



Kurt Lewin Address: Influence, Power, Religion, and the Mechanisms of Social Control

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A power/interaction model of interpersonal influence is applied to the analysis of religions as mechanisms of social control. The original six bases of power presented by French and Raven (1959)—coercion, reward, legitimate position, expert, referent, and informational—are expanded to include variants of these bases: personal reward and coercion and legitimacy of equity, reciprocity, and responsibility (Raven, 1992). Over centuries, certain sages, seers, and chieftains, feeling that they knew what was best for their people individually and collectively, have attempted to utilize these power resources (e.g., to counter tendencies toward murder, theft, adultery, mayhem, or harmful dietary practices). To implement power strategies, various preparatory devices were developed, which include the establishment of a Deity, whose ultimate reward and coercive power is enhanced by omnipotence; whose omnipresence establishes necessary continual surveillance; and whose ultimate expertise follows from omniscience. Much of what has been developed in holy works, and in supportive art and literature, can then be seen as further preparing

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the bases of power for social control. Tensions result when a populace that is educated to expect informational power is faced with a religion that emphasizes extreme coercion, reward, ultimate legitimate and expert power.

I am indeed honored and privileged to have been selected for the Kurt Lewin Memorial Award. In fact, I cannot imagine an honor that would be more important and significant to me. Kurt Lewin, whom I was never privileged to have met, has had a tremendous influence on my life, on my choice of a field of study and research, and my subsequent scholarly activities, an influence that continues to this very day.

As an undergraduate psychology major at Ohio State University, fresh out of World War II military service, I became interested in social psychology as a field that would have relevance to the many exciting changes that were occurring in our society and throughout the world. A course in social psychology with Donald Campbell solidified my interests and enthusiasm for that field. But especially important were my informal readings of early issues of *The Journal of Social Issues* and *Human Relations*. From Campbell and from these readings, in turn, I discovered Kurt Lewin. Especially influential was his book, *Resolving Social Conflict*, which included several articles that hit on issues of critical importance to me, especially questions of social identity and marginality. For me, as a child of Russian-Jewish immigrants, his articles on psychosocial problems of minority groups and self-hatred among Jews were especially relevant. And when I had read the Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) experiments on democratic and autocratic leadership and the group decision studies, I knew that this was to be my direction. I then continued my studies in the social psychology program at the University of Michigan, and at the Research Center for Group Dynamics, where I worked particularly closely first with Leon Festinger and John R. P. French. It was, of course, my contact with Jack French that led to our development of our analyses of the bases of social power (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1965).

In 1992, as one of three presentations in honor of Jack French's receiving the Kurt Lewin Memorial Award, I discussed a Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence, an extension of the original French and Raven bases of power analysis (Raven, 1992, 1993). In this presentation, I shall review this model briefly, for those who might not be familiar with it, show how the model might be applied to social control, and then more specifically focus on religions as mechanisms of social control. As in our previous articles, I will define social power as potential influence, the ability of a person or group to induce or prevent change in another. Social control I will define as the process by which members of a social entity are influenced to adhere to values and principles of proper behavior deemed appropriate for that social entity. This is essentially a definition that had been used by many sociologists in the past (Janowitz, 1975). Parents control their children in the interests of the family, universities exercise control over professors and students, government exercises control over citizens, and religions control their adherents. . . .

Society's need for social control was stated most dramatically by Hobbes (1651/1958), who observed that in the "natural" state (without social control), as each person attempted to satisfy his/her individual needs and desires at the expense of others, humankind would be in a war of all against all, such that life would be "nasty, brutish, and short." As we can see then, the concepts of social power and social control are closely interrelated, since the process of social control involves the exercise of the bases and resources of power. But both terms also have their negative and even threatening connotations. All of us, or at least most of us, like to think that we are independent agents, and being subjected to social power restricts that sense of independence. The thought of being "socially controlled" also brings forth strong negative feelings. Yet, when we consider it more carefully, power and influence are part of our everyday interaction and contribute to individual and collective benefit. Similarly for social control.

In his 1975 presidential address to the American Psychological Association, Donald Campbell (1975) presented as his major thesis that psychology and psychiatry are more hostile to the inhibitory messages of traditional religious moralizing than is scientifically justified. Indeed, religion generally has a bad name in many intellectual circles, and not without cause. We think of the numbers of people who have been killed in religious wars, the numbers who have been tortured for their religion in the Inquisition, in Salem witch hunts, or hunted down by crusaders. . . . We see some religions as inhibiting science, medical innovation, and social progress. Yet, Campbell makes a case, through his analysis of social evolution, for the adaptive quality of optimal social coordination in limiting "selfishness, pride, greed, dishonesty, covetousness, cowardice, wrath" (p. 1104). He notes that *biological evolution* would tend to select for characteristics that help assure biological survival; essentially it would select for tendencies to satisfy selfish interests, for oneself and one's genetic line, without concern for others. *Social evolution* would counter such selfish tendencies, selecting for personal restraint, sympathy, concern for others, and altruism. How many lives were saved when people, motivated by revenge or desire for personal gain, were restrained by religious belief from injuring or killing their neighbors?

Aside from social coordination, we can all cite religious restrictions that are maladaptive, such as restrictions on accepting blood transfusions, or use of contraceptive devices to avoid venereal disease or excessive births. But how many lives were saved because of religious restrictions against the consumption of pork products and shellfish in the Middle East, at a time when there was no refrigeration? Or even in more modern times, by religions that proscribe the consumption of tobacco, alcohol, coffee, narcotics, and other substances later determined to be unhealthy and life-threatening (Paloutzian & Kirkpatrick, 1995)?

Campbell is then "convinced that in past human history, an adaptive social evolution of organizational principles, moral norms, and transcendent belief systems took place . . . [but] sociocultural evolutionary studies [do not give] attention

to the mechanism that would make an adaptive evolutionary progress possible” (p. 1106). Religions, then, despite their failings, have contributed significantly to social control and the protection of society. It is my purpose here to examine some such mechanisms, and to further explore some of the effects of such mechanisms, positive and negative.

I should say at the outset that I must admit some inadequacies on my part in such an analysis. I can make no claim to being an expert on religions, nor at this point do I have the time and energy to develop such an expertise. And what I do know is restricted to only a segment of world religions, those that stem from the Judeo-Christian tradition. But I propose that an understanding of the social psychological mechanisms of social control, through an analysis of the bases of power, might help us to understand how religion and other agencies operate in the interests of positive social evolution, as well as how these same mechanisms might lead to harmful effects if they are utilized improperly or manipulatively.

A Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence

The expanded Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence draws on a number of sources, including various works by Cartwright (1959, 1965), Festinger (1953), Kelman (1958), Kipnis (1976), Lewin (1944/1951), and many others. From our original focus on supervisor/subordinate relationships, our application of the model has been extended to many others: doctor/patient, doctor/nurse, counselor/counselee, parent/child, political confrontations. Could the model also be applied to the analysis of religions as mechanisms of social control? First, a few words about the expanded model:

Originally, we proposed six bases of power, resources that an influencing agent can utilize in changing the beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors of a target: reward, coercion, legitimacy, expertise, reference, and information.¹ (See Table 1.) We further proposed that, as compared with the other bases of social power, the changed behavior resulting from Information would be maintained without continued social dependence on the influencing agent. For reward and coercion, maintenance of the change would be socially dependent: It would specifically depend on surveillance by the influencing agent. Change following legitimate, expert and referent power would initially be socially dependent on the influencing agent, but would not require surveillance. On the basis of research and experience, there have been many other developments and elaborations on the original theory. Let me mention just a few of these here.

¹Actually, as some readers will note, information was listed only as a form of influence in the 1959 paper (French & Raven, 1959), but has been included subsequently (since Raven, 1965) among the six bases of power.

Table 1. The Six Bases of Social Power

Basis of power	Social dependence of change	Importance of surveillance
Coercion	Socially dependent	Important
Reward	Socially dependent	Important
Legitimacy	Socially dependent	Unimportant
Expert	Socially dependent	Unimportant
Reference	Socially dependent	Unimportant
Informational	Socially independent	Unimportant

Further Differentiating Bases of Power

Though we still believe that most social influence can be understood in terms of the six bases of power, some of these bases have been elaborated and further differentiated, as shown in Table 2.

Coercive Power and Reward Power: Personal Versus Impersonal Forms

In our original statement, we considered coercive and reward power in terms of tangible rewards and real physical threats: threats of being fired or fined, promises of monetary rewards and bonuses or promotion within an organization, etc. However, it should be clear that personal approval from someone whom we like can result in quite powerful reward power; and a threat of rejection or disapproval

Table 2. Further Differentiating the Bases of Power

Basis of power	Further differentiation
Coercion	Impersonal coercion Personal coercion
Reward	Impersonal reward Personal reward
Legitimacy	Legitimate position power Legitimacy of reciprocity Legitimacy of responsibility Legitimacy of equity (compensatory)
Expert	Positive/negative
Reference	Positive/negative
Informational	

from someone whom we value highly can serve as a source for powerful coercive power. Considering personal, as well as impersonal, forms of reward and coercion helped us to understand certain forms of influence that had previously been inappropriately categorized as referent power (which also depends on the target's evaluating the influencing agent positively).

Legitimate Power: Position, Reciprocity, Equity, Responsibility

Legitimate power is based on a structural relationship between the influencing agent and the target. Implicitly, or explicitly, the agent says, "I have a right to ask you to do this and you have an obligation to comply." Thus terms such as "obliged" or "obligated," "should," "ought to," "required to" may signal the use of legitimate power. Legitimate power is most obvious when it is based on some formal structure—a supervisor or a higher ranking military officer influencing a subordinate, what Cialdini (1988) has called "authority pressure," and what others (e.g., Etzioni, 1961) have called "position power." The strength of such legitimate power, when used by an experimenter to influence a subject, is demonstrated all too vividly in Milgram's (1974) classic study of obedience. That is the way we originally conceived of legitimate power. However, we have had to recognize that there are other forms of legitimate power that may be more subtle, that draw on other social norms.

Legitimate power of reciprocity. "I did that for you, so you should feel obliged to do to this for me" (Gouldner, 1960). The obligation to return a favor, even an unsolicited favor, has been demonstrated experimentally (Goranson & Berkowitz, 1966; Regan, 1971).

Legitimate power of equity. "I have worked hard and suffered, so it is only fair that you should do something which I ask of you," or "You have not listened to me in the past . . .," or "You have done things which caused pain or difficulty for me, so you should feel obliged to do what I ask to compensate for this" (Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978; this might also be referred to as a "compensatory norm").

Legitimate power of responsibility or dependence. According to this norm, we have some obligation to help others who cannot help themselves, or others who are dependent upon us (Berkowitz & Daniels, 1963; this form of legitimate power has sometimes been referred to as the "power of the powerless"). The supervisor could conceivably say, "Look, I am not about to force you to follow my method, but it is absolutely essential to me that you do so in order to get the job done this way. I really depend upon you to do this for me."

We might note that particularly with regard to legitimate power of reciprocity, equity, and responsibility, failure to adhere to these norms is often accompanied by

feelings of guilt, and this will become particularly relevant as we see these bases of power utilized in a religious context.

Invoking or Reducing the Power of Third Parties

Sometimes an influencing agent can bring about change in a target by invoking the power of third parties. Perhaps the supervisor could gain the assistance of a coworker to help persuade the recalcitrant worker. A mother may invoke the potential coercive power of the father: "Daddy is going to hear about this when he gets home." Other bases of power could also be invoked on the part of some third party: the referent power of a long-departed and beloved grandparent ("This is the way she would want you to do this"), the expert power of an absent authority, etc. Sometimes, the power of third parties may be invoked negatively, particularly with referent power. Mother: "When you wear those baggy pants, you look like one of those awful gang members. You don't want to be seen as one of them, do you?"

Selecting Power Strategies

When an influencing agent wishes to affect the behavior, attitudes, beliefs, etc., of the target, s/he selects a basis of power or a combination of resources. These will be selected on the bases of a number of considerations. These might begin with an assessment of the target: Which bases of power will be effective for her/him? Which will lead to long-term change? What is the capacity of the target for understanding the reasoning for the change (informational power)? The motivations of the agent are also important: Is change on the part of the target the primary goal? Or to punish the target, through influence or perhaps humiliation? Or is it most important for the agent to demonstrate her/his power for the target, for her/himself, or for third parties who happen to be observing? Other considerations would include the more practical ones: What are the costs of not only inducing influence but also continuing it? Reward or coercion may be more rapid, but they also require longer term surveillance at potentially high costs. How could surveillance be maintained? Coercive power may be effective, but might also lead to personal rejection and hostility by the target and by others who may be observing. The legitimate power of the powerless could work, but at the cost of demeaning oneself and weakening other bases of power.

