

Satanic Ritual Abuse: A Second Look

By Gregory R. Reid

In the last ten years, the issue of Satanic ritual abuse has gone from being what some investigators called "the crime of the decade" to being the butt of every media joke and the target of Christian "investigative journalists". The reasons for this turnaround, and whether it's safe to breathe easily knowing it was all "Satanic panic" and doesn't really exist, warrants serious consideration. If it doesn't exist, then obviously it was much ado about nothing. Certainly several major Christian ministries, journalists and publications have stuck their neck out on that assumption. However, if Satanic ritual abuse does in fact exist, no matter to what degree, then we have a responsibility to find out the truth of the matter. That, of course, is easier said than done. The "investigative report" on Mike Warnke, as well as subsequent articles seeking to "debunk" ritual abuse stories, devastated people and ministries and caused thousands of alleged survivors and cult victims to retreat, doubt, bleed. Certainly Mike Warnke's situation warranted correction. One seriously doubts that it was handled in a Biblical, Christ-like way. They authors claimed to have wanted to expose it to the church before the secular press go hold of the facts. Then, they went and leaked it to the secular press. Would Christ, or even Paul, spend or sanction spending multiple thousands of dollars investigating, then publicly exposing a Christian brother without warning? "I rejoice, that whether in pretense or sincerity, Christ is preached." That would be, and was, Paul's stand. None of these "investigators" or magazines that published them gave any thought to the damage it would do to the scores of kids Warnke brought to Christ. Lauren Stratford, author of the best - seller Satan's Underground, in other "investigative reports", was drawn, quartered, and crucified unmercifully without any opportunity to defend herself . For the record, despite the humiliation and ridicule, Ms. Stratford* is alive and well, and reaching out to scores of survivors in the name of Jesus. In addition, Satan's Underground, (picked up by another publisher after Harvest House pulled it in hopes of ending the controversy it created) is still available and selling well, as well as her other two subsequent books that deliver a message of hope and encouragement to survivors. And, despite reports to the contrary, she has not recanted one word of her testimony as written in Satan's Underground. It should be noted that 99% of Ms. Stratford's allegations are based on real experiences and not "recovered memories." These Christian denials of Satanic ritual abuse, set forth in numerous writings by such notables as Bob and Gretchen Passantino, Jon Trott from Cornerstone Magazine, and Christian Research Institute, paralleled in time, sources and theories the secular world's move to disprove ritual abuse. In fact, the same sources are repeatedly used: The False Memory Syndrome Foundation (whose founders were accused of abuse by their own daughter who is a respected academic who stands by her claims and never spoke about her parents until they publicly tried to discredit her): Special Agent Kenneth V. Lanning of the F.B.I. , who claims he has never seen any evidence of ritual crime; and Ralph Underwager, a paid court "expert" who says children always lie about abuse (and who is on public record as supporting the pedophile's God-given right to find an expression for their attraction to children). Because of the caliber of the experts quoted, nearly the entire Christian community accepted their expertise - without reservation, without discrimination, without question. In the aftermath of this pendulum swing, there has not been one fair, factual hearing of the evidence published in the Christian press. This article is an attempt to rectify that imbalance - on behalf of the victims. Because, in the

end, that is what is at issue: What about the victims? In order to take this second look, certain untruths need to be undone, untruths that have been assumed to be right but never properly supported by facts.

UNTRUTH: There is no evidence of ritual abuse.

TRUTH: There are multiple thousands of victims of ritual abuse. Among those thousands, there are multiple hundreds of children who have been fully examined and have documentation of the sexual abuse they allege, as well as volumes of therapeutic evaluations and case files detailing the most graphic, horrific, ugly, frightening abuse anyone could imagine, except, perhaps, the adult survivors, whose allegations fairly duplicate to the detail the children's stories. These details, incidentally, are so intricate and "adult", that it is insanity to suggest the children "got it from watching too much TV" Not even Stephen King could contrive details this sickening. Those who suggest these children "made it up" show their ignorance of the incapability of children to make up such exacting details, nor can they explain why in most cases there is corresponding, medically documented proof of sexual violation. Few if any of them have even bothered to read these evaluations or talk to a single child. Regardless, even many of those who may find it difficult to believe that such horrible ritual abuse took place, nonetheless come away from a thorough look at the evidence saying, "Something happened to these kids. Someone abused them." To suggest, as so many "debunkers" have out of hand, that it's just "Satanic panic" is not just an insult but a deep and undeserved injury to the little ones who have been so abused.

