

**INQUIRY INTO THE RECRUITMENT METHODS AND IMPACTS OF
CULTS AND ORGANISED FRINGE GROUPS**

Name: Name withheld

Date Received: 2 May 2025

Name
withheld

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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In the 1920s my grandparents [REDACTED] had just lost their first child and in that vulnerable state were recruited by the American based religious cult The Jehovah's Witness under the promise that "Millions living will never die" and they would see their daughter again in the resurrection after Armageddon which was coming soon. I was born in 1960 into that now 5th generational family.

The cult of Jehovah's Witness is an in-group. Outside association is discouraged as well as voting, birthdays, Christmas and higher education.. My father [REDACTED] broke the rules and married a "worldly" local girl [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] converted by eventually the marriage broke down with my mother being dis-fellowshipped (shunned) for adultery and myself and my 2 siblings were subjected to a protracted custodial vicious tug of war. Subsequent to the divorce my father became a fanatical full time Jehovah's Witness selling all his assets and preaching full time. In retaliation our mother at ages 12, 10 and 6 our mother had us baptized Anglican. My older brother and I were paid \$50.00 and spent it at the local [REDACTED] rodeo.

Shunning can lead to a range of significant psychological effects, including increased anger, anxiety, depression and negative impacts on physical health. Our mother was our primary carer as within a short time of custody arrangements being arranged my siblings and I refused weekend visitation with our father as he used it as an opportunity to relentlessly spend the weekend taking us door to door and Jehovah's Witness meetings. After a long day in the tropical heat at school my father picked us up for a weekend and

that night I fell asleep at the religious meeting. He took me outside and put my head under the cold tap for my disrespect and disobedience. We live opposite the local public swimming pool and my father (who patrolled our street daily) saw me (about 12 years old walking home in my swim suit and towel and reported me to the police for being immoral in public.

Our primary carers mental and physical health deteriorated she would lay in bed and cry with fear about Armageddon) exasperated by her addiction to alcohol which finally caused her death from cirrhosis of the liver.

I left home very young and married a man who was not a Jehovah's Witness. I was subjected to emotional, physical and financial domestic violence which left me still young and shattered with 2 young children. My mother refused to help or support me and I was "love bombed" another cult tactic by my father and relatives in Jehovah witness and so I returned to the cult

Because worldly psychological counselling is not encouraged I spent most of my subsequent 35 years in the organization with untreated PTSD on and immobilized by strong depressants I remarried and gave birth of a daughter in 1991 Unknown to me and later explained by a psychiatrist I attended my mothers alcoholic rages had set me up to develop psychotic post natal if I had a daughter. (I never had it with my 3 sons)... You cannot imagine of the terror of not knowing if your symptoms are from being mad or bad. (demonized). Both highly misunderstood and stigmatized in the organization. Eventually after an horrific 9 months I confided in my family doctor and was sent to a psychiatrist who was amazed that myself and my daughter had survived. I was told never to have more children fell pregnant. My GP strongly recommended that I have an abortion as I was still under treatment for the Post natal psychosis but as a patriarchal organization the males consulted my husband, father and elders would not allow it.

My husband was out preaching with our infant daughter when I started to hemorrhage at home. I called an ambulance and was transported to [REDACTED] hospital suffering Placental abruption a serious condition where the placenta prematurely separates from the uterine wall, potentially depriving the fetus of oxygen and nutrients and causing heavy bleeding in the mother. Urgent medical treatment, including blood transfusions and potentially C-section delivery, is crucial for both the mother and baby's survival. A blood transfusion is a shunning (dis-fellowshipping) offence a life saving blood transfusion was not a option for

me and 2 elders with no medical backgrounds stood in the hallway to support my husband to say no to a blood transfusion on my behalf if I lost consciousness. My baby and I survived but I need to be readmitted to hospital for complications and surgery 10 days later, Again without a blood transfusion. Its a patriarchal cult my best friend confided in me which of her 7 children where conceived by marital rape. I reported her husband to the elders and was disciplined for speaking out of place and her husband was asked to do extra bible study.

My husband and I are now in a state of Shunning after I reported a prominent elder in our congregation to the police for sexually assaulting my daughter when she was around 4 years old. At the time I did not report the matter to the police as the elders said they would take care of it and I was not allowed to bring Jehovah name into disrepute. The investigating elder (a plumber) was the perpetrators best friend and he took him camping because my daughters very credible allegations "stressed him". The Jehovah's Witness organization is not child safe as shown by the Royal Commission as I was also advised that without 2 witnesses my daughters accusation would not be believed and we would have to wait for another child to make an accusation for her to be credible My now adult gave evidence to Justice McClellan in person at the Royal Commission and I submitted a written statement (which I have a copy of) and am happy to submit if required).

Having spent some years away with my mother I later learnt that my grandfather [REDACTED] was disfelwoshipped twice for sexually assaulting children. My grandfather was a local celebrity as a world champion axe man and reporting him as a serial sex offender would be a "bad witness". My father, his sons in law, nephews all elders spent a lifetime protecting him and his heinous acts against children. There where many more victims (most of my female cousins and others) who never made formal complaints to the elders. At least one of his victims has suffered lifetime of mental and physical health issues and has never has any professional counselling. My father even wrote a poem for my female cousins who were grandfathers victims because he didn't think they understood his good qualities properly.

After my husband and I began to speak out and criticize the rule the requires two witness of child sexual assault. (I had obediently stayed quiet for 10 years) we where increasingly shunned by the [REDACTED] congregation, The last time my father visited our home in [REDACTED] he insisted on a cup of tea outside because the house was demonised. We where already in our 50s and moved to [REDACTED]. I enrolled in [REDACTED] and graduated with a degree in Social Work at [REDACTED]. Unfortunately our relationship with out daughter has

broken down as she resents her cult upbringing and the fact we obeyed 2 witness rule for so long..