# Listing (in Black and White) Some Observations on (Sociological) Thought Reform

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Benjamin Zablocki's article, "The Blacklisting of a Concept: The Strange History of the Brainwashing Conjecture in the Sociology of Religion" (*Nova Religio* 1: 96-121), qualifies as a shot across the bow of some scholars, although just whose metaphorical bows have been traversed will be a matter of some contention. A number of scholars doubtless perceive themselves to occupy exactly the moderate position to which Benjamin Zablocki seeks to lay sole claim by dividing the rest of the scholarly community into two radical camps. The argument in this article seems to be that there is a moderate, responsible "brainwashing" position between the two radical camps, but that legitimate existing work has been ignored and other work that might support the position has been "blacklisted." The sequel paper, "Exit Cost Analysis: A New Approach to the Scientific Study of Brainwashing" (published in this issue), offers a prolegomenon to a "brainwashing" theory.[1] Each of these "conjectures" I find problematic, and I shall respond to each in turn. I conclude with a proposal for addressing issues related to "brainwashing" through the more neutral, sociologically relevant framework of socialization/resocialization.

### THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

If there is a true "conjecture" to be found in "The Blacklisting of a Concept," it is with respect to "blacklisting" rather than "brainwashing." It is important to consider the "blacklisting" interpretation because if the "brainwashing" position is regarded as "forbidden fruit," it may draw more attention than it merits. Arguing as he does for the careful, systematic collection and interpretation of data in assessing the controversial "brainwashing" thesis, Zablocki seems willing to reach a "blacklisting" conclusion on the basis of slim evidence indeed. Some of his observations have substantive merit, but they can be more appropriately contextualized. Let me begin with some points on which there is a measure of agreement.

There clearly are some rather strongly held theoretical positions on the "brainwashing" issue, and these positions have been vigorously ad-

vanced and defended. Contested positions, in which individuals sometimes become personally invested, surely do not distinguish this area of inquiry from many others. The debate between consensus and conflict theorists, for example, has raged for decades; in fact, separate professional journals have been established in which scholars refine the details of positions that are of limited interest to broader disciplinary audiences. In the "brainwashing" debate, theoretical divisions have been compounded by methodological differences. For example, there continues to be a disagreement over the representativeness of member and ex-member samples and the status of accounts yielded from these samples.[2] Again, this situation is not unique. The community power structure literature for years divided along methodological lines with decision-making studies regularly discovering pluralism and reputational studies finding elites. Whatever one's assessment of entrenched, contesting schools of thought, it would appear that the condition is normal intellectual politics. To call for greater collegiality in intellectual debates is commendable, but the substance of that message and the tone of "The Blacklisting of a Concept" seem oddly discordant.

It is also clear that the study of new religious movements (NRMs), and the sociology of religion itself, have been quite insular. This critique has been made by a number of those working in the field.[3] There is no shortage of illustrations. For a considerable period, new religion scholars virtually ignored the wealth of historical and cross-cultural research on religious movements.[4] Until recently, the connection of quasi-religious movements to the cohort of movements exhibiting more conventional religious attributes remained unexplored.[5] Similarly, the important relationships between movements within churches and those contesting institutionalized religion have been disregarded.[6] In recent years, however, the groups and scholars studying new religions and the issues discussed have changed rather rapidly. While much of the initial wave of research on religious movements focused on the affiliation process, a new generation of scholars has broadened the research agenda to include a much greater range of groups, a variety of organizational and developmental issues, and more historical and comparative perspectives. Perhaps research on new religions can still be constructively critiqued on such grounds, but insularity is quite a different matter from intentional exclusion. In fact, if there is an insular and exclusionary perspective to be found here, I would argue it is "brainwashing." It is precisely the narrowness and insularity of the "brainwashing" conjecture that forms a primary basis of the critique I shall offer of the perspective presented in "The Blacklisting of a Concept."

There is yet another problem that complicates theory and research in this area—the unfortunate conflation of scholarly and legal argumentation. The scholarly need for complexity and uncertainty clashes frontally with the legal system's need for closure and certainty. This problem, for

example, has continued to plague psychological and psychiatric testimony on the issues of legally defined "sanity" and "responsibility." The effects of the extension of theoretical debate over interpretations of religious movement affiliation into the legal forum are similar to those in other areas. It is very unlikely that scholars operating as "experts" in legal cases will advance sociological understanding in any appreciable fashion. I think the conditions under which social scientists should function as legal "experts" should be openly debated in professional forums.[7]

In the case at hand, however, I disagree with the assessment of scholars' involvement. Entrance of social scientists studying new religions into the legal and judicial process was precipitated by attempts to use radical "brainwashing" theories (from which "The Blacklisting of a Concept" carefully distances itself) to invoke the power of the state through mental health diagnostic categories, legislative statutes, and judicial precedents. The models that were being resisted at that historical moment were not simply "straw men" that were gratuitously attacked. Those theories were extreme, they were unsubstantiated, and they were premised on assumptions that contravened the weight of evidence accumulating in the research area. Resisting the extreme versions of "brainwashing" theories was a professionally responsible course of action under those circumstances.[8] As the debate continued to unfold, a broader coalition formed around what came to be termed the "agnostic" position that social scientists simply do not possess sufficiently definitive knowledge to participate in judicial proceedings as expert witnesses on this issue. I would submit that a responsible position did emerge from the debate and that the current position, which has been in place for some time, is one that invites rather than precludes further theorizing and research.

Finally, it is also not particularly surprising that there has been some skepticism directed toward research premised on "brainwashing" assumptions. While "The Blacklisting of a Concept" refers to accumulated research findings as "skimpy," the corpus of work in this area by historical standards is rather impressive both theoretically and empirically, and affiliation is the most thoroughly researched single issue.[9] To reduce that corpus of work to a "conjecture" and elevate the extremely limited work on these groups from a "brainwashing" perspective is simply bravado. Tracing back several decades to one of the earliest pieces of research—Lofland and Stark's research on the Unificationist movement—a large number of scholars with direct, extensive participant observation experience have independently reported their findings through a variety of role theory, socialization, and conversion models.[10] For most of this period the theoretical debate over "brainwashing" was well known to these scholars. Researchers had a choice about how to interpret and report their findings, and they exercised that choice. Anyone is free to challenge this corpus of work theoretically or empirically and to develop a comparable corpus of work that offers a compelling alternative. That is the essence of

scientific knowledge building, and that opportunity is and must be freely available and collegially supported. The appropriate course of action for anyone dissatisfied with the state of current knowledge is clear—produce a superior theory and empirically substantiate it.

