

**Tribe of Jesse Simulation – Supervisor’s Notes**  
**RLST 004 – Religion, Society, and Culture**  
**UC Riverside**

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**FBI Coordinator**

- 1 person per simulation; communicates between FBI Hostage Rescue Team and FBI Negotiating Team (who are not otherwise allowed to communicate and should be placed out of sight and preferably out of earshot from each other). Select for this role someone who is outgoing but also thoughtful, able to carry the burden of being the final decision-maker regarding FBI responses to the siege (unless one of the FBI teams decides to mutiny, which can happen).

**FBI Negotiating Team**

- 1 group, ideally no more than 15 people, per simulation. They may communicate with members of the Tribe of Jesse but may not communicate directly with the Hostage Rescue Team (HRT). They should be positioned out of sight and earshot (ideally) of the HRT and the classroom that is acting as “Mount Sinai.”

**FBI Hostage Rescue Team (HRT)**

- 1 group, ideally no more than 15 people, per simulation. They should be stationed immediately outside the door of Mount Sinai; if they’re near another active classroom or on an interior hallway where there are offices, remind them to keep their voices down. Once they discover that the Tribe can hear their voices from the other side of the door, they’ll keep their voices down anyway.

**The Tribe of Jesse**

- 1 group, ideally no more than 15 people, per simulation. One of them should be chosen (by the group or by you) to be Jesse. Given the dynamics of the Tribe and of common stereotypes of “cults,” Jesse needs to be a man or a masculine-presenting trans/non-binary person (but be cautious not to activate stereotypes of trans men, men of color, etc.). They are stationed in a room with the door closed; they may not leave but may contact you to request communication with the FBI negotiating team. You might see them resist this requirement by opening the door to interact directly with the HRT; allow that to happen because it’s a realistic response to siege. But if they want to negotiate, it must be with the negotiating team.
- In preparing this group the week before, it will be critical to have access to biblical texts in order to read the sections mentioned in the briefing. Of course these can be found online, but you might also consider recommending that students who own a copy of the Bible bring it to section and also to the simulation. It doesn’t really matter which translation they have; although the King James Version would be most realistic, varying translations make the simulation even more interesting.

**Jesse the Prophet**

- 1 person per simulation. This role should be played by someone who’s capable of taking it seriously and really trying to understand the motivations and religious perceptions of this character. These are reasons to select the person yourself rather than allowing the

other students to pick or people to volunteer, since those processes could result in someone self-aggrandizing playing the role and doing it poorly.

### **Media Team**

- A small group – no more than 3-4 per simulation, ideally 2. These are reporters who get almost no information prior to the start of the simulation, but who know they're trying to publish attention-grabbing news for CNN. They can post their "stories" on iLearn for the class to see and follow, and they have access to anywhere they want. Be sure they remember to tell people when they've "published" a story about the case; media reports played a complicating role in the real case on which this simulation is based.

### **Your Role**

The underlying premise of the simulation is that if you set people up with the perceptions that these groups had of each other, it is quite difficult to avoid a violent outcome. This becomes a particularly memorable learning experience when students then watch the lengthy documentary about the real situation on which the simulation is based. So your main role as supervisor is to clarify roles, be sure everything is running correctly, connect participants who want to engage with each other (like if the Tribe wants to contact the negotiators), and otherwise stand back and watch the scenario play out. Those involved in the simulation will quickly lose track of time, so your other important role is timekeeping. Time pressure was one of the factors in the violent end to the siege at Mount Carmel (the Branch Davidians' home outside of Waco), so your timekeeping plays a dual role of making sure the simulation doesn't run late and adding realistic pressure. They must resolve the situation in one way or another by the end of the class period.

## Jesse the Prophet

You are a humble and devout follower of God. Raised by conservative Mormons in rural Utah, son of an unmarried young woman and stepson of a carpenter, you learned early on that all truth in human life comes from God and is expressed most thoroughly in the Bible. Like most Mormons, you also learned that God remains in contact with human beings through His chosen representatives. In your childhood, you learned that this representative was the Prophet of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the LDS Church). However, during your teenage years you began to have dreams in which you believed God was speaking to you directly. In response to these dreams, you began to study the Bible intensively. Although you have always struggled with writing (English was not your favorite subject in school!), you have a sharp memory and a perceptive, inquisitive, analytical mind. You know the Bible like the back of your hand, and you are fascinated by the challenge of interpreting it.

You believe that the Bible is the literal and contemporary word of God, whole and coherent when understood correctly, but written in code. It does not need to be interpreted by experts and historians; God has put the words there on the page for true believers to interpret on their own, with His occasional help and with the clues provided especially in the Book of Revelation. Through your extensive biblical studies, you came to believe that the Book of Mormon is heretical. The LDS Church is thus, in your eyes, the worst of all sinners.

Your extensive study of the Bible, especially the books of prophecy in the Old and New Testaments, has led you to believe that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. Furthermore, your close relationship with God, your ongoing experience of revelations from God, and the uncanny similarities between your childhood and that of Jesus have convinced you, after much study and with much trepidation, that you not only are a prophet but are in fact the figure often referred to by Christians as the “second coming of Christ” – the lamb referred to in the book of Revelation, Chapter 5. You believe that the lamb is the same as the seventh angel referred to in Revelation Chapter 10, verse 7 (Rev. 10:7) and thus you also expect that you will play the role of that angel in the cosmic battle that Christians call Armageddon. You also see yourself reflected in Psalm 45. As the future king of the coming Kingdom of God, your role is a heavy burden and a deep responsibility before God, so you spend much of your time attempting to understand it further through ongoing study of the Bible and revelations from God. Rev. 4:4 refers to the gathering of twenty-four elders around the throne, who will be princes in the new realm; these you believe to be your children, and thus you have come to the conclusion that God requires you to produce twenty-four children before the coming of the Kingdom. Since there is not much time, the logical conclusion from this is that your duty to God requires you to have sexual interactions with more than one woman among your followers. Because Christ called His followers to celibacy, however, you and your followers believe that no man except you may have sex during these end times, regardless of marital status. If “in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage” (Matthew 22:30), it falls to the faithful to prepare for such a state now, as the second coming draws near.

