

Diabolic Debates: A Reply to David Frankfurter and J. S. La Fontaine

STEPHEN A. KENT

Prior to the publication of my two articles in *Religion* about deviant scripturalism,¹ no academic model existed in either religious studies or sociology to lend credence to ritual abuse accounts. These articles borrowed a basic assumption from the study of rituals, which is that people often construct symbolic activities that sanctify their marginality. The marginality underlying these presumed rituals seemingly involves severe sexual deviance² possibly combined with insatiable quests for worldly gain.³ I draw an analogy between my religious studies argument and Albert Cohen's classic sociological observation about gang deviance that '[t]he hallmark of the delinquent subculture is the explicit and wholesale repudiation of middle class standards and the adoption of their very antithesis'.⁴ If definitive proof (rather than merely suggestive indicators) about the existence of such organized practices and 'ritual inversions' were to surface, then researchers would borrow insights from the burgeoning literature on family violence as part of their analyses.⁵

Regrettably, some otherwise thoughtful scholars such as David Frankfurter rely upon inconclusive, and at times polemical, scholarship and inappropriate methodologies in their efforts to close discussion on the topic of ritual abuse. This opportunity to respond to his rejoinder allows more opportunity to speak about methodological issues and factual information that will focus the debate in the future and, at the same time, addresses several of J. S. La Fontaine's concerns.⁶ It also allows me to clarify significant historical and cross-cultural examples that suggest parallels to the contents of current ritual abuse accounts. Finally, the response allows me to draw conclusions about the debate over recovered memories in the context of ritual abuse claims.

Anomalies—Historical and Contemporary

Historical discussions about witchcraft and satanism may assist contemporaries in their efforts to interpret current ritual abuse claims, yet unique aspects of modernity also may create new social opportunities for deviant action. It may be, for example, that modern forms of familial privacy, transportation, and communication facilitate the performance of deviant actions in ways that are historically unique. Nonetheless, Frankfurter expands the knowledge of researchers who are unfamiliar with the ancient world by noting the reality of child sacrifice in public ceremonies.⁷ He also informs us about some of the polemical debates among competing religions of antiquity in which allegations of atrocities abound. His conceptualization, however, of later historical periods in which witchcraft persecutions and pogroms raged suggests a lesser grasp of the material and issues as they may pertain to the current discussion.

Much of both Frankfurter's and La Fontaine's historical understanding of satanic claims rests upon the work of Norman Cohn, who argued that the demonization of Jews by Nazis was the consequence of psychologically based obsessive fears that developed over centuries. These fears manifested as attacks against: Jews (by early and medieval Christians);⁸ Christians (by their early opponents);⁹ medieval heretics (by Catholic clergy);¹⁰ religiously based social rivals (by France's King Philip IV);¹¹ male

and especially female social marginals (by judges),¹² and presumed participants in Sabbats (by intellectuals unconsciously colluding with the peasantry).¹³ These obsessive fears coalesced in medieval charges that people participated in satanic worship, and the Church pursued these charges with cruel and irrational relentlessness. Frankfurter fears (with some merit) that the current discussion of satanic ritual abuse contains the potential of once again turning against innocents caught in communities that become rocked by hysterical fear.¹⁴

Only a scholar of Carlo Ginzburg's calibre could modify Cohn's historical sweep—a sweep upon which Frankfurter relies heavily. Ginzburg significantly alters our understanding of medieval traditional life through his analysis of the origins of belief in the witches' Sabbath. In addition, his basic methodological technique has relevance to the debate involving Frankfurter, La Fontaine, and myself. In a criticism of Cohn's work that happens to be apropos to the current discussion, Ginzburg observed that '[h]ere we have a polemic conducted with arguments which, while effective, are by now taken for granted. Their persistence is a symptom (and, in part, a cause) of the unilateralism that characterizes many studies of the history of witchcraft.'¹⁵ Extrapolating to my debate with Frankfurter, one multifaceted approach attempts to continue discussion about the very contentious topic of satanic abuse allegations, while another, unilateral approach wishes to end it.

