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# Heaven's Gate's Website: The Group is Gone, the Religion Lives On

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<u>Heaven's Gate's Website: The Group is Gone, the Religion Lives On</u>

**Introduction**

The bodies of Heaven's Gate were found by a former member in a mansion in California, each lying on a mattress with a five dollar bill and three quarters in their pockets, plastic bags over their heads, and for most, a purple shroud covering their bodies. Many things led up to this movement, and one of them was their use of the internet. Their knowledge of technology was highly advanced at the time, although it may seem "retro" and dated today. The web was a vital piece of Heaven's Gate; from earning income to proselytizing and documenting, the internet was key in how we remember them today and the impact they left upon the world. Within my paper, I explore how the Heaven's Gate website is not only literal technology, but also a religious technology that mediates almost everything we know about the beliefs of Heaven's Gate at the moment. I use this to reflect on how technology is an inevitable part of religion in society, and the constant societal changes make religion a growing force today. Technology gives religion an emphasis that acts upon the viewer and acts as a mediator for religion, specifically Heaven's Gate, and assists it in becoming conjoined as one concept, instead of two separate ideas (religion and technology).

Heaven's Gate was a religion that was labeled by the media as "a UFO cult," which would make sense to many who have heard of it. They came to light in late March of 1997 after Do (Marshall Applewhite), the "teacher," and 38 other "students" committed suicide in a

mansion in Rancho Santa Fe, California, though the group began in the 1970s after a chance meeting by "the UFO Two."

In order to properly discuss Heaven's Gate, it is critical to identify what separates a New Religious Movement (NRM) from a cult. Traditionally, cults have the following attributes: authoritarian leadership, exclusiveness, isolation, and opposition to independent thinking. Although Heaven's Gate fits all these stereotypes, I label them as an NRM in order to give them agency and obtain objectivity. The term "New Religious Movement" removes the idea that these groups are evil and have malevolent intentions, but instead allows for me to focus on how the group constructs itself and accomplishes its goals. Meanwhile, cults have the stereotype of an "evil" select group whose goal is to draw in as many members as they can, take their money, and often kill them. Viewing Heaven's Gate as a New Religious Movement rather than a cult allows me to be more objective, as well as removes the negative stigma the word "cult" has attached to it. Rather, Heaven's Gate was comprised of two leaders with a nontraditional belief system, which let the members leave at any time they wished to.

**Background**

Marshall Herff Applewhite had "the normal conflicts regarding homosexuality in the 1950's [sic] and 60's [sic]."[1] The media gives the story that Applewhite met Nettles when he was in psychiatric care for his homosexuality, but Applewhite met Bonnie Lu Nettles as he was a vocal coach and instructor to Nettles' daughter.[2] Benjamin E. Zeller writes that Nettles was "biblically literate and interested in religion, but not devout" in her practices, going to church simply because her friends also went; she was instead interested in astrology.[3] Regardless of how

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[1] The Telah Foundation. *Higher Source Connection?*, edited by Eli Ewing 2017.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Zeller, Benjamin E. *Heaven's Gate*. New York: New York University Press, 2014. Pp. 19.

they met, they clicked immediately, with Applewhite running to get his birth certificate which he conveniently stowed in his car for easy access so she could do an astrological reading on him.[4] They each had strengths that they brought to the pairing – Applewhite with his dreams, visions, and out-of-body experiences, and Nettles with her explanations of dreams. She also brought her overarching worldview of the mysticism to the lack of clarity that surrounded Applewhite's visions.

Naming themselves "the Two," then "Bo and Peep," and finally "Do and Ti" (pronounced "Doe" and "Tea"), they toured throughout America, putting up flyers entitled "UFO's: Why they are here; Who they have come for; When will they leave," and "Last Chance to Advance Beyond Human." As they began touring the country, gaining followers, they preached a life of abstinence and purity, with the eventual goal of removing themselves from their "physical vessels" and ascending to the Next Level, or T.E.L.A.H., The Evolutionary Level Above Human. The representatives at heavensgate.com say that the number of members grew to "less than 200 between the May 1975 and April 1976."[5]  During this time, Applewhite and Nettle banned sex and drugs, which made then-active members drop out, believing that (then-called) Bo and Peep were asking too much of them, as this was in the mid-1970s, in the midst of the Sexual Revolution. The ban of sex and drugs created a rift in the group and Bo and Peep lost the majority of their followers.