The stakes of believing in the second coming are extremely high: those who do not follow the true teachings of God will go with Satan to eternal punishment. On the other hand, those who comprehend God’s truth through a correct interpretation of biblical prophecy, and who remain dedicated to that truth, will receive eternal life in the sacred Kingdom of God. After a lifetime of studying cryptic prophecies and personal revelations, you believe that you have discovered God’s truth, and thus you feel great pressure to reach as many people as possible with your message before time runs out. To that end, over the past decade you and your growing community of believers have traveled throughout the United States and even to other countries to spread your message. You have spoken mainly to interested Mormons, feeling not only that they are the greatest sinners but also that if you could come out of the LDS church to discover the truth, so can they. Over the course of the years,

as people study the Bible with you and consider your reasoning, you have convinced several hundred people of the truth and urgency of your message. Some of them have joined you in sharing your message with others, and some one hundred fifty of them have come to live with you in a small community in northern Montana, where you can be undisturbed as you prepare for the arrival of God's kingdom. Your followers have come to be known as the Tribe of Jesse, and because you believe yourselves to be experiencing revelations on a final journey to the promised land, you have named your community Mount Sinai. The community supports itself in several ways. As in many communal living arrangements, members pool their resources when they arrive. The Tribe also runs a small auto repair shop on the outskirts of a nearby town, and operates a "survival gear" business selling military surplus, inert hand grenades, and the like.

One of your interpretive challenges has been to figure out the exact events of the second coming as they are predicted in the book of Revelation (which you believe to be a summary of, and therefore a key to, all other biblical prophecy). Revelation is quite clear that there is to be a terrifying battle between the forces of God and the forces of Satan, or the Antichrist. Babylon, the book says, will be destroyed. Beasts will arise from the forces of evil to attack the armies of God, but in the end the Beasts will be defeated. What are these Beasts? Like some other millennial Christians in the U.S., you believe the signs point quite clearly to the U.S. government. You expect, then, that you and the rest of the Tribe of Jesse will be attacked by this and other forces of Satan when the end times arrive. You have been gathering weapons for the battle, although you expect that you will definitely die and some of the faithful will as well. Those surviving will cleanse the earth with fire, as is predicted in the book of Joel, Chapter 2, and will be untouched – although you are still unsure whether it is only your heavenly bodies (your spirits) or your earthly bodies as well that will be unharmed. This last point is somewhat irrelevant, however, since after the triumph of God's forces the faithful will all be resurrected and will live forever in the heavenly kingdom. Physical death, then, is nothing to fear, as long as one has ensured one's spiritual life.

Until four weeks ago you believed that the Kingdom of God would be restored in Jerusalem, following a war in the Middle East. With all of the recent unrest in that area you are convinced that the battle is coming soon, and you visited Jerusalem a few years ago along with some of the faithful in order to see your future home. But four weeks ago, events forced you once again to re-think your interpretation of God's revelation. Seventy-five agents of the U.S. government attacked your community. They arrived in cattle trailers – possible evidence that they were the armies of the Beast. This not only strengthened your belief that the U.S. government is in fact the Beast of Revelation 13; it also suggested that Armageddon was in process. Facing the armies of Satan himself, the faithful fought back valiantly. Four of Satan's soldiers were killed, but you also lost six of the faithful. The first of God's chosen had fallen, and you look forward to seeing them again in the Kingdom.

Although the armies of the Beast retreated under your attack, you anticipated that they would return if this was indeed the beginning of the end – although you had expected this all to happen in Jerusalem. They did in fact return, as FBI agents with tanks and bright lights, painfully loud music played at all hours of the night, and unpredictable cessations of Mount Sinai's electricity and phone service. Unable to leave without capitulating to Satan, God's chosen are now under siege. Every time the electricity goes out the milk in the refrigerator goes sour, threatening the health of the babies in the community. Women and children were shot during the initial attack. People who have such flagrant disregard for innocent life must truly be the agents of the Antichrist. You have come to the conclusion that you were wrong about the location of the final battle; it is apparently to take place in Montana. You now believe that you are in the fifth seal described in the book of Revelation (Chapter 6:9-11).

For the past four weeks you have not only been under siege; you and other leaders of the Tribe have also held hours of very frustrating conversations with FBI negotiators. You hold out some hope for these people's eventual salvation, and they are your only source of doubt that this may not in fact

be the final battle – though you are generally convinced that it is. The negotiators have listened to your teachings, though despite professing to be Christians and to know the Bible they have stubbornly refused to see the logic in your interpretations. You have repeatedly referred them to the proper texts – Revelation, especially 6:9-11; Joel 2; Psalms 2, 18, and 45 – but they still fail to see the truth. You keep trying, however, and they have helped you to spread the message farther afield. Last week, still unsure that this was the final battle, you agreed to surrender – though you wavered on whether such surrender should be the kind expected by the FBI negotiators, or a surrender in death. At the last minute, God revealed to you that it was not yet time for your community to leave Mount Sinai, either in spirit or in body. A member of the Tribe told the FBI negotiators that God had told you to wait. As usual, the FBI did not understand. A few days later God revealed that He wanted you to write an interpretation of the seven seals in the book of Revelation before the Tribe did anything else. You communicated this to the negotiators and set to work.