Listening to the accounts of the victims—the accused whose testimonies speak across the centuries through court records and transcripts—Ginzburg followed what he called 'the anomalies' in their confessions. These anomalies were 'the cracks that occasionally (albeit very rarely) appear in the documentation, undermining its coherence'.¹⁶ While accepting that inquisitorial victims presented confessions that resonated with their interrogators' stereotypical witchcraft beliefs, he also realized that 'the more a detail strays from the stereotype, the greater is the likelihood that it brings to the surface a cultural stratum immune from the judges' projections'.¹⁷ By collecting and then analysing these anomalies, he unearthed the existence of persistent pagan myths during the medieval era about shamanistic battles between the living and the dead over the fertility of the land. Having done so, he identified a number of rituals throughout medieval (and in a few cases, modern) Europe that ritually recreate those battles.¹⁸ Rather than finding the origins of the satanic Sabbath event in centuries old psychological obsessions against opponents and marginals, Ginzburg concluded that '[t]he folkloric nucleus of the stereotype of the Sabbath is here' in 'the ecstatic journey of the living into the realm of the dead'.¹⁹

Anomalies in accounts that Ginzburg examined led to his discovery of a persistent pagan myth that permeated popular Christian culture and local rituals for well over a millennium. Anomalies in accounts that I collect raise the possibility that satanic groups operate in the shadows of contemporary life. Ginzburg unearthed a shamanic myth, and I, too, hope that this is all that I and others have found. La Fontaine completely misinterprets my collection of primary accounts by asserting that I am arguing for a necessary subjectivist experientialism in religious studies and other academic disciplines. Instead, I am arguing that first hand accounts of alleged events provide rich details that simply are missed by quantitative methods.²⁰ On the topic of satanic ritual abuse, the rich details may prove to be exceedingly useful to researchers and investigators. If La Fontaine insists that rich details are 'clearly idiosyncratic' and merely are 'bizarre allegations',²¹ then she may be missing valuable information.

In Frankfurter's eyes, the myth that I have found merely is the conservative Christian stereotype of satanism—incest, child sacrifice, sacrificial abortions, anthropophagy/

cannibalism, chanting by robe-wearing ritualists, etc. Hapless therapists allegedly lead clients into these memories,²² unless, of course, the clients had watched Geraldo or read a discredited book such as *Satan's Underground*²³ before placing themselves at counsellors' mercies. Presumably he imagines that the remaining ritual abuse claimants are reflecting the ideology of conservative Christian churches that they must have attended. All of them, he believes, have false memories, and no historical precedents or current cases provide any possible validation for their sordid tales. Unilaterally, the debate about satanic and other forms of ritual abuse is closed.

He scorns, but cannot explain away, however, the anomalies—those aspects of accounts that differ from Christian conservatism, or that do not appear in popular culture sources. From what source, for example, did Samantha extract (as Frankfurter would insist) the idea in early 1990 that a satanic group placed a mouse in her mouth as part of a ritual practice? Until her alleged memories overwhelmed her Samantha had been an events organizer and public relations official for a major Canadian organization, and was a lapsed member of the United Church. She was not sufficiently versed in the *Bible* to have unconsciously assimilated, personalized, and reversed a Godly admonition against mouse-eating.²⁴ Where would Frankfurter say that Elaine and Gail got the inspiration to concoct stories about being ritually treated like dogs? Perhaps Elaine's work in a high profile media position would have brought a book to her attention, but which one? When La Fontaine attempts to discredit these claims, she fails to mention that Gail recorded her memory of it *before* a television show aired in which an alleged survivor made the same assertion.²⁵ Moreover, in her suggestion that Elaine could have picked up the dog image from the television show, La Fontaine could not have known that Elaine works during the day, which is when the talk show was broadcast.

Would Frankfurter say that Louise encountered a book by Aleister Crowley while preparing classes for the public high school students whom she taught, and from it fabricated an account of men gathering her vaginal fluids after violating her with insertions of some kind? How can I explain that at least seven of the people with whom I have spoken recall abuse scenarios in the context of deviant Freemasons,²⁶ and independently of my interviewees I have discovered self-proclaimed survivors' groups for deviant Masonic victims in Colorado, Georgia, Thunder Bay (Ontario), and Fredericton (New Brunswick)?²⁷ My informants are not fundamentalist Christians, which means that their accounts cannot be dismissed as ideological cant.

Of the scenarios that Frankfurter and La Fontaine would use to explain these anomalies, none makes sense—a judgement that I make after having spoken with all of these people at great length. Their accounts certainly do not fit into stereotypes about traditional conservative Christian representations of satanism, but neither do a number of additional accounts that I have recorded since my initial publications in this journal.