All of the kinds of problems enumerated here have been raised previously and can be openly discussed in professional forums. However, to assemble these various disciplinary problems into a single narrative with a "blacklisting" theme is a much more contentious and, I think, erroneous claim. Quite simply, it is not plausible that a small number of scholars in a specialized area within the sociology of religion, itself a specialized area, could exert very much control over the presentation or publication of ideas not comporting with their professional or ideological preferences. If one considers the number of professional meetings, disciplinary journals and serials, and publishing houses available to scholars, this quickly becomes apparent. Of course, the argument might be narrowed to the small number of journals in the sociology of religion. However, my experience as prior editor of one of those journals and as a reviewer for all of them is that editors quickly become cognizant of rival schools of thought (as in the case of the debate among psychologists over intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity) and select reviewers rather carefully to balance the review process. As an editor and reviewer my own philosophy is that the best theory and research from extant schools of thought should be represented in professional forums.[11]

While there may be isolated instances where the editorial or review process is somehow compromised, I think the history of "The Blacklisting of a Concept" is much more representative of how the process works in the model case. The original paper was accepted by the program chair and presented in an open session at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. At that session, attended by colleagues with a variety of theoretical persuasions, the paper received formal and informal feedback. Following the meetings the author remained in dialogue with colleagues representing a variety of positions. The paper was revised and subsequently submitted to this journal. The manuscript was sent out for review. Presumably it was further revised in response to reviewer comments. The editor was aware of the differences in perspective on the issues at hand, selected reviewers carefully in light of those disagreements, and functioned as an editorial mediator during the review process. The paper was published. In order to preserve balance a rejoinder was invited. Journal readers are now free to assess the merits of the arguments on both sides. Given the intensity of the debate, it strikes me that the process is more notable for its openness than its obstructionism.

## ASSESSING THE "MODERATE" "BRAINWASHING" POSITION

The arguments posed in "The Blacklisting of a Concept" raise more problems than they resolve about the utility of "brainwashing" as a theoretical approach.[12] Most notably these include the counterproductiveness of employing "brainwashing" as a concept in conducting fieldwork and scholarly exchange, the inadequate definition of some basic concepts, and the summary rejection of existing empirical evidence.

Let's begin with terminology. Why attempt to organize the scholarly discussion around the term "brainwashing"? "The Blacklisting of a Concept" asserts that it is because the term commands the widest public recognition. However, if this is a theory-building enterprise rather than a political campaign, building on prior work such as *The Joyful Community* and drawing upon concepts such as the *thought reform* tradition applied in those works make considerably more sense.[13] Nonetheless, not only is the popularized "brainwashing" term employed, but the text is salted with a variety of other terms ("target," the criminal justice metaphor of "motive, opportunity, and weapon," "social-psychological prison," "charismatic abuse," "puppet show," and "deployable agent") that seem designed to be provocative and conclusionary rather than analytic and exploratory. It sounds as if the "verdict" is already rendered and "evidence" is being gathered after the fact.

This is not trivial semantic dispute. If the goal of the paper is scholarly "rapprochement," this is a peculiar initiative that is unlikely to create much common ground. More importantly, if researchers are candid and negotiate with the subjects of their research about their objectives, what religious movement would be receptive to a research agenda constructed in these terms? Why urge on colleagues a model that is likely to abort empirical inquiry at the outset? How is knowledge thereby advanced? Researchers obviously should not capitulate to organizational interests by employing "user friendly" theories or methods as a condition of access. However, if, as "The Blacklisting of a Concept" asserts, "brainwashing" may occur in some groups but not others, at some times but not others, for some individuals but not others, why adopt a model that is presumptive, limiting, and alienating from the outset?

A second key problem is definitional. What precisely is "brainwashing"? Despite its being the focal point of the intellectual argument in "The Blacklisting of a Concept" and "Exit Cost Analysis," the concept remains a slippery one. It is defined as "nothing more than an orchestrated process of ideological conversion that takes its subjects through a well-defined sequence of social psychological stages." The process through which this occurs is described as "persuasive influences so overwhelming that they actually restructure core beliefs and world-view and profoundly modify one's self conception." But as the argument develops, murkiness increases.

The argument seeking to establish the existence of "brainwashing" begins with what it is *not.* The phenomenon does not require:

1. Deceptive, manipulative recruitment practices. Rather, the emphasis is on high "exit costs."

2. A loss of "free will" (better constructed sociologically, I think, as "agency"). Rather, through "resocialization" (a concept to which I shall return) the individual may voluntarily and rationally act in conformity with organizational requisites. The individual may even enthusiastically participate in the process.

3. A particularly high rate of effectiveness. In fact, it may occur in a tiny minority of cases. The organization does not necessarily need a total complement of "deployable agents" and so may not be motivated to implement this costly "environmental management program" more comprehensively. Further, some movement participants may be less affected by the process if, for example, they have relatively short movement careers or if they possess a higher personal capacity for resistance for whatever reason.

4. Obvious indicators of its presence. On the organizational side, coercive power is not necessary. On the individual side, there are not necessarily any indicators of cognitive, emotional, or physical distress or debilitation of individuals who have been subjected to the process.

What, then, does definitively distinguish "brainwashing"? The process is:

1. Qualitatively different from other processes with which it might be confused. So, for example, it differs from conventionally accepted socialization procedures practiced by educators or tolerated manipulation strategies used by salespersons. It also is distinguished from "spontaneous conversion."

2. Encapsulating. The process makes it emotionally very difficult, although not impossible, for the individual subjected to it to exit the implementing group.

3. Transformative. It involves the elements of thought reform (absolute control over channels of communication, manipulation of the individual based on the priority of group goals, a demand for absolute purity and strong reaction to any hint of ambivalence or rebellion, demands for continuous personal confession, a closed ideological system, elimination of individual idiosyncrasies, division of the world into worthy insiders and unworthy outsiders). There may also be desensitization rituals employed. These are organized into a sequence of stripping, identification, and symbolic death-rebirth during which individuals are subjected alternately to assaults and leniency. Significantly, it is not necessary that all these elements be present for the process to qualify as "brainwashing," and they do not necessarily occur in any specific sequence.