Preparatory and Stage-Setting Devices

Strengthening bases of power. To effectively influence the target, the influencing agent will often find it necessary first to engage in preparatory or stage-setting devices. These preparatory devices by the agent may begin in anticipation of future influence attempts. The clothing worn by the agent will often suggest

certain bases of power: the uniform of a policeman, the vestments of a clergyman, the laboratory coat and stethoscope of the surgeon . . . (Bickman, 1974; Bushman, 1988). The display of diplomas, books, photos with celebrities would emphasize expert power. Indeed, the architecture in which the influence is to take place may suggest bases of power. The initial interaction with the target will also serve to enhance or emphasize certain bases of power: To use coercive power or reward power, it must be demonstrated that the agent not only has means to punish or reward the target, but the readiness to use such means. For expert power, superior knowledge may have to be demonstrated by choice of erudite words or other demonstration of knowledge. For legitimate position power, the agent must first demonstrate to the target that, by virtue of his/her position, the agent has a right to influence the target and the target must feel an obligation to comply. For legitimate power of reciprocity, the target may have to be reminded of what the agent has done previously for the target, such that the target should feel that reciprocal obligation. These are summarized in Table 3. (Some of these stage-setting devices are presented in Jones and Pittman, 1982).

While going through basic training in the army, I was very puzzled about a number of the things which we had to do. I could understand our having to learn how to use our weapons and how to operate under combat conditions, but why learn to lace our shoes a particular way, walk back and forth through puddles, salute commissioned officers even when off base, etc.? Only much later did I realize that, in addition to combat training, basic training was a stage-setting device, especially for the establishment of legitimate position power. Those in command were not ready to put their trust in informational power: Particularly in combat conditions, officers would not be able to give us reasons. Coercive power, under limited surveillance, would also not be sufficient. We must learn, as Tennyson said of the Light Brigade, that when ordered to do something, "ours is not to reason why, ours is but to do or die." So it was important that we were ordered to do *meaningless* things, and learn to obey legitimate authority without question, while coercive power was still hovering in the background.

Minimizing the target. Just as the agent will attempt to enhance or establish his/her bases of power, it may also be necessary to minimize the target, to show the target that his/her knowledge is limited (to enhance expert power), to convince the target that his/her ability to resist punishment is insufficient, to induce guilt in the target by showing how the target had previously harmed the agent, and so forth. And finally, the influencing agent may wish to diminish the power of other opposing influencing agents who might have power over the target, by demonstrating their lack of expertise, their illegitimacy, their negative character. Cult leaders often reduce counterinfluence by physically isolating their members from their families, friends, or others who might have contrary beliefs or opinions.

Table 3. Social Power: Preparatory and Stage-Setting Devices

Setting the Scene or Stage

Architecture and building design (expert, referent)
 Displaying diplomas, library, photos with celebrities (expert)
 Wearing uniform, laboratory coat, stethoscope (expert)
 Arranging of podium or pulpit, or desk, chairs (legitimate)

Enhancing or Emphasizing Power Bases

References to agent’s ability to control rewards; punishments; to expertise; mutuality of interests (referent); formal role as supervisor, teacher, doctor, etc. (legitimate)
 Intimidation, presenting fearful image (coercion)
 Ingratiation, via compliments, etc., to increase target’s attraction to agent (personal reward, personal coercion, referent power)
 Self-promotion, emphasizing superior knowledge (expert)
 Emphasizing common goals, background, identification, similarity (referent)
 Doing a favor for target, emphasizing one’s dependence upon target, reference to some harm which target had imposed on agent (legitimacy of reciprocity, responsibility, equity)
 Presenting background information, which can subsequently serve to enhance informational influence
 Giving rewards to others who comply, or severe punishment to noncompliers
 Surveillance—emphasizing agent’s ability to observe target (enhances coercive power and reward power)

Minimizing Target

Subtle “put-downs” that decrease target’s self-esteem, confidence, to increase agent’s informational, expert, or legitimate power

Diminishing Opposing Influencing Agents

Minimizing expertise, reference, legitimacy, etc., of others who may support the target’s current position or mode of behavior
 Pointing out undesirable characteristics of opposing agents
 Physical isolation of target from contact with opposing agents

Religion, Power, and Social Control

How might these ideas apply then to religions as mechanisms of social control? As I introduce this discussion, I beg your indulgence, since my presentation here will very likely appear to be oversimplified and even naive.

A Naive Illustration of the Development of Religious Power

Let us imagine a time when supposedly chaos characterized the relationships among peoples, in something approximating Hobbes’s “natural state”—a time

when murder, theft, rape, mayhem were rampant and when people were relatively unrestrained in acting on their impulses or in acquiring whatever they needed or desired. Let us imagine a sage and chieftain (at that time, most likely a male, otherwise religions might have developed differently) who observes that such behaviors will ultimately lead to individual and collective catastrophe. He attempts to restrain a shepherd who, it seems, is ready to murder a neighbor who had just stolen one of the shepherd's sheep. He tries to explain (informational power) that "this is not a good practice, since it will lead to ultimate suffering for everyone." The shepherd is not convinced. "Look," he says, "Trust me. Even if you don't understand, you must respect my wisdom and experience." (Expert power doesn't work.) "But I am your chieftain and you should feel an obligation." But the shepherd does not accept the chieftain's legitimate right to restrict this behavior. If these bases of power are insufficient, then how about: "I shall see to it that you are punished for such an act." But, again, the shepherd does not really believe that the chieftain really has the means to punish the shepherd. Besides, the act could be carried out without the chieftain's even knowing about it.

The sage then develops or discovers another means to implement change in the shepherd and others. (Some might find it more comfortable at this point to think of the sage as divinely inspired.) He develops the concept of a "Deity," a Supreme Being. This Deity is *omnipotent*, can determine life or death, has the ultimate power to offer the ultimate reward (heaven) or the ultimate punishment (hell), and many other intermediate rewards and punishments. He is *omnipresent*: He is everywhere, His power is universal. He is also *omniscient*: He is the ultimate expert power, and furthermore, with this Deity as the influencing agent, the target can be assured that there will always be the surveillance that is necessary for behaviors to be rewarded and punished. In effect, the sage is going through a series of preparatory strategies, but specifically attributing qualities that provide bases of power to an omnipotent third party. This Deity is certainly a formidable influencing agent with such a strong armament available to induce compliance.