**What's next:** On Wednesday, November 15, report to Mount Sinai (your section leader will tell you where this is) by 12:10 pm. In section the week before, you should work with your community (through whom God sometimes also speaks) to study the biblical prophecies of the end times, to further confirm or to disprove your conclusion that you are in the end times. Once you are at Mount Sinai on the 15<sup>th</sup>, watch the FBI closely – your best clues are likely to come from their actions. You may initiate any actions or communication you deem necessary.

**Communicating:** Your only communication with the FBI forces surrounding your home is through your actions within the community. To let the forces know about such actions contact your section leader, who will be nearby. Your section leader will relay your actions to the forces, and will also relay the forces' actions to you in the event that they make any moves. You may speak with the FBI negotiators; to set this up you should also contact your section leader, who will contact the negotiators and will either bring their representative to your community or bring you or your representative to a one-on-one meeting with their representative outside of Mount Sinai.

## The Tribe of Jesse

You are one of the chosen people of God. Sometime during the past several years, you have spoken with someone, or read, about the teachings of Jesse the Prophet. Through your own study of the Bible you have become convinced that what Jesse says is true: he is the Lamb of God, the second coming of Christ, the future king of God's eternal kingdom. The world is on the brink of Armageddon – the final battle between good and evil that is predicted in the book of Revelation, the last book of the Christian Bible.

Most of your group were already lifelong Christians before coming to believe in Jesse's teachings. Like your teacher, many of you come from Mormon backgrounds but have since rejected that church and the Book of Mormon itself, having come to see both as the products of Satan rather than of God. Because of your long history of devotion to Christianity, you are well schooled in the Bible and are a capable interpreter of it. You also believe that all truth is contained in the Bible – the literal and contemporary word of God – even if that truth often takes a cryptic form that requires significant decoding. You know the Bible thoroughly, and thus you were well equipped to evaluate Jesse's unique interpretations of it when you heard about them. You decided to join Jesse's followers, the Tribe of Jesse, because you became convinced of the truth of Jesse's teachings and you wanted to be with the faithful in the Kingdom of God after the final battle.

To prepare for that battle, and to begin living among the faithful who will be your eternal companions, you have moved to the Mount Sinai community in northern Montana. There, in addition to living fairly normal (if socially conservative) lives, you prepare for the second coming. God continues to reveal aspects of His plans to the faithful. These revelations come through close biblical study, through Jesse's prophecies, and occasionally through prophecies revealed to members of the community – though it's worth noting that if a member of the Tribe ever received a prophecy that conflicted with Jesse's teachings it must surely be from Satan, since you believe Jesse to be the Lamb of God. This, however, has never happened.

The following are some of the connections that Jesse has shown you between biblical prophecies and the Mount Sinai community. Jesse is the lamb referred to in Chapter 5 of the book of Revelation. This lamb is the same as the seventh angel referred to in Revelation Chapter 10, verse 7 (Rev. 10:7) and thus you also expect that Jesse will play the role of that angel in the final battle. He is also reflected in Psalm 45, and he is the future king of the coming Kingdom of God. Rev. 4:4 refers to the gathering of twenty-four elders around the throne, who will be princes in the new realm; these will be Jesse's children, which means that God expects Jesse to produce twenty-four children before the coming of the Kingdom. Since there is not much time, the logical conclusion from this is that God also expects Jesse to have sexual interactions with more than one woman in the Mount Sinai community, and that it is each woman's duty once she is sexually mature to produce a child for the Lamb of God. Because Christ called His followers to celibacy, however, no man except Jesse may have sex during these end times, regardless of marital status. If "in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matthew 22:30), it falls to the faithful to prepare for such a state now, as the second coming draws near.

The stakes of believing in the second coming are extremely high: those who do not follow the true teachings of God will go with Satan to eternal punishment. On the other hand, those who comprehend God's truth through a correct interpretation of biblical prophecy, and who remain dedicated to that truth, will receive eternal life in the sacred Kingdom of God. In light of Jesse's lengthy study of cryptic prophecies and personal revelations, you believe that he

has helped you to discover God's truth, and thus you feel great pressure to reach as many people as possible with your message before time runs out. To that end, over the past decade some members of the Tribe have traveled with Jesse throughout the United States and even to other countries to spread the Tribe's message. They have spoken mainly to interested Mormons, feeling not only that Mormons are the greatest sinners but also that if so many other members of the Tribe could come out of that church to discover the truth, others can too. Over the course of the years, as people have studied the Bible with members of the Tribe and considered Jesse's interpretations, several hundred people have become convinced of the truth and urgency of the Tribe's message. Like you, some one hundred fifty of them have come to live at Mount Sinai. The community supports itself in several ways. As in many communal living arrangements, members pool their resources when they arrive. The Tribe also runs a small auto repair shop on the outskirts of a nearby town, and operates a "survival gear" business selling military surplus, inert hand grenades, and the like.

