

## Cults In Our Midst The Continuing Fight Against Their Hidden Menace

A startling--and often downright amusing--expose of the alternative philosophies and practices that can be found in today's ever-growing psychotherapeutic marketplace. The book describes actual case histories of people who participated in a variety of controversial therapies, including alien abduction, past lives regression, and aromatherapy.

Hailed by critics and readers alike, Jessica Stern's riveting memoir examines the horrors of trauma and denial as she investigates her own unsolved adolescent sexual assault at the hands of a serial rapist. Alone in an unlocked house, in a safe suburban Massachusetts town, two good, obedient girls, Jessica Stern, fifteen, and her sister, fourteen, were raped on the night of October 1, 1973. The rapist was never caught. For over thirty years, Stern denied the pain and the trauma of the assault. Following the example of her family, Stern—who lost her mother at the age of three, and whose father was a Holocaust survivor—focused on her work instead of her terror. She became a world-class expert on terrorism and post-traumatic stress disorder who interviewed extremists around the globe. But while her career took off, her success hinged on her symptoms. After her ordeal, she no longer felt fear in normally frightening situations. Stern believed she'd disassociated from the trauma altogether, until a dedicated police lieutenant reopened the case. With the help of the lieutenant, Stern began her own investigation to uncover the truth about the town of Concord, her own family, and her own mind. The result is *Denial*, a candid, courageous, and ultimately hopeful look at a trauma and its aftermath.

Discover new technology that helps translators with previously unreadable Scroll fragments, supposedly "secret" scrolls in hiding, and the furious debate about who rightfully owns the Scrolls. Includes never before-published photographs.

Spanning religious, historical, and political themes, a new collection from the award-winning poet I think now more than half Of life is death but I can't die Enough for all the life I see In Sometimes I Never Suffered, his seventh collection of poems, Shane McCrae remains "a shrewd composer of American stories" (Dan Chiasson, *The New Yorker*). Here, an angel, hastily thrown together by his fellow residents of Heaven, plummets to Earth in his first moments of consciousness. Jim Limber, the adopted mixed-race son of Jefferson Davis, wanders through the afterlife, reckoning with the nuances of America's racial history, as well as his own. *Sometimes I Never Suffered* is a search for purpose and atonement, freedom and forgiveness, imagining eternity not as an escape from the past or present, but as a reverberating record and as the culmination of time's manifold potential to mend.

A summation of research on the structure and function of the brain presents new ideas on how the human mind evolved in adaptation to a world that no longer exists

A memoir of formative years spent on a series of communes: A "wonderful account of a frankly ghastly childhood . . . Hilarious and heartbreaking" (*Daily Mail*). At the age of six, Tim Guest was taken by his mother to a commune modeled on the teachings of the notorious Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. The Bhagwan preached an eclectic doctrine of Eastern mysticism, chaotic therapy, and sexual freedom, and enjoyed inhaling laughing gas, preaching from a dentist's chair, and collecting Rolls Royces. Tim and his mother were given Sanskrit names, dressed entirely in orange, and encouraged to surrender themselves into their new family. While his mother worked tirelessly for the cause, Tim—or Yogesh, as he was now called—lived a life of well-meaning but woefully misguided neglect in various communes in England, Oregon, India, and Germany. In 1985 the movement collapsed amid allegations of mass poisonings, attempted murder, and tax evasion, and Yogesh was once again Tim. In this extraordinary memoir, Tim Guest chronicles the heartbreaking experience of being left alone on earth while his mother hunted heaven. "An intelligent, wry, openhearted memoir of surviving a childhood and a cultural phenomenon that were both extraordinary." —*Booklist* (starred review)

Written by a cult survivor and renowned expert on cults and totalitarianism, *Terror, Love and Brainwashing* draws on the author's 25 years of study and research to explain how almost anyone, given the right set of circumstances, can be radically manipulated to engage in otherwise incomprehensible and often dangerous acts. Illustrated with compelling stories from a range of cults and totalitarian systems, from religious to political to commercial, the book defines and analyses the common and identifiable traits that underlie almost all these groups. It focuses on how charismatic, authoritarian leaders control their followers' attachment relationships via manipulative social structures and ideologies so that, emotionally and cognitively isolated, they become unable to act in their own survival interests. Using the evolutionary theory of attachment to demonstrate the psychological impact of these environments, and incorporating the latest neuroscientific findings, Stein illustrates how the combined dynamic of terror and 'love' works to break down people's ability to think and behave rationally. From small local cults to global players like ISIS and North Korea, the impact of these movements is widespread and growing. This important book offers clarity and a unique perspective on the dynamics of these systems of control, and concludes with guidance to foster greater awareness and prevention. It will be essential reading for mental health professionals in the field, as well as policy makers, legal professionals, cult survivors, and their families, as well as anyone with an interest in these disturbing groups. Students of social and developmental psychology will also find it fascinating.

