

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

“Save the human race, punch a Moonie in the face”: The
Unification Church from Cult to Corporation

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Abstract

From the 60's to the early 80's numerous religious and social groups arose due to the political climate that permeated the entire world. One such group that gained notoriety but since has fallen into America's distant memory is the Unification Movement led by Reverend Sun Myung Moon. The Unification Movement began in Korea, and later moved its base to America bringing controversy to itself due to its beliefs and the methods it employs in order to gain support from the American youth. Looking at the history of the Unification Movement it is can be seen that what was once a religion is now a family run corporation that lost its crusade in America. This can be seen not only through the media at the time, but also by examining a specific case of the Unification Movement on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus in 1982.

Introduction

Ever since the dawn of civilization humans have banded together to form groups or communities, usually bonded by sharing common beliefs and traditions. For the most part these groups are harmless, but sometimes they go to the extreme resulting in devastating consequences. With its members committing acts that are remembered for all time and whose names flash across news stories, these groups are now infamous. A few are easily recognizable: Charles Manson, Jim Jones and Ron Hubbard, just to name a few. Just as a refresher, Manson is the puppeteer whose ‘family’ brutally murdered a pregnant Sharon Tate and her friends in her California home. Jim Jones is the minister who convinced hundreds of people to ingest cyanide in a mass suicide, even giving some to their own children. This is the likely source from where the phrase “don’t drink the Kool-Aid” comes from, as Jones members laced the drinks with the poisonous substance. Hubbard is the mildest of the group, he is included here just because of how much publicity his church, the Church of Scientology, garner. This is a group which promises powers and contacts with higher beings, and whose inner workings are shrouded in secrecy.

Another man who should be added to this milder group is one that most people would not recognize unless they were a child during the 60s; a man whose religion inspired perhaps thousands of members to marry in mass ceremonies; a man whose name used to be associated with brain washing and cult like activity. This man is Reverend Sun Myung Moon and he founded what is known as the Unification Church, or UM for Unification Movement. If anyone happened to be watching world news on Monday September 3 of 2012 they might have noticed his obituary being read, and passingly thought to themselves “I wonder who he is? Never heard of him before.” This movement created by Moon, whose members were stuck with the name

‘Moonies’ due to their obsession with their leader, captivated American media and society alike with its determination in recruitment and with the methods it allegedly employed in order to gain more members. The religion started out like any other, with a man having a vision that it was he who was meant to usher in a new time of peace, and that in order to do this he needed to amass a following of loyal people so that they might be saved. Leaving a war torn country, Moon set out to America where previously he sent his missionaries who already had a foot in the door and brought his message with them.

There is an abundance of material written about the UM and Sun Myung Moon, mostly written by sociologist and historians. What these sources lack is the perspective that comes with time. This means the authors are either influenced by the atmosphere and environment of the time, or they did not have the full information available now in regards to the goings on and intentions of the Church. One source that many site as great research is the *Doomsday Cult* by John Lofland, which is one of the only sources I found that focuses on a specific area affected by the Unification Church. The reason it is not going to be used in this paper is because it is written in the 60s before the Church really came to public attention. It should be included, though, as a great place to start when looking at the early history of the UM.

The UM has fallen into relative obscurity since its heyday in the late 70’s. Although gathering a notable amount of followers, the UM never really caught on religiously like its past religious movements, even though it was a supposed branch of Christianity. The reason for this failure cannot be explained away in one answer: a multitude of issues and circumstances prevented the UM from gaining the sort of good fame that it sought. The reason for this notoriety is a mix of the following: the UM came on too fast and too strong, not gaining momentum; it was too secretive about its true agendas and was mistrusted because of its numerous holdings and

corporations; and lastly, America was uncomfortable with the tactics it believed was employed on the minds of the youths. More specifically, youths whose dreams and wishes for paradise and utopia on earth made them especially susceptible to the ideas of Reverend Moon and his followers.

The following research will address these concerns while at the same time giving a summarized history of the UM. There are plenty of academic articles, books and journals on this same subject, yet none of them are from recent years. All focus on the UM movement up until its disappearance from America and are mostly published in the late 80s and early 90s. The hope for this piece of scholarly work is to not only show the beginning of the UM movement but to give a specific case of the distrust felt by society towards the movement, involving the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus, and also to show where the movement is today and the power it still may or may not have.

Part I: In the Beginning

Life in Korea

Early in the morning on Easter Sunday in 1936, a young man walked through his small town of Pyungon Bukedo, Korea and was hit with a vision: the vision is from Jesus Christ, and he is telling the boy that he will bring the heavenly Kingdom of God to earth. This boy was Sun Myung and at the young age of 16 he already knew his life's purpose and strove to achieve it whatever the methods and cost. Born to a peasant family in South Korean, Moon came from limited means and knew only a simple way of life. Once Moon begins his crusade his life changed and set in motion a series of events that some people will forever remember because they deeply affect their lives. Still living with his parents after his vision, Moon went on to become a well-educated man, starting a ministry in Pyungon which lasted from 1946-55, and writing his most famous piece of literature which holds all the beliefs of the Unification Church members: the Divine Principle.¹

Moon quickly gains attention in his village, attention that spreads to all of South Korea. The common people love Moon, because he brings a message of hope to a country full of insecurities and war. Korea was at the time was being pulled back and forth between communist and non-communist parties.² Moon preaches freedom from communism and that this freedom can be found in his religion by following his teachings, which are sent to him from God himself. Moon attempts to pull people away from the mainstream Catholic Church and into his own place of worship, which does not earn him many friends within the religious communities of Korea.

¹ David G. Bromley and Anson D. Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979), 36.

² Ibid, 37.