4. Psychologically disruptive. There is an extended socioemotional impact. Effects must continue after the process is halted, and the "dread" created by the process reduces the individual's capacity for exit.

Framing the argument in this way creates a definitional quagmire. One concern about this formulation is that it leaves unclear whether "brainwashing" refers to the totalistic structure of the organization, the process through which various elements of that structure operate, the intent of actors implementing those elements, the impact or state that is created by the structure/process, or some combination of the foregoing. There are references to each at various points in the text. This is an important matter. For example, if "brainwashing" is defined in terms of organizational structure or the process, then it becomes a pivotal question as to which elements or combinations are central. If it is not simply the structure/process but the intent with which these elements are employed or the impact that they make, then that connection must be specified and demonstrated.

There is an enormous amount of slippage allowed in this formulation. The existence of the process is not necessarily constrained by the degree of voluntarism, its rate of effectiveness, or exit rates. "Brainwashing" is a costly and laborious process, it is asserted, and so the organization only invests the resources necessary to maintain the level of control needed. At the same time, it is suggested that technological advances in the form of psychotropic drugs and electronic devices may be increasing the effectiveness of brainwashing, although no evidence is cited to support this supposition. Since no specific level of requisite control is stipulated, a "brainwashing" argument can be defended on the basis of almost any numerical outcomes, and various unsubstantiated speculations become possible. If "brainwashing" constitutes a qualitatively distinct process, then the distinctive nature of that process must be defined, demonstrated, and defended. Further, "brainwashing" is juxtaposed to "spontaneous conversion" (a rare event), which creates the potential for labeling as "brainwashing" any behavior that is not "spontaneous" (i.e., very high agency and very low structure). Obviously the distinction between "conversion" and "brainwashing" will be an issue of some interest and sensitivity to many sociologists of religion. The effect of this formulation is to expand the possible range of illegitimate influence findings and correspondingly decrease the range of legitimate influence findings.

Equally importantly, "The Blacklisting of a Concept" seeks to disqualify through redefinition a number of well-established empirical observations about NRMs that are the basis of serious skepticism about the "brainwashing conjecture."[14] Among the major arguments countering "brainwashing" claims that rest on deceptive, manipulative recruitment practices (front-end loaded models) are that (1) the sociocultural conditions appear to be pivotal, as a number of the groups charged with employing

such practices increased in size for a very limited time period before declining precipitously; (2) the recruitment success rate of groups labeled cults was very low; (3) recruitment success was limited to a very narrow range of age, socioeconomic status, and educational level characteristics; and (4) recruitment success rates declined over a several year period, when time, practice, and organization presumably would yield higher success rates. These observations become largely irrelevant as it is not recruitment practices but subsequent organizational control practices influencing exit costs (back-end loaded models) that are causal. Research on NRMs also indicates very high membership turnover rates; the number of individuals ever affiliated with these movements is many times membership size at any point in movement history.[15] Simply put, the overwhelming majority of those ever affiliated ultimately disaffiliated. In fact, disaffiliation rates must have increased dramatically, as movements that only a few years earlier were growing exponentially suddenly went into sharp decline. However, high exit rates, and even increasing ones, do not undermine this "brainwashing" conjecture either since the argument is sustained if affiliates faced difficulty in exiting and since the organization does not need everyone to be a deployable agent. Numerous case studies of new religions discuss schisms within religious movements, individuals moving to marginal status, and struggles for power, but these various ongoing conflicts are irrelevant if movements do not need to "brainwash" everyone.[16] The extraordinarily varied cultural origins, patterns of organizational development, and leadership styles of such groups pose a problem in explaining how they seem to have discovered the same "brainwashing" psycho-technology at almost precisely the same historical moment. This predicament is handled through the observation that individuals in some movements confess to having read Robert Lifton's work and to having attempted to implement its principles.[17]

One important characteristic of a theory is testability/verifiability. In these terms, the problem with the present formulation is twofold. On the one hand, the conceptualization of "brainwashing" is so indeterminate that no necessary and sufficient organizational or behavioral indicators are specified. This means either that "brainwashing" cannot be verified at all or it can be invoked at will. On the other hand, the concept is defined so as to disqualify referents that numerous scholars studying new religions have developed using empirical methods or employing alternative theoretical formulations. Further, the emphasis in "The Blacklisting of a Concept" is on the verification end of testability. However, the other question, that of disconfirmation, is equally important. How and with what kind of data could a theory such as the one proposed here be disconfirmed? How could any group defend itself against "brainwashing" charges? Both questions are important since "brainwashing" clearly is a normative, conclusionary concept, particularly in a dichotomous, typological form.

There are, then, a number of problems with the "brainwashing conjecture" in its "moderate" as well as its radical form. The theory is essentialist, seeking to identify essential elements of organizations/processes rather than placing those in the context of the sociocultural environment, on one side, and individual attributes and intentionality, on the other side. It is also normative and conclusionary. There is an implicit presumption about an appropriate balance of structure and agency in organizational relationships. It is not clear that it would be possible to have a totalistic, revolutionary movement, for example, without invoking the specter of "brainwashing."

## TOWARD A THEORY OF ORGANIZATIONAL POWER AND CONTROL

One of the most important points to be made here is that none of this conjecturing is necessary. It is unnecessary to claim "blacklisting"; it is unnecessary to develop a theory under the "brainwashing" nomenclature; and it is unnecessary to rely on assembling data from movements that are small, rapidly changing, and highly controversial. There is a logical, moderate course available that would link theory and research in sociology of religion to the broader discipline. This agenda would build upon the well-established, non-evaluative concepts of socialization and resocialization (S/R) to which "The Blacklisting of a Concept" in fact makes passing reference.[18] There is an enormous body of scholarship in this area. The logical strategy is to work from the existing stock of knowledge on these bedrock social processes. S/R processes obviously vary in their intensity, extensiveness, and impact. From this perspective, "brainwashing" is proposed as a radical form of S/R. But what is created by thinking about the problem in this fashion is a continuum rather than a dichotomy in which one form of S/R is presumptively labeled as qualitatively different from others. The problem then becomes one of identifying the key elements of S/R that distinguish various forms along the continuum. This strategy has the virtue of reasoning from well-established principles and common forms of behavior. It involves reasoning from the middle of the behavioral distribution outward toward more radical forms rather than reasoning from extreme cases.