As an aside, I am sure that most of us have had experience with people even today invoking the power of God. We hear religious ministers and authorities do so, particularly from fundamentalist religions, but also others, including parents. Some years ago, Clyde Nunn (1964) interviewed 367 parents and found that two-thirds of them told their children that God will punish them if they are bad, a proportion that has probably changed little, if at all, since then. Such invocation of the coercive power of God was most likely among parents who had low income, were members of fundamentalist churches, and who felt that children should obey their parents without question. Nunn concluded that such parents would be likely to feel relatively powerless and needed such a powerful ally to gain compliance. At this very conference, Bugental (1998) reported that parents who feel powerless are particularly likely to use excessive force (coercive power) in disciplining their children. She did not ask about invoking the coercive power of God, but we would

expect that that would also be more likely for such parents. Recently, Haruki Sakai (personal communication, 1998) questioned Japanese university students about the tendency of Japanese parents to invoke the power of “gods,” and though he found that this device was less likely than Nunn had found in his earlier American sample, 44% of his sample still reported that they did so.²

But in those earlier times, it must have been quite a challenge for the sage to convince that shepherd and others that such a Being exists, and exists with these characteristics. It becomes more understandable if we realize that really there is not just one sage, but that this sage, in fact, continues in one form or another over many hundreds of years. The sage and his future “collaborators,” in fact, develop a series of stories, which are modified in retelling over many years and which then support the nature of such a Deity. Indeed, it turns out that these collectively form a book or series of books, which come from no less than the Deity Himself. The establishment of this omnipotent authority is developed over and over again, including convincing stories of miracles, beginning with the creation of the world itself. His omnipresence and omniscience is also demonstrated time and again. Much of what is in our holy books today, it seems, was first transmitted orally, over many generations, over many centuries. The religion attributed to Abraham, which is central to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, is said by biblical scholars to have its origins in the 20th Century, BCE,³ but it appears that it was not written down until twelve centuries later (Armstrong, 1993). As these were transmitted, they were modified to fit the period and the political situation of that period (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989, p. 58) and honed to serve their purposes. Some stories and dicta were added and some were lost, or edited out, in the retelling. Recent studies of ancient works, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, show how the words and stories of that day appear to have been inherited and modified from previous works of the past, and were remodified in future works that we know today (Vermes, 1997). These are the works of an innumerable series of writers and editors. Why and how were these earlier works modified? The book that we know as the Bible becomes more meaningful in these terms. As Kelman and Hamilton (1989) point out, “The Bible can be conceived as a book of norms: a historical window into the ‘oughts’ and ‘ought nots’ of long ago cultures in what was then the crossroads of the world” (p. 58).

We would go somewhat further and also see the Bible, among its many other qualities, as a magnificent, convincing preparatory or stage-setting mechanism, designed to demonstrate and establish God’s bases of power and to thereby provide

²Although Buddhism does not include a concept of “God” or “gods,” Sakai explains that in Japan there is some belief in the indigenous Shinto religion, which includes many gods and goddesses, somewhat parallel to Greek mythology. Though current adherence to Shinto is not widespread, the folk belief in various gods continues.

³Since our discussion here is presented from various religious perspectives, we will use the terms BCE (Before the Common Era) and CE (Common Era), instead of the more conventional BC and AD.

an elaborate and often effective mechanism for *social control*.⁴ These prescriptions and proscriptions of various behaviors, and the power behind them, is amplified and emphasized over the years by other writings, sermons, works of literature and art. Let us look at some examples and see if they can be considered in this way.

Social Power Strategies in Holy Works

In the Holy Works, to help people to accept the existence of the Superior Being, the sages presented Him in terms, and drawing on analogies, that people could understand. Of course, the Supreme Being would have to be male, since in that era, the more powerful persons in almost every social situation, with very few exceptions, would be male. Powerful kings were a part of the life of that day, as well as subsequently, and God was then represented as an all-powerful king, sometimes benevolent, sometimes vengeful, but expecting complete and unquestioned obedience. A more gentle conception presents God as shepherd and humanity as His flock. Implied in such a relationship is a lack of real consent by the members of the flock, but yet unquestioned obedience to even the slightest suggestion by the Shepherd. The flock exists through the activity of the Shepherd, who guides them, provides sustenance, prods them if they do not follow. Without Him, the flock would collapse into an unprotected mass of dispersed individuals (Foucault, 1981, as cited in Hindess, 1996, p. 118).

But, of course, the Lord is much more powerful than shepherds or kings. Throughout the Bible and other holy works, the omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence of the Lord are emphasized, beginning with Genesis and the majestic account of the power of the Lord in creating heaven and earth and everything therein (Genesis 1). The Koran has a strong conception of God's absolute omniscience and omnipotence (Armstrong, 1993, pp. 163 ff.). Certainly, with the descriptions of heaven and hell, in the Bible and the Koran, in the strident words of religious ministers, in art and literature, the Lord's ultimate coercive power and reward power are dramatically established. In Jewish texts, such as the Bible and prayer book, thirteen attributes are ascribed to God, including omniscience, omnipotence, transcendence, merciful, forgiving, gracious, and long-suffering. These are chanted and repeated at many significant occasions. These attributes "attest to the sense of human dependence on a power which compels reverence and obedience" (Werblowsky & Wigoder, 1965, p. 49). As in the Bible, the Koran

⁴Once the power of God has been established, His power has been invoked frequently by kings and other rulers, to establish and maintain their power in the name of God. Machiavelli (1532/1940) notes that "prudent men know of many beneficial things which, having no persuasive evidence for them, they cannot get others to accept. Consequently, wise men who wish to avoid this difficulty, resort to divine authority. . . . Where a fear of God is lacking, the state must either fail or be sustained by a fear of the ruler which may substitute for the lack of religion" (pp. 103–104).

encourages adherents to be aware of the benevolence of the Allah, who brings forth a being from a drop of sperm, makes it easy for him to go through life, and may thereafter raise him again from the dead (Koran 80:24–32). Allah is given 99 names or attributes, indicating greater positive qualities than those in any other being: rich and infinite, giver of life, knower of all things, producer of speech; he dominates; he gives, he takes away; he brings low and exalts. These names are recited, counted on beads, and chanted as a mantra (Armstrong, 1993, p. 150).

Sins and legitimate power. The story of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3) not only demonstrates God's omniscience and His reward and coercive power, but offers the first instance of God's legitimate power of equity, based on a compensatory norm. Such a power base stems from the target's obligation to obey the agent to atone for an inappropriate or hurtful act that the target has committed previously. Guilt seems to play such a role in many religions. The concept of sin also serves this purpose, not only in invoking guilt, but with the threat of punishment that accompanies it. Augustine, in a particularly harsh doctrine, stated that Adam's and Eve's descendants must consider themselves as having committed this original sin for having disobeyed God. This sin is passed on through the sexual act, and believers must atone for it by complete surrender and obedience. For those who believe that we are born in sin, and from birth, the sense that we should feel an obligation to atone for it, the Lord's legitimate power of equity would be overwhelming, and supported also by coercive power, the threat of extreme punishment after death. But, for some branches of Christianity, the words of Paul give some relief, in stating that Jesus suffered and died on the cross "for our sins," thus granting collective atonement. But those who accept this interpretation are not completely off the hook, for it is emphasized that they now have a special obligation to the Lord, in the name of Jesus, to love and obey Him:⁵ the legitimate power of reciprocity. For some Christians, the original sin is washed away in baptism, thus freeing the baby from even this obligation. But, in adulthood, there is renewed emphasis on behaviors in which almost everyone engages, and which are seen as sinful, invoking guilt and an obligation to comply.