This is ironic given the fact that Moon is raised a Christian and also claims that his movement is a branch of Christianity, since it is Jesus Christ himself who appears to Moon and tells him to undertake his mission.

Putting off his messianic mission for the first few years of his adult life, Moon receives a degree in electrical engineering from the Waseda University of Japan. Soon after leaving he gets married but then a divorce a few short years later, despite his beliefs on how sacred marriage is. He does not take long to remarry and in 1954 he weds the woman who he calls the other “true parent” of humanity, his wife Hak Ja Han.³ The road to the status of savior starts out easy for Moon, but he soon encounters a few roadblocks: the Catholic Church and his own government. Inside a country whose government has almost full power to do whatever it wants, in 1948 Moon is sent to a labor camp for the charge of “injuring public morals”. These injuries are numerous, one including sexual impropriety but none of these accusations have been able to proven true.⁴ Because of his very outspoken anti-communist nature, Moon is also charged with spying for South Korea against North Korea when he goes there to establish the Kwang-Ya Church.⁵

Due to this cloud of suspicion, Moon flees as soon as he is able to Pusan in 1950, where he establishes Tong IL Church. He focuses primarily on attracting the youth whom he believes are the future leaders of the planet and therefore essential to establishing a sound base for his religious institution. This is a tactic employed by many groups because it is the youth who decided what is popular and who seemed to be more easily persuadable than older people, because they want something new and different. In 1954 Moon officially establishes the

³ David J. Wakin, “Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Self-Proclaimed Messiah Who Built Religious Movement, Dies at 92”, *The New York Times* September 2, 2012.

⁴ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 49.

⁵ Wakin, “Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Self-Proclaimed Messiah Who Built Religious Movement, Dies at 92”.

Unification Church in Seoul; where within a very short period of time over 30 churches are established.⁶

In 1963 Moon acquires a business holding in South Korea, called the Tongil Group, and it is a non-profit organization that helps take care of the church's finances.⁷ Corporations are the most important things to the UM movement because they are what kept it going and allows Moon and his followers to fund everything: from plane tickets to America to various functions that allow the Unification Church to spread its message and recruit more followers. Their importance unknown at first, corporations mean more to the UM than anything else, and once it loses popularity in America the UM puts even more of its focus into building its corporate empire in Korea and abroad. The UM is a very secretive sect, never really disclosing too much personal information about itself, its group or its leader, and this includes his property holdings.

With all the turmoil in Korea, Moon wishes to extend his vision further into the world. He sets his sights on America and dispatches a few loyal followers to go ahead of him and establish a sort of base in the country. A Ms. Kim is one of the first followers that Moon sends over and she does a poor job at handling the responsibility: she has neither the skill nor the money to attract as many followers as needed to get the UM off the ground and gain it the type of respect Moon desires.⁸ Kim suffered persecution herself for her beliefs and is expelled from the University of Seoul in 1955, four years before she is sent to America.⁹ Moon himself does not come to America until 1971 and by that time the Unification Church is a well-known, if not yet famous, name. This all changed when Moon arrived, with his charismatic personality and

⁶ Wakin, "Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Self-Proclaimed Messiah Who Built Religious Movement, Dies at 92".

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ellen Barker, *The Making of a Moonie: Brainwashing or Choice?* (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1984), 46.

⁹ Ibid.

ability at public speeches, initiating the battle that is the American people versus the Unification Church and its 'Moonies'.

Beliefs and Teachings

The religion of Moon and his followers is a complicated one, as it is incorporated with common themes found in all religions, primarily salvation and redemption as well as a mixture of Western and Eastern philosophy.¹⁰ Moon believes that ever since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden "the elements of evil and sin" are transferred from Adam to offspring in the first act of sexual intercourse.¹¹ The moment Eve listened to the serpent and ate the apple from the Tree of Knowledge and convinced Adam to do so as well; mankind has been formed in the image of Satan and not that of God. This is supported by the fact (according to Moon) that Adam's direct offspring, Cain, slew his brother Abel. Moon preaches that Jesus Christ was sent to earth in order to remedy this mistake, but is prematurely executed before this dream is realized.¹² Moon believes that the savior, the chosen city, the protagonist and the antagonist are all reincarnated within different cycles of mankind's life, and Moon has very specific roles in mind: he sees himself as Jesus Christ the savior, South Korea as the new Israel, Japan as the new Eve and the United States as the archangel that will deliver Adam and Eve from the evil of Lucifer (communism).¹³

Moon's incorporation of Catholic beliefs into his own is what attracts the first followers. It is a religion for people who are not wholly satisfied with the Church's teachings, since priests preach about the next coming of Christ yet do not give a definitive time: the fact that Moon

¹⁰ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 38.

