

# **Steven Hassan M.Ed., LMHC, NCC**

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www.freedomfromundueinfluence.org



## **SUMMARY**

Licensed mental health professional, cult expert and undue influence expert with professional experience in the United States and abroad including consulting, coaching, speaking, media appearances, activism, writing, researching, teaching, intervention and recovery services, and expert witness work to assist individuals and families with problems related to undue influence including brainwashing, mind control, and unethical hypnosis.

Expertise includes undue influence in cases of destructive one-on-one relationships, families, parental alienation, mini-cults, religious cults, therapy and self-improvement groups, professional abuse, institutional abuse, corporations, multi-level marketing, political groups, human trafficking, hate and violent extremism, and other undue influence situations.

## **CREDENTIALS**

### **Doctoral Studies**

Fielding Graduate University, School of Leadership Studies, PhD student in Organizational Development and Change (ODC) (Expected 2020)

### **Masters**

Cambridge College, Masters in Education in Counseling Psychology, Cambridge, MA (1985)

### **License**

Licensed Mental Health Counselor in 1992 (Commonwealth of Massachusetts #820)

## **National Certification**

National Board of Certified Counselors: Nationally Certified Counselor, Cert. No. 43226

## **Additional Professional Training**

American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law  
American Society for Clinical Hypnosis conferences  
Attachment Pathology  
American Psychological Association  
Dissociative Disorders  
Ericksonian Hypnosis and Psychotherapy workshops and conferences  
International Academy of Law and Mental Health Congress  
International Society of Hypnosis workshops and conferences  
National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
Neuro-Linguistic Programming extensive training (NLP) 1980-1981  
New England Society of Clinical Hypnosis  
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder  
Phobia and Panic Disorders  
Strategic and Structural Family Therapy

## **Honors and Awards**

Recipient of the Margaret Thaler Singer Award, given by International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA) 2014  
Recipient of the Jerusalem Medal given with gratitude by Nahum Itzkovitz, Director General of the Israel Ministry of Social Affairs and Services, 2010

## **SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

*Independent Practice* in counseling and consulting. (Newton, MA) (1985-)  
*Founding Director & President, Freedom of Mind Resource Center.* (Newton, MA) (1999-)  
*Founding Director, Freedom From Undue Influence*, a division of the non-profit Dare Association, Inc. (Newton, MA) (2017-)  
*Teacher of Elective Course for 4th Year Psychiatry Students: Helping people influenced by Undue Influence: Hypnosis, Destructive Cults and Traffickers*, for the Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Residency Training Program, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. (Boston MA) (2018-)  
*Instructor, Harvard Law School Trial Advocacy Workshop* (Cambridge, MA) (2016-)  
*Presenter in the course Spirituality, Religion and Psychiatry* in the Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Residency Training Program, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. (1999-)  
*Presenter, Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Grand Rounds: Undue Influence: An Introduction to Destructive Cults, Mind Control, Brainwashing and Deprogramming*, affiliated with Harvard Medical School. (Boston, MA) (2017)  
*Presenter, Psychiatry Grand Rounds*, Boston University School of Medicine. (Boston, MA) (2016)  
*Presenter, Harvard Longwood Psychiatry Grand Rounds*, affiliated with Harvard Medical School (Boston, MA) (2003)  
*National Coordinator, FOCUS: Developing programs to provide information, counseling and support to former cult members* (1985-1986)  
*Founder, Ex-Moon Inc.:* Founder and first President of this nonprofit educational corporation

serving as an information and support network for over four hundred former cult members. (1979-1981)  
*Former Consultant/Instructor*, Fox Valley Technical College  
*Former Clinical Affiliate* in Psychology, McLean Hospital (Belmont, MA).  
*Former Guest Faculty*, Cambridge Family Institute  
*Presenter* of other lectures, workshops, and trainings at hundreds of universities, colleges, churches, synagogues and community centers including:  
Boston Psychoanalytic Society  
British Society for Medical and Dental Hypnosis – Scotland, October 2016  
American Bar Association's Conference on Tort and Religion  
American Psychological Association - 2001  
American Society of Clinical Hypnosis  
Eastern Regional Conference on Multiple Personality and Dissociation  
The International Congress of Hypnosis  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
McLean Hospital

## **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

### **Books**

- Hassan, Steven (2019) *The Cult of Trump: A Leading Cult Expert Explains How the President Uses Mind Control*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Hassan, Steven (2018) *Combating Cult Mind Control: The #1 Best-Selling Guide to Protection, Rescue and Recovery from Destructive Cults* Newton, Massachusetts: Freedom of Mind Press.
- Hassan, Steven (2012, 2013) *Freedom of Mind: Helping Loved Ones Leave Controlling People, Cults and Beliefs*, Newton, Massachusetts: Freedom of Mind Press
- Hassan, Steven (2000) *Releasing the Bonds: Empowering People to Think for Themselves* Somerville, Massachusetts: Freedom of Mind Press. This book has also been published in Russian, Chinese and Polish.
- Hassan, Steven A. (1988,1990). *Combatting Cult Mind Control*. Rochester, Vermont: Park Street Press. This book has also been published in Spanish, French, German, Japanese, Italian, Polish, Czech and Russian.