In traditional Christianity, the confession of sins is made both collectively and individually, again with a vow for compliance with religious law in return for expiation. In the Jewish most holy Day of Atonement there is a recitation of every possible sin, which, the worshipper says, "*we* have committed"; the worshipper

⁵This position is presented even more forcefully by Luther in his *Small Catechism*: "Jesus has redeemed *me*, a lost and condemned creature delivered *me* from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil . . . with his holy and precious blood and with his innocent sufferings and death, in order that I may be his, live under him and in his Kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness and blessedness. . . ." (quoted in Armstrong, 1993, p. 278, emphasis added).

then assumes a collective obligation not only for his/her own past misdeeds but for those committed by others. In asking forgiveness, the penitent also vows to adhere to proper behavior and thought in the future. This same device is used to emphasize God's legitimate power of reciprocity: After all, it is important for all Jews to feel that they were each *personally* freed by God from slavery in Egypt. For this, they are *all* eternally obligated. The Lord's extreme legitimate power of reciprocity is further strengthened by the account of the Covenant on Mount Sinai: The Jewish people, in return for a promise of protection and continued support from the Lord, pledged themselves to complete obedience and acceptance only of the one Lord.

But this was further strengthened by the words of Joshua, warning, with extreme coercive power, that if they did not honor the covenant with the Lord, he would destroy them (Joshua 24:24). This is demonstrated dramatically in the tragic story of Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, Moses's brother. They had obeyed the words of the Lord in performing a series of rituals, none of which could be seen as having a rational basis other than that they were commanded to do so. Then they slipped and took into the tabernacle burning incense, other than what the Lord had commanded. As punishment the Lord immediately sent out flames that consumed them. That event is then recounted several times to emphasize the extreme coercive power of the Lord, with severe punishment for even for the slightest disobedience, regardless of reason or rationality (Leviticus 9, 10).

Unquestioning obedience in the "binding" story. The "binding" story, which has such an important place in the holy Jewish New Year services, can also be seen as a preparatory device for a basis of power (Genesis 22). Abraham is commanded by the Lord to take his beloved son, Isaac, to a mountain where he is to be sacrificed to the Lord. Abraham misleads his son, brings him with a donkey and firewood to the designated location, binds Isaac and is about to drive his knife into Isaac when his hand is stopped by an angel of the Lord. Abraham has passed the test, and as a reward for his unquestioning obedience, his acceptance of the ultimate legitimate power of God, Abraham and his descendants will be God's chosen people, with all of the rewards which that implies. If one obeys without question the legitimate power of the Lord and has faith in His ultimate wisdom, then one not only can avoid extreme punishment, but can anticipate enormous rewards. But by being chosen, Abraham and his descendants also incurred a lasting obligation "to do and obey all that the Lord hath spoken" without exception and without question (legitimate power of reciprocity). Thus "binding" refers not only to the physical binding of Isaac, but to the resulting "binding" of Jewish people to the Lord, with an obligation of unquestioning obedience, establishing the Lord's extreme legitimate power, legitimate power of position and reciprocity, but still backed by coercive and reward power.

We might note that the binding account is also represented in the Koran, but with Ishmael, Abraham's other son and the ancestor of the Arabs, taking the place of Isaac. There is one difference, however, in that Ishmael is made aware of his being sacrificed and attempts to assist Abraham in this deed of obedience.

Rejection of Reasoning and Informational Power

Also reflected in religions is their emphasis on legitimate and ultimate expert power of the Deity, as compared to informational power. For the former, adherence and complete acceptance of the literal word of God and the Bible is an absolute necessity.⁶ St. Paul argued for "justification by faith," accepting the word without question, for even "God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom" (I Corinthians 1.25). If there is discussion, it is not so much in terms of what is ultimately moral per se, but in terms of what God and the Bible really mean by a particular passage. Suppose we congratulate an orthodox traditional Jew on the wisdom of his ancestors, who in biblical times proscribed the eating of pork products and shellfish. After all, it is only relatively recently that careful scientific research has become aware of trichinosis and other diseases that in a hot Middle East climate, without refrigeration, can lead to serious illness and death. Our biblical ancestors were able to determine this through their wisdom and careful observations. We might be startled to find that, rather than receiving appreciation or gratitude, our congratulations will more likely meet with rejection and even indignation: The reason we don't eat pork or shellfish is simply because it is stated in the Torah that such food is forbidden, an "abomination": No further reason is necessary. Indeed, it could even be argued that we are not forbidden to eat pork in order to avoid a deadly disease that we now know as trichinosis; rather trichinosis might be the severe punishment that is visited on the person who violates religious law by eating meat that is ritually unclean.⁷

⁶Though informational power is not characteristic in the Old Testament, there are exceptions, particularly in the Prophets. For example, Ezekiel (Ezekiel 34), speaking for the Lord, makes a plea for ethical treatment of animals, pointing out that shepherds take the wool of their sheep, feed themselves of the meat of the sheep, but yet do not properly feed the sheep, mend their broken bones, or look after them, treating them with force and cruelty. Surely, shepherds should behave ethically toward their animals. But the Lord follows this with a threat of extreme punishment. For those who treat their flock ethically, He offers a reward: He would treat them as a good shepherd should look after his sheep. Informational power is strengthened through reward and coercive power.

⁷One cannot fail to be impressed with an elaborate series of requirements that the Lord gave to Moses and Aaron, which they were in turn to pass on to the children of Israel. These specified what should be done if "a man had a running issue out of his flesh," what signs one should look for, how these should be dealt with as these might change over time, with a priest brought in to make certain that the correct things were done. These included destroying the clothing and bedding of the infected person, cleaning and bathing of that person, as well as anyone who might come in contact with him, shaving of body hair, destroying earthen vessels that the person might have used, thoroughly cleaning or even

The concern by fundamentalists that the literal words be accepted (legitimate and expert power) seems clear. Once we speak in terms of informational power—expecting rational reasons why an act is required or forbidden—then we also allow the adherent to question that and other proscriptions and requirements. Since today we have refrigeration, the acceptor of informational power may say, we can now safely eat pork and shellfish. And as further items are questioned, the adherent's ultimate faith might be undermined. For fundamentalists—Jew, Christian, or Moslem—it is important therefore that every word in the Holy Work, both the historical facts and the various dicta, be accepted as literally true and not to be questioned. There is an interesting parallel here to the military officers who feel that they cannot trust soldiers to be influenced by explanations, informational power, but instead insist on unquestioned reliance on expert and legitimate power. Such acts as saluting a superior officer in addition to emphasizing obedience to the word of military law begin to have the appearance of ritualized behavior. Ritual, of course, plays a very important role in most religions. Common ritual gives the adherent a sense mutual identity with others in their religious community, with the security and satisfaction which that implies. But one might see one important function of ritual as the establishment of the legitimate power of religious law.