Mystery. Manipulation. Murder. Cults are associated with all of these. But what really goes on inside them? More specifically, what goes on inside the minds of cult leaders and the people who join them? Based on the hit podcast *Cults*, this is essential reading for any true crime fan. Cults prey on the very attributes that make us human: our desire to belong; to find a deeper meaning in life; to live everyday with divine purpose. Their existence creates a sense that any one of us, at any time, could step off the cliff's edge and fall into that daunting abyss of manipulation and unhinged dedication to a misplaced cause. Perhaps it's this mindset that keeps us so utterly obsessed and desperate to learn more, or it's that the stories are so bizarre and unsettling that we are simply in awe of the mechanics that make these infamous groups tick. The premier storytelling podcast studio Parcast has been focusing on unearthing these mechanics—the cult leaders and followers, and the world and culture that gave birth to both. Parcast's work in analyzing dozens of case studies has revealed patterns: distinct ways that cult leaders from different generations resemble one another. What links the ten notorious figures profiled in *Cults* are as disturbing as they are stunning—from Manson to Applewhite, Koresh to Raël, the stories woven here are both spellbinding and disturbing. *Cults* is more than just a compilation of grisly biographies, however. In these pages, Parcast's founder Max Cutler and national bestselling author Kevin Conley look closely at the lives of some of the most disreputable cult figures and tell the stories of their rise to power and fall from grace, sanity, and decency. Beyond that, it is a study of humanity, an unflinching look at what happens when the most vulnerable recesses of the mind are manipulated and how the things we hold most sacred can be twisted into the lowest form of malevolence.

The first comprehensive psychological, social, and evangelical treatment of the growing and insidious cult problem. Martin provides evidence that our schools, families, and even our churches have facilitated the rise of cults and offers suggestions on how these institutions can develop cult education programs and assist in the healing of former members.

We have still much to learn as to the laws according to which the mind and body act on one another, and according to which one mind acts on another; but it is certain that a great part of this mutual action can be reduced to general laws, and that the more we know of such laws the greater our power to benefit others will be.

Equips readers from every walk of life to use biblical truth to counter the efforts of cults to masquerade as mainstream Christians.

Cults today are bigger than ever, with broad ramifications for national and international terrorism. In this newly revised edition of her definitive work on cults, Singer reveals what cults really are and how they work, focusing specifically on the coercive persuasion techniques of charismatic leaders seeking money and power. The book contains fascinating updates on Heaven's Gate, Falun Gong, Aum Shinrikyo, Hare Krishna, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, and the connection between cults and terrorism in Al Qaeda and the PLO.

In this frighteningly believable thriller from New York Times bestselling author and master storyteller Tosca Lee, an extinct disease re-emerges from the melting Alaskan permafrost and causes madness in its victims. For recent apocalyptic cult escapee Wynter Roth, it's the end she'd always been told was coming. When Wynter Roth finally escapes from New Earth, a self-contained doomsday cult on the American prairie, she emerges into a world poised on the brink of madness as a mysterious outbreak of rapid early onset dementia spreads across the nation. As Wynter struggles to start over in a world she's been taught to regard as evil, she finds herself face-to-face with the apocalypse she's feared all her life—until the night her sister shows up at her doorstep with a set of medical samples. That night, Wynter learns there's something far more sinister at play: that the prophet they once idolized has been toying with the fate of mankind, and that these samples are key to understanding the disease. Now, as the power grid fails and the nation descends into chaos, Wynter must find a way to get the samples to a lab in Colorado. Uncertain who to trust, she takes up with former military man Chase Miller, who has his own reasons for wanting to get close to the samples in her possession, and to Wynter, herself. Filled with action, conspiracy, romance, and questions of whom—and what—to believe, *The Line Between* is a high-octane story of survival and love in a world on the brink of madness, from “the queen of psychological twists” (New York Times bestselling author Steena Holmes).