### **Book Chapters**

- Hankir, A. and Hassan, S. (2018). Psychological Determinants and Social Influences of Violent Extremism In S. Moffic, M.D., J. Peteet, M.D., A. Hankir, M.D. and R. Awaad, M.D (Ed.), *ISLAMOPHOBIA AND PSYCHIATRY: Recognition, Prevention, and Treatment*. Springer Publishers.
- Hassan, Steven. (1994). Chapter 6: Strategic Intervention Therapy. In Shupe, A. & Bromley, D. (Ed.), *Anti-cult Movements in Cross-cultural Perspective*. New York: Garland
- Forthcoming: J. Caven-Atack and Hassan, S. (2020). Competing and Parallel Theories. In J. Holzer, P. Recupero, P. Gill, and A. Dew. (Ed.), *LONE-ACTOR TERRORISM: An Integrated Framework*. Oxford University Press.
- Forthcoming: J. Caven-Atack and Hassan, S. (2020). Antisemitism in Cult and Hate Groups. In H. S. Moffic, J. Peteet, A Hankir, and M. V. Seeman. (Ed.), *ANTI-SEMITISM AND PSYCHIATRY: Recognition, Prevention, and Interventions*. Springer Nature Switzerland

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### **Peer-reviewed Journal Article**

Hassan, S.A. and Shah, M.J. (2019) The anatomy of undue influence used by terrorist cults and traffickers to induce helplessness and trauma, so creating false identities. *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health* (2019) 8, 97-107. Elsevier Masson SAS.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemep.2019.03.002>

### **Other Articles**

Hassan, Steven (2017) Brainwashing Young People into Violent Extremist Cults, *Freedom from Fear* magazine of The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (Unicri.it) <http://f3magazine.unicri.it/?p=1353>

Hassan, Steven (1999) *Spiritual Responsibility: Cult Awareness* March/April issue of *New Age Journal*

Hassan, Steven and Surya Das (1996) *Spiritual Responsibility: Avoiding Abuses and Pitfalls Along the Spiritual Path* (1996) booklet

### **Curriculum**

Co-developer of *Ending the Game* with Rachel Thomas, Carissa Phelps and D'Lita Miller—an intervention curriculum for women who have been sex trafficked to understand pimp/trafficker mind control [www.endingthegame.com](http://www.endingthegame.com)

Hassan, Steven A. (1984). *Exit-Counseling: Working to Undo the Shackles of Cult Mind Control*. Reprinted in *Cults and Consequences* (1988). Los Angeles: Los Angeles Jewish Federation.

### **SELECTED PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

Hassan, Steven (8/02/2018). Is Technology Controlling Your Mind. Presented at the TEDx Beacon Street Salon. Online at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev\\_zuiXTTzA&t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev_zuiXTTzA&t=4s).

Hassan, Steven (7/22/2018) , A Complex Systems Approach to Countering Mind Control, Trafficking and Terrorism, Plenary presentation presented at International Conference on Complex Systems (ICCS), Cambridge, MA at New England Complex Systems Institute.

Hassan, Steven (7/05/2018). The Freedom of Mind Approach to Helping People Raised in Destructive Environments. Presented at Annual ICSA International Conference, Philadelphia, PA

Hassan, Steven (10/22/2017). Presentation at New England Society for Ethical Culture.

Hassan, Steven (9/11/17). *Combating Cult Mind Control*. Presented at a meeting with officials at the Ralph J. Bunche Library at the U. S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.

Hassan, Steven (July 2017). Presented paper on Anatomy of Undue Influence at the International Academy of Law and Mental Health in Prague, Czechoslovakia in July 2017

Hassan, Steven (August 2015). Presented a countering ISIS program at the Aspen Institute. Was 1 of 25 invitation only guests including State Department counterterrorism officials, Secretary Madeleine Albright, former Ambassadors, and other luminaries.

Hassan, Steven (2014). Presented a Human Trafficking training for *My Life, My Choice* in Boston.

Hassan, Steven (2014). Presented a Human Trafficking training for Joint Regional Intelligence Organization in California to help organizations assist sex trafficking survivors.

- Hassan, Steven. Training for Attorneys General of Utah and Arizona concerning FLDS cult of Warren Jeffs
- Hassan, Steven. (2009). The main speaker at National Amber Alert Symposium sponsored by U.S. Department of Justice about Jaycee Dugard, Elizabeth Smart and other victims like them.