To be sure, even among traditionalists, as among various Protestant sects of the Christian church, there is active discussion of the meaning of the words of the Bible or other Holy Works. The Jewish Talmud includes millions of words of such discussion, and the Talmud is actively reviewed in disputations with thousands of Talmudic scholars to this very day. But, I believe it is fair to say, that much of this discussion focuses not on what is *inherently* appropriate or moral behavior, but what did the Lord *really mean* by these words, and how can one comply with them precisely under changing social and environmental conditions.

Religious Differences With Regard to Bases of Power

Religions differ in the bases of power that are utilized by the clergy and that are ascribed to God. We can see it in the language that different religious groups use. When good, religious people are described as “God-fearing,” this suggests that for that religious group God's coercive power is predominant. The

destroying the dwelling place, and the like (Leviticus 13–15). If one omitted the dicta requiring certain sacrifices of turtledoves and lambs, much of what was ordered by the Lord was similar to what our National Centers for Disease Control recommend for the prevention and control of nosocomial infections (Raven & Haley, 1980). However, these requirements are not presented as well-reasoned procedures to avoid spread of infection, but as behaviors required by the Lord, and they are presented shortly after the story of the sons of Aaron being consumed by fire for even a slight deviation from their orders. Given the difficulty that the CDC has in gaining compliance even today with even simple recommended hand-washing procedures, who can say that the earlier influence strategies were less effective?

architecture of places of worship also seems to imply bases of power. Compare the imposing and overwhelming Gothic cathedrals of the Roman Catholic church, with the priest in a pulpit well above the parishioners, or the magnificent mosques of Islam, with the simple Quaker meeting house, with the congregants sitting in a circle, and encouraged to express their individual beliefs about morality. The former would appear to give the individual worshipper a sense of relative insignificance and relative powerlessness, a message that is also strengthened in prayers and in the holy works.

We must keep in mind that at the time of the development of written scripture of the Bible and the Koran, all but a chosen few were illiterate and uneducated. The emphasis on a Supreme Being, who expected obedience without question, relying on His extreme coercive power, reward power, unquestioned expert power, and various forms of legitimate power, was likely effective in determining the behavior of many, if not all of those who accepted His existence. But as humankind became more literate, educated, and knowledgeable, such forms of power became more difficult to accept. Religious authorities, and the temporal powers who supported them, were threatened by such independent thought. Any new ideas that were counter to the literal statement in the Holy Works were seen as threatening the entire system and undermining the very foundations of what was seen as necessary to maintain and continue that way of life. It seems that such deviations were especially threatening at times when the system was menaced by other dangers.

In the 12th century and for a period thereafter, lands under Moslem rule flourished in new scientific and philosophical developments. Many of these discoveries would have questioned the literal words of the Bible and the Koran. In the 15th century, Islam had suffered a number of defeats in Spain, through the Mongol invasions and elsewhere. It was then that schools of Islamic studies decreed that "the gates of independent reasoning had been closed"; reliance on informational power and on the expert power of those not part of religious orthodoxy was forbidden in religious and other practices, including the sciences. "Henceforth Muslims should practice emulation of the great luminaries of the past, especially in study of Shariah, the Holy Law." The emphasis was to extend Shariah to all circumstances in which Muslims were likely to find themselves (Armstrong, 1993, p. 258).

Evidence of responses to the threat of informational power to the established order is represented in various other critical events, such as the inquisition trial and imprisonment of Galileo, whose heliocentric theory was thought to contradict the word of God in scripture. Later in the 17th century, the Dutch Jewish philosopher Baruch Spinoza was ostracized and cursed by the Jewish community. Though he believed in God, he felt that an understanding of God and religion through logical philosophical analysis should be accepted over a literal acceptance of the words in the Bible. Such examples of the punishment of religious deviants, including those

who advocated informational power in the greater service of humanity and knowledge, have been repeated innumerable times.⁸

Social Power Strategies and Differences in Moral Reasoning

Much of what we have been discussing thus far is based on assumptions that few of us would question: From our own experience, and supported by various studies, we know that people differ in their tendencies to respond to one form of influence strategy as compared to another, though this might vary with the situation. We might expect that a person who has low self-confidence will be less likely to respond to informational power, somewhat more likely to respond to expert power—in fact, even when the influencing agent gives good reasons, the person with low self-esteem may decide to comply, but attribute such compliance to expert power. According to the classic definition, a psychopathic personality (more recently called an antisocial personality), when it comes to issue of “moral” or “immoral” behavior, would be more likely to respond to coercive power and reward power, less likely to comply because of informational power (showing logically that undesirable behavior is inconsistent with certain social values), or because of referent power or legitimate power. The power strategies utilized by an influencing agent will also be determined by personal predilections and a conception of the bases of power to which the target would respond. Often, of course, these will be related to the bases of power to which the agent would respond if s/he were the target. It would not be a big step to go from there to a further assumption that both the influence strategies chosen and the strategies to which a target of influence would respond are determined by personality and by culture.

Several years ago, Lawrence Kohlberg (1964, 1984), following the earlier works of Piaget (1932), developed a six-stage model of the development of complexity in moral reasoning, the ways in which various people might determine what behavior is “good” or “bad.” Kohlberg, in the tradition of Piaget, examined moral development according to how these are determined at various age levels, but adding that people sometimes are fixated at the lower stages and levels with few people

⁸Among the most esteemed philosophers and codifiers in Judaism is Moses Maimonides (Moses ben Maimon or Rambam, 1136–1204 CE), who is particularly remembered for his belief in the love of God through reason. His great philosophical work, *Guide for the Perplexed*, attempted to show the way to “the science of the law in the true sense,” pointing out the rational bases for dicta and requirements in Holy Works—what we would interpret as an emphasis on informational power. He became an uncompromising adversary of all that would not stand up to reason. For deviating from literal interpretations, traditional Jewish scholars condemned his works as heretical, he was subjected to an excommunicatory ban, and his books were burned by Christian Dominicans. The influence of his writings continues to this day, even among traditionalists (Hartman, 1977; Minkin, 1993).

actually reaching stage 6, the most mature and developed stage of moral reasoning. These are summarized in Table 4.