The approach proposed here would open up a cache of existing knowledge that does not present the problems that become apparent from analyzing the proposals in "The Blacklisting of a Concept" and "Exit Cost Analysis." The material to which I refer is the substantial body of theory and research on S/R within a very diverse array of high control environments as well as lower control environments that would help to develop a continuum conceptually. Most of this literature is produced by scholars

not involved in the present debate and published in mainstream journals, but scholars studying new religions also have raised many of the same issues.[19] Consider the following:

There have been a number of attempts to identify characteristics of "radical" forms of organization that exhibit totalistic qualities and to compare them with more moderate characteristics.[20] There is also a substantial body of theoretical and experimental work on manipulative forms of interpersonal influence, which has been summarized by Robert Cialdini.[21] It is worth observing that some research suggests that there are cultural differences accounting for one's "vulnerability" to interpersonal and situational influence.[22] Finally, Dean Kelley's cataloging of the "traits of a strong religion" develops this line of analysis with respect to religious organizations.[23]

An array of theoretical and empirical work is available on the impact of social control mechanisms in conventional and totalistic situations. This would include work by Lewis Coser on "greedy institutions," Stanley Elkins' classic analysis of slavery, Erving Goffman and Madeleine Karmel on the structure and impact of "total institutions," Herbert Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton on "crimes of obedience," Abraham Cohen and Takie Lebra on countercultural, high-demand groups, Henry Kellerman on sources of group cohesion, and John Van Maanen on organizational socialization strategies.[24] Other work by scholars such as Helen Rose Ebaugh and Susan Rothbaum examines the exit problems faced by individuals leaving both conventional and higher demand organizations.[25]

There are a number of studies that attempt to link to "brainwashing," conceptually or empirically, a variety of social processes in conventional, "legitimate" organizational contexts (the work of psychologists Theodore Sarbin and Nathan Adler is particularly instructive). Examples include the work of J. A. C. Brown, who compares "techniques of persuasion" that include advertising and political propaganda; Jerome Frank's work on influence in therapeutic relationships; research on religious conversion and exiting by Theodore Long and Jeffrey Hadden, Drew Westin, and Helen Rose Ebaugh; Richard Lynn's work on child rearing; Thomas Rohlen's study of worker training and motivation in Japan; research on psychotherapeutic treatment by Robert Dolliver and Richard Ofshe; comparisons of brainwashing and sexual seduction by Jack Douglas and Frances Waksler; Stuart Wright's comparison of apostasy and divorce; and E. O. Boyanowsky's exploration of psychological, social, and cultural level factors impacting individual identity change.[26]

Some research on conventional socialization practices suggests means through which organization members may move from individualistically motivated participation (e.g., personal idealism) to continued involvement based on institutionally defined priorities. Examples include Howard Becker and Blanche Greer's research on socialization of medical students,

parallel work on nursing students by George Psathas, and a study of the socialization of priests by Fred Goldner, Richard Ritti, and Thomas Ference.[27]

There is a vast literature on religious and nonreligious communal organizations, many of which developed as social experiments, offering insight into the diversity of such totalistic organizations. In particular, Rosabeth Kanter has reviewed this literature in a way that identifies characteristics associated with totalism.[28] The research on religious communes, such as convents and monasteries, is particularly interesting because they have been accorded substantial legitimacy, are voluntary associations, and share a number of characteristics with coercive organizations. George Hillery's work in this area is particularly instructive.[29]

There is a massive corpus of theory and research dealing with family violence that might be defined in this context as a "naturalistic experiment" on encapsulation and identity transformation. Research dealing with the escalation of violence, such as that by Ola Barnett and Alyce LaViolette, and on spouses who remain in abusive relationships, such as studies by Trudy Mills and Kathleen Ferraro and John Johnson, are especially relevant.[30] Sometimes work in this area employs models that theorize high levels of coercion.[31]

Another substantial body of theory and research addresses control in state authorized organizations. There are military organizations in which participation, which is sometimes voluntary and sometimes involuntary, has generally been accorded legitimacy. S/R is designed to maximize conformity and explicitly legitimates engaging in violence. The literature in this area is extensive. There is work on basic training in military academies by Sanford Dornbusch, in the Army by Peter Bourne, and in the Air Force by Melford Weiss; military training as a rite of passage by Robert Endleman; and the mechanisms of social control employed in the armed forces by Lawrence Radine.[32] Findings from other state-sponsored, coercive institutions, such as Etzioni's analysis of high security prisons, indicate that many participants resist official S/R efforts despite high control levels,[33] but individuals may become encapsulated (Donald Clemmer expresses this in terms of "prisonization") despite their involuntary participation.[34]

Research on police interrogation methods by Edward Driver, Mike Hepworth and Bryan Turner, T. Shallice, and Philip Zimbardo suggests significant effects on individuals as a result of even limited periods of high control, such as when false confessions are induced.[35]

Yet other state-authorized institutions, such as the custodial mental health organizations about which Erving Goffman has written, present the opportunity for observing shifting patterns of voluntarism.[36] Some participants initially resist, others initially cooperate, and yet others begin by resisting and later participate voluntarily. More generally, Perry Lon-

don has analyzed therapy as one of the technologies developed under state authorization to bolster "behavior control."[37]

Then, of course, there is the body of research on P.O.W. and concentration camps, exemplified by the work of Robert Lifton and Edgar Schein.[38] There have been a few attempts, such as the work by Roy Baumeister, to connect S/R processes in NRMs to the P.O.W. and Chinese re-education camp literature.[39]

The foregoing is only a sampler of the relevant theory and research upon which a theoretical continuum of social control organization and mechanisms could be constructed. I submit that a preliminary model of some sophistication, identifying putative characteristics of radical forms of organization and their impact, could be formulated from just such theory and data. The initiative begins rather than ends at the social psychological and organizational levels. Since the concept of "brainwashing" is a normative and conclusionary one, it would be preferable to interpret S/R more neutrally in the context of organizational control. Anthony Giddens' concepts of "structure" ("systems of generative rules and resources") and "agency" ("causal interventions of corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events-in-the-world") offer one useful alternative.[40] Theories about the relationship between relative levels of individual-organizational control can be analyzed in terms of the balance of structure and agency.[41] To this must be added a perspective on power. Rather than traditional formulations of power that refer to position, reputation, control over organizational decisions, or even agenda control, a conception such as that proposed by Steven Lukes, which admits the possibility that power may involve shaping the way that individuals perceive situations and thus their capacity to identify grievances or initiate disputes, would be useful.[42] The notion of "manipulated agreement" seems to be foundational to "brainwashing" as a normative concept. If theoretical elements such as these could be conjoined, they might form the basis for a sociologically meaningful analysis of the pivotal elements of both totalistic structure/process and structure/agency in that social context.

