

# Satanic Ritual Abuse

## – *The Evidence Surfaces* –

Sept. 19, 2001 - Daniel Ryder CCDC, LSW



This article was originally published for the newsletter of the International Council on Cultism and Ritual Trauma.

Daniel Ryder is an investigative journalist and a counselor. The article below is based on material from Mr. Ryder's book from 1992: "Cover-up of the Century - Satanic Ritual Crime and Conspiracy". He is also the author of "Breaking the Circle of Satanic Ritual Abuse" from 1996.

### YOU DON'T HAVE TO PLAY ME BACKWARDS...

*Candles glowing, altars burn  
Virgin's death is needed ther  
Sacrifice to Lucifer my master  
Bring the chalice, raise the knife  
Welcome to my sacrifice...*

Those lyrics are from a song about Satanic ritual abuse off Joan Baez's latest album, "Play Me Backwards". Incidentally, it's the lead song.

*You don't have to play me backwards  
To get the meaning of my verse.  
You don't have to die and go to hell  
To feel the devil's curse.*

It's not only the "devil's curse" survivors of Satanic ritual abuse have been feeling of late. They have also been feeling the curse of a pronounced societal backlash. In some circles now, the stories of some of the most heinous abuse imaginable - sexual abuse, brain-washing, torture, murder/sacrifice - are being labeled as "patently false." Therapists are being accused of planting these memories. And, for instance, the FBI has come out debunking the phenomenon, saying, unequivocally, there is no tangible evidence organized Satanic ritual abuse exists at all.

However, my research shows it does exist. And indications are we are only seeing the tip of the iceberg of a social phenomenon that, when totally exposed, will rock the core of societal beliefs.

For the last four years, I have criss-crossed the country interviewing cult researchers, ritual crime investigators, task force members, therapists, investigative reporters, cult survivors... as part of an in-depth investigation on the issue of Satanic ritual abuse. And, the research has yielded some extremely eye-opening things. The most eye-opening hasn't been the mutilated backwoods remains of a cult victim's body in Massachusetts. It wasn't the bloody pentagram carved into a cult victim's corpse in San Francisco. The most eye-opening, has been a widely cited Law Enforcement Perspective report out of the FBI's Behavioral Science Center in Quantico, Virginia.

The report was written by supervisory special agent Kenneth Lanning. It has gone out to law enforcement agencies around the country; and has been cited consistently throughout the media the last several years.

The report states, in regards to "organized" Satanic ritual abuse homicide (that is, two or more Satanic cult members conspiring to commit murder):

"The law enforcement perspective can't ignore the lack of physical evidence (no bodies, or even hairs, fibers, or fluids left by violent murders."

No bodies? The following is an excerpt from a March 13, 1981, UPI article:

"Fitchburg, Mass. -- The alleged leader of a devil worship cult was found guilty of first degree murder Friday in the ritual killing of a young Fall River, Mass. prostitute last year. Carl Drew, 26, stood pale and expressionless as the verdict was announced. He was immediately sentenced to life imprisonment by superior court judge Francis W. Keating... Miss Marsden was allegedly killed, mutilated and beheaded by Drew and two others in a blood-soaked night time ritual in a wooded area because she wanted to leave the cult."

In 1993, House Bill 1689 was introduced in the Massachusetts Legislature. It is a bill prohibiting "Certain Ritualistic Acts." Some of these acts include: ritual mutilation, dismemberment, torture, the sacrifice of animals, humans... (A similar bill was passed in Idaho in 1990).

Also, in the 1993 Avon Books release:

Raising Hell, author/investigative reporter Michael Newton writes, "While some cult apologists may be forgiven their ignorance of current events, (FBI) Agent Lanning -- with access to nationwide police files -- should know better. As this volume amply demonstrates, cult related killers stand convicted of murder in 23 states and at least nine foreign countries. Numerous other occultists are now serving time for practicing their "faith" through acts of arson, rape, assault, cruelty to animals, and similar crimes."

The organization, Looking Up, founded initially as a nationwide support/referral program for incest survivors, serves approximately 15,000 people a year, 40% of whom now are reporting they are dealing with ritualistic or cult related abuse. According to a spokesperson for JUSTUS Unlimited in Denver, a non-profit referral and resource center, they are currently receiving more than 7,000 Satanic ritual abuse related calls a year. (What's more, they are also hearing from all over the world: Australia, New Zealand, England, The Netherlands, Germany, Israel, Canada...)