Dismissing these people's accounts out of hand, without serious investigation and without viable explanations about their contents, is unscholarly and ethically unacceptable. Researchers cannot erase the emotionally powerful claims that credible people make about their lives without doing damage to their informants and to the very reputation of social science. Apparently Frankfurter objects to my sharing of peer-reviewed, published information with interviewees after I have recorded their accounts, since he hints at possible ethical misconduct on my part. Possibly because his own research as an historian does not require him to interview people, he does not realize that I have obtained University ethics clearing for my methodology and interviewing techniques. Nor would he necessarily be aware of the ethics demand on

researchers to return some benefit to research subjects for their participation in studies. As long as I present interpretations cautiously and carefully, and subsequently assist in efforts to seek verification or disconfirmation of their memories, then my behaviour is entirely ethical and appropriate.

He would be impressed with how well informed a large percentage of my subjects are about issues related to false memory even before we discuss them, and he would be pleased to learn that several of my interviewees have read his rejoinder! Nonetheless, if Frankfurter wishes to raise specific ethical improprieties about my research, then I invite him to submit them to my University's Ethics Committee. If, however, he cannot substantiate his allegation of 'dubious ethics', then I await his retraction.

The accounts that I cited from my informants, and many others that I have collected, remain anomalies unless or until I and others obtain viable alternative explanations to the one that I proposed. More plausible than a scenario in which these people fell under the sway of therapists with passions for occult arcana, is one in which sexual predators and power-driven sociopaths use readily available religious sources to devise rituals that celebrate and sanctify their deviance. Almost everyone in our culture has a *Bible*, and the other books that I mention (various Mormon, magickal, and Masonic publications) are also readily available to people through various social networks. Besides, historical precedents exist involving people who apparently attempted to use satanic rituals in their efforts to obtain worldly gain and sexual satisfaction, even if Frankfurter and La Fontaine are unaware of them.

I shall not dwell on the fact that, contrary to Frankfurter, a respected Gnostic scholar takes Epiphanius's account of an Egyptian Gnostic anthropophagous group to be true,²⁸ and I bypass unconvincing discussions about the possible satanic implications of the dualistic Cathars.²⁹ Likewise, I spend no time musing over the fabricated charges that Philip IV of France used to destroy the Knights Templars.³⁰ Instead, I draw attention to the notorious cases of Black Masses performed by renegade priests during the reign of France's Louis XIV, in which various courtiers (and quite possibly the King's mistress) sought Satan's assistance in gaining royal favour. Police uncovered these activities through a large investigation about Parisian traffic in poison, which led to the arrest of two fortune-tellers, one fortune-teller's step-daughter, and a score of chemists, abortionists, practitioners of the black arts, and their patrons. Most notorious was the Abbé Guibourg, who had ritually sacrificed children (some of which were his own) in ritual murders.³¹ In the quest for worldly influence and prestige, people commissioned and performed atrocities—a motivational pattern that is repeating itself if any of the accounts that I have heard are true.

Somewhat later in France, the sadistic writings of the Marquis de Sade demonstrated how sexual deviants might derive sexual pleasure from desecrating Christian symbols. One of his female characters (named Clairwil), for example, suggested to another (named Juliette) 'that they go to confession, seduce a Carmelite friar and desecrate the Eucharist, in her words, "commit horrors over that miserable symbol of the infamous Christian religion".' Clairwil explained her desires by saying that, "[t]hree-quarters of Europe attach very religious ideas to this Eucharist, to this crucifix; that is why I like to profane them; I scoff at public opinion; I trample on the prejudices of my childhood, I annihilate them; this excites my mind".³² Later these two women, 'together with some monks in a convent, parody the ceremonies of Easter and desecrate the holy symbols in a sexual orgy'.³³ In an earlier work, Sade has a character narrate 'accounts of perversions' that involve 'violations of nuns . . . , sacrilegious acts in churches . . . , and profanation of sacred rights'.³⁴ Unfortunately, the scenario of a sexual deviant obtain-

ing pleasure by the desecration of a Christian symbol has contemporary reality in the events revealed in a recent Florida daycare case (that I discuss below). Curiously, homosexuality in the context of the Black Mass also delighted the early 20th century writer against satanism, Montague Summers—a dubious cleric who (in his younger days) ‘was aroused only by devout young Catholics, their subsequent corruption giving inexhaustible pleasure’.³⁵