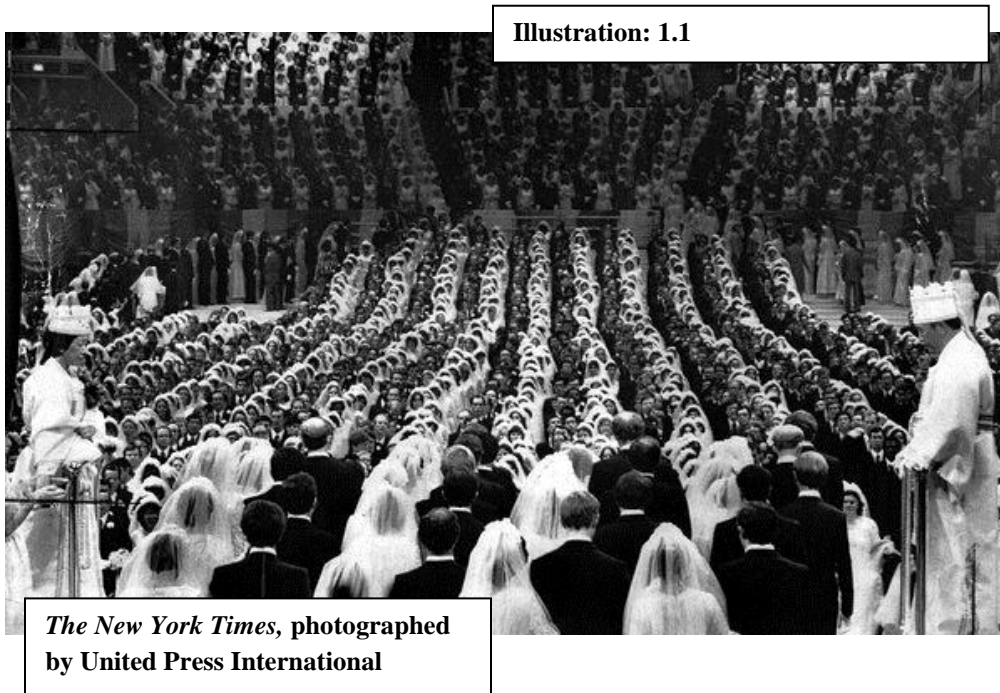
¹¹ *Ibid*, 39.

¹² *Ibid*, 99.

¹³ *Ibid*.

claims to know exactly when this is going to happen and who it involves really attracts people who are having a crisis of faith and need their religion to be tangible. Moon is a figure who claims a relationship to the divine and people are attracted to the idea of being that close to someone they believe is their messiah.

One of Moon's acts as father to mankind is to make sure his children procreate with each other and produce more UM members. He does this by arranging marriages as well as presiding over them with this wife. Thousands of couples attended these mass weddings, filling stadiums to the brink.¹⁴



Moon never comes out and says he is the messiah but as one ex member, Richard LaMartina, puts it “no one ever tells you directly he is the messiah and the lord of the Second

¹⁴ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 142.

Advent, but not to come to that conclusion you have to be blind, deaf and dumb.”¹⁵ Moon makes a point of never saying word for word that he is the messiah, but hints at it so specifically that no one doubts that this is what he believes. This vagueness disconcerts some people, who believe that the UM has hidden agendas, although they do not have a guess as to what this agenda might be.

LaMartina does a lengthy interview with the *LA Times* describing his time spent with the Moonies and what it did to his life. LaMartina’s parents get him out of the UM a few years after he joins, for which he is thankful for. Running a large group, even a religious one, is not cheap and Moon seeks to acquire various business holdings in order to finance the group’s expenditures. Moon has holdings worldwide and some are placed in America. One is the News World Communications, which is a media corporation based in New York City. This organization produces the paper called *The News World* where besides local and global news, Moon put out information about the Unification Church.¹⁶

When looking at Moon’s teachings, the political climate of the time cannot be ignored. The US and Russia were in the midst of their Cold War, each threatening each other with nuclear attacks should one stray from one treaty or another. With the threat of death hanging over their heads every day, it is no wonder that some youths who had their full life ahead of them, wanted peace on earth in their lifetime. In history classes now it is still hard to grasp the terror people must have felt every day, with news and leaders constantly telling them that at any moment their whole lives could be destroyed. Communism was the scariest and harshest insult you could have

¹⁵ “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Affirmative Action Hearing Evidence, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Archives, McIntyre Library.

¹⁶ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 111.

thrown at some on in the 60s and 80s, so Moon's hatred of them and promise of safety was so appealing to a nation at war.

Part II: Exodus to America

Recruitment

Moon discovers that the easiest way to get to people is to target the youths. In an age after student protests were widespread, the youths were more. These are the citizens that are not quite yet set in their ways and are open to more radical ideas. They are the ones who look towards the future and hope for a better society, a sort of utopia on earth. Moon's followers would hang out at places like bus stops at parks, where they would look for young people wearing a back pack or holding a suitcase. This oftentimes meant that they were either travelling along or running away from something. This was the perfect person Moon and his followers sought to recruit.

Another great place to find the youths is in shopping malls and parks, where Unification Members hang out and look for people in their late teens/early twenties, who are alone or have a backpack, meaning they are potentially running away from something.¹⁷ Professor Patricia Turner from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire recalls the 'Moonies' favorite spot to get people's attention was to hang out at airports, where people are constantly coming and going. This airport scene is immortalized in the film "Airplane" where Robert Stack's character performs martial arts on 'Moonies' harassing him at the airport. This is an example of how the UM was slowly gaining notoriety, with their tactics being portrayed even by Hollywood.

After a Moonie convinces one of these youths to go along with them, they often take them to their own house which has been set up as a sort of headquarters. These communal units often is where youths stay if they have come to the city with no place else to go, and are

¹⁷ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 172.

subjected to what is called love bombing.¹⁸ Love bombing is when the members make you feel so loved and wanted that the thought of leaving them will leave you in a deep depression, unloved and unwanted.¹⁹ After getting you to stay with them, you will then be invited to a workshop where you only have to pay a small fee to attend.²⁰ Once there, the members will tell you about the sad lives they led before joining the group and you are encouraged to do the same. They then go on to say how great life has been since joining, and surrounded by all this love, you surrender.²¹

The reasoning for the formation of these sub sects of society has been greatly researched. Groups that are less popular, or less understood, form in opposition to what is considered the normal or popular social class to be a part of.²² Then the groups become popular by word of mouth: It is not uncommon for someone to act a certain way, because that is what their friend or their peers do. So it is no wonder that with a few youths joining the UM church, others begin flock to it as well. In trying to “fit in” these youths are essentially estranging themselves from mainstream or what is considered normal society. It is the youths who wish to not be a part of the “normal” crowd that tends to become part of what is called the “hippie” movement. The phenomenon of the hippie movement does not end in the 60’s. One researcher, David Kinney, discovers while studying social groups at a high school in the Midwest that “a number of teenagers became disenchanted with the lifestyle...consequently formed a new peer group that focused on the values of the 1960’s”.²³ As irony would have it, many of these students claim that

¹⁸ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 192.