Given the tangible evidence now surfacing, and given the volume of people reporting Satanic cult related abuse, it would seem curious the FBI would come out with such a definitive stance attempting to discredit the increasing phenomenon. Of course, then again, it was the same FBI that for more than the first half of this century consistently said there was no evidence whatsoever of another type of "organized" criminal activity. That is -- Mafia related crime.

Actually, Satanic cults are somewhat similar to Mafia crime families. There is, for instance, extreme secrecy through code of silence programming. This is usually initiated with the signing of a "blood" contract. Wendell Amstutz, author of Satanism in America, said these contracts are generally signed in the initiate's own blood. The contract, said Amstutz, usually demands life-long obedience. And breaking it means death.

And that's exactly what it meant for the four California Satanic cult defectors one fateful night in 1990. The defectors were tracked to an apartment on, of all places, Elm Street in the small town of Salida.

The defectors were beaten and stabbed. Finally, they were decapitated. What was left behind rivaled the carnage of the Tate-LaBianca crime scene. The trail led back to five Satanic cult members, and the story began to unfold... The five who were indicted were part of a 55-member Satanic cult that was operating out of a compound in Salida. Cult members stretched across a three-county area, with a number of them holed-up in a Salida compound (homes and trailers), somewhat similar to Waco's Branch Davidian complex. Except for one thing: What was going on in the Salida compound for the most part made what was going on in Waco seem like a Disney production.

Randy Cerny, Director of the Northern Chapter of California's Ritual Crime Investigator's Association, had followed the cult closely. And after the indictments, he interviewed several of the cult members and reviewed extensive diaries they'd kept.

He said the cult worshipped Satan, followed the teachings of renowned Satanist Aleister Crowley, engaged in sexual abuse, ritual torture including electric shock, child abuse, murder... In other words, many of the same things Satanic ritual abuse survivors have been consistently reporting.

Cerny also said it was reported cult members were from all walks of life. This even included a dentist, a minister, and a woman enrolled in a law enforcement class at a local community college. (Satanic cult members aren't, by any means, always tattooed teen bikers who have listened to one too many Metallica albums. Often, Satanic ritual abuse survivors report their cult perpetrators are respected members of the community: doctors, law enforcement officials, PTA members, little league coaches... This all, apparently, is part of the facade.)

One of the Matamoros cult members responsible for some of the 13 grisly murder/sacrifices in Mexico a few years back, was majoring in law enforcement at Texas Southmost College at the time she was arrested.

"The California cult was a very secretive, close-knit, sophisticated group," said Cerny.

The Satanic cult was run under the iron fist of charismatic leader, high priest, Gerald Cruz. And, as David Koresh had done in Waco, Cruz used sleep deprivation, brainwashing, torture... to keep members in line. At a trial in Oakland in December, 1992, cult expert and psychologist, Daniel Goldstine, would characterize Cruz as "evil and sadistic."

The jury thought so too. Cruz and two other cult members were sentenced to death for the murders. Two other cult members got life. "Now let's project this 20 to 25 years down the road," Cerny continued. "Say someone walks into a police department or therapist's office and says, 'I'm starting to have memories that my dad was a leader of this Satanic cult in California. And they would brainwash people, torture them with electric shock, sexually abuse me, sacrifice animals, kill people...'"

Cerny wondered if that would all be passed off as a "false memory." Nationally syndicated columnist Molly Ivins might well have passed it off as just that. In a May, 1994, column, Ms. Ivins wrote:

"...social workers who deal with child abuse have nightmares about the people who come up with patently false recovered memories of Satanic ritual abuse."

Monika Beerle seemed to be nobody's "false recovered memory." The following is a February 18, 1992, Newsday article excerpt:

"New York -- Members of a cult here killed ballerina Monika Beerle in August, 1989, and then dismembered her and fed her flesh to the homeless as part of a Satanic ritual, law enforcement sources said yesterday after arresting a cult member in connection with the slaying. "The public isn't generating enough momentum to get police mobilized around this (Satanic ritual abuse) issue at this point," explained Akron, Ohio Police Captain Jerry Foys. And John Hunt, Sherman, Texas ritual crime investigator says that "because of the FBI report, the stigma around Satanism and other factors have made it hard to get internal police department support in following up on the ritual aspects of a crime."