Do and Ti arranged their movement to be like a "classroom" where Do (and Ti until her death) was the "teacher" and the members were the "students." Their goal from this was to set up a dynamic where the students could ask the teacher(s) questions about the ideology, specifically

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[4] Ibid., 25.
[5] The Telah Foundation, *Higher Source Connection?*

about the next level beliefs. Do taught that he had come to earth previously, and Ti was his

Father, a "link in the chain advancing upward."[6]

Heaven's Gate meanwhile cut off contact with any inquiring members and focused on

themselves and their practices. They aimed to eradicate gender, which they did through

abstinence and surgical castration. The members also achieved this through wearing

androgynous clothing and getting close-cropped haircuts that assisted them in erasing their

sexual characteristics. This made gender more difficult to discern when looking at them for the

first time. The genderless attire the members wore helped them give both women and men a

sexless look.

After Ti passed away, Do discovered there was to be a comet passing approaching Earth

in 1995 and became assured that the Hale-Bopp comet was to be the link between T.E.L.A.H.

and this world. Scholars suspect that this is because his students were getting restless, and felt the

need to move the movement forward. On March 22, 1997 the Hale-Bopp comet passed Earth,

and during the following days the 39 members of Heaven's Gate ritualistically killed themselves.

They took an expensive trip in the previous days, spending $351 at dinner at Marie Callendar's

and $549.90 on a steak dinner.[7]

In preparation for their passing, they dressed in long-sleeve button-down shirts with a

patch that said "Heaven's Gate Away Team" with black sweatpants and Nike Decades. They

died in three shifts over three days; when found, they were all covered in purple shrouds.

Heaven's Gate's 7-bedroom residence, Rancho Santa Fe mansion, was furnished with

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[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.

approximately 20 computers from which the group maintained their website and their web

design company, Higher Source.[8]

**Higher Source**

> **"Whether using stock or custom photography, cutting-edge computer graphics, or plain HTML text, Higher Source can go from "cool" to "corporate" like a chameleon."[9]**

Heaven's Gate members were proud of the website-designing skills they used in running

their company called Higher Source, which was their primary source of income. At Higher

Source, they made digital graphics and displays for companies they were contracted by. On the

archived version of Higher Source, they list several sites they composed graphics and wrote the

code for: among them the San Diego Polo Club and the Catholic site "Keep the Faith." The latter

of these two sites was at the time the primary distributor for Catholic audio clips, from hymns

and lectures to the traditional Latin mass and home-schooling tools for elementary school

children. However, both of these sites now run an updated, revised, and restructured code. On the

same page, they give a more general area in which they have worked. They say, "[t]he Higher

Source programming crew has successfully completed many development projects in both large

and small systems environments and in a variety of languages. Chances are your cellular phone

or pager company uses programs designed by our team of professionals. So do many banks and

other major corporations."[10] Heaven's Gate may not have been top-notch in the eyes of the

media, but they were given high ranking from a technology review page (Gizmodo) in 2014:

"UFO and suicide cult connotations of hindsight aside, this is one of the most pristine testaments

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[8] Purdum, Todd S. "Videotapes Left by 39 Who Died Described Cult's Suicide Goal." *The New York Times,* Mar 28, 1997. http://www.nytimes.com/1997/03/28/us/videotapes-left-by-39-who-died-described-cult-s-suicide-goal.html.
[9] "Higher Source." http://web.archive.org/web/19970128184631/http://www.highersource.com/pro/main.htm#8
[10] "Higher Source."

to early internet web design around. Not only could Higher Source program in Java, C++, and Visual Basic as well as use Shockwave, QuickTime, and AVI, they could gradient the hell out of your word art, too."[11] Higher Source was on the front edge of technology and coding, along with simpler concepts, like WordArt. As shown by the quote, the members contributing to Higher Source were excellent at what they did – unsurprising since a large number of them were computer programmers by trade.