Kohlberg and his followers presented a number of studies, including cross-cultural comparisons with a number of nations, to support this model (Kohlberg, Levine, & Hewer, 1983; Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990; Miller & Bersoff, 1992). I think it would be worthwhile to examine these stages and levels not only in terms of developmental psychology, but in exploring various peoples and cultures and how they respond to mechanisms of social control. In Table 4, I have tried to draw a parallel between Kohlberg's stages and the bases of power that might operate most effectively at each level. Some of the parallels are quite clear: Those with a "Punishment and Obedience Orientation" would be more likely to respond to impersonal coercive power and reward power. Those with an "Interpersonal Concordance Orientation" would be more likely to respond to personal coercion and personal reward, plus, perhaps, referent power. "Social System Maintenance" seems to suggest particularly legitimate position power and legitimate power of

Table 4. Stages of Moral Reasoning

I. Preconventional: Emphasis on External Control

Stage 1. Punishment and Obedience Orientation. What is right or wrong is determined by whether one may be punished or whether it is contrary to commands from a legitimate and powerful agent. Highly dependent on extreme forms of *coercive power*, plus obligations to a powerful *legitimate position power*.

Stage 2. Instrumental Relativist Orientation. Right or wrong is determined by whether one gets a reward depending on such behavior. Extreme form of *reward power*.

II. Conventional: Emphasis on Pleasing Others

Stage 3. Interpersonal Concordance Orientation. Approval or disapproval, especially by the influencing agent, but also by others who are important. Concern for winning and maintaining love and affection, avoiding personal rejection. *Personal reward* and *personal coercive power* predominate.

Stage 4. Social System Maintenance and Law-and-Order Orientation. Accepting higher authority as a means toward general harmony in social system. Accepting established rules with social order in mind. Doing one's duty. Concern for "fairness" in the interests of self and others. *Legitimate position power* with such higher order justification. *Legitimate power of equity*. *Personal reward* and *personal coercive power* carry over, with the greater good in mind.

III. Postconventional: Accepting Universal Principles and Standards

Stage 5. Social Contract Orientation. Acceptance of obligation to adhere to agreements with others, either formally or implied. *Legitimate power of reciprocity*.

Stage 6. Universal Ethical Principles Orientation. Right or wrong is tied into accepting basic social values and internalized standards. Values such as equality, freedom, fairness, security, etc., guide behavior. Conscience provides direction. *Informational power* predominant, plus *legitimate responsibility*.

Note: Adapted from Kohlberg (1984).

equity. "Social Contract Orientation" parallels the legitimate power of reciprocity. And "Universal Ethical Principles Orientation" implies an amenity toward informational power, particularly information that shows a relationship between the desirable behavior and the target's basic moral values.

Kohlberg's model of moral stages has certainly had great impact in psychology, education, and religion. It does not quite seem so well universally accepted today, though it still has its devotees, as in a recent work by Reed (1997). Gilligan (1982) specifically felt that Kohlberg's system had a built-in gender bias, and really represented a masculine, rather than a feminine orientation. Paloutzian (1996, p. 94) suggests that the system has a political bias in favor of Western democratic liberalism. There are also questions about the universality of the stages that he proposed. Unfortunately, the research depends too much on the Choice Dilemmas Questionnaire, in which the items themselves might have a cultural bias. It would be nice to see research on moral choices that focused more on how power and influence strategies determined appropriate behavior. I, personally, have some intuitive questions about whether the stages are ordered as Kohlberg presents them, particularly if we look at adults in different societies and cultures, rather than children of different ages. But it still makes sense that there are differences among people and peoples in terms of moral reasoning, and in terms of what forms of influence, which bases of power, are most effective. And we can take that position without saying anything about the intrinsic superiority of one stage over another. One can well imagine that a social influence process that is meant to work with people who operate with Kohlberg calls a Universal Ethical Principles Orientation will not work for those who think in terms of Punishment and Obedience. And, by the same token, we can all probably think of examples in which people who would listen to an argument for doing something because it is right and proper would rebel against an order to do the same thing that threatens punishment. And what happens, then, when religious works, which were prepared for a people who were presumed to respond only to promises of reward or threats of punishment, are retained without modification at a later time, when people are more attuned to appeals of legitimacy of equity, or to value-related information orientation?

Modern-Day Difficulties in Accepting Supreme Coercive and Legitimate Power

It is understandable that in a modern age, some might be inclined to reject entirely the orthodox notions of religion, with an all-powerful and sometimes vengeful Deity, a form of religion developed in a preliterate, much less sophisticated age, but which is then frozen and impermeable to changes resulting from knowledge acquired in later years. As in social influence processes in general, it is painful and restricting of one's sense of independence and individualism to have to succumb to extreme coercive power, or to become dependent on reward power, or

to be subjected continuously to the guilt of stronger forms of legitimate equity, legitimate position, or legitimate reciprocity power. Karen Armstrong, who had spent seven years as a Roman Catholic nun in a traditional order, describes such feelings very vividly:

Those of us who have had a difficult time with religion in the past find it liberating to be rid of the God who terrorized our childhood. It is wonderful not to have to cower before a vengeful deity, who threatens us with eternal damnation if we do not abide by his rules. We have a new intellectual freedom and can boldly follow up our own ideas without pussyfooting around difficult articles of faith, feeling all the while a sinking loss of integrity. (Armstrong, 1993, p. 378)

But she goes on to say that the hideous deity that describes is not necessarily the only way one can practice and understand one's religion. She does accept the possibility that for some people such a religious outlook might be more effective, not only as a means of social control, but in giving the adherent a sense of security, a structured life, and the support of a number of other adherents who feel similarly. For those of us who have a need for a logical, informational power system for determining our behavior or sense of morality, within or without religion, it is important for us to understand that it is entirely appropriate that others structure their lives and their religion in more traditional ways—so long as in doing so they do not restrict the rights of others.

There have been many times in history when there have been movements away from a religion with a literal punishment/obedience orientation to religions with an approach that emphasizes ethical principles with an informational orientation. In Islam there were such teachers as Mulla Sadra in Iran (1571–1640), who placed greater emphasis on informational power. Knowledge, he said, was not simply a matter of acquiring information but a process of transformation. He saw heaven and the divine to be discovered within oneself. In the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant, in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1896) “dismissed many of the trappings of religion, such as the dogmatic authority of the churches, prayer and ritual, which prevented human beings from relying upon their own prayers and encouraged them to depend upon Another.” However, he still viewed God as a strategy that enables us to function more efficiently and with greater morality, but people still needed a governor who would reward virtue with happiness (Armstrong, 1993, pp. 314–315). In Europe, some Jewish scholars were influenced by Kant's thinking, who then tended to emphasize basic moral responsibility, which could be discussed and argued. These included the German philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn, the grandfather of musician Felix Mendelssohn, and Baruch Spinoza, in Holland, whom we discussed above. In many cases, such people were condemned as “freethinkers,” or worse, by traditional religious authorities, ostracized and punished, sometimes very severely. We discussed earlier similar treatment of Maimonides in the twelfth century (see note 8, p. 178).