*The Guru Papers* demonstrates with uncompromising clarity that authoritarian control, which once held societies together, is now at the core of personal, social, and planetary problems, and thus a key factor in social disintegration. It illustrates how authoritarianism is embedded in the way people think, hiding in culture, values, daily life, and in the very morality people try to live by. The book unmasks authoritarianism in such areas as relationships, cults, 12-step groups, religion, and contemporary morality. Chapters on addiction and love show the insidious nature of authoritarian values and ideologies in the most intimate corners of life, offering new frameworks for understanding why people get addicted and why intimacy is laden with conflict. By exposing the inner authoritarian that people use to control themselves and others, the authors show why people give up their power, and how others get and maintain it.

A gripping literary memoir of life inside an extremist political group. Invaluable . . . honest . . . intelligent. --Doris Lessing "If you want to know how sensible and educated people can be hooked into a cult run by a psychopath, this honest and intelligent book will tell you. It will be invaluable in the effort to expose the mechanisms of cults and sects." Doris Lessing "The most gripping inside account of a cult that I have ever read. It is also a literary masterpiece, and a classic of autobiographical writing. By the end, readers will care passionately about the author, her family and the many characters that illuminate these pages. Dr. Dennis Tourish, Department of Communication and Management Aberdeen University, Scotland "Inside Out tells a riveting story of life inside a fringe group of political activists, not unlike the SLA and others that emerged from the U.S. Left in the 1970s. With passion, insight, and wit, Stein unravels the mystery of this secretive cult called the O. - a tale made all the more real because of the author's frankness about her own 10-year involvement with the group. The processes of induction and indoctrination, and the increasing devotion of O. members, who over time are exploited by a corrupt leader, come alive in absorbing detail. This book makes a significant contribution to the study of the social psychology of closed groups, as well as to our understanding of fanaticism and idealism gone astray - all subjects of compelling importance in this post-9/11 world. Janja Lalich, Ph.D. Department of Sociology California State University, Chico

From the Preface: "My name is Flora Jessop. I've been called apostate, vigilante, and crazy bitch, and maybe I am. But some people call me a hero, and I'd like to think they're right too. If I am a hero, maybe it's because every time I can play a part in saving a child or a woman from a life of servitude and degradation, I'm saving a little piece of me, too. I was one of twenty-eight children born to my dad and his three wives. Indoctrinated to believe that the outside world was evil, and that I resided among the righteous, I was destined to marry a man chosen for me by the Prophet. I would then live in harmony with my sister-wives, bear many children, and obey and serve my future husband in this life and throughout eternity. But my innocence didn't last long. While still a child, I understood that the church of the righteous was nothing but a church of lies. When I was eight years old my father sexually molested me for the first time, raping me when I was twelve. I tried to kill myself. Beaten, molested, taunted, and abused by family members alleging they only wanted to save my soul became a daily routine, I ran from this abuse more than once in my early teens--even attempting to cross the desert on foot. My family hunted me down. I thought government agencies would provide me safety if I reported my father. Instead, police and social services colluded with the FLDS to return me to my family and I ended up back inside polygamy, right where I started." Flora goes on from there to tell the dramatic true story of how she ultimately escaped and has been fighting against frustrating obstacles with hard fought successes in rescuing women and children from the FLDS. It's a story you can't put down.

Informed by Erik Erikson's concept of the formation of ego identity, this book, which first appeared in 1961, is an analysis of the experiences of fifteen Chinese citizens and twenty-five Westerners who underwent "brainwashing" by the Communist Chinese government. Robert Lifton constructs these case histories through personal interviews and outlines a thematic pattern of death and rebirth, accompanied by feelings of guilt, that characterizes the process of "thought reform." In a new preface, Lifton addresses the implications of his model for the study of American religious cults.

"Based on extensive interviews with mostly former cult members, this book chronicles the history of the Church of God of Union Assembly from its beginning around World War I up to recent times. Founded by a charismatic, unlettered leader, C. T. Pratt, who forcefully broke away from the Holiness COG organization, the church eventually found its home base in Dalton, Georgia. It grew steadily at first and then more rapidly as the great Depression ravaged workers in the mostly rural area of north Georgia. The group set up communal living practices and spread branches of the church across the country, recruiting among the most displaced with a message of social uplift and anti-capitalism, even as its religious practices became increasingly authoritarian and exploitative. If C. T. Pratt exhibited some characteristics of a violent cult leader, his son, who took over the church as his father suffered from ill-health, took these tendencies to a new level that eventually caught the attention of secular authorities. His son, in turn, was even worse--and placed the

church on the path to financial ruin. Amazingly, the church survived its three authoritarian leaders and still exists"--