Under "The Difference" section on the archived Higher Source website is written a paragraph about what differentiated Higher Source from other web designers. It opens with "[t]he individuals at the core of our group have worked closely together for over twenty years. During these years, each of us have developed a high degree of skill and know-how- through personal discipline and concerted effort. We . . . provide advanced solutions at highly competitive rates."[12] If Heaven's Gate was formed in the early '70s, then many of them would have had to work from the beginning in order to make the time 20 years by March 1997. The representatives at heavensgate.com confirmed that some of them had worked together previously.

Along with the above on the Higher Source website, they post that they have "highly skilled designers [who] are aware of the latest tricks of the trade, including the latest Internet multimedia presentation technology" who "understand the many variations and limitations of the Internet and of Web browser applications." [13] The runners of the website were required to have, collectively, a knowledge of all web and coding programs. They gave the client a graphic (in

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[11] Feldberg, Ashley. "The Online Legacy of a Suicide Cult and the Webmasters Who Stayed Behind." Newstex. http://search.proquest.com/docview/1562450496.
[12] "Higher Source."
[13] "Higher Source."

bright turquoise) of their services they offer, ranging from website design to "Systems Analysis

and Consulting" to "PGP, Privacy and Security Training."[14]

As far as professionalism goes, the Higher Source employees were described as being

"diligent and professional . . . [they] didn't look particularly unusual for computer experts with a

lot of work in the entertainment industry, with dark, collarless shirts and close-cropped hair."[15]

The individuals exuded professionalism with non-descript identities, nothing that particularly

stood out about them. Apart from their expertise knowledge and giving advice, they gave out

little personal presence.

The individuals behind Higher Source gave little information about themselves, which

limits our present knowledge of them. All they said is, "We try to stay positive in every

circumstance and put the good of a project above any personal concerns or artistic egos. By

sustaining this attitude and conduct, we have achieved a high level of efficiency and quality in

our work. [There is a] crew-minded effort, combined with ingenuity and creativity."[16] Their

choice of language used here plays on their concept of UFOs: "crew-minded" for one, as Do and

Ti called followers variations of "students," "the class" and "the crew," which refer to their

eventual destination aboard a spaceship. In addition, they also say they work "closely together,"

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| Higher Source's Internet World Wide Web services include: | | |
|---|---|---|
| Advanced Website Design | Graphic Design and Layout | Digital Audio and Video Integration |
| Java, ShockWave, VRML Programming | Domain Name Search and Registration | Strategies to Increase Web Traffic |
| PGP, Privacy and Security Training | Multimedia Application Development | Custom Programming in Many Languages |
| Intranet Design and Implementation | Search Engine Placement | Systems Analysis and Consulting |
| Systems Setup and Training | | |

[14] Permission to use granted by the Telah Foundation through email. 1 May, 2017.
[15] Elizabeth Weise. "Internet Provided Way to Pay Bills, Spread Message before Suicide." *Seattle Times,* Mar 28, 1997. http://search.proquest.com/docview/383838045.
[16] "Higher Source."