Frankfurter does not acknowledge humans’ capacity to transform imagination into deviant behaviour. With dire consequences, neither did Sigmund Freud, who retreated from a literal interpretation of what may have been a ritual abuse account that he received from a patient. It appears that alleged memories provided by a patient, Emma Eckstein, helped to persuade him that his patient’s accounts of childhood sexual victimization were imagined. As Jeffrey Masson has shown, however, Freud’s earliest position was that the hysteria he saw among his patients was the result of actual sexual abuse.³⁶

In his 1896 essay, ‘The aetiology of hysteria’, Freud boldly (and, many now believe, correctly) put forward the thesis that:

at the bottom of every case of hysteria there are *one or more occurrences of premature sexual experience*, occurrences which belong to the earliest years of childhood but which can be reproduced through the work of psycho-analysis in spite of the intervening decades.³⁷

Early in the next year, Freud recounted to his professional friend, Wilhelm Fliess, what (in current contexts of alleged ritual abuse stories) is a remarkable account:

I am beginning to grasp an idea: it is as though in its perversions, of which hysteria is the negative, we have before us a remnant of a primeval sexual cult which once was—perhaps still is—a religion in the Semitic East (Moloch, Astarte). Imagine, I obtained a scene [i.e., a fantasy] about the circumcision of a girl. The cutting off of a piece of the labium minor (which is even shorter today), sucking up the blood, after which the child was given a piece of the skin to eat . . .

Perverse actions, moreover, are always the same—meaningful and fashioned according to some pattern that someday will be understood.

I dream, therefore, of a primeval devil religion, with rites that are carried on secretly, and understand the harsh therapy of the witches’ judges. Connecting links abound.³⁸

These passages are open to several interpretations, especially in light of Freud’s refusal to condemn a brutal and careless nasal operation that Fliess had performed on Eckstein nearly two years earlier. Rather than accuse his friend of incompetence for the surgical conditions that caused Eckstein severe blood loss, Freud claimed that the bleeding was the result of her hysteria.³⁹ Seen in context, these passages most probably indicate Freud’s drift toward rejecting what Masson calls ‘the seduction hypothesis’—that adults sexually seduce children. Freud seemed to imply that Eckstein fantasized the scene—that it had not been a real event, despite the fact that apparently he had examined her physically and confirmed her claim of genital damage.

This story is particularly significant because one of my survivor claimants almost certainly went through a somewhat similar experience as Eckstein described. With incredulity I viewed medical photographs and slides that Sandra (a pseudonym) showed to me of her cervix, which had on it a scar in the shape of a cross or an ‘X’. Upon my request, she telephoned her physician (whom I know), and he confirmed to

me that he had discovered the scar during a physical examination. She claims that she was branded by the satanic group in which she forcibly participated as a child, and neither her doctor nor I can offer an alternative explanation. Whatever caused the scar, she almost certainly could not have done it to herself.

Finally, brief mention must be made of a cross-cultural religious example of a Hindu group, the Kapālikas, that ritualistically associated themselves with sex, decay, and death while worshipping terrific forms of that tradition's god of death, Śiva. References to the group appear throughout Indian literature, beginning in the early centuries of the Common Era and extending to a statement about their small numbers in a 1970 publication.⁴⁰ Group members were distinctive because they wore garlands of human skulls or bones, from which the name, Kapālikas ('wearers of skulls') derives.⁴¹ Followers performed rituals designed to appease and/or imitate their god, primarily through scripturally-inspired associations with dead bodies. By associating themselves with death, followers attempted to propitiate Śiva or imitate his complete transcendence of the world, as indicated by his insensitivity to corpses and other items related to death, decay, and impurity. Toward these ends, followers swore 'the great vow (*māhavrata*)', which consisted of 'eating food placed in a human skull and smearing the body with the ashes of human carcasses . . .'⁴² Rites performed to appease the god's destructive and blood-thirsty manifestations included animal and human sacrifices, suicide, and self-mutilation.⁴³ Moreover, they coupled their sacrificial rites with sexual ones in the tradition of left-handed Tantra.⁴⁴ Parallel examples of death-worshippers may operate in the Western world, whose rites and rituals would involve propitiating Satan or some other reputedly malevolent force.