It is necessary at this point to address the most often-quoted statement from the F.B.I.'s "expert" Ken Lanning: "There is no evidence of Satanic crime." That statement is patently false. If you have a strong stomach, and don't have any conflict reading a secular book, Michael Newton's *Raising Hell* fully documents the reality of Satanic crime. Not only does it give hundreds of examples of modern Satanic crime, it also gives overwhelming historical evidence that widespread Satanic rituals and sacrifice of children and infants is documentable as far back as the 16th century, exposing as untrue the skeptic's view that all of it is just "folklore." Satanic mass murdering socialites Gilles de Rais and Catherine Deshayes, both executed for the mass slaughter of children, were no "urban myths". And, they were Satanists.

Although some would point to the survey of 11,000 professionals and their responses as proof of no evidence, I understand only a fraction of those solicited for response even responded at all, making it an unfair analysis to begin with.

UNTRUTH: All Satanic ritual abuse memories are the result of "false memories".

TRUTH: First of all, the "False Memory Syndrome" explanation is just a theory and not recognized as a scientific or even psychological diagnosis. Secondly, It is impossible for thousands of children and adults, as young as three and as old as seventy, most having never met nor communicated nor had access to any "shared network" information concerning ritual abuse, to be telling the same stories down to miniscule details, dates, intricate ritual setups and in some cases, the same perpetrators. Yes, there can be some incidences of false memories, but the incidents are not as widespread as the

False Memory Syndrome Foundation and "investigative journalists" want us to believe. For Christians, there are only three explanations for such widespread and intricate testimony: One, it's a mass psychic phenomenon, mass mental transference of information. And I don't know many Christians who are inclined to accept that theory. Two, it's mass demonic deception. However, a full 80% or more of all the victims I have worked with, children, adults and families, are Christians or from a Christian home, people dedicated to God's Word and God's truth. The third option is to accept that they are telling the truth. No, we may not understand everything they have been through or sorted out all the details, but to dismiss out of hand these numerous allegations as "false memories" is simplistic, not to mention insensitive to the complex issues of the survivors.

One big question has been posed by skeptics that needs to be addressed: If there is an organized Satanic conspiracy, where is the evidence? Where are the bodies?

As a private investigator and law enforcement trainer on cult related crimes, I have worked for ten grueling years on actual, flesh and blood ritual abuse cases, murder cases and criminal investigations of every sort. Numerous professionals, from judges to EMS workers after seeing our workshops, have told us that they have been seeing evidence of serious ritual crime including Satanic mutilated corpses for years but simply hadn't had the tools then to identify it.

The evidence is there - buried in nearly every police department file around the country - marked "unknown".

If Satanic crime is widespread, the skeptics say, why can't current evidence be found? First of all, it gets found all the time, but chances are you won't hear about it. Many times it is kept from the public to avoid a so-called "Satanic panic." I spoke with a registered nurse some years ago who had been walking to work and saw an ambulance and several police cars. She went to see if she could be of assistance, and came upon the decapitated body of a woman who had black candles surrounding her body. It never made the paper. It never will. This is one of dozens of incidences I know of where the public never was privy to such crimes. I have seen the murder slides of several of these nondisclosed murders.

Secondly, these groups have been doing this for centuries. They have perfected the art of secrecy, covering abuse and burying evidence. Of course, the FBI says that's not possible - despite the fact that they still have no idea what happened to Jimmy Hoffa. Children describe babies being cremated. Where's the evidence? Did you know you can buy a portable crematorium at a reasonable cost? Or dispose of bodies in trucker's lime pits designed to dispose of cattle carcasses?