One of the Tribe's interpretive challenges has been to figure out the exact events of the second coming as they are predicted in the book of Revelation (which you believe to be a summary of, and therefore a key to, all other biblical prophecy). Revelation is quite clear that there is to be a terrifying battle between the forces of God and the forces of Satan, or the Antichrist. Babylon, the book says, will be destroyed. Beasts will arise from the forces of evil to attack the armies of God, but in the end the Beasts will be defeated. What are these Beasts? Like other millennial Christians in the U.S., you believe the signs point quite clearly to the U.S. government. You expect, then, that you and the rest of the Tribe of Jesse will be attacked by this and other forces of Satan when the end times arrive. You have been gathering weapons for the battle, although Jesse expects that he will definitely die along with some of the faithful. Those surviving will cleanse the earth with fire, as is predicted in the book of Joel, Chapter 2, and will be untouched – although the Tribe is still unsure whether it is only your heavenly bodies (your spirits) or your earthly bodies as well that will be unharmed. This last point is somewhat irrelevant, however, since after the triumph of God's forces the faithful will all be resurrected and will live forever in the heavenly kingdom. Physical death, then, is nothing to fear, as long as one has ensured one's spiritual life.

Until four weeks ago Jesse believed that the Kingdom of God would be restored in Jerusalem, following a war in the Middle East. With all of the recent unrest in that area he is convinced that the battle is coming soon, and he visited Jerusalem a few years ago along with some of the faithful in order to see your future home. But four weeks ago, events forced him once again to re-think his interpretation of God's revelation. Seventy-five agents of the U.S. government attacked Mount Sinai. They arrived in cattle trailers – possible evidence that they were the armies of the Beast. This not only strengthened your belief that the U.S. government is in fact the Beast of Revelation 13; it also suggested that Armageddon was in process. Facing the armies of Satan himself, the faithful fought back valiantly. Four of Satan's soldiers were killed, but you also lost six of the faithful. The first of God's chosen had fallen, and you look forward to seeing them again in the Kingdom.

Although the armies of the Beast retreated under your attack, Jesse expected that they would return if this was indeed the beginning of the end – although he had expected this all to happen in Jerusalem. They did in fact return, as FBI agents with tanks and bright lights, painfully loud music played at all hours of the night, and unpredictable cessations of Mount Sinai's electricity and phone service. Unable to leave without capitulating to Satan, God's chosen are now under siege. Every time the electricity goes out the milk in the refrigerator goes sour,

threatening the health of the babies in the community. Women and children were shot during the initial attack. People who have such flagrant disregard for innocent life must truly be the agents of the Antichrist. Jesse has come to the conclusion that he was wrong about the location of the final battle; it is apparently to take place in Montana. He now believes that you are in the fifth seal described in the book of Revelation (Chapter 6:9-11).

For the past four weeks you have not only been under siege; Jesse and other leaders of the Tribe have also held hours of very frustrating conversations with FBI negotiators. Jesse holds out some hope for these people's eventual salvation, and they are his only source of doubt that this may not in fact be the final battle – though he is generally convinced that it is. The negotiators have listened to Jesse's teachings, though despite professing to be Christians and to know the Bible they have stubbornly refused to see the logic in his interpretations. Jesse has repeatedly referred them to the proper texts – Revelation, especially 6:9-11; Joel 2; Psalms 2, 18, and 45 – but they still fail to see the truth. He keeps trying, however, and the negotiators have helped him to spread the message farther afield. Last week, still unsure that this was the final battle, Jesse agreed to surrender – though members of the Tribe are divided about whether “surrender” was the kind expected by the FBI negotiators or whether it actually meant a surrendering of life on earth. Regardless, at the last minute God revealed to Jesse that it was not yet time for the Tribe to leave Mount Sinai, either in spirit or in body. A member of the community told the FBI negotiators that God had told Jesse to wait. As usual, the FBI did not understand. A few days later God revealed that He wanted Jesse to write an interpretation of the seven seals in the book of Revelation before the Tribe did anything else. Jesse communicated this to the negotiators and set to work.

**What's next:** On Wednesday, November 15, report to Mount Sinai (your section leader will tell you where this is) by 12:10 pm. In section the week before, you should work together with Jesse to study the biblical prophecies of the end times, to further confirm or to disprove your conclusion that you are in the end times. Once you are at Mount Sinai on the 15<sup>th</sup>, watch the FBI closely – your best clues are likely to come from their actions. With Jesse's approval, you may initiate any actions or communication you deem necessary.

**Communicating:** Your only communication with the FBI forces surrounding your home is through your actions within the community. To let the forces know about such actions contact your section leader, who will be nearby. Your section leader will relay your actions to the forces, and will also relay the forces' actions to you in the event that they make any moves. You may speak with the FBI negotiators; to set this up you should also contact your section leader, who will contact the negotiators and will either bring their representative to your community or bring you or your representative to a one-on-one meeting with their representative outside of Mount Sinai.



## **FBI Coordinator Briefing**

You are the head of operations for the FBI's mission at the Mount Sinai compound. Your job is to integrate the recommendations of the FBI negotiating team and the FBI hostage rescue team, and come up with plans of action. Though you should listen carefully to each team, the final decision on each action and response ultimately lies with you. Below are copies of each team's briefing so that you know their roles and recent experiences.

**To communicate with your teams:** Simply visit each team; your section leader will inform you of their locations.

**To inform the Tribe of an action taken by the HRT:** Ask your section leader to announce the action.

**To have a conversation with the Tribe:** Speaking with the Tribe is the task of your negotiating team members, who have been extensively trained in diplomatic communication strategies. If you want to send a message to the Tribe, ask a member of your negotiating team to pass it on.

For your reference, below are the briefings for each of your teams.