Contemporary Issues

Daycare and satanic allegations

I was somewhat surprised to see Frankfurter use current controversies about daycare centers in an attempt to refute my argument concerning deviant scripturalism and intergenerational satanism, since I judiciously avoided these controversies in my study. Nevertheless, careful examination of recent cases indicate that satanic ritual abuse in fact has occurred against children in adults' care. The 1985 Dade County, Florida successful conviction of Frank and Iliana Fuster for numerous sexual offences against daycare children serves as an excellent example. Evidence in the trial indicated that the couple had mutilated animals, drugged children, and committed a wide variety of sexual deviances against them (including coprophilia). When Iliana killed birds in front of the children, a child who was present reported that she chanted:

Devil, I love you.
Please take this bird with you
and take all the children up [sic] to hell with you.
You gave me the grateful gifts.
God of Ghosts, please hate Jesus and kill Jesus because
He is the baddest, damnedest [sic] person in the whole world.
Amen.
We don't love children because they are a gift of God.
We want the children to be hurt.
Signed, Iliana and Frank.
Amen.⁴⁵

Iliana confessed to various crimes and testified against her abusive and violent husband. Part of Frank's sexual abuse involved inserting a cross in his wife's rectum,⁴⁶ and (on at least one occasion) sucking his wife's blood.⁴⁷ Sade would have approved.

In support of the aggravated sexual assault convictions of Texas daycare operators Frances and Daniel Keller in 1992, parents recounted stories from their abused children that involved satanic themes. One child, for example, claimed to have been 'forced to paint a picture with "Satan's arm" dipped in blood'. Other tales involved Frances Keller baptizing babies with blood and offering them to Satan, and both adults 'killing a baby named Rachel by cutting her heart out' and placing it 'in the hand of a child'.⁴⁸ As with several other daycare cases, however, these Texas convictions are controversial.⁴⁹

Certainly trials and convictions have occurred over daycare abuse allegations that appear to be gross miscarriages of justice. In these contexts, false allegations may provide the only viable parallel that I see to medieval Europe's 'blood libel/ritual murder' charges against Jews. The common medieval scenario was that a child's murdered corpse would be found and panicked residents (often, according to researcher R. Po-Chia Hsia, led by the perpetrators) would blame the death on the communities' marginal outgroup—the Jews.⁵⁰ Today, parents discover what they believe to be evidence of child abuse, and (often with the assistance of poorly trained professionals) blame people who are either on the margins of their families—their children's daycare workers—or on the economic fringes of their communities—what La Fontaine calls 'the marginal poor'.⁵¹ The eventual result, however, of unsubstantiated blood libel charges against Jews was that '[g]radually but unmistakably, ritual murder discourse lost its credibility among the elites . . . [who] exercised greater caution in investigating the charges of child murders'.⁵² After extensive academic and press coverage of poorly conducted cases, a similar pattern seems to be emerging regarding the investigation of daycare child abuse allegations.

Just as daycare workers may be falsely accused and convicted, so too may other workers be wrongly acquitted. Debate still rages, for example, about one critical aspect of California's McMartin Daycare acquittals. In a case that was seriously flawed by officials' inappropriate interviewing techniques of children, the McMartin prosecution also was unable to provide physical evidence to substantiate its charges. Especially harmful to the prosecution's case was that the police were unable to locate secret rooms and tunnels in which some children alleged that ritual abuse occurred. With the imminent bulldozing of the daycare facility during the second trial, a group of desperate parents hired an archaeologist to conduct one final set of digs in an attempt to verify the children's claims.

Scornful critics of the McMartin trial, authors Paul and Shirley Eberle, ridiculed the parents' efforts by scoffing that '[t]hey found a plastic bag with some Walt Disney characters printed on it'.⁵³ When the parents 'said they found veins of debris' and claimed that the veins 'were evidence of a network of tunnels that had existed under the school and been filled in', the Eberles raised the question about how the supposed perpetrators would 'have removed tons of soil and then replaced it without being seen?'⁵⁴ At most, the Eberles suggested that the diggers had found an old septic hole.

The actual evidence, however, that archaeologist E. Gary Stickel, Ph.D. found is more dramatic. Following the description of a child who had attended the school, Stickel unearthed definitive evidence that a tunnel had existed under the McMartin school. Part of it led 'into a wide, room-like potential space of contrasting earth fill bearing remnants of timber, plywood and tar paper which appeared to have shored up

the ceiling of a "secret" room. All this had been implied for years by numerous children . . .⁵⁵ Amongst 'the stratified dirt in the [school's] play yard' the archaeologist discovered '[a] small, white, plastic plate with 3 pentagrams hand drawn [by an adult] on top of light green paint'.⁵⁶ Pentagrams, of course, have traditional associations with satanism.