¹⁹ Barker, *Making of a Moonie: Brainwashing or Choice?*, 150.

²⁰ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 174.

²¹ *Ibid*, 176.

²² David A. Kinney, “From ‘Headbangers’ to ‘Hippies’: Delineating Adolescents’ Active Attempts to Form an Alternative Peer Culture”, *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development no. 84* (1999), 21.

²³ *Ibid*, 25.

their parents were actually hippies during the 60's.²⁴ What once was a movement embraced by youths for not being what their parents have chosen for a lifestyle is now chosen by the descendants of that lifestyle. Sometimes drugs play a minor role in these new age hippies' lives, with most of them admitting to dabbling in LSD, to name one of a few.²⁵ Also like their parents, these new hippies are concerned about social issues and the way the world is heading; exactly what many youths who joined UM said they were concerned about.²⁶

While there is an over abundant amount of material on the hippie culture, it all seems to come to the same conclusion: individuals feel a bitterness which causes them to join these groups and the "most common scapegoat for bitterness was the total society".²⁷ In a series of interviews of youths who shunned mainstream society and joined outside groups, sociologist Lewis Yablonsky strives to find the answer to the question of *why*. Here are some answers when asked why they chose to escape:

"I couldn't stand the ideals of society, its customs and traditions".²⁸

"Becoming totally aware of the inner self... doing your own thing but not imposing your thing on anyone else".²⁹

"An attempt to build humanity on top of a graveyard of dead ideas and nonliving existing people".³⁰

²⁴ Kinney, "From 'Headbangers' to 'Hippies': Delineating Adolescents' Active Attempts to Form an Alternative Peer Culture", 26.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid, 27.

²⁷ Lewis Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip* (New York: Pegasus, 1968), 348.

²⁸ Ibid, 349.

²⁹ Ibid, 353.

³⁰ Ibid, 361.

They despair “the hypocrisy or disparity in American society between value ideas and actual behavior”.³¹

The most effective measure found by the UM at spreading its message and getting to the youths is through workshops. Here is where members spoke about their lives before and after the UM. If a prospect likes what they hear and comes to another workshop, they are told to read the *Divine Principle* which lists the beliefs of the UM. This is often a roadblock to joining since a lot of recruits do not want to read this lengthy and dense tome.³² Oftentimes people agreed to come to the workshops because they said the ‘Moonie’ who recruited them seemed ‘normal’ and not brainwashed.³³ Through research it has been determined that people are more likely to join after attending a workshop because it was a controlled environment where the ‘Moonies’ could dictate all the information being taught.³⁴ This is what the ‘Moonies’ label as ‘heavenly deception’ where they control what is said and through processes such as ‘love bombing’ they convince potential members that if they leave they will be friendless and only through the UM will they be loved.³⁵

In 1972 Moon and his followers embarked on what is known as the Day of Hope Tours. This 32 city tour had 3 purposes:³⁶

The first is to fulfill the role of John the Baptist by proclaiming the Second Advent, telling people that God is speaking again today.

³¹ Lewis Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip*, 363.

³² Barker, *Making of a Moonies: Choice or Brainwashing?*, 163.

³³ *Ibid*, 101.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 233.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 176.

³⁶ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 150.

The second is to intensify the work of members in a lot of cities. The tour is a shot in the arm for the local groups.

The third purpose is the training of members, both in local groups and those on the tour.

Each tour is met with varying degrees of success. UM members have high expectations for this tour, shelling out a lot of money and time in order to attract new members, who they hope will be from higher up in society.³⁷

Moon was an educated man and he fully understood the importance of youths to his movement. Youths decided what is popular and what is in, and this even stretched to religious and political institutions. This is comparable to modern day in the example of a YouTube video that took the world (and college campuses) by storm: KONY 2012. The KONY video described atrocities committed by a Ugandan warlord who forced children to fight for him and how by donating and continuously sending letters to politicians, America would be forced to take action and not let Joseph Kony escape justice. Thousands ordered KONY kits and blackouts where students will post posters all over their town happened across the world and just as soon as it started it ended. It is released that although indeed Kony is a terrible person, he had not been active for some years and with the founder of KONY suffering a mental breakdown, many people abandoned the idea they had so whole heartedly grasped at first. Although not at all comparable to a warlord, Moon and his church suffered the same fate in America.

Building an Empire

Moon had a secondary goal besides establishing the UM as a legitimate religion, and this goal was to build a corporate empire that would finance the Church as well as lend it legitimacy

³⁷ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 115.

in people's eyes, since many of his ventures tended to be philanthropic. The holdings in America alone were numerous: tracking down the complete business holdings of the Church is almost impossible, because some are unknown. One *New York Times* author, Daniel J. Wakin, does a lot of investigating in order to compile a list of businesses to include in the story he wrote for the death of Moon. In addition to the newspaper Moon also owned the New Yorker Hotel and the Manhattan Center, an 18 acre compound in Irvington, an estate in Belvedere, New York and the Unification Theological Seminary in Barrytown, New York. These are in addition to the numerous retail, food, and construction and property businesses, all within the New York area.