which is an understatement if they are referring to their classmates who they lived with for twenty years, followed the same rules, and ate the same diet. Through the programmers' thinly veiled references to UFOs and space, the technology they used gives insight to the wish they had to be removed from this world and to move on to the next, The Evolutionary Level Above Human.
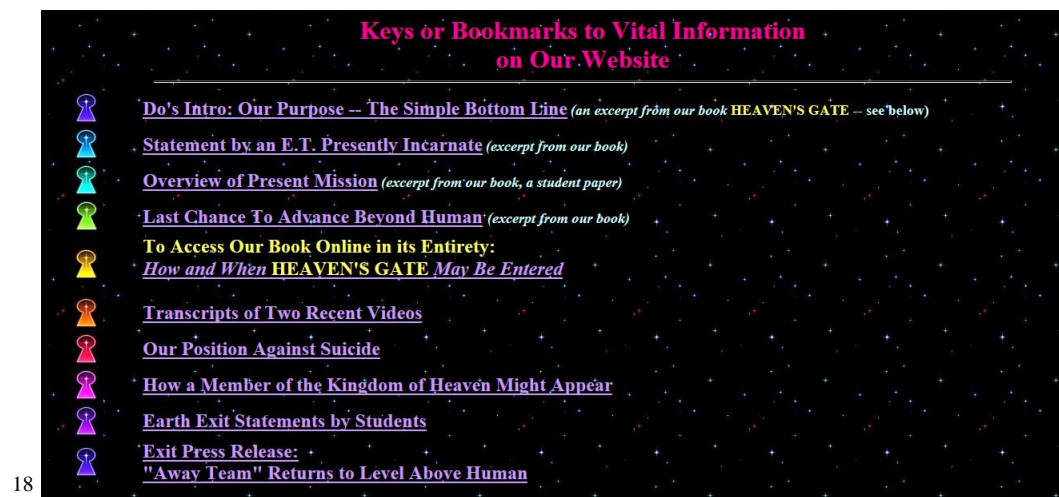
**Heaven's Gate Website**

The Heaven's Gate website has remained mainly untouched since 1997. This website is the sole remaining artifact of the New Religious Movement Heaven's Gate. They used the same tools to create both Higher Source and their own website, both with a space theme, with a star-speckled background and brightly-colored text. At the top of their website (Heaven's Gate) lies the flashing "RED ALERT" in red Comic Sans font. Under that is, in Times New Roman, "HALE-BOPP Brings Closure to:" next to which is the Heaven's Gate logo.[17] Underneath this, as if in space, floats the upper part of a planet (that is supposed to be Earth?). Over the world, in WordArt text, lies the inscription: "As was promised – the keys to Heaven's Gate are here again in Ti and Do (The UFO Two) as they were in Jesus and His Father 2000 yrs. ago." This states the belief of Heaven's Gate's, the understanding that Jesus and His Father were reincarnated as Do



[17] Permission to use granted by the Telah Foundation through email. 1 May, 2017.

and Ti. Upon first viewing this sentence, it may seem to read that, if Ti is Do's Father, then Ti

should be God, but the representatives behind the website refute this understanding of the Two's

relationship. Their revolutionary doctrine began not as a religion, but as what some called crazy

fantasies; their website reflects that sense of fantastical color scheme strongly. The clash of the

colors brings a sharp edge to the website, assisting it in appearing even more retro than it

otherwise would seem. Below the title, the site is composed of rainbow colored keys with links.[18]

This layout now looks to us to be oversimplified as well as slightly harder on the eyes than most

other sites on the web are in 2017, yet it was cutting-edge back in the 1990s. The color scheme is

distinctly from the '90s with the bright colors and rainbow keys, and the neon pink and yellow

titles. The keys were meant to represent the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven that Do and Ti

preached to the world.

[19]The "secret" layout is much more complex than just different colored links, however,

and it helps the Heaven's Gate website to get more hits than if this subtle and near-undetectable

detail was not included. At the bottom of the site, if all text is highlighted, there will appear a

block of "keywords," notably "Heaven's Gate" (repeated eight times), "ufo" and "space alien"



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Permission to use granted by the Telah Foundation through email. 1 May, 2017.
[19] I don't know why the line is there, I can't get rid of it, sorry!

(repeated twelve times), "extraterrestrial" (repeated fourteen times), and among the more interesting, "misinformation," which is repeated twelve times. Many more keywords follow once or twice, such as "He's Back," "Kingdom of Heaven," "Past Lives," "Virginity," "Walk-ins," and perhaps most fascinatingly, "Yoda."[20]

This is an example of Search Engine Optimization (SEO), which was a common attribute of websites in the '90s. The term SEO consists of various methods of boosting a specific site to the top of search results. Although there are several "accepted" forms of SEO, a number of them are illegal and in some cases can get that website banned from Google, however, as far as I know, the SEO on heavensgate.com is legal. Regardless, SEO, although it can get websites banned from the internet, is still a common practice today. Heaven's Gate's programmers were current in their coding techniques that allowed for their website to rise to the top when searched.