In addition, Stickel's report indicated irregularities about the classroom facilities themselves, and these irregularities add credence to the children's claims of abuse. For example, '[n]o doorknobs were on classroom 3 door, only a deadbolt lock'. In addition, '[e]ach classroom had on and off light switch labeled "Fire alarm". System did not connect to fire station but was used as an alert within the school'.⁵⁷ While explanations may render these findings to be harmless, serious researchers realize that they also may indicate the school facility was constructed to facilitate child abuse. The Eberles, of course, would downplay this possibility in their book, since, as Lloyd DeMause indicated, they are prolific publishers of child pornography.⁵⁸

The probable existence of a tunnel, however, certainly raises questions regarding the testimony of Charles Buckey, who was the husband of one defendant and the father of the other, as well as the designer and construction supervisor (in 1966) of the building itself. While on the witness stand on 24 April 1989, he 'said [that] neither subterranean areas nor tunnels existed' at the nursery school.⁵⁹

An academic framework for the discussion of these and other instances of ritualistic abuse in daycares was established in a 1988 study of two hundred and seventy 'nursery crimes' in the United States during the years 1983 to 1985. The authors of this study 'identified 36 substantiated sexual-abuse cases in which some ritualistic element was noted by investigators'.⁶⁰ After reviewing the varied types of ritual allegations that appeared in these cases, the researchers developed a three-fold typology 'that may be refined and expanded as our knowledge about this phenomenon increases'.⁶¹

First, they identified 'true cult-based ritualistic abuse', characterized by 'an elaborated belief system and the attempt to create a particular spiritual or social system through practices that involve physical, sexual, and emotional abuse'.⁶² Second, they identified 'pseudoritualistic abuse', in which 'there may be ritualistic practices, even ones that appear similar to those of the cult type. However, the practices are not part of a developed belief system, and, more important, the primary interest is not spiritual or social, but rather the sexual abuse of children'.⁶³ Finally, they identified 'psychopathological ritualism', in which '[a]n individual, alone or as part of a group, may abuse children in a ritualistic fashion that is neither part of a developed ideology nor a cynical effort to frighten the children, but rather part of an obsessive or delusional system'.⁶⁴

After providing this three-fold identification, the authors offered two possible explanations why some adults perpetrate ritualistic crimes. Both of these explanations have implications for the broader discussion of intergenerational satanic abuse. First, they coined the term, the 'mortification of a child's sexuality', to hypothesize why men and women 'develop a notion of their own sexuality as corrupted, evil, or demonic in some way', and become driven by these feelings to 'harm, corrupt, retaliate against, or . . . "mortify" the sexuality of a small child because of its innocence'. Second, the researchers realized that some people's 'identification with evil' would allow them to tie 'sexual abuse to ritual in the mind set that may be attracted to so-called satanic practice'.⁶⁵

Thoughtful typologies and responsible explanations assist researchers in understanding the disturbing phenomenon of daycare crimes. Frankfurter, in contrast, seems to deny the entire reality of satanic or ritual abuse of pre-school children by complaining

that 'the specter of the Satanic conspiracy has been raised at some point in all the recent abuse trials of daycare centers'. Often it is entirely proper for investigators to do so.

Intergenerational ritual abuse

Frankfurter was wise when, in an endnote, he decided not to 'exclude a priori that extreme and symbolically-enacted forms of such abuse do take place', since recent convictions in Prescott, Ontario concern precisely this type of deviance. The number of people involved—both perpetrators and victims—is astounding:

So far, sixteen accused have been found guilty and twenty have pleaded guilty. Of the 225 alleged victims, 145 are children and eighty are adults reporting abuse as kids. And forty-two children are 'in care', apprehended by child protection authorities. In addition to the fifty-five adults already charged, the police report that another fifty alleged perpetrators are under investigation.⁶⁶

The perpetrators in this case:

abused their own children, their neighbours' children and their grandchildren in a multi-generational network that was staggering in its reach and its routine violation of hundreds of victims. Some were terrorized in nightmarish ways that can only be termed ritual abuse. The police have evidence that Billy Elliot [who was a major perpetrator] had been in the habit of digging up bodies in the graveyard, pulling the heads off skeletons and engaging in makeshift basement rites in which adults disguised in costumes sexually abused children; sometimes the activities were recorded by videocameras.⁶⁷

Unproven in the Prescott case was the claim, made by various witnesses, that a baby named Joshua had been murdered.