## **FBI Negotiating Team Briefing**

You are a negotiator with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Your duty is to use your mediation skills to defuse potentially volatile situations and to preserve as many lives – especially innocent ones – as possible. Four weeks ago, your team was called in to a frustrating and dangerous situation in a remote area of northern Montana. A small cult had built a compound there called Mount Sinai, occupied now by approximately one hundred fifty members (including both adults and children). A few months ago, a UPS driver making deliveries to an auto repair shop run by the cult reported that he had made separate deliveries over the past weeks of ninety pounds of powdered aluminum, two cases of inert hand grenades, and forty to fifty pounds of black gunpowder. The driver also saw sentries watching him when he made deliveries to the Mount Sinai compound itself, and he thought the sentries were armed.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (the ATF) was extremely concerned by this report, and decided to investigate. Worried that arresting the cult's erratic and dictatorial leader would simply allow other members to hide the weapons before the ATF arrived, they decided to raid the compound. Evidence from previous surveillance of Mount Sinai suggested that the cult also had a history of manufacturing methamphetamine; the link to drug enforcement meant that the ATF could make use of U.S. military resources as well as its own equipment. After a month of training exercises, the ATF brought in military helicopters as decoys, then surrounded the Mount Sinai compound with seventy-five agents in the hope of convincing the cult members to surrender and turn over their arsenal. Unfortunately, a local reporter had learned of the operation and had unwittingly tipped off a resident of Mount Sinai. Prepared for the raid, the cult fought back viciously. Despite lengthy training, the seventy-five ATF agents were overwhelmed by a violent and apparently well-armed group who had the advantages of numbers,

surprise, and shelter. Four ATF agents died and several more were wounded before the ATF retreated. At this point, your team was called in.

Because the FBI's analysts believe that many in the compound – especially the children – are innocent victims of the cult's leader, you are working together with the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team, or HRT. Their mission is to rescue hostages from violent situations with as little loss of innocent life as possible. Your two teams work well together, because while your main strategy is patient negotiation, theirs is to place psychological pressure on those holding hostages by playing painfully loud music, shining high-powered lights into the compound at night, and cutting off electricity and telephone service at random intervals. They also have tanks, military weapons, tear gas, and snipers at their disposal, none of which they have used so far. Shortly after the failed ATF raid, the HRT's tanks surrounded Mount Sinai. Though they have been asking the cult members to leave the compound and give themselves up, only a few children have been released so far (largely through your work).

Though you had never heard of the cult before coming to Montana, you have learned a great deal about it in the past four weeks. Members call themselves the Tribe of Jesse, and they follow a man named Jesse the Prophet, who seems to believe that he is Jesus Christ. The Tribe is unwaveringly loyal to Jesse, but it is not entirely clear why, especially now that their lives are in danger. In fact, Jesse has told you in phone conversations that six members of the Tribe also died during the ATF raid – deaths which he most deeply regrets but ultimately dismisses, saying that the blessed will return again. Some people have suggested that the cult members have been brainwashed.

When you speak with Jesse, it is clear that he is mentally unstable. He goes off on long and largely incoherent rants about the Bible, and even your team members who are Christians can make little sense of what he says. Shortly after the siege began, you contacted a prominent psychologist at Syracuse University who studies cults. After examining the tapes of your phone conversations with Jesse, he told you the cult leader likely suffered from a deep-seated paranoia. Ex-members of the cult have told you that Jesse had sex with most of the women in the compound, including girls as young as twelve. They also say that he talked about the cult making grenades and converting (legal) semi-automatic weapons to (illegal) machine guns.

Last week – three weeks into the siege – Jesse agreed to allow the cult members to leave the compound. You painstakingly prepared the plans, agreed to his conditions for surrender, and allowed yourselves to feel the first hint of relief that the crisis might be over. Just hours before they were due to come out, though, one of Jesse's followers contacted your team. He told you that Jesse was claiming that God had said to wait – no one would be coming out after all. In later conversations, Jesse told you that God wanted him to write an interpretation of the seven seals in the biblical book of Revelation, and only after this task was completed would he release anyone from the compound. Further conversations with Jesse have produced nothing new – just more rambling and incoherent discourses on the Bible. Your team contacted a psychiatrist at UCLA for more ideas, only to be told that Jesse was most likely a manipulative con man, that the success of further negotiations was dubious, and that Jesse was probably continuing his sexual abuse even while the siege was going on.

Your mission is to save lives through the use of negotiation wherever possible. The HRT is becoming increasingly frustrated and is pressuring the FBI coordinator, who leads both of your teams, to allow them to take more decisive action. So far, their psychological pressures have produced no results, and they want to increase the pressure on the Tribe. Yet you are trained as negotiators, and you worry about the risks that a more aggressive strategy would entail.

**Your tasks:** On Wednesday, November 15, report to the location indicated by your section leader by 12:10 p.m. Overall, your mission is to resolve this situation by 1:00. In section the week before, you should select a leader. This person will gather suggestions from the rest of your team, but will ultimately make final recommendations for action to the FBI coordinator. Also in section, you should deliberate on and develop initial recommendations for action, which your leader will communicate to the FBI coordinator when you arrive at your location on the 15<sup>th</sup>. You will then carry out the courses of action that the coordinator ultimately decides upon (refusing to carry out the coordinator's plan, or carrying out actions on your own without their permission, is certainly possible but will likely get you fired). When you interact with others outside your team, have conversations or dictate actions rather than showing them this sheet.

**To communicate with the HRT and the FBI coordinator:** You must stay at your post, except for when (if) you send a representative to the Tribe. However, the FBI coordinator will move back and forth between your team and the HRT, keeping you in touch with each other. If you need information from the HRT or need to pass information on to them, contact the FBI coordinator. The coordinator also has final decision-making authority on strategies to use at Mount Sinai.

**To communicate with the Tribe of Jesse:** You may either meet one-on-one with a member or members of the Tribe, or send emissaries to the compound. To do so contact your section leader, who will bring your representative(s) to a meeting place.