In some respects this proposal cannot fail because it constitutes a viable strategy for developing a continuum of organizational influence structure/process. However, this does not in any sense mean that a "brainwashing" theory as envisioned in "The Blacklisting of a Concept" and "Exit Cost Analysis" would somehow be "discovered." I rather think the opposite would occur. In fact, Robert Lifton and his contemporaries did not "discover" brainwashing as some proponents of this position would like to suggest. They observed several different extreme control and influence processes that occurred under a very specific set of social and cultural circumstances (certainly not the least of which was coercion) and that yielded very mixed results. They chose to identify this set of processes with labels such as "brainwashing" and "coercive persuasion." How-

ever, it is critical not to reify those concepts as if they have a reality that transcends the context in which they occurred. "Brainwashing" is, after all, a metaphor. It is of no small significance that the brainwashing literature has been in circulation for considerable time, and as the review of theory and research presented above indicates, the analogy has been explored in other areas of theory and research. The fact that new religions scholars are not the first to find the approach unproductive should be a warning. The fact that descriptions of individual behavior and organizational practices converge much more closely than evaluations of them suggests the evaluative core of the "brainwashing" concept. The observation that many of the best examples of high demand organizations have been authorized by dominant order institutions while the term has been most successfully applied to organizations deemed subversive is telling. The reliance by proponents of "brainwashing" on data from groups deemed subversive rather than on the wealth of theory and research cited here is equally telling. Finally, the evidence on individual transformation across the range of totalistic organizations staffed by individuals fully steeped in cultural knowledge about how to produce control or change suggests results that are at once modest and complex. If there is a common theme in the reports from organizations that seek to change, reform, rehabilitate, or cure participants through their various regimens, it is frustration with lack of "success." These organizations certainly can have complex effects on individuals, sometimes traumatic and sometimes salutary, but apparently they often do not coincide with the results expected by organizational officials.

The agenda I have outlined would be a beginning, one that would yield generically useful sociological insight and would connect now disparate lines of inquiry. Why would a social scientist beg the very question that needs to be answered—that there is a qualitatively distinct and empirically verifiable "brainwashing" process—when the means for addressing the question are at hand? Why would a social scientist assert findings presumptively rather than allow them to emerge empirically? No permission or cooperation from anyone is required to undertake this research, and a synthetic statement engaging a number of what to date are discrete areas of inquiry can be fashioned. There is indeed a moderate position to be developed, and it might even yield some modest sociological thought reform.

## ENDNOTES

[1] In drafting a response to the second article I have drawn on the original paper presented at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion in Nashville, Tennessee. I have, in addition, seen the first draft of "Exit Cost Analysis."

[2] Lewis Carter, "Carriers of Tales: On Assessing Credibility of Apostate and Other Outsider Accounts of Religious Practices," in *The Politics of Religious Apostasy*, ed. David Bromley (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1997); Benjamin Zablocki, "Reliability and Validity of Apostate Accounts in the Study of Religious Communities" (paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Sociology of Religion, New York, 1996).

[3] James Beckford, "The Restoration of 'Power' to the Sociology of Religion," *Sociological Analysis* 44 (1983): 11-32.

[4] Mary Farrell Bednarowski, *New Religions: The Theological Imagination in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[5] Arthur Greil and Thomas Robbins, eds., *Between Sacred and Secular: Research and Theory on Quasi-Religion* (Greenwich, CT: Association for the Sociology of Religion and JAI Press, 1994).

[6] David Bromley, "Remembering the Future: A Sociological Narrative of Crisis Episodes, Collective Action, Culture Workers, and Countermovements," *Sociology of Religion* 58 (1997): 105-40.

[7] James Richardson, "Sociology and the New Religions: 'Brainwashing,' the Courts, and Religious Freedom," in *Witnessing for Sociology*, eds. Pamela Jenkins and Steven Kroll-Smith (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 115-34.

[8] There is ample critical assessment of brainwashing-based claims introduced into the legal system. See, for example, Dick Anthony, "Religious Movements and Brainwashing Litigation: Evaluating Key Testimony," in *In Gods We Trust*, ed. Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1990), 295-344; Dick Anthony and Thomas Robbins, "Law, Social Sciences and the 'Brainwashing' Exception to the First Amendment," *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* 10 (1992): 5-30; and James Richardson, "'Brainwashing' Claims and Minority Religions Outside the United States: Cultural Diffusion of a Questionable Concept in the Legal Arena," *Brigham Young University Law Review* (1996): 873-904.

[9] Thomas Robbins, *Cults, Converts, and Charisma: The Sociology of New Religious Movements* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1988); John Saliba, *Social Science and the Cults: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Garland Publishers, 1990); David Snow and Richard Machalek, "Sociology of Conversion," *Annual Review of Sociology* 10 (1984): 167-90.

[10] John Lofland and Rodney Stark, "Becoming a World Saver: A Theory of Conversion to a Deviant Perspective," *American Sociological Review* 30 (1965): 862-75.

[11] The issue of incorporating opposed positions into one's work is not simply a matter of "collegiality" and "fairness." Sociologically, it is an issue of "voice." In my own work I have tried to incorporate positions with which I disagree in their own voice. For example, a recent book on anti-cultism includes a chapter by an anti-cult organization official and a deprogrammer/exit-counselor. See Anson Shupe and David Bromley, eds., *Anti-Cult Movements in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (New York: Garland Press, 1994). Correspondingly, a book assessing the probable success or failure of NRMs includes chapters by members of the Unificationist Movement and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. See David Bromley and Phillip Hammond, eds., *The Future of New Religious Movements* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987).