Joshua's apparent death haunted police after someone claimed to have seen Elliot kill the infant. In early March, 1990, police charged Elliot with murder,⁶⁸ and Canadian newspapers carried the grim photograph of three police officers walking through a graveyard with digging equipment as they began searching for the body.⁶⁹ The police chief admitted to reporters that he would not be surprised to find satanic cult involvement in the case, and one anonymous source stated that "the possibility strongly exists that a satanic cult could be involved".⁷⁰ A month later, however, the accuser withdrew his account, so police withdrew the charge.⁷¹ Unexpectedly, the baby's alleged murder came up on the witness stand, in the testimony of a nine-year-old girl. When the defence lawyer asked the child who lived in her house, she answered, "Me and Nancy and Billy and Freddy and Joey and Josh". She quickly clarified about Josh[ua] that "he was the baby but Billy killed him". Police speculated that the girl's mother may have been a 'cult "breeder"'.⁷²

The Prescott case is an example of a properly investigated, complex crime of multi-generational ritual abuse in which the prosecutors downplayed any satanic elements.⁷³ In another famous abuse case—one often trumpeted by false memory syndrome [sic] lobbyists⁷⁴—people forget that the prosecutor in the Paul Ingram trial also downplayed allegations that the former Olympia, Washington police officer had abused his family in satanic rituals. Instead, the state secured six guilty pleas from him to third degree rape that happened in the Fall of 1988. Since Frankfurter cites Lawrence Wright's skewed account of the case,⁷⁵ it is worth mentioning the observations that a Superior Court judge in Thurston County offered for rejecting Ingram's attempt to withdraw his guilty pleas. Ingram's first set of taped confessions to detectives occurred:

before any psychologist has been seen by the defendant. This [set of confessions] is before any of the ministers, or counselors have been seen by the defendant. And so the brainwashing—the alleged brainwashing, by the chaplain and the alleged brainwashing by the psychologist, could not possibly have occurred at that time.⁷⁶

When it came to 'business of witchcraft, the satanism, and devil worship, and what not', the judge simply stated that '[h]e isn't charged with satanism', and that some of his daughters' statements 'were probably gross exaggerations', but that 'the doctors have stated this [kind of exaggeration] is not an unusual thing, that [sic] when people have been subjected to severe sexual abuse over a period of years'.⁷⁷

As evidence of Ingram's supposed false memory and high suggestibility, Wright and others cite sociologist Richard Ofshe's 'little experiment'. On the spur of the moment, Ofshe told Ingram a false story about an accusation against him, and within days the accused presented the professor with a complete account of an incident that (presumably) never had occurred.⁷⁸ Ofshe then attempted to convince the court that Ingram's confessions were the result of faulty interview procedures, and were not to be taken as accurate admissions of guilt. The judge, however, decided 'that the three state[']s witnesses are more credible than Dr Ofshe',⁷⁹ and then elaborated on his judgement:

My problems with Dr Ofshe's testimony [in favor of Ingram's attempt to overturn his pleas] are just these. No. 1, he is not a clinical psychologist. He is a professor of sociology at—in Berkeley. He's not able to treat—he's not able to treat this defendant for the conditions that Dr Lennon [for the state] found that he had. 2. he's not an expert in sex abuse or with matters with regard to victims of sex abuse. 3. his experiment that he engaged in here was odd in my judgement.

The judge's criticisms of this experiment fill an entire page of transcript, followed by two additional criticisms of Ofshe's conclusions and behavior in the case.⁸⁰

The false memory debate

Discussion of Ofshe's role in the Ingram case provides an opportunity to address the fundamental issue of false memory in the context of satanic and other abuse allegations. Both Ofshe and a person whom Frankfurter thanks for advising him on the rejoinder—Jeffrey Victor—are board members of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation.⁸¹ A co-founder of the foundation indicated that "[w]here our members know the allegation, it has pretty consistently been 17 percent who are accused of satanic ritual abuse".⁸² Despite intense efforts on the part of this group and others to reject categorically the accuracy of recovered abuse memories, solid scientific evidence plus verifiable cases indicate that recovering buried memories of trauma is possible.⁸³ Consequently, the basic research position that I and my associates use is straightforward and scientifically sound. Whenever possible I seek to obtain independent evidence about people's allegations—evidence that may either support or contradict the memory claims (since, indeed, recovered memories also can be contaminated or false). Frankfurter should have realized the care with which I argued that many accounts are *plausible*, but never do I state that they are *true*.