Hunt and Foys both said they believe the Satanic ritual abuse is quite widespread -- and extremely dangerous.

It definitely proved dangerous for an alcoholic drifter known only as John Doe No. 60, whose body was found in San Francisco. According to a May 6, 1988, San Francisco Chronicle article:

"The victim had a pentagram carved into his chest, lash marks across his buttocks, a stab wound to his neck, wax in his right eye and hair, and a sliced lip. The naked body was virtually drained of blood."

Clifford St. Joseph, 46, was eventually convicted and sentenced to 34 years to life for the killing.

In his book, Raising Hell, Michael Newton writes when police came to St. Joseph's apartment nine days after the body was found, they found St. Joseph dressed in a black robe, companion Michael Bork, 26, stripped to the waist, his face daubed with cosmetics, and another man, Edward Spela, 26, passed out from drugs. In the middle of the room was a 19-year old man, who was laying on the floor, handcuffed and surrounded by candles.

According to the San Francisco Chronicle:

"Investigators said that St. Joseph appeared to be part of a Satanic cult that involved men of means in San Francisco's gay community."

Again, John Doe No. 60's mutilated body was real. It was nobody's false memory. A term popular culture has latched onto tightly in the last couple of years is the very clinical sounding, false memory syndrome. It is a term coined by the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania based False Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF), which is an advocacy group for people whose children have accused them of either sexual abuse and/or Satanic ritual abuse.

Despite its scientific sounding title, there is actually no such thing as a clinically acknowledged category for "false memory syndrome," reports Judith Herman, an associate clinical professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and author of the book, *Trauma and Recovery*. "The very name FMSF is prejudicial and misleading," said Dr. Herman. "There is no such syndrome, and we have no evidence reported memories are false. We only know they are disputed."

Many professionals dealing with Satanic ritual abuse believe we are seeing the beginnings of a phenomenon that might well mushroom into staggering proportions. And they draw a parallel to the amazing evolution of the sexual abuse field. "As recently as the 1970s," said Herman, "rape was considered rare, and incest was regarded as a universal taboo. Less than twenty years ago, for example, the *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry* estimated the prevalence of all forms of incest at one case per million population. And popular and professional literature [as in the case with SRA survivors now] routinely questioned the character of victims, and disparaged the credibility of women who made claims of assault. Today, however, widespread sexual abuse/incest has been extensively documented." In the case of false memory allegations, perhaps we should be spending a bit more time actually questioning the character of some of those accusing the "alleged" victims of confabulation. And perhaps we should start at the False Memory Syndrome Foundation itself.

The following is an excerpt from a February 29, 1992, FMSF Newsletter where the organization claims it is:

"...not in the business of representing pedophiles... We are a good-looking bunch of people: graying hair, well-dressed, healthy, smiling... Just about every person is someone you would likely find interesting and want to count as a friend."

Joan Baez's song goes on:

*Let the night begin  
There's a pop of skin  
And a sudden rush of scarlet  
There's a little boy riding on a goat's head  
And a little girl playing the harlot  
It's a sacrifice in an empty church  
Sweet little baby Rose...*

A Fall 1989 Cleveland Plain Dealer article excerpt reads:

"Three Norwalk area residents charged with opening two graves, beheading the corpses and stealing the skulls, were part of a cult that had recently gotten instructions on how to sacrifice babies to Satan, Norwalk police said yesterday. "We're taking this very seriously," he [Police Chief Gary Dewalt] said. "Maybe society should take the police chief's lead, in a lot of different areas regarding this problem. For one, many youth are bombarded with Satanic symbols, images, lyrics... One area where it is probably the most prevalent is in the heavy/black metal music scene. For instance, the heavy metal band Venom sings:

*Candles glowing,  
Altars burn Virgin's death is needed ther  
Sacrifice to Lucifer my master*

*Bring the chalice,  
Raise the knife  
Welcome to my sacrifice...*

Just a passing phase kids go through? Just lyrics?