As well as owning the *Washington Times* Moon also funds a ballet school there. Controversy surrounds Moon even in his businesses, and drew serious criticism in 1992 for putting money into the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut where he was accused of offering scholarships to students who agreed to join the Church while enrolled there; this is supported by the fact that the church had a boarding school on campus for its members children as well as importing many foreign students who are followers. With the growing cost of education it is no wonder that many students would have been attracted to this type of 'opportunity' Moon owned even more businesses in his home country of South Korea that included everything from hospitals to ski resorts to sports teams.³⁸

These holdings spanned the globe, and most of them were newspaper publication businesses so that Moon could spread his message. These included but were not limited to the *Sekai Nippo* in Japan, the *Middle East Times* in Greece, *Tiempos del Mundo* in Argentina, the *Ultimas Noticias* in Uruguay as well as numerous publications in South Korea.³⁹ It is estimated

³⁸ Wakin, "Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Self-Proclaimed Messiah Who Built Religious Movement, Dies at 92".

³⁹ Ibid.

by a number of sources that the Church brought in upwards of tens of millions of dollars in revenue from these holdings, so it was impossible for Moon to argue that he held them purely for philanthropic reasons. These corporations are what will keep the Unification Church going even after its fall from grace in America.

It is not at all unusual for churches to own property, after all they do need a building to practice their worship in, conduct philanthropic duties such as soup kitchens and sometimes they even own land: the Vatican is the home base for the Catholic Church and governs itself with its own rules and beliefs. While some could argue, and they would do so correctly, that the Catholic Church also underwent scrutiny and survived, you have to look at in perspective: The Catholic Church came around during a different time and a different place. Even the Catholic Church has been maligned for the papal seat having so much money. During modern times if you do not already have an established religion that many people believe in for centuries it is very difficult to just come out with one.

David Bromley, a sociologist at Virginia Commonwealth University, said: "The corporate section is understood to be the engine that funds the mission of the church. The wealth base is fairly substantial, but no more so than any other religious organization trying to get up and running. What is so disconcerting to some people about the Unification Church's holdings is that it brought them in direct contact with youths of all ages, and Moon made no effort to hide that he used these contacts as a way of getting new recruits. Some saw this as deception on the part of Moon and his followers, which is one of the things they are charged with on the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire campus. Through all of its holdings the main goal of the Church was to get more followers and make more money, all in the name of their messiah Sun Myung Moon.

Part III: Persecution and Redemption

Accusations

The shift in popularity for the Unification Church is best described by Anson Shupe, who concludes that the Unification Church went through four stages in public opinion. The first stage is ‘Latent Preconstruction’ where Moon received little to no publicity for his movement and was just beginning to bring it to public attention.⁴⁰ Few know that the religion was actually around many years before Moon came to America, when it was brought here by his follower Ms. Kim. This lack of celebrity is one of the reasons Moon considered the first trip to America a failure and why he felt like he needed to go to America himself. This anonymity of the Church was soon gone after Moon arrived, which was what he wanted.

The second stage is ‘Benign Construction’ where the group was looked at in an amusing light, and this is when the Day of Hope Tours commenced, resulting in even more publicity.⁴¹ One way Moon hoped to gain recognition was through placing himself in the way of important people and he succeeded in doing so. He amassed a number of honorary titles from over 178 cities and 26 Governors, one of whom was the Governor of Georgia Jimmy Carter.⁴² Getting so many officials in government to recognize Moon is quite astounding and probably one of his greatest achievements in America.

Many people wondered why and how Moon gained so much positive recognition from politicians and this reason is best explained by the Dallas Mayor Wes Wise: he knew nothing

⁴⁰ Anson Shupe, “Vicissitudes of Public Legitimacy for Religious Groups: A Comparison of the Unification and Roman Catholic Churches”, *Review of Religious Research* 39, no. 2 (1997), 172.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 153.

about him. “Unless he’s preaching something really radical, I would extend the same courtesy to any visiting religious leader.”⁴³ This greatly helped Moon but sometimes embarrassed officials who endorsed him without knowing who he was or what he stood for.

This short lived acceptance quickly shifted into ‘Skeptical Construction’ due to Moon’s claims of godhood and visions from a higher power.⁴⁴ The nail in the coffin was Moon’s continued support of President Richard Nixon after the Watergate scandal and Moon’s proclamations that Nixon did what he had to do in order to save America. Reverend Moon’s endorsement of Nixon did not waver, even with the revelation of the Watergate scandal and its subsequent investigation.⁴⁵ Moon claimed that in “November 1973, while visiting in Korea, that God appeared in a vision and told him to forgive Nixon “which makes sense since Moon had designated the role of archangel to him.”⁴⁶ He could not afford to have his visions contradicted,

so he continued to support Nixon.

Illustration 2.3

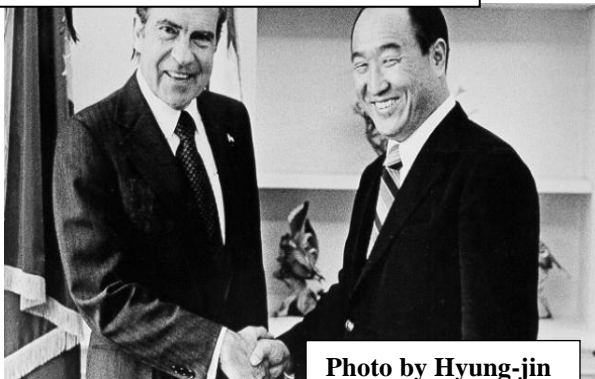


Photo by Hyung-jin Kim

This is yet another example of Moon manipulating beliefs and events to fit his own agenda by heavenly deception. Heavenly deception is basically acceptable lying, lying done for the good of the movement and in Moon’s eyes the good of mankind. This

deception is highlighted in the previous section about student involvement in CARP and their lives within Church workshops and communes.

⁴³ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade* , 154.

⁴⁴ Shupe, “Vicissitudes of Public Legitimacy for Religious Groups: A Comparison of the Unification and Roman Catholic Churches”, 172.