### **FBI Hostage Rescue Team Briefing**

You are a member of an elite cadre of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that has the training and equipment of a SWAT team. Your directive is to resolve delicate hostage situations in the best way possible, above all by protecting the lives of as many innocent people as you can. Four weeks ago, your team was called in to a frustrating and dangerous situation in a remote area of northern Montana. A small cult had built a compound there called Mount Sinai, occupied now by approximately one hundred fifty members (including both adults and children). A few months ago, a UPS driver making deliveries to an auto repair shop run by the cult reported that he had made separate deliveries over the past weeks of ninety pounds of powdered aluminum, two cases of inert hand grenades, and forty to fifty pounds of black gunpowder. The driver also saw sentries watching him when he made deliveries to the Mount Sinai compound itself, and he thought the sentries were armed.

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fought back viciously. Despite lengthy training, the seventy-five ATF agents were overwhelmed by a violent and apparently well-armed group who had the advantages of numbers, surprise, and shelter. Four ATF agents died and several more were wounded before the ATF retreated. At this point, you were called in.

Because the FBI is concerned about the potential volatility of this cult, your team is working together with the FBI's negotiations team to resolve this situation. Their mission is ultimately similar to yours – to resolve delicate hostage situations with as little loss of life as possible. However, they work through mediation, conversing with the cult's leader and some of its more powerful members in an effort to establish rapport and convince the cult to release its members from the compound. Your two teams work well together, because while their main strategy is patient negotiation, yours is to place psychological pressure on those holding hostages by playing painfully loud music, shining high-powered lights into the compound at night, and cutting off electricity and telephone service at random intervals. You also have tanks, military weapons, tear gas, and snipers at your disposal, none of which you have used so far. Shortly after the failed ATF raid, your team's tanks surrounded Mount Sinai. You've now been camped out there in the elements for a month. Though the negotiation team has been asking the cult members to leave the compound and give themselves up, only a few children have been released so far.

Though you had never heard of the cult before coming to Montana, you have learned a great deal about it in the past four weeks. Members call themselves the Tribe of Jesse, and they follow a man named Jesse the Prophet, who seems to believe that he is Jesus Christ. The Tribe is unwaveringly loyal to Jesse, but it is not entirely clear why, especially now that their lives are in danger. In fact, Jesse has apparently told the negotiators in phone conversations that six members of the Tribe also died during the ATF raid – deaths which he most deeply regrets but ultimately dismisses, saying that the blessed will return again. Some people have suggested that the cult members have been brainwashed.

The negotiating team has told you that Jesse is mentally unstable. He goes off on long and largely incoherent rants about the Bible, and even team members who are Christians can make little sense of what he says. Shortly after the siege began, the negotiating team contacted a prominent psychologist at Syracuse University who studies cults. After examining the tapes of their phone conversations with Jesse, he told them the cult leader likely suffered from a deep-seated paranoia. Ex-members of the cult have told the negotiators that Jesse had sex with most of the women in the compound, including girls as young as twelve. They also say that he talked about the cult making grenades and converting (legal) semi-automatic weapons to (illegal) machine guns.

Last week – three weeks into the siege – Jesse agreed to allow the cult members to leave the compound. The negotiators painstakingly prepared the plans and agreed to his conditions for surrender. Your team prepared the security, and the coordinator overseeing all FBI operations at Mount Sinai warned you to stay out of the exit process, but also to stay alert in case the surrender was a trick. You allowed yourself to feel the first hint of relief that the crisis might be over. Just hours before they were due to come out, though, one of Jesse's followers contacted the negotiators, saying that Jesse was claiming that God had said to wait – so no one would be coming out after all. In later conversations, Jesse apparently told the negotiators that God wanted him to write an interpretation of the seven seals in the biblical book of Revelation, and only after this task was completed would he release anyone from the compound. The negotiators say that further conversations with Jesse have produced nothing new – just more rambling and incoherent discourses on the Bible. They contacted a psychiatrist at UCLA for further perspectives and

information, only to be told that Jesse was most likely a manipulative con man, that the success of further negotiations was dubious, and that Jesse was probably continuing his sexual abuse even while the siege was going on.

Your mission is to resolve this situation with minimal loss of innocent life. You are all becoming increasingly frustrated with the negotiators, whom you see as pursuing a plan that has already been proven ineffective while Jesse continues to inflict harm on his followers. As a result, you have been pressuring the FBI coordinator to allow you to take more decisive action – so far your psychological pressures have produced no results.

**Your tasks:** On Wednesday, November 15, report to the location indicated by your section leader by 12:10 p.m. Overall, your mission is to resolve this situation by 1:00. In section the week before, you should select a leader. This person will gather suggestions from the rest of your team, but will ultimately make final recommendations for action to the FBI coordinator. Also in section, you should deliberate on and develop initial recommendations for action, which your leader will communicate to the FBI coordinator when you arrive at your location on the 15<sup>th</sup>. You will then carry out the courses of action that the coordinator ultimately decides upon (refusing to carry out the coordinator's plan, or carrying out actions on your own without their permission, is certainly possible but will likely get you fired). When you interact with others outside your team, have conversations or dictate actions rather than showing them this sheet.

**To communicate with the negotiating team and the FBI coordinator:** You must stay at your post at all times. However, the FBI coordinator will move back and forth between your team and the negotiators, keeping you in touch with each other. If you need information from the negotiators or need to pass information on to them, contact the FBI coordinator. The coordinator also has final decision-making authority on strategies to use at Mount Sinai, and will ask your section leader to inform the Tribe of your actions.

