

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

**Name:** Name withheld

**Date Received:** 6 May 2025

Name  
withheld

**Submission Text:** I was a Jehovah's Witness from 1975 to 2000. I was recruited via my Mother who became and still is a JW. All the years I was a JW I and all the members were encouraged to push the message. And not to go into any University programs or not to join Police or join the Army. We were always told that the ministry was our career. Having children was discouraged. So as to be free to do the preaching as Pioneers as it was called. It involved 90h a month as a Regular Pioneer or 60h a month as

a Full or part time Pioneer. We were told to marry only inside the religion. Complaints were discouraged. I was disfellowshipped or kicked out because I separated from my wife of 16 years and complained about an official of the congregation for possible inappropriate behaviour with my then 4yo Son. Suspicion was everywhere that someone was not a Genuine JW. And of course gossiping was about. Especially by the Elders' wives. If someone was thought to have done something not in the spirit of being a JW the Elders would do a Judicial committee with 3 Elders. No outside help was allowed. A Challenge was available but it had to be 3 other Elders including the original 3 Elders to meet with you. I had 9 Elders at my second appeal. I stopped appealing once I found out that the 2nd or 3rd group of Elders had no say on the decision of the first 3 Elders. Only the first 3 Elders had the authority to reverse their decision. My crime was I was in a share house with a Woman not my wife. No matter what I tried would not change the decision. The Elders had complete power over the congregation members. All members were the property or slaves of the Jehovah's Witness organisation. The word Slave was used often in the sermons and we were told over and over again that we were all slaves of the Jehovah's Witness organisation. The Organisation was called the Faithful and Discreet slave (taken from a Biblical verse) We were all under the ownership of the Jehovah's Witness organisation. Not just members. All Jehovah's Witnesses are instructed to shun anyone who is disfellowshipped.