May 5, 1993 -- Three eight year old boys were riding their bikes down a country road in West Memphis, Arkansas. Suddenly they were forced off the road and horribly killed. One of the suspects accused in the murders, Jessie Lloyd Miskelly, Jr., 17 according to wire service reports, told police that the murders were tied to a teen Satanic cult sacrifice. "Miskelly said the children were lured into a wooded are of West Memphis known as Robin Hood Park, choked until they were unconscious, then brutalized in various ways -- including rape..." According to a March 8, 1994 article on the trial appearing in the West Memphis The Commercial Appeal: "A witness last week told him Baldwin (one of the accused) told him he sucked the blood from one victim after he mutilated him." Diaries indicated the Satanic cult in Salida, California, followed the teachings of renowned Satanist Aleister Crowley. In his book, *Magick in Theory and Practice*, Crowley wrote, "The blood is the life... any living thing is the storehouse of energy... at the death of the animal this energy is liberated suddenly. The animal should therefore be killed within the Circle, or Triangle, so that it's energy cannot escape... For the highest spiritual working one must accordingly choose that victim which the greatest and purest force. A male child of perfect innocence is the the most satisfactory and suitable victim."

There's a good bet that seven year old Yvando Caetano, like most seven year olds, was living a life in "perfect innocence" in the small town of Guaratuba, Brazil. This may well have been the precipitating factor in his death. According to a July 28, 1992, Cable News Network (CNN) report/transcript, Yvando was found in a shallow grave. His arms and legs had been dismembered, his internal organs cut out. Ritual implements used during the ceremony were also found near the body.

Investigator Jose Moscic Favetti said police believed the mayor's wife and daughter were involved with a Satanic cult, and that the wife had paid five cult members to sacrifice Yvando to Satan -- in return for the mayor having a good political year.

"The stories (about different aspects of cult rituals) are very much the same, whether it's someone reporting about a ceremony in Melbourne, Australia, Vermont, Utah..." said Dr. Judianne Densen-Gerber. "This leads me to believe, not only are the cults all over, but because of the similarities, many are also networked." Dr. Densen-Gerber is a New York Psychiatrist who has treated a number of SRA survivors since 1980. She also has a law degree, and is the founder of PACT (Protect America's Children Today).

Are American children in danger because of these Satanic cults? Well, the small town in Brazil might provide some clues. Besides the death of 7-year old Yvando in July, 10 other children had come up missing in Guarutuba since January of that year.

According to Brandon Perez, initial Development Director of the National Missing Children's Center, based in Houston, Texas, there are currently some 4000,000 abductions a year in the United States of which, said Perez, almost 50% of the children are never found. Perez added that many of these cases are not adequately tracked.

In his book, "The Franklin Cover-up: Child Abuse, Satanism and Murder in Nebraska", author and former Nebraska State Senator John DeCamp interviewed 28 year veteran FBI agent Ted Gunderson. Since his retirement from the FBI, Gunderson has been actively investigating reports of Satanic ritual abuse. DeCamp writes:

"Evidence from Gunderson's investigations has convinced him tens of thousands of children or young people disappear from their homes each year, and that many of them are ritualistically sacrificed... nobody knows the true figure because the FBI doesn't keep count. Gunderson observes, 'The FBI has an accurate count on the number of automobiles stolen every year. It knows the number of homicides, rapes, and robberies, but the FBI has no idea of the number of children who disappear every year. They simply do not ask for the statistics.' Gunderson goes on to say he believes they don't ask for the statistics, simply, because they don't want to see them. "They would be confronted with an instant public outcry for action, because the figures would show a major social problem that would demand action."

And it's not just the tragedy of the missing children that come up dead as a result of this savage cult abuse -- there are many children that are "walking wounded." Pamela Hudson, LCSW, a child therapist with a county health outpatient department in northern California began to identify the symptoms of SRA in several children who had been referred to her in 1985. What was to follow was a most frightening phenomenon. Throughout the remainder of 1985 and into 1986, twenty-four children, all from the same day care center, all exhibiting varying degrees of ritual abuse symptoms, were brought to her by concerned parents. (What was even more amazing, said Hudson, was that the cases came to her individually, without the parents initially talking among each other.)

Some of the symptoms included frequent night terrors, night sweats, extreme separation anxiety, uncontrolled vomiting, 3,4, and 5 year olds acting out sexually in bizarre, sadistic manners... all indicators of significant trauma. As Hudson continued to work with the children, the Satanic ritual abuse stories started to surface: the children reported being locked in cages, buried for short periods in coffins, injected with drugs, defecated and urinated on, sexually abused, forced to watch animal and human sacrifice...