This website has not been changed since March 27th, 1997, although "it did crash a few times due to the servers going down to over use [sic] by the public."[21] The website is still maintained by two individuals who call themselves the Telah Foundation, although their identities are easily found online and reveal them as Mark and Sarah King. The Kings, who married after being requested to maintain the website, also relayed that "the coding has never changed [although] some of the links are broken due to those linking websites coming to an end."[22] They were with the group when Do requested them to continue the website after his (and the others') deaths. In interviews, they state that it is an honor to do so, and they are not disappointed in being left behind, because this is what Do asked them to do. They still believe that they will ascend at some point in their lives, and that time will arrive when it arrives, that

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[20] "Heaven's Gate." The Telah Foundation, 1997.
[21] The Telah Foundation, *Higher Source Connection?*
[22] Ibid.

they should not try to rush the process. They acknowledge that even though Do left them behind, they are not bitter about his choosing of them to take responsibility for the website.

**Religion as a Technology**

Jeremy Stolow describes technology as a mediator for religion, writing that it is technology through "which religious experiences are materialized, rendered tangible and palpable, communicated publicly, recorded, and reproduced."[23] From this perspective, "technology" is defined as one that mediates, and brings together religious experiences and "actors."[24] Although technology is doing the mediating, it is also a defining factor in the changes society brings each and every day.

In the case of Heaven's Gate's website, technology not only brings the viewer and the religion closer together, but advocates for the religion, giving the user a more sympathetic idea of it than the media has. It is in this way that religion is promoted and advanced (?) through technology, specifically Heaven's Gate.

Technology has always played a key role in our lives, with the number of human inventions growing year by year, which leads to an influx of connection between the viewer and the technology. One example of this is the Heaven's Gate technology. The Higher Source website was created in order to help people work with technology more, with the programmers making navigating webpages easier, which led to an increase in people using the internet. When the programmers of Higher Source began to rely on the internet as a way to bring in money, their viewership increased as they were putting much more effort into Higher Source.

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[23] Stolow, Jeremy. *Key Words in Religion, Media and Culture*, edited by Morgan, David. New York, NY: Routledge, 2008.
[24] Ibid.

The web was cold and unfamiliar in its early years, so to make individuals browsing the internet feel comfortable, there was a necessity for personable people behind the websites. Hugh B. Urban, a professor of religion, writes that "Heaven's Gate seems to have offered a loving, human community and an alternative source of personal identity amidst the seemingly cold and sterile world of hyperspace."[25] Because the web was still unfamiliar to most of the world in the 1970-80s, the amicable "personality" of the web and those on the web was necessary for viewers to feel included and engaged. If there were to be viewers who could feel "at home" on the web and the Higher Source programmers were those people, users would presumably listen to them. The individuals behind the technology were initially assumed to be no more than robots and machines, but as people used the web more, the users became more comfortable with the internet and websites on the internet.

As technology advanced, the user's experiences with technology came to be interlinked with religion, as the individuals behind the computers advanced their beliefs upon the web. The programmers and computer operators began to create "links" with the users, and were soon helping to advocate for their religion(s). In the case of Heaven's Gate, because the computer user was "mastering the bodily vehicle," transcending sexual desire, and ascending into a supra-material cyberspace world, Heaven's Gate was a religion that seemed *ideally suited to the "processed life"* of the late twentieth-century cyborg/human [italics mine]."[26] The developers behind Higher Source were knowledgeable about their coding, as well as the religion, and this knowledge showed in their ability to connect their beliefs to the web. The users were becoming increasingly comfortable with technology, which helped the programmers to advance their skills.

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[25] Urban, Hugh B. "The Devil at Heaven's Gate: Rethinking the Study of Religion in the Age of Cyber-Space." *Nova Religio* 3, no. 2 (2000): 270.
[26] Ibid.