There are some who would argue that if we wish to follow universal ethical principles, then we should best do so by providing universal education or indoctrination into these principles and dispense with religion entirely. This, of course, raises questions as to who should be responsible for such ethical education (the family and the school have not currently been too effective in this regard) and, indeed, who should determine exactly what these moral principles should be. In addition, there are a number of contributions of religions, other than social control, that are difficult to give up: the sense of belongingness, social support, the beauty and inspiration of traditional prayer and services, a counterweight to some governmental restrictions, a sense of power to many who consider themselves powerless, and, recently, evidence of actual health advantages that can be enhanced through prayer (Paloutzian & Kirkpatrick, 1995). Thus, followers of some modern religious movements, while encouraging independence of thought and action, have rejected the conception of a God who relies on coercive power, reward power, unquestioned expert power, and guilt-induced legitimate power, yet continue to feel a need for a Deity in their religion.⁹

The Reconstructionist movement in Judaism, founded by Mordechai Kaplan (1994), considers God as a force, rather than as an all-powerful Being with superhuman-like qualities, fashioned after a benevolent, but sometimes vengeful, king of yore. Such a God is seen as a force for a well-ordered and systematic universe, which is manifest in a basic tendency for goodness, which comes from within ourselves. God then is “the power within which inspires us to strive for human fulfillment as loving and caring people, and acknowledges both the rational foundation of the universe and the spirituality inherent in all human life” (Reuben, 1998). Prayer in such religious services is directed to the best tendencies within ourselves. Similar modern-day orientations are represented in Christian religions, and, indeed, have some similarity to Buddhism, which does not include a deity, as Western peoples think of it, but includes prayer to *tanha*, a drive for personal fulfillment (Smith, 1994, p. 72).

⁹There have been other, similar attempts to examine religious orientations in how religions determine individual behaviors and beliefs. Fromm (1941) distinguished between authoritarian and humanistic religious orientation. Gordon Allport (1950, 1966) began by distinguishing between mature and immature religion, then developed this into a conception of religious orientations that involve extrinsic versus intrinsic motivations (anticipating later motivation theories by Deci, 1975). Intrinsic religionists follow their religion because an internally felt acceptance of the propriety of such behavior. Extrinsic do so because they hope to receive certain rewards and void punishments by adherence. (See Paloutzian, 1996, pp. 201ff., for further discussion.) The distinction is most clear for religions that operate on the basis of informational power versus reward or coercive power. However, we argue that it is also useful to consider various forms of legitimate power, as well as expert and referent power, that don't fit so neatly into this dichotomy.

Discussion

In this presentation, I have reviewed the bases of power and the Power/Interaction Model of Interpersonal Influence, and attempted to demonstrate how that model might help us understand the mechanisms of social control, as these are utilized by religions. Religion, of course, comes in innumerable forms. I have focused particularly on the Judeo-Christian religions, with some reference to Islam, and even in these religions, I do not begin to examine the many ways in which they are understood and practiced. Although religion serves many functions and purposes, the social control function has been especially important. In examining these religions, I look at the various bases of power that are utilized, particularly those bases of power that are attributed to God. The Bible, the Koran, other Holy Works, including commentaries and prayer books, serve first to prescribe and proscribe behaviors and beliefs that are considered by religious authorities to be necessary and appropriate for the maintenance and survival of humankind. These also serve as effective stage-setting and preparatory devices for the establishing of the power of God and the religious system. These bases of power, it seems, were developed according to what the writers and editors of religious works felt were appropriate to the people who were to be the targets. Certain bases of power emphasize the coercive and reward power of God, which are possible with a God who is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. Often these bases of power are supported by strong forms of legitimate power that demand unquestioned obedience and invoke guilt for failure to conform. In contrast, some forms of religion emphasize informational power, depending on reasoning for adherence to universal values and principles. Tensions within religious groups develop when a traditional religion continues to be based on coercion/reward and unquestioned legitimate and expert power, though many followers expect informational power.

This discussion only begins to examine the bases of power in religions. Certainly, it would be fruitful to examine social power in greater depth, in other religions and how these operate in the interests of social control. In addition, there are several other topics which should be considered:

1. *The bases of power used by religious authority figures.* In their day-to-day contacts with their members and in their sermons, ministers, rabbis, and priests draw on a number of power resources (Heinrichs, 1993). The ways they utilize these resources will depend on their perceptions of their members, and the effectiveness of their influence will similarly depend on their ability to select an appropriate fit.

2. *Analyses of power strategies in religious cults and new religious movements.* The distinction between a "religion" and a "cult" is not always clear. It would appear that many current established religions in their early stages of development were close to what we would call "cults." Accordingly, cults can sometimes be studied in the same way that astronomers study astronomical nebulae in

attempting to understand the origins and development of our solar system. The examination of cults, such as the Reverend Jim Jones and the People's Temple,¹⁰ Heaven's Gate, the Unification Church, Hare Krishnas, and the Kingdom of Father Divine, often indicates attempts at social influence and social control (Batson & Ventis, 1982, pp. 202–210; Galanter, 1989; Paloutzian, 1996, pp. 166–173; Young & Griffith, 1992) The social influence processes utilized in cults are often quite consistent with the Power/Interaction Model.

3. *Analysis of other approaches to social control.* Religion has been one of the major devices dedicated to social control, but there are, of course, many others. Most prominent is the governmental and legal system. Arguments about law and order, the use of incarceration or threat of death versus education, and the discussion of instruction in morality and ethics in the schools essentially reflect conceptions of moral development and the efficacy of various social power strategies.

A full discussion of such issues must await further study and exploration.

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¹⁰Hue Fortson (personal communication, May 1997), who had been assistant pastor and archivist for the Reverend Jim Jones of the People's Temple and Jonestown, reported a number devices used by Jones to establish his power: To demonstrate his omniscience, Jones would have trusted accomplices go into a persons' quarters without their knowledge and report to Jones very personal and private things, which Jones would bring out at the next prayer meeting. When a member died, he would discuss instances in which that member had not been completely obedient to Jones's wishes. He would give very long speeches in which he would use his intelligence and logic to convince everyone of both his wisdom (expert power), and the true bases of his beliefs. Members would wonder about how he could speak for 3–4 hours without a toilet break; he did this by having a hidden container behind his podium. He also performed miraculous "surgery" on stage, removing with his hands a presumably cancerous growth, with the "patient" immediately jumping off the stage in triumph. To demonstrate the relative weakness of the opposing Deity, he would fling the Bible across the room, challenging the Lord to punish him for his impunity.

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