## **SELECTED PUBLISHED INTERVIEWS**

- Berman, Sarah. (9/05/2018). NXIVM, Jordan Peterson, and the Reincarnation of Ayn Rand's Cult: Lessons from the 'Atlas Shrugged' author's fanatic Objectivist collective. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *Vice.com*. Internet article at [https://www.vice.com/en\\_ca/article/3kyxvvnxivm-jordan-peterson-and-the-reincarnation-of-ayn-rands-cult](https://www.vice.com/en_ca/article/3kyxvvnxivm-jordan-peterson-and-the-reincarnation-of-ayn-rands-cult).
- Campbell-Gross, Haley and Cross, Angie. (7/26/2018). A Complex Systems Approach To Countering Mind Control. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *Human Current*, Ep 94. Podcast at <http://www.human-current.com/episode-094-a-complex-systems-approach-to-countering-mind-control>.
- Brown, Jennings. (6/20/2018). The Gateway: Teal Swan, Part 4: Tribe. [Interview with Steve Hassan]. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *Gizmodo*. Online podcast at <https://cms.megaphone.fm/channel/thegateway?selected=PPY3730306262>.
- Brown, Jennings. (6/20/2018) How Internet Spiritual Guru Teal Swan Targets Desperate People Online. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *Gizmodo*. Online article at <https://gizmodo.com/how-internet-spiritual-guru-teal-swan-targets-desperate-1826971039>.
- Duhigg, Charles. (2/28/2018). Change Agent, Episode 3: The Talk. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *NYTimes*. Podcast available at <https://www.nytimes.com/podcasts/change-agent>.
- Nedelman, Michael. (2/12/2018). Are you susceptible to brainwashing? [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *CNN Health*. Online article at <https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/13/health/brainwashing-mind-control-patty-hearst/index.html>.
- Kelly, Brendan Joel. (2/9/2018). Anti-LGBT cult leader calls on followers to purchase assault rifles. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *South Poverty Law Center*. Online article at <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2018/02/09/anti-lgbt-cult-leader-calls-followers-purchase-assault-rifles>
- DeVega, Chauncey. (2/08/2018). Is Donald Trump a cult leader? Expert says he "fits the stereotypical profile: Mind control expert Steven Hassan says a cult leader "wants everyone to merge into their definition of reality." [Interview with Steven Hassan]. Podcast available at <https://www.salon.com/2018/03/06/is-donald-trump-a-cult-leader-expert-says-he-fits-the-stereotypical-profile/>
- Lewis, Court. (1/4/2018). An expert on cults explores this netherworld with us. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. American Variety Radio, Episode 377. *American Variety Radio with Court Lewis*. Radio show available online [http://penmarketing.org/americanvarietyradio/PAST\\_SHOW\\_ARCHIVES/SHassan-Cults\\_2\\_1-12&13&14-18.mp3](http://penmarketing.org/americanvarietyradio/PAST_SHOW_ARCHIVES/SHassan-Cults_2_1-12&13&14-18.mp3)
- Washington, Glynn. (11/9/2017). Senior Producer: Ann Heppermann. Heaven's Gate: The Tape.

[Interview with Steven Hassan]. Heaven's Gate, Episode 5. *Produced by Stitcher in collaboration with Pineapple Street Media*. Podcast available at <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/stitcher/heavens-gate/e/52232859>.

Berman, Sarah. (11/03/2017). How a Secret Society That Brands Women Sold Empowerment: Before she was branded, former Nxivm member Sarah Edmondson thought she would change the world. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *Vice*. [https://www.vice.com/en\\_nz/article/kz3dv3/how-a-secret-society-that-brands-women-sold-empowerment](https://www.vice.com/en_nz/article/kz3dv3/how-a-secret-society-that-brands-women-sold-empowerment)

WNYT. (10/21/2017). Boston man provides insights into cults. [Interview with Steven Hassan]. *WYNT.com*. Online at <http://wnyt.com/in-depth/boston-man-provides-insights-into-cults-hassan/4642578/>.

### **SELECTED CITATIONS**

Alvarez, Larry and Cañas-Moreira, Jocelyn. (11/9/2015). A Victim-Centered Approach to Sex Trafficking Cases. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, United States Department of Justice. Online article at <https://leb.fbi.gov/articles/featured-articles/a-victim-centered-approach-to-sex-trafficking-cases>.

Has been cited in many publications including peer-reviewed journal articles and other articles.

### **SELECTED APPEARANCES**

Has appeared on many national television and radio shows, including: 60 Minutes; Nightline; Dateline; ABC, NBC, ABC Nightly News; Leah Remini: Scientology and its Aftermath; Oprah Winfrey; Today show; Good Morning America; Larry King show; CNN Anderson Cooper; CNN Special Reports; WBUR; NPR. A more complete list is available upon request.

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS**

Member: Against Violent Extremism (AVE)  
Member: The American Counseling Association  
Member: American Society for Clinical Hypnosis  
Advisory Board Member: [Child-Friendly Faith Project](#)  
Member: International Society of Hypnosis  
Member: International Cultic Studies Association  
International Society for Psychological and Social Approaches to Psychosis-US Branch (ISPS-US;) Boston, 12/3/17  
Founding Member: International Society for Therapeutic Jurisprudence, <https://www.intltj.com>  
Member: Massachusetts Mental Health Counselors Association  
Affiliate: [New England Complex Systems Institute](#)  
Member: New England Society of Clinical Hypnosis  
Advisory Board Member: [Open Minds Foundation](#)  
Member: [The Program in Psychiatry and the Law](#) at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center, a teaching hospital of the Harvard Medical School  
Advisory Council Member: Newton, MA Crime Prevention Commission Advisory Council

Member