[12] There have been a number of theoretical critiques of "brainwashing" theory. See, for example, David Bromley and James Richardson, eds., *The Brainwashing/Deprogramming Controversy: Sociological, Psychology, Legal, and Historical Perspectives* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983); James Richardson, "The Social Psychology of 'Brainwashing' Claims About Recruitment to New Religions," in *The Handbook of Cults and Sects in America*, eds. David Bromley and Jeffrey Hadden (Greenwich, CT: Association for the Sociology of Religion, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, and JAI Press, 1993), 75-98.

[13] Benjamin Zablocki, *The Joyful Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[14] It also seeks to reduce the significance of the quite diverse research on affiliation/disaffiliation, which is far greater than is implied here. See Snow and Machalek, "The

Sociology of Conversion." To create a fourfold categorization of models that subsumes the diversity and complexity of research findings on NRMs, and to juxtapose it to a "calcium deficiency" model is not going to advance anyone's understanding.

[15] Eileen Barker, "Defection From the Unification Church: Some Statistics and Distinctions," in *Falling From the Faith: Causes and Consequences of Religious Apostasy*, ed. David G. Bromley (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1988), 166-84; Stuart Wright, *Leaving Cults: The Dynamics of Defection* (Washington, D.C.: Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, 1987).

[16] Eileen Barker, *The Making of a Moonie: Brainwashing or Choice?* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984); David Bromley, "Economic Structure and Charismatic Leadership in the Unification Church," in *Money and Power in New Religions*, ed. James Richardson (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), 335-64.

[17] It should also be noted that some of the more radical brainwashing theory indicators (e.g., physiological characteristics, psychological disturbance, loss of free will, deceptive recruitment) also are disqualified in this formulation.

[18] Richard Moreland and John Levine, "Socialization in Small Groups: Temporal Changes in Individual-Group Relations," in *Advances in Experimental Psychology*, ed. Leonard Berkowitz (New York: Academic Press, 1982), 137-92.

[19] See, for example, James Richardson, Robert Balch, and J. Gordon Melton, "Problems of Research and Data in the Study of New Religions," in *Cults and Sects in America* (Part B), eds. David Bromley and Jeffrey Hadden (Greenwich, CT: Association for the Sociology of Religion, Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, and JAI Press, 1993), 213-29.

[20] Egon Bittner, "Radicalism and Radical Movements," *American Sociological Review* 28 (1963): 928-40; Rose Coser, "Insulation from Observability and Types of Social Conformity," *American Sociological Review* 26 (1961): 28-38; Erving Goffman, *Asylums* (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1961); Rosabeth Kanter, "Commitment and the Internal Organization of Millennial Movements," *American Behavioral Scientist* 16 (1972): 219-44; William Kornhauser, "Social Bases of Political Commitment: A Study of Liberals and Radicals," in *Human Behavior and Social Processes*, ed. Arnold Rose (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962), 321-39.

[21] Robert Cialdini, *Influence: How and Why People Agree to Things* (New York: Quill, 1985).

[22] S. Perrin and C. Spencer, "Independence or Conformity in the Asch Experiment as a Reflection of Cultural and Situational Factors," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 20 (1981): 205-9.

[23] Dean Kelley, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 56-96.

[24] Abraham Cohen, "Group Cohesion and Communal Living," in *Group Cohesion: Theoretical and Clinical Perspectives*, ed. Henry Kellerman (New York: Gruene and Stratton, 1981), 375-91; Lewis Coser, *Greedy Institutions* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1974); Stanley Elkins, *Slavery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959); Madeline Karmel, "Total Institution and Self-Mortification," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 10 (1969): 134-40; Henry Kellerman, "The Deep Structures of Group Cohesion," in *Group Cohesion: Theoretical and Clinical Perspectives*, ed. Henry Kellerman (New York: Gruene and Stratton, 1981), 3-22; Herbert Kelman and V. Lee Hamilton, *Crimes of Obedience: Toward a Social Psychology of Authority and Responsibility* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Takie Lebra, "Millenarian Movements and Resocialization," *American Behavioral Scientist* 16 (1972): 195-218; John Van Maanen, "People Processing: Strategies of Organizational Socialization," in *Organizational Influence Processes*, eds. Robert Allen and Lyman Porter (Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman, 1983), 240-59.

[25] Helen Rose Ebaugh, *Becoming an Ex: The Process of Role Exit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Susan Rothbaum, "Between Two Worlds: Issues of Separation and Identity after Leaving a Religious Community," in *Falling from the Faith*, ed. David Bromley (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1988), 205-28.

[26] Theodore Sarbin and Nathan Adler, "Self-Reconstitution Processes: A Preliminary Report," *Psychoanalytic Review* 57 (1970): 599-616; J. A. C. Brown, *Techniques of Persuasion: From Propaganda to Brainwashing* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1963); Jerome Frank, "The Dynamics of

the Psychotherapeutic Relationship," *Psychiatry* 22 (1959): 17-34; Theodore Long and Jeffrey Hadden, "Religious Conversion and the Concept of Socialization: Integrating the Brainwashing and Drift Models," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 22 (1983): 1-14; Drew Westen, *Self and Society: Narcissism, Collectivism, and the Development of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Helen Rose Ebaugh, *Out of the Cloister* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984); R. Lynn, "Brainwashing Techniques in Leadership and Child Rearing," *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 5 (1966): 270-73; Thomas Rohlen, "Spiritual Education in a Japanese Bank," *American Anthropologist* 75 (1973): 1542-62; Robert Dolliver, "Concerning the Potential Parallels Between Psychotherapy and Brainwashing," *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice* 8 (1971): 170-74; Richard Ofshe, *et al.*, "Social Structure and Social Control in Synanon," *Journal of Voluntary Social Action* 3 (1974): 67-76; Jack Douglas and Frances Waksler, *The Sociology of Deviance* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982); Stuart A. Wright, "Reconceptualizing Cult Coercion: A Comparative Analysis of Divorce and Apostasy," *Social Forces* 70 (1991): 125-45; E. O. Boyanowsky, "The Psychology of Identity Change: A Theoretical Framework for Review and Analysis of the Self-Role Transformation Process," *Canadian Psychological Review* 18 (1977): 115-27.