⁴⁵ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 161.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 161.

The most obvious answer Moon comes up with to get to these youths is by targeting campuses across America. This is where the foundation of CARP comes in: CARP is the College Association for the Research of Principles. These groups pop up on campuses all over, usually started by a student who has fallen in with the Unification Church. One of the requirements for joining is for individuals to read the Divine Principle in order to familiarize themselves with the teachings of the church.⁴⁷

The last stage according to Shupe is 'Accepted Malicious Construction' which is the open hatred and distrust of the Unification Movement. This hate is evident in numerous letters sent to school administrations by angry parents who are in disagreement with their children about joining the group and in the case of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire applauded Dean Robert Shaw who disbanded CARP on campus and resisted the attempts of the student Susan Matsukawa in reinstating it. This is also the birth of anti-brainwashing businesses who believed there is an actual science in how the UM convinced people to join, through brainwashing. They also believed that these people needed to be deprogrammed in order to function like 'normal' human beings and to rejoin regular society outside the confines and influence of Moon and his hard core followers. This hate sometimes culminated in violence, as evident from a Massachusetts bumper sticker that said: "Save the human race. Punch a Moonie in the face".⁴⁸

One of the leading anti-brainwashers was Ted Patrick. Calling himself a deprogrammer, Patrick worked for the ACM, or the Anti-Cult Movement.⁴⁹ Patrick's job was to 'recover' the children of parents who asked for his help, and this meant essentially kidnapping them back from whichever commune they had been staying at. The child is then subjected to anti programming

⁴⁷ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 128.

⁴⁸ Barker, *Making of a Moonie: Choice or Brainwashing?*, 2.

⁴⁹ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 209.

techniques, usually therapy, or as ‘Moonies’ called it ‘satanic torture’.⁵⁰ In 1978 Unification members sued deprogrammers, saying they violated their freedom of religion.⁵¹ Since no former members who had been subjected to this deprogramming sued with them, the lawsuit failed. The accusation of brainwashing is what really did in the Unification Church. As LaMartina puts it “it’s satanic to doubt, and if you have questions, you go to your immediate superior, and he always talks you into thinking the right way again.”⁵²

While the term brainwashing could be considered a bit extreme, it is an example of covert persuasion. The reasoning for the hysteria created by the UM is best described by an alumni of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, who did his capstone paper on Susan Matsukawa, the women who tried to form a CARP branch on campus. The UM coincided with the Jonestown Massacre led by Reverend Jim Jones, and this event sparked fear in the masses that the UM will follow in the People’s Temple footsteps.⁵³ In 1970 a survey was given to 1,000 Americans born between 1940 and 1952, giving them a list of 155 names; only 3% of the participants had never heard of him and only 1% stated that they admired someone less than him, picking Charles Manson.⁵⁴

The term cult is synonymous with evil, bad and corrupt but that has not always been the case. If anyone has ever studied ancient Greek or Roman civilizations they would see that a cult is just another way to say a group or religious organization. The term took on a new meaning

⁵⁰ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 215.

⁵¹ Ibid, 231.

⁵² “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Affirmative Action Hearing Evidence

⁵³ Glen Eastman, “Susan Matsukawa vs. UWEC: The 1982 Incident Which Created Debate About Religious Organization and Freedom of Speech on Campus”, minds@uw.com Glen Eastman’s capstone paper is the only other piece of scholarly work on the Eau-Claire campus incident and can be found online under the title “Susan Matsukawa vs. UWEC: The 1982 Incident Which Created Debate About Religious Organization and Freedom of Speech on Campus”.

⁵⁴ Barker, *Moonies of America: Choice or Brainwashing*, 2.

when groups considered outside of the norm began to form in order for people to differentiate between what is an established religious group and one that should be avoided at all cost. Going back to the original meaning for the word, any religious organization could be called a cult.⁵⁵ When applied to the Unification Church in the rest of this analysis, the negative definition for cult is the one being referenced. This term, so quickly used by the media to describe the church, is what really strikes fear into the hearts of parents and concerned citizens of America. Thinking of the word cult now brings to mind images of figures in dark robes, huddled around a young virgin on an altar, preparing to sacrifice her while whispering devilish incantations. This has nothing to do with the Unification Movement: cult is instead meant to describe the *way* that ‘Moonies’ recruited their followers not so much the *practices or beliefs* of the group.

Not only the media, but the government as well stepped into the fight against the UM. In March of 1982, the European Parliament requested that the media exposed the ‘Moonies’ for whatever dangerous actions they might have been taking, and also revoked their special tax cuts and benefits that as a religious foundation they were entitled to.⁵⁶ During this same time the UM lost a libel case that took six years to complete, having to pay the UK *Daily Mail* an estimated £750,000.⁵⁷ Another lawsuit in 1981 found Moon guilty of failing to report his income which had accumulated over a million dollars of interest in a New York bank. Moon believed he was being targeted for his religion saying “I would not be standing here today if my skin was white and my religion was Presbyterian. I am here today only because my skin is yellow and my religion is Unification Church.”⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Eastman, “Susan Matsukawa vs. UWEC: The 1982 Incident Which Created Debate About Religious Organization and Freedom of Speech on Campus”.

⁵⁶ Ellen Barker, *Making of a Moonies: Choice or Brainwashing?*, (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1984), 2.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Wakin, “Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Self-Proclaimed Messiah Who Built Religious Movement, Dies at 92”.

