

Satanism and Witchcraft: The Occult and the West—Part 5

By Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon

When Satanist high priest Anton LaVey heralded our modern era as “the Age of Satan”¹ he was apparently not far from the truth. Today books on Satanism have sold in the millions. LaVey’s first book, *The Satanic Bible*, has sold over 750,000 copies;² and apparently, it frequently turns up in police investigations of occult crime.³

Since *The Satanic Bible* was published in 1969, Satan worship has increased dramatically. Many park rangers encounter satanic sites so frequently they may no longer report them.⁴ Satanism is producing problems in many American communities. Several major cities on the West Coast have aired special segments dealing with Satanism. For example, Channel 7 Eyewitness News in Los Angeles, California, ran a week-long special devoted to the topic in February 1986. It documented the increase of Satanism, the secrecy, the desecration of churches, ritual animal sacrifices, etc. Satanic graffiti included “Hail, Satan” and “Kill all the Christians.” Satanists were interviewed who stated their beliefs. One man (who had carved 666 on his arm) stated: “This says I believe in Satan, worship Satan, believe that he is master, that he is lord.”

Another Satanist replied that the reason for his involvement was “strength and power and everything else that goes along with it: drugs, women, money, violence.” Both were members of a gang called “the Stoners” and were interviewed from the California Youth Authority in Chino where they were wards of the state. A connection was noted between devil worship and heavy metal rock music; indeed, there are apparently hundreds of heavy metal/ “Stoner” gangs with various degrees of involvement in Satanism.

A number of murders related to Satanism were also cited. One former Satanist admitted on camera to murdering his father and to the attempted murder of his mother when he was 17. His story began early in the fourth grade with an interest in the occult which developed into an interest in Satan. Richard Frederickson, the Orange County assistant district attorney, noted a gruesome local fact. Where one or more parents were murdered by their children, “Of those 6-8 cases there is probably 5 that have had some sort of overtones of Satanism.”

Incredibly, in spite of the obvious evils of Satanism, there are actually respected scholars today who laud its alleged “social benefits”!⁵

The Cable News Network reported on August 25, 1985, that a family found to be involved in making snuff films had allegedly murdered children in the process. They were suspected of involvement in Satanism and ritual murder and had been arrested on child molesting charges three years earlier.

It is a lack of evidence in satanic crime which is the greatest problem law enforcement agencies face (see **Occult Criminality** below). Without hard evidence, police are powerless. Yet, the highly secretive nature of serious Satanism means that all evidence of a crime is carefully disposed of. Thus, when the police or TV news reporters usually conclude, “We found no evidence of a satanic crime,” the public tends to think no crime was ever committed. But anyone who has studied Satanism knows that crimes are being committed, for criminal activity is inherently compatible with Satanism—and much other paganism.

High school teacher Joy Childress is one wounded survivor of Satanism who tries to warn others:

I was in the Satanic cult from birth until I was twenty-one years old. My whole family was in the cult. It was generational as my grandfather on my mother's side also participated. My experience deals with ritualistic rape, ritualistic sacrificing of children and dogs, mainly German shepherds, ritualistic eating of flesh, feces, vomit and urine, and ritualistic drinking of animal or human blood.... It was a family cult—made up entirely of families. At one time, the high priest was an ordained Baptist minister of a prominent church in Denver, Colorado.... Some of the ceremonies would be performed to gain Satan's power through the terror of the child. The child would be starved, tortured, and raped in order to gain that power. Some of the ceremonies were strictly for sacrificial killings for Satan. The child would be killed with a knife through the heart while a cult member was raping the child. The point of all this was to have the sexual climax at the point of death of the child.... The bodies were always burned. Some of the bones were kept as implements for the ceremonies.... These things do upset me very much when I talk about them, but people need to know and understand that these things really did happen and are still happening.⁶

Detective Sandi Gallant of the Intelligence Division of the San Francisco Police Department is among the most respected of police officers who investigate occult crime. She observes, "With organized groups, it is very deliberate that we were not finding any evidence of criminal activity. They're much too careful and hide their tracks very well."⁷

Lack of evidence and public denials by Satanists may fool some people, but it will never change the nature of serious Satanism itself, which is inherently anti-moral and dedicated to the promulgation of evil. Having said this, we must observe that Satanism and Satanic practices may vary by group.

