; thus through isolation they found unification of the members in the movement. The unifying effect of these pressures galvanized the membership of these movements against these external threats and helped to promote a unified identity of membership. Therefore, the members of these movements were using the pressures from outside of their movements to create a foil against which they were defining themselves and unifying themselves as a community, at least in part, through these pressures. These external pressures, along with the use of kinship terms, socialism, communal living, and other prominent elements of each movement's worldview, are all examples of relationships between the members of these movements. All of these relationships were significant elements of the social power and authority relationships of the members of these movements during "white night" and "shelter night."

White Night/Shelter Night

The members of both, the People Temple and the Church Universal and Triumphant, anticipated attacks upon themselves and they had to react to these threats in ways that were acceptable with their worldviews. There are some similarities in how both movements responded to these threats because they both sought a place to create isolated communities. The isolated communities of Jonestown and the Royal Teton Ranch in Montana became the spaces of security, sanctuary, and unification for each movement.

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As previously mentioned the isolationist tendencies of these movements were reinforced, in part, through the othering of secular society, which both movements thought to be full of conspiracies and persecution.[142] Some of the discussions concerning the worldviews of millenarian movements seem appropriate for this analysis due to the similarities between the dichotomous perspective of the world held by the Peoples Temple, CUT, and millenarian movements. The Peoples Temple and CUT each created worldviews that were divided by dualities, and their perspectives are very similar to how Michael Barkun describes the worldview of millenarian movements: "It is a world of sharp divisions between good and evil, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness."[143] The worldviews of both the Peoples Temple and CUT's can be seen as stark contrasts between good and evil, especially during their isolated periods. It was from this dualistic perspective that these movements reacted to the events and circumstances that led to "white night" and "shelter night."

The actions of these movements during "white night" and "shelter night" can be seen as the members of these movements doing what they thought was necessary to preserve themselves and their communities. While this is obvious in the case of the members of CUT, who built bomb shelters to protect themselves from a predicted nuclear attack, it may be less obvious when one considers the Peoples Temple. Catherine Wessinger describes the Peoples Temple's "white night" as defending and preserving their ultimate concern against the threat of outsiders:

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[142]James T. Richardson. 1982. A Comparison between Jonestown and Other Cults. In *Violence and Religious Commitment: Implications of Jim Jones's People's Temple Movement*, ed. by Ken Levi, 21-34. University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press. 31. Prophets, 221-2.
[143] Barkun, Michael. 2000. Millennium Culture: The Year 2000 as a Religious Event. In *Millennial Visions*, ed. Martha F. Lee, 41-54. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger. 45.

The ultimate concern of the Jonestown residents was to preserve their communal solidarity, and, thus, be an example that would help establish a future society free of racism, sexism, classism, and ageism. Jim Jones taught that a period of turmoil, race war, and nuclear destruction would precede the establishment of the perfect society, which he believed would be communist.[144]

In this light the Peoples Temple's mass suicide-murder can be seen as revolutionary act because it helped them preserve an aspect of their ultimate concern, a unified community. The community was the ultimate concern of Peoples Temple because it was seen as physical manifestation of their beliefs and ideology. Therefore, the murder of and attacks on Ryan and his delegation opened the door for further involvement from outside of the movement, which almost certainly would have ended with some members of the Jonestown community being detained and removed from the settlement. Jones claimed that once these members were removed from Jonestown it would betray what the community stood for and believed in and therefore would have destroyed the solidarity of the community by betraying its worldview.[145]

The sheltering of CUT members during the prediction for a nuclear attack can be seen in a similar light as "white night" for the Peoples Temple because during this event Prophet and CUT members sought to preserve themselves as a counterbalance against the forces of darkness that were thought to be orchestrating events to create a period of turmoil, which would prevent humanity from achieving its spiritual goals. Therefore, by retreating to the shelters the members of CUT were ensuring the survival of their beliefs

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[144]Catherine Wessinger. 2000. *How the Millennium Comes Violently: From Jonestown to Heaven's Gate.* New York and London: Seven Bridges Press. 15. She is using Robert D. Baird's definition of religion for her examination of millennial groups.
[145] Maaga, 161-2.

and values, which were necessary to prevent the ascension of darkness and to also further the advancement of humanity.