But where do they get the victims? While the 5 million a year abducted child statistic is clearly over-inflated, it is also much higher than the FBI's estimated "50 people" a year number. Babies do disappear. Children are abducted. Some neglectful and abusive parents never even report their child as missing, living a transient life and moving from state to state undetected. You can buy a child in Mexico for \$10, an infant for \$5. Runaway teens, not considered a major priority by law enforcement, are the easiest targets of all. They are already missing and off the list of active investigations. They can

be slaughtered and made to disappear without a trace - who would know? People with money - large sums acquired through drugs, child pornography and child selling, can pretty much cover up anything, especially since the country's top investigating agency denies the problem exists altogether. Child porn and child trading is estimated to be an eight billion dollar a year industry. Satanic groups work very well with them, and with that kind of money, there's not much you can't get rid of.

One last thing needs to be understood. Granted, it is only a rhetorical question, but it's a crucial one. If there is no problem and no organized threat, why, since the beginning of an organized effort to investigate and stop Satanic crime, has this happened:

Numerous authorities have received death threats to back off investigations. (One private investigator and his son died in a light plane crash of suspicious causes on the way to break a serious case of child trading and Satanic crime.)

Numerous investigators of Satanic crime have been fired, demoted or replaced. A widespread campaign of vicious, malicious and devastating slander has been launched against some of the best Christian investigators and ministries, causing many to quit from discouragement or burnout.

Dozens of serious investigations have been shut down at the moment the case was about to break, halted by high level officials, and in one case a congressman, without explanation.

This author has received numerous death threats, computer sabotage, break-ins, robberies, and even a public threat by a military officer to keep my mouth shut about what I know about military Satanists.

In short, if Satanic crime isn't real, why the threats? Why the interference? Why the attacks?

After ten years of work, I do not have the luxury of denial and skepticism. I am a veteran of a very real, very brutal war. I can't sit on the sidelines and pontificate about false memories. Like John, I am speaking of things I have seen and touched with my hands. It is no fantasy at all. The Christian media has chosen to tackle the very "secular" issue of ritual abuse. Left out of most debate, and most debunking, has been any answers. Left out has been compassion or understanding for the victims, help for the abused and no answer to the larger questions I have raised. Sure, many issues were raised by the skeptics. But they are answerable. As of yet, no one has asked to have them answered by those of us who have first hand knowledge of ritual crime and abuse.

Since we've tackled the surface issues, now let's get to the heart of the matter: What should we as a Christian community do?

We need to acknowledge the damage done by only presenting one side of the story. For every "story" the skeptics have "debunked" there are another ten with evidence, and in some cases convictions on the perpetrators. Their story has never been told. As a result, thousands of victims have been disbelieved out of hand, been hurt and humiliated and gone into hiding without hope. We must judge a tree by its fruits, and so far the only fruit that has come from the investigative pieces debunking Satanic abuse has been the wholesale cutting off of survivors from the hope of Jesus Christ through the church. We need to ask forgiveness - of God, and of the victims.

We need to acknowledge that, although we may not understand everything regarding Satanic crime and ritual abuse, the full facts have not been set forth in the few biased articles published previously. We need to acknowledge that any issue that is a threat to children, especially, warrants a serious investigation of all sides of the issue.

We need to ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?" The Word tells us He would, and so we should, bind the broken hearted, set the captives free. The Word also tells us we are to "do justly" - to believe in and fight for justice on behalf of the helpless, the defenseless, the orphans and widows and all those whose lives have been shattered by evil. Jesus would tell us, I believe, to defend the children. He would tell us to be the Good Samaritan - not the Pharisee that said, "I don't want to get involved so I'll just keep walking" - nor the priest, who if he were here today, might likely say to the wounded, "It's all false memories. We don't have robbers in Jericho. God bless you!", but rather the one who cared for the wounded victim.

We're not required to know it all, nor understand it all, nor believe it all without question. We are required to "receive those whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters." (Romans 14:1) Certainly ritual abuse could be considered a "disputable matter." It does not excuse our failure to receive those who allege such abuse. If we don't, we run the serious risk of standing before God one day and hearing him say, "Inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these...you have done it to Me."

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