Hudson took the information to authorities, but the District Attorney's office decided not to prosecute. A disappointed Hudson said she attributes the decision to the lack of physical evidence, and the children being perceived as too young, and also considered too emotionally traumatized for the stories to appear credible to a jury.

However, several years later, a jury in Austin, Texas, did find children's stories of sexual and Satanic ritual abuse credible enough to put Fran's Day Care directors, Fran and Dan Keller, in prison for extended sentences. (The Kellers aren't eligible for parole until 2004.)

As with the case in California, the children talked of extreme forms of abuse: being threatened with guns, being buried alive, forced to make pornographic movies, watch an infant sacrifice...

In addition, my research has also turned up similar day care and school SRA cases in Florida, several more in California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and in Christchurch, New Zealand.

The longest trial in American history, California's McMartin Day School case, was one of the first day care center cases to claim Satanic ritual abuse. There were some 500 separate reports filed at the Manhattan Beach Police Department in connection with the case. The children's stories matched those of other cases cited. However, there was an additional component to the McMartin case. The children consistently talked of being abused in an underground tunnel below the day care center. A highly qualified archaeologist, hired by the children's families, talked about a series of what he says were highly questionable incidents in the search for the elusive tunnels.

Archeologist Gary Stickle, Ph.D., has worked extensively in the United States and in Europe, including heading the largest underwater archeological sonar survey ever conduc-

ted in Europe. In addition, he has been a consultant to Lucas Films in the development of the Indiana Jones movie series. He has also been professor of Archeology at the University of California at Long Beach. Stickle said initially a private investigator went to the day care center site and did some preliminary informal digging. It is reported, said Stickle, that this investigator found some rabbit bones in the soil. (The children talked about rabbits being sacrificed.) However, the day before he was to testify, the private investigator was found dead from a gun shot wound. It was determined to be a suicide. But Stickle said that determination was questioned by more than a few people, given the timing. Eventually, said Stickle, the prosecution hired an archeological firm that dug seven pits clustered outside of the building. (This was curious, said Stickle, because the children were reporting the abuse had gone on in tunnels below the building.) Stickle said a remote sensing device was also used at the time, but it was reported that no tunnels were found. That was 1985.

The lack of a tunnel damaged the credibility of the children's stories tremendously. Stickle's firm was hired by the parents in 1990. Using a sophisticated ground penetrating radar, Stickle said a tunnel was found, right where some of the children had told his staff it would be.

However, even though evidence of the tunnel was found in May of 1990, while the trial was still in progress -- the evidence was never introduced in court, said Stickle. "Finding such a tunnel was highly relevant (to the case)," said Stickle. "Because it (prior lack of physical evidence of a tunnel) was a major thing used to discredit the children."

The accused McMartin Day Care Center staff were eventually acquitted. However, some of the McMartin parents haven't quit fighting. A two hundred page report on the tunnel findings has recently been released by the parents, in an ongoing effort to keep the case before the public.

As with these children, it is becoming more and more apparent that there are many adult SRA walking wounded as well. As a result of the trauma, these are people often afflicted with things like severe paranoia, schizophrenia, multiple personalities. They are people almost off the scales in terms of addictions/compulsions, depression, self-mutilating behavior...

However, an advancing therapeutic field has developed highly sophisticated techniques to help survivors. And the prognosis for recovery is often good. In addition, parts of society are also rallying around these survivors. The County Commission for Women has a Ritual Abuse Task Force in Los Angeles; there is a state-wide Minnesota Awareness of Ritual Abuse group; Jireh, headquartered in Arlington, Texas, is a national program to create safe-houses for cult survivors breaking away; The International Council on Cultism and Ritual Trauma, in Richardson, Texas, ; and a number of cult survivor resource and referral organizations; ritual abuse twelve-step programs are evolving.

As much as we don't want to believe it as a society -- Satanic ritual abuse is a reality. And, as was done by the parents in the McMartin Day Care Center case, we need to be rolling up our sleeves and digging deeper to get at the whole truth.

May 25, 1994 was designated National Missing Children's Day. Those postcards that come to our homes so very often don't represent anybody's "false memories." Those are real children, with real fates. Daniel Ryder, CCDC, LSW, an investigative journalist and a counselor, is the author of *Breaking the Circle of Satanic Ritual Abuse*.