Never Let Me Go meets The Giver in this haunting debut about a cult on an isolated island, where nothing is as it seems. Years ago, just before the country was incinerated to wasteland, ten men and their families colonized an island off the coast. They built a radical society of ancestor worship, controlled breeding, and the strict rationing of knowledge and history. Only the Wanderers -- chosen male descendants of the original ten -- are allowed to cross to the wastelands, where they scavenge for detritus among the still-smoldering fires. The daughters of these men are wives-in-training. At the first sign of puberty, they face their Summer of Fruition, a ritualistic season that drags them from adolescence to matrimony. They have children, who have children, and when they are no longer useful, they take their final draught and die. But in the summer, the younger children reign supreme. With the adults indoors and the pubescent in Fruition, the children live wildly -- they fight over food and shelter, free of their fathers' hands and their mothers' despair. And it is at the end of one summer that little Caitlin Jacob sees something so horrifying, so contradictory to the laws of the island, that she must share it with the others. Born leader Janey Solomon steps up to seek the truth. At seventeen years old, Janey is so unwilling to become a woman, she is slowly starving herself to death. Trying urgently now to unravel the mysteries of the island and what lies beyond, before her own demise, she attempts to lead an uprising of the girls that may be their undoing. Gather the Daughters is a smoldering debut; dark and energetic, compulsively readable, Melamed's novel announces her as an unforgettable new voice in fiction.

Heaven's Gate, a secretive group of celibate "monks" awaiting pickup by a UFO, captured intense public attention in 1997 when its members committed collective suicide. As a way of understanding such perplexing events, many have seen those who join cults as needy, lost souls, unable to think for themselves. This book, a compelling look at the cult phenomenon written for a wide audience, dispels such simple formulations by explaining how normal, intelligent people can give up years of their lives—and sometimes their very lives—to groups and beliefs that appear bizarre and irrational. Looking closely at Heaven's Gate and at the Democratic Workers Party, a radical political group of the 1970s and 1980s, Janja Lalich gives us a rare insider's look at these two cults and advances a new theoretical framework that will reshape our understanding of those who join such groups. Lalich's fascinating discussion includes her in-depth interviews with cult devotees as well as reflections gained from her own experience as a high-ranking member of the Democratic Workers Party. Incorporating classical sociological concepts such as "charisma" and "commitment" with more recent work on the social psychology of influence and control, she develops a new approach for understanding how charismatic cult leaders are able to dominate their devotees. She shows how members are led into a state of "bounded choice," in which they make seemingly irrational decisions within a context that makes perfect sense to them and is, in fact, consistent with their highest aspirations. In addition to illuminating the cult phenomenon in the United States and around the world, this important book also addresses our pressing need to know more about the mentality of those true believers who take extreme or violent measures in the name of a cause.

What is it like to grow up in a strict religion or sect? Why did my parents become involved in this group? Why do people stare at me? Born and Raised in a Sect answers many, often unspoken, questions and enables the reader to better grasp what the experience of a sect upbringing and recovery from it may be like. Dr. Kendall is a leading researcher and a passionate advocate of those born and raised in sects. Her book enables the reader to grasp the enormity of the challenges facing this diverse group of people, including - the risks and vulnerabilities associated with maltreatment and abuse - the potential impact on child and adolescent development - socialization and whether or not the child received state schooling - how children and young people come to leave sects and what happens to them afterwards - the practical and emotional challenges they may face, such as stigmatization, loss, trauma, and identity. All of these issues are addressed, and much more. The voice of those born and raised in sects shines through in the pages of this book, especially through the use of quotes from research participants and autobiographies. This book will be of interest to academics and those who support this population, such as loved ones, teachers, clinicians, clergy, or other professionals. Of course, those who might receive the most from reading Born and Raised in a Sect are those who themselves have had this experience. May the words of this book soothe your soul and sharpen your mind.

