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**This research has been approved
by the International Review Board
(IRB) of International Cultic Studies
Association (ICSA).**



Research Title: Sacrificial Seductions: Female Bodies as Exploited Sacrifices

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*This is a research project into women's lived experiences within
cults. It aims to explore and highlight the exploitation,
devaluation, and subjugation women faced.
Your voices are crucial in unraveling these intricate narratives
and paving the way for understanding and change.*



Abstract

This study presents the Feminist Cult Research Framework with two primary objectives. Firstly, it aims to identify and classify gaps and potentials in intersectional cult research. Secondly, it seeks to guide and inspire researchers by emphasizing women's empowerment and the advancement of feminist theories in the study of cults. Using the case study of The Children of God cult, the research examines the exploitative doctrines and organizational structure that predominantly affect women. Former members' narratives and the dissemination of male-centric structures within the cult are analyzed, highlighting the long-lasting and harmful effects experienced by female survivors. The study also explores how predetermined teachings and manipulation lead to the development of distorted doctrines. The proposed framework encourages scholarly engagement and investigates cultic doctrines, gender dynamics, power structures, and women's experiences to promote women's empowerment and advance feminist theorization in the study of cults.

What is this research about?

This study introduces the Feminist Cult Research Framework with two main objectives. Firstly, it aims to identify and categorize gaps and potentials related to intersectional cult research. Secondly, it seeks to guide and inspire researchers in the field by emphasizing scholarly concerns for women's empowerment and advancing feminist theories in the study of cults.

As a case study focusing on the theme of '*Exploitation, Violence and Abuse*' within this framework, the research delves into the intricate organizational structure and exploitative doctrines of The Children of God cult. The analysis critically examines the oppressive principles and heretical practices that primarily affect women. It includes narratives of lived experiences shared by former members and explores the dissemination of male-dominated hierarchies within the cult. Additionally, the research highlights the post-traumatic experiences of female survivors, emphasizing the long-lasting and harmful effects of involvement in a cult.

The study also reveals how using predetermined teachings as a foundational framework allows persuasion, even when subsequent doctrines become increasingly absurd. This manipulation leads to distorted doctrines that convince followers to renounce themselves in anticipation of an impending apocalypse.

Scholarly research in cult studies has yet to explore critical reviews that incorporate feminist theories fully. Additionally, little is known about the long-term effects of cult experiences on women who leave. The intersection of gender, sexuality, and spirituality within cultic contexts suggests potential avenues for empowerment and emancipatory insights to address female subordination. In this regard, this study proposes the Feminist Cult Research Framework. The framework aims to stimulate scholarly engagement in the field and guide feminist research investigating the cultic doctrines that shape women's experiences, contribute to gendered inequalities, and create power imbalances.

Furthermore, the proposed framework identifies specific research areas that focus on women's experiences, agency, gender dynamics, power structures, and intersectionality of identities within cultic contexts. These research areas are crucial for understanding and promoting women's empowerment and advancing feminist theorization in the study of cults.

If you are interested in the feminist cult research framework, do not hesitate to contact the researcher.