[27] Howard Becker and Blanche Greer, "The Fate of Idealism in Medical School," *American Sociological Review* 23 (1958): 50-56; Fred Goldner, Richard Ritti, and Thomas Ference, "The Production of Cynical Knowledge in Organizations," *American Sociological Review* 42 (1977): 539-51; George Psathas, "The Fate of Idealism in Nursing School," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 9 (1968): 52-64.

[28] Kanter, "Commitment and the Internal Organization of Millennial Movements."

[29] George Hillery, "The Convent: Community, Prison, or Task Force?" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 8 (1969): 140-51.

[30] Ola Barnett and Alyce LaViolette, *It Could Happen to Anyone: Why Battered Women Stay* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1993); Kathleen Ferraro and John Johnson, "How Women Experience Battering: The Process of Victimization," *Social Problems* 30 (1983): 325-35; Trudy Mills, "The Assault on Self: Stages in Coping with Battering Husbands," *Qualitative Sociology* 8 (1985): 103-23.

[31] Steven Morgan, *Conjugal Terrorism: A Psychological and Community Treatment Model of Wife Abuse* (Palo Alto, CA: R&E Associates, 1982).

[32] Peter Bourne, "Some Observations on the Psychosocial Phenomena Seen in Basic Training," *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes* 30 (1967): 187-196; Sanford Dornbusch, "The Military Academy as an Assimilating Institution," *Social Forces* 33 (1955): 316-21; Robert Endleman, "The Military as a Rite de Passage," in *Anthropology and American Life*, ed. Joseph Jorgensen and Marcello Truzzi (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974), 282-89; Lawrence Radine, *The Taming of the Troops: Social Control in the United States Army* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977); Melford Weiss, "Rebirth in the Airborne," in *Sociological Realities*, eds. Irving Louis Horowitz and Mary Strong (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 195-97; Louis Zurcher, "The Naval Recruit Training Center: A Study of Role Assimilation in a Total Institution: Recruits in Boot Camp," *Sociological Inquiry* 37 (1967): 85-98; Louis Zurcher, "The Sailor Aboard Ship," in *Social Problems in a Changing World*," ed. Walter Gerson (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1969), 243-62.

[33] Amitai Etzioni, *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations: On Power, Involvement, and Their Correlates* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1961).

[34] Donald Clemmer, *The Prison Community* (New York: Rinehart, 1958).

[35] Edward Driver, "Confessions and the Social Psychology of Coercion," *Harvard Law Review* 82 (1968): 42-61; Mike Hepworth and Bryan Turner, *Confession: Studies in Deviance and Religion* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982); T. Shallice, "The Ulster Depth Interrogation Techniques and Their Relation to Sensory Deprivation Research," *Cognition* 1 (1972): 385-405; Philip Zimbardo, "Coercion and Compliance: The Psychology of Police Confessions," in *The Triple Revolution Emerging*, eds. Robert Perucci and Marc Pilisuk (Boston: Little Brown, 1971), 492-508.

[36] Goffman, *Asylums*.

[37] Perry London, *Behavior Control* (New York: New American Library, 1977).

[38] Robert Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Edgar Schein and C.H. Baker, *Coercive Persuasion* (New York: Norton, 1961).

[39] Roy Baumeister, *Identity: Cultural Change and the Struggle for Self* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[40] Anthony Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), 81, 133-34.

[41] The problem is obviously not a simple, dichotomous one but a holistic, interactive one as agency creates structure and structure empowers agency. But that is the point. These concepts invite the kind of complex analysis that is required for meaningful sociological understanding.

[42] Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (London: Macmillan, 1974).

# Reply to Bromley

## Benjamin D. Zablocki

David Bromley divides his response to my two-part essay into three sections. In the first, he argues that my blacklisting allegation is exaggerated; in the second, that my definition of brainwashing is unscientific. I think he fails to support either of these contentions. However, in the third section, where he discusses strategies for theorizing about collective influence, I find his comments welcome and valuable.

What can I say about Bromley's contention that my allegations of blacklisting are exaggerated? Our disagreement is exactly what standpoint theory would lead one to predict.[1] Bromley is a past president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and a former editor of the *Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion* while I am a person who has begun to define himself primarily as a sociologist of religion only in the past few years. From where I stand, it looks as if Bromley underestimates both the hegemony of his faction's point of view and the tokenism of its receptivity to alternative points of view.[2] But we are fortunate in having to rely neither on his nor on my own structurally situated opinion. It is not an opinion but a fact that, in the last 36 years, the number of articles supporting the brainwashing perspective that have appeared in the two leading American journals devoted to the sociology of religion has been zero while more than a hundred have appeared in journals marginal to the field.[3] I rest my case.

In the next section of his article, Bromley goes on to label my concept of brainwashing controversial, provocative, essentialistic, normative, conclusionary, insular, exclusionary, evaluative, narrow, presumptive, limiting, alienating, back-end loaded, likely to abort empirical inquiry, and not analytic nor exploratory. I acknowledge the first three but I deny all the others. The fact that Bromley would use all these terms indicates to me that he is not adequately distinguishing between brainwashing as an analytic concept and brainwashing as a categorical label. If Bromley were right that I am using the term as a label to attach to groups whose practices I don't like, then his charges would be justified.

Frankly, I think that all this name calling is a waste of time. I'm not overly impressed with arguments about the connotations of words. Of course, the words we use must always be precisely defined. However, I think we worry too much about whether the words we use in our theories

are politically correct. Any well-defined word for a concept will do as long as there is general agreement as to its meaning.

Bromley seems to believe that the term "brainwashing" has become so inextricably linked with the Fu Manchu stereotype of the term that it can no longer be used scientifically. Maybe he has a point. But I would reply with a quote from a Joan Baez song:

> Then give me another word for it.
> You who are so good with words,
> and at keeping things vague.[4]

As I indicated in my article, if the academic community were to come up with a standard alternative term for this phenomenon, I would be among the first to adopt it. It is the idea not the word that interests me.

I have space here to deal with the preposterousness of only a few of Bromley's charges. One of these charges in particular reveals the extent to which he and I live in different methodological worlds. He ridicules my approach as follows:

... if researchers are candid and negotiate with the subjects of their research about their objectives, what religious movement would be receptive to a research agenda constructed in [brainwashing] terms? Why urge on colleagues a model that is likely to abort empirical inquiry at the outset? ... If ... "brainwashing" may occur in some groups but not others . . . why adopt a model that is presumptive, limiting, and alienating from the outset?