This book discusses the depictions of the cult and its personnel in the twelve prophetic books commonly referred to as "The Book of the Twelve" or "The Minor Prophets." The articles in the volume explore the following questions: How did these prophetic writers envision the priests and the Levites? What did they think about the ritual aspects of ancient Israelite faith, including not only the official temple cult in Jerusalem but also cultic expressions outside the capital? What, in their views, characterized a faithful priest and what should the relationship be between his cultic performance and the ways in which he lived his life? How does the message of each individual author fit in with the wider Israelite traditions? Finally, who were these prophetic authors, in which historical contexts did they live and work, and what stylistic tools did they use to communicate their message? Explains how to recognize cults, and argues that cults are infiltrating the workplace in the guise of training programs and workshops.

Eva wants to be a good disciple of Righteous Path. She grew up knowing that she's among the chosen few to be saved from Armageddon. Lately, though, being saved feels awfully treacherous. Ever since they moved to the compound in Colorado, their food supplies have dwindled while their leader, Ezekiel, has stockpiled weapons. The only money comes from the jewelry Eva makes and sells in town—a purpose she'll serve until she becomes one of Ezekiel's wives. But a college student named Trevor and the other "heathens" she meets on her trips beyond the compound are far different from what she's been led to believe. Now Eva doesn't know which is more dangerous—the outside world or Reverend Ezekiel's plans...

A definitive account of the psychology of zealotry, from a National Book Award winner and a leading authority on the nature of cults, political absolutism, and mind control In this unique and timely volume

Robert Jay Lifton, the National Book Award–winning psychiatrist, historian, and public intellectual proposes a radical idea: that the psychological relationship between extremist political movements and fanatical religious cults may be much closer than anyone thought. Exploring the most extreme manifestations of human zealotry, Lifton highlights an array of leaders—from Mao to Hitler to the Japanese apocalyptic cult leader Shōkō Asahara to Donald Trump—who have sought the control of human minds and the ownership of reality. Lifton has spent decades exploring psychological extremism. His pioneering concept of the “Eight Deadly Sins” of ideological totalism—originally devised to identify “brainwashing” (or “thought reform”) in political movements—has been widely quoted in writings about cults, and embraced by members and former members of religious cults seeking to understand their experiences. In *Losing Reality* Lifton makes clear that the apocalyptic impulse—that of destroying the world in order to remake it in purified form—is not limited to religious groups but is prominent in extremist political movements such as Nazism and Chinese Communism, and also in groups surrounding Donald Trump. Lifton applies his concept of “malignant normality” to Trump’s efforts to render his destructive falsehoods a routine part of American life. But Lifton sees the human species as capable of “regaining reality” by means of our “protean” psychological capacities and our ethical and political commitments as “witnessing professionals.” Lifton weaves together some of his finest work with extensive new commentary to provide vital understanding of our struggle with mental predators. *Losing Reality* is a book not only of stunning scholarship, but also of huge relevance for these troubled times.

In the polygamous Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (FLDS), girls can become valuable property as plural wives, but boys are expendable, even a liability. In this powerful and heartbreaking account, former FLDS member Brent Jeffs reveals both the terror and the love he experienced growing up on his prophet’s compound—and the harsh exile existence that so many boys face once they have been expelled by the sect. Brent Jeffs is the nephew of Warren Jeffs, the imprisoned leader of the FLDS. The son of a prominent family in the church, Brent could have grown up to have multiple wives of his own and significant power in the 10,000-strong community. But he knew that behind the group’s pious public image—women in chaste dresses carrying babies on their hips—lay a much darker reality. So he walked away, and was the first to file a sexual-abuse lawsuit against his uncle. Now Brent shares his courageous story and that of many other young men who have become “lost boys” when they leave the FLDS, either by choice or by expulsion. Brent experienced firsthand the absolute power that church leaders wield—the kind of power that corrupts and perverts those who will do anything to maintain it. Once young men no longer belong to the church, they are cast out into a world for which they are utterly unprepared. More often than not, they succumb to the temptations of alcohol and other drugs. Tragically, Brent lost two of his brothers in this struggle, one to suicide, the other to overdose. In this book he shows that lost boys can triumph and that abuse and trauma can be overcome, and he hopes that readers will be inspired to help former FLDS members find their way in the world.

*Misunderstanding Cults* provides a uniquely balanced contribution to what has become a highly polarized area of study. Working towards a moderate “third path” in the heated debate over new religious movements or cults, this collection includes contributions from both scholars who have been characterized as “anticult” and those characterized as “cult-apologists.” The study incorporates multiple viewpoints as well as a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, with the stated goal of depolarizing the discussion over alternative religious movements. A prominent section within the book focuses explicitly on the issue of scholarly objectivity and the danger of partisanship in the study of cults. The collection also includes contributions on the controversial and much misunderstood topic of brainwashing, as well as discussions of cult violence, children brought up in unconventional religious movements, and the conflicts between alternative religious movements and their critics. Unique in its breadth, this is the first study of new religious movements to address the main points of controversy within the field while attempting to find a middle ground between opposing camps of scholarship.