Occult Criminality

A number of problems surround the relationship between occult activity and homicide. (Larry Kahaner's *Cults That Kill: Probing the Underworld of Occult Crime* is essential reading here.)

- **Disbelief.** Evidence may never be heard or reported because of skepticism. It is true that more police departments are becoming aware of the problem (a few have units devoted solely to investigating criminal occult activity), but often there is a denial that, where present in significant proportions, occultism may have been a contributing factor in serious crimes.
- **Absent or conflicting evidence.** Those who are serious about occult murder are secretive and dispose of evidence methodologically. Conflicting evidence can be interpreted in various ways when the motives are multiple, and investigators downplay the occult factor for less bizarre answers.
- **Impotence.** Police may find it almost impossible to infiltrate satanic or related groups. Often someone cannot join such groups without an initiation that involves criminal acts.
- **Fear of repercussions.** Most people instinctively avoid that which is overtly evil. Investigators may be concerned that reprisal is more likely in groups with a satanic philosophy and where trial and conviction are unlikely.

In several cases where alleged Satanism, ritual killing, and other crimes were involved, the *Chicago Tribune* (July 29, 1985) illustrated a number of the problems discussed above:

"It's something I don't want to be identified as knowing that much about," said a psychiatrist who has interviewed the children in one of the cases. "I think anybody who works in this area ought to carry a badge and wear a gun. And not have a family."

"Good luck with your life," said another child therapist, one of whose patients is among

the children making such accusations. “My car was blown up ten days ago.”

“People,” one psychiatrist says, “just aren’t ready for this.”

A mistrial was declared in the case when the jury announced that it was deadlocked 6-6, and Jewett said several jurors told him later that it had been their disbelief of the girl’s testimony about Satanic rituals, and not about being abused, that prompted them to vote for acquittal.

“There’s no doubt in my mind that she was a participant in Satanic worship,” Jewett said, “But she also described incidents of human sacrifice, bestiality and cannibalism....”

His dilemma is shared by Rick Lewkowitz, a deputy district attorney in Sacramento who is prepared for a preliminary hearing in the case of five men, many of them waiters in the same restaurant, who are charged with 77 counts of sexually abusing nine children.

“There’ve been descriptions of Satanic rituals,” Lewkowitz said in a telephone interview.... “Four of the children have described one specific incident where three children were killed by the sexually abused victims.”

Lewkowitz is convinced that the children are telling the truth. “I don’t see where these kids would be able to come up with the consistent detail they come up with, if not from their own experience,” he said.

The principal obstacle confronting them, say those investigating the various cases, is the almost total lack of physical evidence, including bodies, to confirm the children’s allegations.

Of course, it is a big world with lots of places to hide bodies. Perhaps the estimated 25,000 to 50,000 children who disappear off the face of the earth each year might account for some of them.

Most of the one-and-a-half to two million children who disappear are found. But many are kidnapped by child molesters and Satanists who use them in pornographic films, occult rituals, and/or “snuff” films. Robert Simandl is a 20-year veteran of the Chicago police department and a leading authority on crime and Satanism. He is one of many who thinks there is an international network of Satanists responsible for selling drugs, child pornography, and other crimes.⁸

Up to 50,000 children are never found and never accounted for—children who, presumably, never wanted to be lost in the first place. One can only wonder what may have happened to them. We know for a fact what happened to some: “Each year between 2,500 and 5,000 unidentified children are found slain, and many are thought to be the victims of child abductors.”⁹

Notes:

¹ Anton LeVey, *The Satanic Bible* (Avon Publishing, 1972), p. 11.

² Publisher’s statement.

³ E.g., Larry Kahaner, *Cults That Kill: Probing the Underworld of Occult Crime* (New York: Warner, 1988). pp. 31, 90, 135-137, 190.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁵ E. J. Moody in Zaretsky and Leone, eds., *Religious Movements in Contemporary America* (Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 644, 381.

⁶ Kahaner, *Cults That Kill*, pp. 232-233.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁸ Patricia Weaver, “Ritual Abuse, Pornography and the Occult,” *SCP Newsletter*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1989, p. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.*