Cult Case Study Report Sheet

Scientology:

Check off all criteria that Scientology meets in the makeup of a cult.

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| ***Traits*** |  | ***Danger Factor*** |  | ***Tools of Leader*** |  | ***Member Traits******Based on Study*** |  | ***Member Traits******Based on Study*** |  |
| Unquestioning Devotion |  | Control of Relationships |  | Mind Control |  | Stress/Crisis lead them to Cult |  | Low Tolerance for Ambiguity |  |
| Manipulation of Followers |  | Isolation |  | Deception |  | Desire for Belonging |  | Fed up with Society |  |
| Physical or Mental Stress |  | Daily Activities controlled |  | Dependency |  | Lack Self Confidence |  | Find Meaning of Life |  |
| Charismatic Leader |  | Culture of Reporting |  | Dread |  | Unassertive – Can’t Say No |  | Ignorant to Manipulation |  |
| Standard of Behavior |  |  |  |  |  | Gullible – Believe anything |  |  |  |

Case Study Reflection:

Based on the Documentary: Going Clear – Scientology and the Prison of Belief answer the following on the back of this paper.

1. Was L Ron Hubbard a con man or a visionary? Answer in a sentence or two.
2. Would you separate the Church of Scientology from the Sea Org in respect to cult like behavior? Why or Why not?
3. Why has Scientology been able to do the things they have done and not get much bad press, aside from this documentary?
4. View the video from South Park: “What Scientologist Actually Believe” Does satire like this give credentials to Scientology or hurt it?
5. Research the situation between Leah Remini and the Church of Scientology. Does this corroborate the depiction of Scientology in Going Clear?

 Cult Case Study Report Sheet

Heaven’s Gate:

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Case Study Reflection:

Based on the Case Study answer the following on the back of this paper.

1. What astronomical event triggered the actions of the Heaven’s Gate Cult?
2. Describe the ceremonial fashion in which they carried out the suicidal Act.

Cult Case Study Report Sheet

Aum Shinrikyo:

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Case Study Reflection:

Based on the Case Study answer the following on the back of this paper.

1. What physical Ailment did Shoko Ashara have that he claimed gave him Supernatural Powers?
2. What was the doomsday event that the Aum Shinrikyo carried out?

Cult Case Study Report Sheet

Manson Family:

Check off all criteria that Scientology meets in the makeup of a cult.

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Case Study Reflection:

Based on the Case Study answer the following on the back of this paper.

1. What kind of citizen was Charles Manson before the formation of his Family?
2. For a period of time the Family lived with a member of what famous band?
3. What was Charles Manson’s Helter Skelter?
4. How many Act did the family carry out?
5. View some interviews with Charles Manson in Prison. Give a brief (1 paragraph) description of his demeanor, and influence.

Cult Case Study Report Sheet

Jonestown:

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Case Study Reflection:

Based on the Documentary: Jonestown Paradise Lost answer the following on the back of this paper.

1. What was the main reason Jim Jones’ people followed him to Guyana?
2. How did Jones eliminate himself and his people?
3. Why was the US Government investigating Jonestown?
4. Describe the tactics taken by Jones to control the actions of his people including the final moments.

Cult Case Study Report Sheet

Unification Church (The Moonies):

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Case Study Reflection:

Based on the Case Study answer the following on the back of this paper.

1. Sun Myung Moon gained his influence by claiming to be what kind of person?
2. The Moonies are known for what grandiose display of faith?

Cult Case Study Report Sheet

Branch Davidians:

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Case Study Reflection:

Based on the Case Study answer the following on the back of this paper.

1. In what manner was David Koresh abusive to his followers?
2. What was the justification for the ATF and FBI to raid the Compound?

Most people that join cults are "normal." They are not mentally ill or social outcasts. Those who join cults often come from a wide variety of social categories and backgrounds. However, people who join cults do tend to display one or more of the following personality traits:

(1) They are experiencing some type of stress, crisis, or turmoil in their lives. This could include a romantic break-up, failure in school, or problems at work.

(2) They have a strong desire to belong to a group or organization. They want to be part of something good or worthwhile - something bigger than themselves. Some people need to believe that there is some good purpose for their lives.

(3) They have a lack of self-confidence. People who are not sure of themselves are more likely to need others to validate their worth and/or to make them feel good about themselves.

(4) They are unassertive - have trouble expressing criticism and doubt and/or find it hard to say "no" to others. People who cannot say "no" are more likely to be coerced into joining a group out of fear of offending others or having conflict.

(5) They are gullible and believe what they are told without thinking or questioning. These kind of people are simply unable to logically evaluate things they are told. They will trust what someone else tells them instead of thinking it through and coming to a logical conclusion based on evidence/information.

(6) They have a low tolerance for ambiguity. That is, they see things in black & white terms. Something is either one way or the other. They demand absolute answers to life's problems. For instance, a person like this would be more likely to accept a cult leader's assertion that the group is good and the rest of the world is "lost" or "bad."

(7) They are fed-up or disillusioned with society. They want to find a better way to live. A lot of cults promise this in one form or another. Jim Jones' Peoples' Temple offered its' members a community free of racism and fear where everyone shared and worked together.

(8) They want to find meaning in their lives. This is similar to #1, but more specific. Some people want to believe that their life is being spend accomplishing something meaningful - not just wasted away doing whatever. So, the cult gives them a purpose and meaningful work.

(9) They are ignorant to the ways that people manipulate others. So, they do not recognize when the cult leader or fellow group members are lying to them or manipulating them. For example, they do not know that cult leaders will keep people busy and exhausted all the time in order to control them. They do not know that allowing a group leader to set your daily schedule and control your personal relationships is a form of manipulation.