Religion and technology are intrinsically linked as one, although it may not seem like it; religion and technology have always been linked together and are coming closer together. The background of technology is inherently complicated, as it religion. Many people today do not know the details of what happens in their phones, computers, or televisions; all they know are the functions that it performs – communication, learning, and experiencing, to name a few.[27] Technology and its functions are the base of how many religions communicate their ideas to others. In addition, some people may feel more comfortable in private spaces. Rosalind I. J. Hackett, a professor of religion, writes that for younger people and often women, "cyber spirituality holds more of an attraction and affords less of a stigma than attending a formal place of worship."[28] Religion is constantly assisting and comforting young people in their daily lives, and in a place where they feel comfortable. Privacy and the anonymity of the internet experience allows people to explore without facing the societal pressures that face-to-face interactions involve.

Technology is constantly changing, which leads to an increase of both users and software developers, helping technology to constantly advance. Hackett discusses the combination of the internet and religion and how this intersection "allows people to communicate, and to connect in ever-widening, or perhaps ever-more focused, networks of mutual interest."[29] Technology is consistently progressing, which gives programmers the ability to delve more deeply into the web and send their message out on the internet. Religion is increasingly becoming a subject of interest on the web, and although technology is quickly advancing, religion is still continuing to utilize it. Religious groups, including Heaven's Gate, often have web pages, which shows that

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[27] Hackett, Rosalind I. J. "Religion and the Internet." Diogenes 53, no. 3 (2006): 67-76.
[28] Ibid., 70.
[29] Ibid., 68.

religion is progressing with the times. However, we still have much to learn about technology, given that it is constantly changing.

No one has edited the website code since March 1997 and the layout clearly displays that fact. The Heaven's Gate website is still a fascinating subject to read and learn about, yet both scholars and non-academics wait for the coming of one day where we will learn something new about Heaven's Gate. Technology always has the opportunity to change, but it may not be when we expect it.

As technology changes, so does religion, which adapts to the current times. Because technology is rapidly moving forward, religion has no choice but to adapt to the modifications. As

> "[d]evelopments in science and technology were facilitated through the sharing and spread of new thinking and new discoveries among the scientific community . . . new discoveries, new inventions, and new solutions to age . . . changed from a bounded geocentric world governed and revealed by God, to an unbounded universe discoverable through human initiatives of observation and experiment." [30]

Religion became a new force in the world of technology, which assisted in bringing religion into the social sphere. Without the technology to back religion in a social context, religion would not have otherwise been a subject that was widely talked about. Technology is creating a new force of social media, which assists religion in its job to spread the word. Religion is a concept that is developing more every day. One example of this is the 1964 decision to change Catholic Mass from being entirely in Latin, which took place over several years, and by 1969, they had abolished Latin from all masses.[31] Without the technology to decide to change the

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[30] *From Jesus to the Internet.* Somerset: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2015.
http://ebookcentral.proquest.com.ezproxy.ups.edu/lib/ups/detail.action?docID=1998741
[31] O'Toole, James M. *The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007. Pp 208.

language of mass, there would still be Latin masses today. The technology used was, among others, the people used in the translating of the language, the different interpretations of the mass into various versions of English and other languages, as well as the producers who spread the new versions of the mass, and even others. It was inevitable that the masses would eventually switch from Latin to other languages from the beginning. Religion is inevitably going to become an even larger part of society than it already is, and much of that will be due to technology.

Naturally, some are resistant to new technology and resist new situations, but as we "recognize the ambiguous, fluid, almost volatile nature of the internet, as well as its composite character," there will be more acceptance.[32] Heavensgate.com has an aura of mystery surrounding it, and many who visited the website are often hesitant about Heaven's Gate's beliefs, as is to be expected. This New Religious Movement is an example of religion influencing technology, as well as technology influencing religion. There will always be individuals influenced by both religion and technology, and it is more common every day.

Because the viewer has an influence on society, it is particularly important for the website to make a good impression on them. What they see on the website will likely be among their first impressions of Heaven's Gate (or other religions). The influence religion has on society cannot be summed up in one essay, but it is vital to notice that there is an extreme impact upon the technology that is changing, which then influences society to approve or disapprove of the technology introduced.