Both movements were motivated by the preservation of their communities, and while the method of preservation may be different the desire to preserve was the same for both movements. The Peoples Temple's action of preservation was a mass suicide-murder that preserved their ideology, and therefore the solidarity of community. The members of CUT sought survival of their community in their bomb shelters, and they believed that the advancement of humanity and even its continued existence rode on their survival. The events of "white night" and "shelter night" bring into focus aspects of the members' relationships which can be demonstrated in the desire to protect their communities. For the Peoples Temple the discussion between Miller and the rest of the movement was a significant example because it illustrated the dynamic relationships between the members of this movement, who were all concerned with the preservation of their community. This interaction highlighted the significance of kinship terms, the worldview of the communal lifestyle and ideology, and also the pressures from outside of the movement. The example for CUT is slightly different because it is illustrated in two parts, first the creation of the bomb shelters and the desire to preserve the community as bastion of good in the fight against evil and also to ensure that humanity had the opportunity to reach its potential. The second part can be found after the failure of the nuclear prediction during the members' efforts to recruit to new members. This event illustrated the members' need to preserve the continuation of the community, which was threatened due to the number of members leaving after the failed prediction. These

attempts to gain new members demonstrate the significant need of CUT members to maintain a stable and continuing community, which is unified in its goals and desires.

Conclusion

This examination used "white night" and "shelter night" as focal points to undertake an analysis of social power and authority. Foucault, Lincoln, and Bourdieu were influential in how this project conceived of power, authority, and social interactions. They also significantly influenced how this analysis formulated the approach used to analyze the social power and authority interactions of the members in these movements. The events and circumstances of "white night" and "shelter night" emphasized specific concepts that were important to the relationships of the members in these movements. These concepts helped to bring out the context and meaning of their relationships, which was needed to anchor the analysis of the social power and authority interactions of the members.

The relational nature of power and authority requires the involvement of two or more parties and the dialectical nature of power and authority necessitates the engagement of all the parties involved in the relationships. The essential nature of power and authority, being both relational and dialectical, has significant ramifications in how one conceives of the power and authority interactions of the members in new religious movements. This understanding of power and authority is important because it displays the autonomy of all the members in these movements due to the fact they must all be involved in power and authority relationships. The realization of the members'

autonomy is a necessary step in ensuring that their humanity is recognized when being examined by outsiders.

The recognition of the members' autonomy and human nature is a significant step in the right direction when dealing with new religious movements. The common portrayal of these movements in the media usually focuses upon the leader and her or his nameless flock. Under a specific set of circumstance this misrepresentation can have significant repercussions in how outsiders choose to interact with these movements. For example consider how the Concerned Relatives interacted with the Peoples Temple members. The Concerned Relatives believed that if Jim Jones was removed from his position of power and authority then the other members of the Peoples Temple would just walk away. Tragically, the Concerned Relatives did not understand how significant a role the unity of the community was to the members. If Ryan and his delegation had understood members' worldview better then they could have engaged the members in ways that did not threaten the existence of the Peoples Temple.

The significance of this project's approach is found in how it may enable better communication between more isolationist groups and those who are seen as outsiders by these groups. By understanding the dynamic relationships of the members in these groups one has a better chance of engaging the members in ways that do not create ill-will and end in tragedy. Recent history can provide a number of examples where a more conscientious and self-aware approach was needed in dealing with isolated groups.

Appendix and Tables

Appendix 1

Here some demographic information about 908 of the 917 people who died on November 18 1978. The age of the people at the time of death is spread across a wide range.