Comments like this make me wonder if Bromley knows the first thing about how ethnographers conduct themselves in the field. Does he really think that I or any other ethnographer would knock on the door of a religious commune out in the woods and say, "Hi, I'm here from the University to find out if you brainwash your members"? I have had a long and successful career doing participant-observation and interviewing in a wide variety of religious and nonreligious communes, and I have never approached one thus.[5] This is not deception on my part. When I study a NRM, I don't know in advance what I'm going to find out nor how I'm going to interpret my findings. I have never gone into a group assuming I would find brainwashing. I begin a study expecting to observe action and interaction and to record what I observe. For me, theoretical explanations like brainwashing have entered the picture only after the data collection phase was completed.

Even if I had prior suspicion that a religious group might be engaged in brainwashing, it would be neither methodologically wise nor ethically imperative to voice this suspicion at the outset. When I hang out with heroin addicts, I don't tell them I'm there to observe the frequency of needle sharing. When I spend time with families, I don't tell them that

I'm there to observe patterns of spousal abuse. When I sit in on classrooms, I don't announce that I'm there to see if the teacher calls on the boys more than the girls. The norms of informed consent do not require me to reveal my hypotheses in advance, and revealing them would very likely contaminate my findings. Why should the rules be any different for observing religious groups?

I'm disappointed that Bromley has devoted so much of his critique to a debate about words while failing to discuss at all what I consider the nub of my argument, the outlining of an agenda of "critical experiments" whereby future research might actually test the brainwashing conjecture against rival conjectures. I find this odd because it is in the delineation of this research agenda that I consider my paper most vulnerable to criticism. I think my comments are far from the last word on this subject, and I am eager to see this research agenda fleshed out with the contributions of other minds.

His counterargument appears to be that my research agenda is irrelevant because the research has already been done and all the results are in. This seems to me to be a misunderstanding of what science is all about. He argues that affiliation has been the most thoroughly researched single issue within the sociology of NRMs. In this he is correct, but that hardly means that the issue is now closed. More to the point, I was hoping he might have noticed that my essay was devoted not to the highly researched area of affiliation but to the under-researched area of disaffiliation. As I indicated in my essay, brainwashing is not a concept to be used to explain the way groups *obtain* members but rather the way they *retain* members.

It is upsetting to me that Bromley chooses for the most part not to engage in direct scholarly argument but prefers instead either to ridicule or to ignore. My paper contains a detailed, closely reasoned defense of the epistemological status of the brainwashing concept. If it contains logical or factual mistakes, I wish Bromley had pointed them out. I can do nothing with his vague complaints. Let it suffice to give one very specific example of what I believe to be Bromley's selective misreading of my article. He claims that I fail to address the epistemological issue of falsifiability. However, I devote an entire section of my paper to precisely that issue. If my argument is unconvincing, he should show how it is flawed. This is only one example of how evidence in my paper is neither accepted nor refuted but simply ignored.

To me, the useful part of Bromley's essay is the third and last section. Here he outlines a plan for a general theory of the uses of organizational power to resocialize individual participants. This is good stuff. I am impressed, as always, with Bromley's erudition and the catholicity of his scholarly interests. However, I am baffled that he does not perceive the extent to which he and I are on the same track. Again, he simply ignores

the section of my paper on convergent validity in which I cite a number of the same references that he cites.

I don't mean to imply that all of our differences are attributable to misreading. Real tactical differences do exist between Bromley and myself. I am an empiricist who likes to use theory sparingly. Bromley is a theorist who sometimes looks at data. I prefer to start with certain puzzling empirical regularities that have been repeatedly observed by students of NRMs. My tactics are to build from empirical generalizations to theoretical propositions. Bromley prefers to move the opposite way, from the general to the specific.

Bromley has been most at home in theorizing about the weak institutionalized human interactions that make most of the world go round. He is uncomfortable with the study of what Thomas Smith has called strong interactions, those pre-institutionalized passionate attachments that can sometimes drive people to collective murder or suicide.[6] However, it is precisely the pre-institutionalized aspects of NRMs that I find most intriguing. It is the opportunity that they give us to view religion *in statu nascendi*, with the blood on the altar not yet dry, that sustains my interest in these phenomena. I suspect that the bodies writhing on the ground around the pavilion at Jonestown signify something scarier than mere organizational resocialization. Strong interactions sometimes call for conceptual terms with strong connotative loadings. If Bromley can't stand the heat, he should get out of this particular kitchen.

Nevertheless, I hope for a future in which there can be fruitful interchange between scholars like Bromley who use data to test theory and scholars like myself who submerge themselves first in data and bring theory to bear only when something puzzling needs to be explained. We should not allow our tactical differences to hinder our continued collaboration in pursuit of knowledge about these elusive but important phenomena. He says "resocialize." I say "brainwash." But let's not for that reason call the whole thing off.

## ENDNOTES

[1] Standpoint theory is a perspective within contemporary sociological theory based upon the assumption that one's view of reality is, in part, inescapably determined by one's position within the social system.

[2] I should add, however, that Bromley himself has always been a generous colleague and a fair-minded journal editor.

[3] I am speaking here of full-size regular articles in the journals that are now entitled *The Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion (JSSR)* and *Sociology of Religion (SR)*, formerly *Sociological*

*Analysis.* There have been a very few short comments or notes supporting brainwashing and one or two articles that were not entirely dismissive of it. Nor is it the case that articles showing evidence of brainwashing were never submitted. Although I am not at liberty to breech the confidentiality of the peer review process by citing specific cases, I know of a number of instances in which articles of the sort I am speaking of were rejected or "discouraged." However, I do agree with Bromley that the very fact that so much space was given to my arguments in this new journal is encouraging. Perhaps this is a sign that the worst abuses of this sorry period in our discipline's history may now be coming to an end.

[4] Joan Baez, "Diamonds and Rust," *Diamond and Rust*, A & M Records, 1975.

[5] Benjamin D. Zablocki, *Alienation and Charisma: A Study of Contemporary American Communes* (New York: Free Press, 1980); Benjamin D. Zablocki, *The Joyful Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[6] Thomas Spence Smith, *Strong Interaction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

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