**To communicate with the Tribe of Jesse:** Speaking with the Tribe is the job of the negotiators. To inform the Tribe of any unauthorized actions your team takes, send in your section leader.

## **FBI Negotiating Team Briefing**

You are a negotiator with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Your duty is to use your mediation skills to defuse potentially volatile situations and to preserve as many lives – especially innocent ones – as possible. Four weeks ago, your team was called in to a frustrating and dangerous situation in a remote area of northern Montana. A small cult had built a compound there called Mount Sinai, occupied now by approximately one hundred fifty members (including both adults and children). A few months ago, a UPS driver making deliveries to an auto repair shop run by the cult reported that he had made separate deliveries over the past weeks of ninety pounds of powdered aluminum, two cases of inert hand grenades, and forty to fifty pounds of black gunpowder. The driver also saw sentries watching him when he made deliveries to the Mount Sinai compound itself, and he thought the sentries were armed.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (the ATF) was extremely concerned by this report, and decided to investigate. Worried that arresting the cult's erratic and dictatorial leader would simply allow other members to hide the weapons before the ATF arrived, they decided to raid the compound. Evidence from previous surveillance of Mount Sinai suggested that the cult also had a history of manufacturing methamphetamine; the link to drug enforcement meant that the ATF could make use of U.S. military resources as well as its own equipment. After a month of training exercises, the ATF brought in military helicopters as decoys, then surrounded the Mount Sinai compound with seventy-five agents in the hope of convincing the cult members to surrender and turn over their arsenal. Unfortunately, a local reporter had learned of the operation and had unwittingly tipped off a resident of Mount Sinai. Prepared for the raid, the cult fought back viciously. Despite lengthy training, the seventy-five ATF agents were overwhelmed by a violent and apparently well-armed group who had the advantages of numbers, surprise, and shelter. Four ATF agents died and several more were wounded before the ATF retreated. At this point, your team was called in.

Because the FBI's analysts believe that many in the compound – especially the children – are innocent victims of the cult's leader, you are working together with the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team, or HRT. Their mission is to rescue hostages from violent situations with as little loss of innocent life as possible. Your two teams work well together, because while your main strategy is patient negotiation, theirs is to place psychological pressure on those holding hostages by playing painfully loud music, shining high-powered lights into the compound at night, and cutting off electricity and telephone service at random intervals. They also have tanks, military weapons, tear gas, and snipers at their disposal, none of which they have used so far. Shortly after the failed ATF raid, the HRT's tanks surrounded Mount Sinai. Though they have been asking the cult members to leave the compound and give themselves up, only a few children have been released so far (largely through your work).

Though you had never heard of the cult before coming to Montana, you have learned a great deal about it in the past four weeks. Members call themselves the Tribe of Jesse, and they follow a man named Jesse the Prophet, who seems to believe that he is Jesus Christ. The Tribe is unwaveringly loyal to Jesse, but it is not entirely clear why, especially now that their lives are in danger. In fact, Jesse has told you in phone conversations that six members of the Tribe also died during the ATF raid – deaths which he most deeply regrets but ultimately dismisses, saying that the blessed will return again. Some people have suggested that the cult members have been brainwashed.

When you speak with Jesse, it is clear that he is mentally unstable. He goes off on long and largely incoherent rants about the Bible, and even your team members who are Christians can make little sense of what he says. Shortly after the siege began, you contacted a prominent psychologist at Syracuse University who studies cults. After examining the tapes of your phone conversations with Jesse, he told you the cult leader likely suffered from a deep-seated paranoia. Ex-members of the cult have told you that Jesse had sex with most of the women in the compound, including girls as young as twelve. They also say that he talked about the cult making grenades and converting (legal) semi-automatic weapons to (illegal) machine guns.

Last week – three weeks into the siege – Jesse agreed to allow the cult members to leave the compound. You painstakingly prepared the plans, agreed to his conditions for surrender, and allowed yourselves to feel the first hint of relief that the crisis might be over. Just hours before they were due to come out, though, one of Jesse’s followers contacted your team. He told you that Jesse was claiming that God had said to wait – no one would be coming out after all. In later conversations, Jesse told you that God wanted him to write an interpretation of the seven seals in the biblical book of Revelation, and only after this task was completed would he release anyone from the compound. Further conversations with Jesse have produced nothing new – just more rambling and incoherent discourses on the Bible. Your team contacted a psychiatrist at UCLA for more ideas, only to be told that Jesse was most likely a manipulative con man, that the success of further negotiations was dubious, and that Jesse was probably continuing his sexual abuse even while the siege was going on.

Your mission is to save lives through the use of negotiation wherever possible. The HRT is becoming increasingly frustrated and is pressuring the FBI coordinator, who leads both of your teams, to allow them to take more decisive action. So far, their psychological pressures have produced no results, and they want to increase the pressure on the Tribe. Yet you are trained as negotiators, and you worry about the risks that a more aggressive strategy would entail.

**Your tasks:** On Wednesday, November 15, report to the location indicated by your section leader by 12:10 p.m. Overall, your mission is to resolve this situation by 1:00. In section the week before, you should select a leader. This person will gather suggestions from the rest of your team, but will ultimately make final recommendations for action to the FBI coordinator. Also in section, you should deliberate on and develop initial recommendations for action, which your leader will communicate to the FBI coordinator when you arrive at your location on the 15<sup>th</sup>. You will then carry out the courses of action that the coordinator ultimately decides upon (refusing to carry out the coordinator’s plan, or carrying out actions on your own without their permission, is certainly possible but will likely get you fired). When you interact with others outside your team, have conversations or dictate actions rather than showing them this sheet.