The US government also took action and in 1978 the US House of Representatives has the UM investigated for working for the Korean CIA.⁵⁹ This accusation later turns out to be unfounded, as do most of the accusations against the Church. What makes the case of the UM so interesting is that oftentimes in recent years, governments try to stay away from religious organizations unless they are obviously hurting someone. The fact that both America and Britain's government stepped in really goes to show the hysteria that had taken over the world, and that this hysteria was felt high up. It seem as though they did not want to be associated with identifying Moon (like some previous government officials had been). He really alienated the US officials further when during a World Peace conference in 2004 in Washington Moon had himself crowned as humanity's savior.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Barker, *Making of a Moonies: Choice or Brainwashing?*, 2.

⁶⁰ Wakin, "Rev. Sun Myung Moon, Self-Proclaimed Messiah Who Built Religious Movement, Dies at 92".

UW-Eau Claire Campus

A prime example of the distrust CARP is met with is the situation that happened on the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire campus in the year 1982. During this time a student, Susan Matsukawa, brought a case against Dean Shaw in a campus court for banning her from continuing to have a CARP organization on campus.

Illustration: 3.3



Susan Matsukawa, *The Spectator*

It all starts with the resignation of the organization's faculty advisor, Dr. Donald Wolfarth, a professor of speech for the University. With a lack of advisor, which all student organizations must have, and a disinterest by all faculty members to take over, Dean Shaw cancelled the organization's status as a student organization. Matsukawa decided Shaw is banning her group because of religion and thus the case began. In the statement of intent from Matsukawa against Shaw she alleged that Shaw forced Dr. Wolfarth to quit the organization leaving it with no leader.⁶¹ This contradicts what Dr. Wolfarth had to say in his own resignation

⁶¹ "Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008", Affirmative Action Hearing Statements, McIntyre Library.

letter from the group. According to Dr. Wolfarth the reasoning for his resignation are as follows:⁶²

- “1. I feel that Susan Matsukawa is not a bona fide student on this campus in that she is taking no college work for credit.
2. The interest in and need for CARP did not and does not arise from the students on this campus.
3. The purported objectives of CARP are not their real objective which is to recruit disciples for the Unification Church of Rev. Moon.”

Shaw received an outpouring of support from family members of current and ex ‘Moonies’ as well as letters from former ‘Moonies’ themselves. They told him to stand his ground against this cult that sought to undermine the ‘good’ way they had brought up their children. One concerned parent reiterated the idea that Moon sought out youths who wished to make the world a better place saying “Their seeking attitude, wanting to improve the world tomorrow, is zeroed in on by cult recruiters, and converted to the cult’s benefit.”⁶³ She believed the group had four goals:

1. Religion for profit
2. Destroy ego function
3. Mind control
4. Get people in a ‘temporary depression’⁶⁴

Here is a typed copy of another letter received by Shaw:

Dear Sir.

⁶² “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Affirmative Action Hearing Statements.

⁶³ “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Correspondence to Robert Shaw.

⁶⁴ “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Correspondence to Robert Shaw.

I am writing to tell you that we have a son who is with the way cult- he has been gone a year and will soon be in Eau Claire and trying to recruit the college students on campus. In order to avoid heartache to other parents I would want you to be aware of this cult and their love talk- our son is still loved by his family, but is very brainwashed and continues to do what he is told to do-no wishing to sign my name,- will hope you would be aware of this cult.

A heartbroken mother⁶⁵

This “love talk” is the same love bombing described by former members, where a member was made to feel like they are so loved by only the members of the group and it is this love that keeps members from leaving, among other things. Below is a plea from a former ‘Moonie’ who experienced the love bombing first hand:

Dear Mr. Shaw,

I have recently been informed about your little run in with the Moonies on campus and Susan Matsukawa’s attempt to file suit against you. As usual this is a touchy situation and the Moonies will take every advantage of it, and if they win they will, of course, exploit it and use it for their publicity. I’m not sure what kind of a case they have built up against you, but I’m sure I have a good idea. My name is Rick LaMartina and I left the unification church (carp) after 3 years about 1 month ago. I’m not sure how I may help you-or if I can, but, if so, please get in touch with me and let me know. I have been working quite heavily with this cult thing since I’ve been out and will be happy to help you in whatever way I can.⁶⁶

Richard LaMartina is the same LaMartina discussed earlier who did an interview with the *LA Times* and spoke of his time with the ‘Moonies’, focusing mainly on the arranged marriages and how Moon used this to produce more followers: cementing his status as the True Parent to humanity.⁶⁷ There are numerous articles and letters to Shaw from youths who are in the same situation as LaMartina, all expressing their gratitude for being taken out of the Unification Church, oftentimes forcefully. This gratitude can be seen as the youths own belief that they had

⁶⁵ “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Correspondence to Robert Shaw.

⁶⁶ “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Correspondence to Robert Shaw.

⁶⁷ “Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008”, Affirmative Action Hearing Evidence.

been brainwashed and preyed upon by Moon and his followers, even using the term brainwashing.

Shaw's office is bombarded with information from parents, anti-cult groups and former 'Moonies'. With all the information presented to Dean Shaw it is of little wonder that he came to the conclusion that he did. His statement to Matsukawa's claimed that he had banned her based on religion was

"...no testimony or evidence has been introduced to support this allegation...These allegations and activities by Miss Matsukawa have throughout the last several weeks nurtured within me a deep feeling of uneasiness because of their potential to chill, if not suppress, the free flow of information so necessary for the discussion and critical examination of idea without which the University and our society would be a far different place."⁶⁸

Since Miss. Matsukawa has stated...that the Rev. Moon is the head of her organization, it seems interesting that the Rev. Moon has not sought a retraction of the views held in these publication...As a liberal arts institution, we are purveyors of the skills which literally mean 'to free us'.⁶⁹

One very interesting aspect of Susan Matsukawa's case is that she was not at all supported by any student on campus. The only mention of anyone supporting her was a short letter or two from people who believed that Matsukawa had the right to freedom of religion. The only mention of students having had anything to do with her is a brief mention of her in a Student Council report found in the Eau-Claire archives that said Shaw planned on having a seminar teaching about cults on campus: that was it. The lack of student interest comes down to the times: the Cold War was over, hippies were a thing of the past and the world was more concerned about the end of the Cold War, too busy to be bothered about a girl trying to set up a group that no one seemed to care about.