Whether you were sexually assaulted recently or many years ago, you do not need to allow the experience to influence your life. You can recover-- and have your life back again.

*Millions Deceived in a Secret Cult* A former “Worshipful Master” of a Masonic lodge, Jack Harris authoritatively speaks about one of the most deceptive cults in the United States today. This secret organization has entangled ministers, elders, deacons, trustees, Sunday school teachers, and people all over the world in a web of lies and satanic rituals--all of which are veiled with the language of the Bible! Revealed in this book are... The origins and history of Freemasonry Its basic doctrines and goals The secret of passwords and oaths The “supreme Masonic word” The satanic symbolism and rituals Freemasonry is a false religion. It teaches that men can approach God, not through the finished work of Jesus Christ, but through their own abilities. Discover how you can share the light of Christ with those living in the darkness of Freemasonry, and how they can be set free from its deception.

A masterful and eye-opening examination of Trump and the coercive control tactics he uses to build a fanatical devotion in his supporters written by “an authority on breaking away from cults...an argument that...bears consideration as the next election cycle heats up” (Kirkus Reviews). Since the 2016 election, Donald Trump’s behavior has become both more disturbing and yet increasingly familiar. He relies on phrases like, “fake news,” “build the wall,” and continues to spread the divisive mentality of us-vs.-them. He lies constantly, has no conscience, never admits when he is wrong, and projects all of his shortcomings on to others. He has become more authoritarian, more outrageous, and yet many of his followers remain blindly devoted. Scott Adams, the creator of Dilbert and a major Trump supporter, calls him one of the most persuasive people living. His need to squash alternate information and his insistence of constant ego stroking are all characteristics of other famous leaders—cult leaders. In *The Cult of Trump*, mind control and licensed mental health expert Steven Hassan draws parallels between our current president and people like Jim Jones, David Koresh, Ron Hubbard, and Sun Myung Moon, arguing that this presidency is in many ways like a destructive cult. He specifically details the ways in which people are influenced through an array of social psychology methods and how they become fiercely loyal and obedient. Hassan was a former “Moonie” himself, and he presents a “thoughtful and well-researched analysis of some of the most puzzling aspects of the current presidency, including the remarkable passivity of fellow Republicans [and] the gross pandering of many members of the press” (Thomas G. Gutheil, MD and professor of psychiatry, Harvard Medical School). *The Cult of Trump* is an accessible and in-depth analysis of the president, showing that under the right circumstances, even sane, rational, well-adjusted people can be persuaded to believe the most outrageous ideas. “This book is a must for anyone who wants to understand the current political climate” (Judith Stevens-Long, PhD and author of *Living Well, Dying Well*).

You’ve seen them in movies and on TV, but cults are more prevalent than you think—and they’re armed with strategies that can brainwash and persuade even the most unlikely of candidates. But how do individuals get involved with cults in the first place, and what steps can be taken to “deprogram” and heal those who have been drawn into these damaging groups? These questions and more are addressed in *Cults Inside Out*, written by leading cult expert Rick Alan Ross. Over the course of three decades, Ross has participated in around five hundred cult interventions, provided expert court testimony, and performed cult-related work all around the world. With the help of current and former cult members, Ross demonstrates many of the tactics the groups use for control and manipulation—and, more importantly, some of the most effective methods he and other experts have used to reverse that programming. As a result, readers will find themselves armed with a greater understanding of the nature of destructive cults and an improved ability to assess and deal with similar situations—either in their own lives or the lives of friends and family members.

All that Pearl knows can be encapsulated in one word: Seed. It is the isolated community that she was born into. It is the land that she sows and reaps. It is the center of her family and everything that means home. And it is all kept under the watchful eye of Papa S. At fifteen years old, Pearl is finally old enough to be chosen as Papa S.’s companion. She feels excitement . . . and surprising trepidation that she cannot explain. The arrival of a new family into the Seed community—particularly the teenage son, Ellis—only complicates the life and lifestyle that Pearl has depended upon as safe and constant. Ellis is