**To communicate with the HRT and the FBI coordinator:** You must stay at your post, except for when (if) you send a representative to the Tribe. However, the FBI coordinator will move back and forth between your team and the HRT, keeping you in touch with each other. If you need information from the HRT or need to pass information on to them, contact the FBI coordinator. The coordinator also has final decision-making authority on strategies to use at Mount Sinai.

**To communicate with the Tribe of Jesse:** You may either meet one-on-one with a member or members of the Tribe, or send emissaries to the compound. To do so contact your section leader, who will bring your representative(s) to a meeting place.

## **FBI Hostage Rescue Team Briefing**

You are a member of an elite cadre of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that has the training and equipment of a SWAT team. Your directive is to resolve delicate hostage situations in the best way possible, above all by protecting the lives of as many innocent people as you can. Four weeks ago, your team was called in to a frustrating and dangerous situation in a remote area of northern Montana. A small cult had built a compound there called Mount Sinai, occupied now by approximately one hundred fifty members (including both adults and children). A few months ago, a UPS driver making deliveries to an auto repair shop run by the cult reported that he had made separate deliveries over the past weeks of ninety pounds of powdered aluminum, two cases of inert hand grenades, and forty to fifty pounds of black gunpowder. The driver also saw sentries watching him when he made deliveries to the Mount Sinai compound itself, and he thought the sentries were armed.

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Because the FBI is concerned about the potential volatility of this cult, your team is working together with the FBI's negotiations team to resolve this situation. Their mission is ultimately similar to yours – to resolve delicate hostage situations with as little loss of life as possible. However, they work through mediation, conversing with the cult's leader and some of its more powerful members in an effort to establish rapport and convince the cult to release its members from the compound. Your two teams work well together, because while their main strategy is patient negotiation, yours is to place psychological pressure on those holding hostages by playing painfully loud music, shining high-powered lights into the compound at night, and cutting off electricity and telephone service at random intervals. You also have tanks, military weapons, tear gas, and snipers at your disposal, none of which you have used so far. Shortly after the failed ATF raid, your team's tanks surrounded Mount Sinai. You've now been camped out there in the elements for a month. Though the negotiation team has been asking the cult members to leave the compound and give themselves up, only a few children have been released so far.

Though you had never heard of the cult before coming to Montana, you have learned a great deal about it in the past four weeks. Members call themselves the Tribe of Jesse, and they follow a man named Jesse the Prophet, who seems to believe that he is Jesus Christ. The Tribe is unwaveringly loyal to Jesse, but it is not entirely clear why, especially now that their lives are in danger. In fact, Jesse has apparently told the negotiators in phone conversations that six members of the Tribe also died during the ATF raid – deaths which he most deeply regrets but ultimately



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Your mission is to resolve this situation with minimal loss of innocent life. You are all becoming increasingly frustrated with the negotiators, whom you see as pursuing a plan that has already been proven ineffective while Jesse continues to inflict harm on his followers. As a result, you have been pressuring the FBI coordinator to allow you to take more decisive action – so far your psychological pressures have produced no results.

**Your tasks:** On Wednesday, November 15, report to the location indicated by your section leader by 12:10 p.m. Overall, your mission is to resolve this situation by 1:00. In section the week before, you should select a leader. This person will gather suggestions from the rest of your team, but will ultimately make final recommendations for action to the FBI coordinator. Also in section, you should deliberate on and develop initial recommendations for action, which your leader will communicate to the FBI coordinator when you arrive at your location on the 15<sup>th</sup>. You will then carry out the courses of action that the coordinator ultimately decides upon (refusing to carry out the coordinator's plan, or carrying out actions on your own without their permission, is certainly possible but will likely get you fired). When you interact with others outside your team, have conversations or dictate actions rather than showing them this sheet.

**To communicate with the negotiating team and the FBI coordinator:** You must stay at your post at all times. However, the FBI coordinator will move back and forth between your team and the negotiators, keeping you in touch with each other. If you need information from the

negotiators or need to pass information on to them, contact the FBI coordinator. The coordinator also has final decision-making authority on strategies to use at Mount Sinai, and will ask your section leader to inform the Tribe of your actions.

**To communicate with the Tribe of Jesse:** Speaking with the Tribe is the job of the negotiators. To inform the Tribe of any unauthorized actions your team takes, send in your section leader.

## Media Team Briefing

You and your partners are reporters with CNN's online team, and you've been sent to Montana to cover a story about a dangerous cult, the Tribe of Jesse, whose members live in a compound called Mount Sinai (you will receive instructions as to the location of this compound). Four weeks ago, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (the ATF) raided the Mount Sinai compound because of reports that the cult had been stockpiling weapons. Cult members killed four agents and wounded several others before the ATF retreated. At this point, the FBI was called in. The FBI's hostage rescue team, or HRT, has the compound surrounded, and FBI negotiators, stationed nearby, are in regular contact with the cult by phone. CNN has sent your team in to investigate and report on this sensational and nationally relevant story.

**Your task:** Starting at 12:10 pm on Wednesday, November 15, find out more about what's going on! Talk to anyone involved who will talk to you. Use your phone or other device to "publish" brief stories on the iLearn page for our lecture – go to "Discussions" and then click on the forum called "CNN Coverage of the Montana Siege." As well-known reporters with fan bases, you may also post tweets on the same forum. Be sure to write stories that will draw attention – in this era of 24/7 news coverage, your editor expects the breaking news updates on this siege to be great for CNN's ratings! And don't forget to tell the people you're interviewing how to find your stories so they can see what you're publishing each time you write a new post.