⁶⁸ "Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008", Affirmative Action Hearing Statements.

⁶⁹ Cults at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire collection, 1982-2008", Affirmative Action Hearing Statements.

Reverend Moon wanted to distance himself as far as he could from these allegations, so he chooses repeatedly to make no statements about them at all. Around the time of this incident is when the UM launched a PR campaign in order to shift public opinion from where it was heading. A spokesman for the church claimed that some of its members “misrepresented” the Church and that the actions they had been taking were not sanctioned or condoned by the Church.⁷⁰ It is rightly predicted by two researchers of the UM that the Church “will retreat into relatively self-sustaining communities”.⁷¹ Facing so many backlashes was too much for Moon to take and after the lawsuits and disappointments suffered it is no wonder that he returned with his family to South Korea.

⁷⁰ Bromley and Shupe, *Moonies in America: Cult, Church and Crusade*, 237.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 256.

Conclusion

Disappointed with the failure that is the American mission, Moon retreated back to South Korea, denouncing America for all its evils, namely his ‘persecution’ and numerous setbacks. However this opinion will change in his later life and he is quoted saying he enjoyed his stay in America and admired the people he met there. Moon continued to perform mass weddings and hold grand ceremonies, although much less publicized than they were ten years earlier. Moon put his energy into his corporations which quickly became a family business, and like any family that mixes friendship with business, Moons have their problems. The main problem is the fragmentation of businesses that resulted with Moon’s death in September of 2012. No reports can be substantiated, but rumors coming out of South Korea suggest that some of the sons are not happy with how their mother handles her part of the businesses. Despite these minor disagreements, Moon’s family mourns his death and also never forgets that they believe their father was a very important religious figure. His son Reverend Hyung Jin Moon said “We need to remember, father is not just a normal person, and father’s body is not just a normal body.”⁷²

It is unclear exactly how many people fell in with the Unification Church. Moon tended to exaggerate the numbers so as to make his institution seem more important and many who did join tended to not admit to it. They did not want to be seen as weird or different, falling in with a man who was considered a charlatan and a phony messiah, preying on malleable minds in order to gain followers and with them, their money. Moon still owns churches in the US as well as abroad, but their followers are far and few. The UM did not grow in practitioners numbers, it grew in corporate finances. What can be agreed upon is that the Church did attract a large

⁷² CNN Wire Staff “Rev. Moon, Religious and Political Figure, dies in South Korea at 92”, September 3, 2012, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/09/02/world/asia/south-korea-reverend-moon-dead/index.html>.

number of followers when it first started, mainly students in their late teens and mid-twenties. These are the ones who were unhappy with their lot in life, and wished for a better future, a future that did not resemble the type of lives their parents lived. With so many different organizations popping up during the same time period, it is no wonder that many were caught up in the whirlwind, the promise for a utopia on earth.

Despite his infamy, Moon was forgotten by the younger society, who did not grow up fearing the Cold War and communists. The youths after Moon's time did not fear every day of a some nuclear missile descending upon their school, and therefore had no more need of Moon's promises of Utopia and peace on earth. Moon was all about defending against communism, a crusader for democracy and mankind, but if you take that away he is a man with a god complex. This made people fearful and distrustful of him, and once abandoned by the majority he disappeared from modern consciousness.

The goal of this research is to shed light on not just the life of Moon, his teachings and recruitment methods but to look at a particular case where the Unification Church met with backlash. As previous mentioned, there is a capstone on the same topic but this one has an added element: the element of corporations. Many studies on the Unification Church mention corporations as big part of Moon's mission, but few are up to date. Little is publicly known about what Moon did once he left America, like how he is received back in South Korea or the growth of his congregation when he returned. The goal of this research is to change that, and bring the Unification Church's history not to a close, but to continue. Contrary to popular belief, the Unification Movement did not die out once Moon left America, but continues to grow in a different way: business.

For more research on the subject it is recommended to not only check out the sources listed here, but a few extras as well, such as Timothy Miller's *The Quest for Utopia in Twentieth Century America* as well as the previously mentioned John Lofland's *The Doomsday Cult*. Although both are older studies they offer a more in depth look at not just the Unification Movement but the counter culture movement as a whole. Glen Eastman's dissertation is great for a longer case study of the University of Wisconsin Eau-Claire incident, focusing more on religious freedom rather than the history of the church. By going to the archives there is also a full audio interview done between Eastman and Dean Shaw. Plenty of research can still be done about the Unification Church's present day aspirations, since this is just a brief overview of the topic, but one that is hoped to start up the discussion about the 'Moonies' again.

There is no doubt that the 'Moonies' were a controversial group and the distrust that America felt for them is completely understandable. The 'Moonies' were preying on people's children, telling them to leave their homes because their families did not actually love them, and to join commune like facilities where they will be loved, on one condition: they had to recognize Moon as their savior and messiah, a man to be respected and revered, and to give their whole lives in devotion to the cause. But what is this cause exactly that is so talked about? The cause was money, plain and simple. The UM needed money in order to have their massive holdings and to spread their word: followers and money went hand in hand in the case of the Unification Church, and as seen in the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire case, this was not acceptable to society. Although enjoying relatively famous and pleasant lives in South Korea, the Unification Movement has been all but forgotten in America.

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-Illustration 3.3

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