Table 1: Ages at the Time of death.[146]

Age Group (Age Span)	Number	Percentage
Babies (5 and younger)	70	8
Children (6-11)	82	9
Youth (12-19)	188	21
Young Adults (20-35)	229	25
Middle Aged (36-50)	89	10
Older Adults (51-65)	104	11
Seniors (66 and older)	146	16

Table 2: Work Experience and Professional Training at Jonestown.[147]

Training	Number	Percentage
Manual Labor	117	13
Agricultural work	23	2
Domestic worker	107	12
Secretarial	66	7
Health care	101	11
Management of Professional	43	5
Underage or handicapped	291	32
Other	19	2
unknown	146	16

[146] Maaga, 145. Maaga is citing this from Peoples Temple personal records; MS3800 collection, Peoples Temple Archive, California Historical Society, San Francisco, California

[147] Maaga, 145. Maaga is citing this from Peoples Temple personal records; MS3800 collection, Peoples Temple Archive, California Historical Society, San Francisco, California

Appendix 2

Some copies of the Greek Septuagint translated "sons of God" in this verse as "angels of God" (Charles, p.62). The term "sons of God" is also used elsewhere in the Old Testament to indicate angels: see Job 1:6; 2:1. The "sons of God" in Deut. 32:8 (*Jerusalem Bible*) are in most cases understood by scholars to be angels–specifically, the guardian angels assigned to the nations. One theory has it that the Massoretic scribes of the sixth to tenth centuries thought that this idea might lead to worship of these guardian angels, and therefore they changed the original Hebrew words "sons of God" (which they knew to mean "angels") to "children of Israel"–which then found its way into the King James Version of the Bible. Pre-Massoretic manuscripts recently discovered prove that "sons of God" was the original term in the Hebrew Scripture.

It ought to be considered that the term "sons of God" might have originally referred to sons of God in heaven, Christed ones of whom Jesus was one. Some of these sons of God might have fallen, out of the misplaced ambition to create on earth by their Christic seed a super-race who could lead mere earthlings or the creation of the Nephilim on the paths of righteousness and to ultimate reunion with God. Though well intended in their desire to upgrade the evolution of the planet, these sons of God might not have had the divine approbation. Therefore the Watchers, once fallen and judged unworthy of the ascent to God, having lost the sacred fire of their original anointing, would have determined in any case to dominate the scene of earth life with their superior intellect and overwhelming presence yet residual from their lost estate. If, in fact, the Watchers were the fallen sons of God and the Nephilim the fallen angels, we can understand both the difference of their modus operandi and reason for being and the dissimilarity of their natures that remains observable to the present.[148]

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[148] Prophets 2005 p423 footnote 25

Appendix 3

The following tables provide various types of demographic information about members of the Church Universal and Triumphant that attended a summer retreat in 1993.

Table 3: Citizenship[149]

Country	Count	Percent
No Answer	1	.33%
U.S.	224	74.67%
Mexico	3	1%
Canada	27	9%
Europe	31	10.33%
South/Central America	8	2.76%
Africa	0	0%
Asia	3	1%
Oceania	3	1%

Table 4: Race[150]

Race	Count	Percent
No Answer	4	1.33%
White	268	89.33%
African American	6	2%
Asian	7	2.33%
Hispanic/Latin American	12	4%
Native American	3	1%

Table 5: Education[151]

Education Level	Count	Percent
Less than H.S.	28	9.33%
H.S. Grad	45	15%
Some College	82	27.33%
College Grad	83	27.67%
Tech. Degree	41	13.67%
Prof. Degree	17	5.67%
Bus. Admin.	3	1%
Education	1	.33%
Other	0	0%

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[149] Constance A. Jones. Jones, Constance A. 1994. Church Universal and Triumphant: A Demographic Profile. Ed. by James R. & Melton, J. Gordon Lewis. *Sygyzy: Journal of Alternative Religion and Culture* Church Universal and Triumphant in Scholarly Perspective, no. Special Issue: 39-54. 40.

[150] Ibid., 41.
[151] Ibid., 43.

Table 6: Income[152]

Income level	Count	Percent
No Answer	8	2.67%
Less $5,000	66	22%
$5-9,999	37	12.33%
$10-19,999	62	20.67%
$20-29,999	44	14.67%
$30,-39,999	31	10.33%
$40-49,999	16	5.33%
$50-59,999	33	11%
$60-69,999	3	1%

Table 7: Membership Level[153]

Membership Level	Count	Percent
No Answer	3	1%
Pearls Reader	3	1%
Keeper	33	11%
Communicant	29	9.67%
Multiple	232	77.33%

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[152] Ibid., 47.
[153] Ibid., 43.

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