Technology is influenced by the viewer, as the viewer, determines what becomes popular and what does not receive attention online and in the media. Higher Source, for example, gained much media coverage after the Heaven's Gate suicides, as did the website. This was in part due

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[32] Hackett, 210.

to media coverage of Heaven's Gate as well as individuals who wanted to hear about it and

sought information out individually. Admittedly, the media gave the viewers the lead, but after

the viewers gained the lead, it was their decision to go to the websites and discover what

Heaven's Gate was really about. The user has complete control over whether they decide to visit

a certain site or view a certain program, and this is an example of that. The user does not need to

do anything, but they take initiative by themselves. It does help if the piece of information they

are given is intriguing and possibly confusing, however.

As technology gains more weight in the world, the newspapers and other media have

control over what to release to the public. Often they will release incorrect details at the

beginning of the news story, as research has not yet been done, but will be quick to correct

themselves. The media will typically release as much information as they can as soon as they are

able. Frequently, they will release the most exciting piece of information to gain the viewers'

attention and hope that their site or media attraction gains as much news coverage as it can. The

technology is now a central part of our lives and there are very few places where you can escape

it for extended periods of time. We have become extremely accustomed to digital technology

being in our lives in 2017, as we have it at an arm's reach; digital technology is extremely

important to us in this day, but it does not just influence us, but also religion.

Religion may not seem to be connected to the rise of technology, but they are closely

linked. For example, Heaven's Gate's website is a monument that will last, likely as long as the

web, because there are multiple people inquiring about it every day. The individuals running the

website write that they receive "10 to 12 emails every day from around the world."[33] Even

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[33] Harding, Nick. "Mass suicide survivors who stayed behind to keep death cult's bizarre teachings alive for 20 years." *Irish Mirror.* 4 Apr 2017. http://www.irishmirror.ie/news/weird-news/mass-suicide-survivors-who-stayed-10160458

twenty years after the suicides, people are still looking up Heaven's Gate and asking questions. Mark and Sarah King (who do not confirm their individual identities, but instead identify only as the Telah Foundation in their emails) clarified that about 5% of the people they hear from ask if they can join Heaven's Gate, but they "tell them it simply isn't possible. The group came to an end in 1997."[34] Not only is it impressive that the remaining bits of Heaven's Gate are still making people question their beliefs and practices, and in general, want to know more about the New Religious Movement, but it is also impressive that technology has allowed for them to spread the word. They not only use digital technology, but also the postal service, selling physical books for $24.99 and sending you VHS tapes for free. Their dedication can also be considered a technology, as they put an incredible amount of themselves into the organization as it exists now. The entire group also put an enormous amount of effort into both websites in the '70s through the '90s.

By posing Higher Source as a memorable site on the web, the members of Heaven's Gate were able to penetrate society without most people knowing who they were. As I mentioned earlier, they gave out very little information about themselves on the website, and those who came into contact with them in real life remember them as being a bit odd but polite and extremely competent. The programmers of Heaven's Gate, by making themselves visible on the web, were able to link Higher Source to Heaven's Gate, making it so once you discovered Higher Source, you were led to the Heaven's Gate's website. This shows that they were very adept at their skills. As the same programmers wrote code and designed both websites, they were highly intelligent and practiced, which shows through their design of the websites (considering this was in the 1990s).

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[34] Ibid.

Technology is not simply an object that you can pick up and improve, although some people outside Heaven's Gate may have thought that it would be simple to just write better code for the website. Online, there are several critiques of the Heaven's Gate website, yet there are just as many praises.

Religion also ties into the design of the website because Heavensgate.com is a site not just to act as a legacy, but also to act as a cache of knowledge for those who are both curious about the news stories they heard, but also for the public, to remind them that Heaven's Gate is not gone, but they will remain with us forever. Though technology is constantly changing, religion is, and always will be, a factor in how the technology spreads. The same is true for how technology will be a factor for spreading religion. Throughout this paper, I have explained the origins of Heaven's Gate, their business site, Higher Source, and how technology has helped to spread religion. I argue, once again, that although the Heaven's Gate website is an iconic memory of the past, it is not simply technical, but rather also a religious technology. In is in this way that it helps to inform others about the beliefs of Heaven's Gate, as well the fact that we can find technology, just different types, in all New Religious Movements.

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