At least five levels of evidence may play roles in attempts to determine the veracity of satanic and related abuse claims. Simply stated, the more rigorous the level of evidence, the more researchers and other investigators would be certain that satanic rituals have been performed. First, memories themselves are the primary and basic layer of evidence, even though we know that memories may not be accurate⁸⁴ (regardless of the

intensity with which people feel them to be so). Collection of this initial level of evidence is foundational for all else in investigations, but people such as Frankfurter and La Fontaine seem not to value such undertakings.

Second, memories from relatives or associates provide possible support for other people's accounts, despite the fact that significant issues of contamination occur among acquaintances. Researchers such as Frankfurter who are not directly involved with actual interviews may not realize how many abuse claimants also have siblings or other relatives who provide their own accounts of traumatic events. Consequently, I have spoken with (and in most cases formally interviewed or obtained accounts from) over fifty ritual abuse claimants,⁸⁵ but this number of people only represents allegations against thirty-eight distinct groups. On this second level of evidence, I have considerable repetition of satanic abuse claims, but I cannot establish the veracity of the duplicated accounts merely through confirmations of potentially 'cross-pollinating' individuals.

Another type of second level verification of ritual abuse claims come from tattoos or body scars that may indicate various types of abuse. Again in most instances investigators cannot determine with precision the circumstances in which the body markings occurred, but they are indicators that supplement people's memories.

Third, accounts from independent survivor claimants provide even stronger support for people's initial abuse claims. Independent reports are free of contamination or cross-pollination, so the likelihood increases that their reports are based on common experiences (or, presumably, common sources). In one circumstance, I seem to have this level of independent verification. When I interviewed Mary in 1992, she mentioned a person who was not a family member but supposedly was (through parents) another unwilling ritual participant. At the time of our interview, Mary had not seen or had contact with the other person in over eight years, and even then their contact had been brief and superficial. Unbeknownst to me, a doctoral candidate named Grant Charles from the Child Youth Care program at the University of Victoria (British Columbia) already was interviewing that other person. Months later Charles and I met, realized what had occurred, and secured permission from our respective interviewees to exchange transcripts. These transcripts revealed memories of participation in what appear to have been the same rituals with the same alleged perpetrators. Charles's forthcoming dissertation will discuss this case in depth. As with at least one other case on which I have knowledge, police investigated this one but in doing so blundered in a way that may have compromised their ability to find confirming evidence.⁸⁶

Fourth, the next highest level of verification would occur if intergenerational perpetrators were to turn themselves in to authorities and confess (in accurate and corroborative detail) to having committed the actions that their accusers described. Perhaps some of the confessions in the Prescott, Ontario case represent this level of evidence, but I do not have any such admissions.

Finally, physical evidence—videos, artefacts, bodies, etc.—would prove the existence of satanic groups. Evidence of this nature remains elusive in the cases that I discuss in my two-part article, but all of them involve allegations of rituals that happened years if not decades ago. According to Frankfurter, no evidence ever existed, since the events never took place. Until (or unless) it appears, researchers must struggle to keep the ritual abuse debate on level ground.

Careful research, balanced discussions, and thoughtful presentations of evidence are the only techniques that advance scientific enterprises. We must keep these principles in mind during the debates about satanic ritual abuse, since the issues under examination

have become focal points in and among numerous disciplines (including social work, sociology, psychology,⁸⁷ anthropology, religious studies, psychiatry, counseling, and law enforcement). Not only are fundamental social and scientific issues at stake, but also people's lives are affected profoundly by our conclusions.

Notes

- 1 Stephen A. Kent, 'Deviant scripturalism and ritual satanic abuse part one: possible Judeo-Christian influences', *Religion* 23, 1993, pp. 229-241; "Deviant Scripturalism and Ritual Satanic Abuse Part Two: Possible Masonic, Mormon, Magick, and Pagan Influences," *Religion* 23 (1993) pp. 355-67.
- 2 See, for example, Richard Stivers, *Evil in Modern Myth and Ritual*, Athens, Georgia, University of Georgia Press 1982, pp. 42-3.
- 3 For a contemporary example of members of a Singapore spirit medium, Adrian Lim, engaging in ritualized deviance and child sacrifice in efforts to gain sexual partners and wealth, see Jean DeBernardi, 'On the rhetoric of antimoralities: a comparative consideration of religious antilanguages', Paper presented at the XIII World Congress of Sociology, Bielefeld, Germany, July, 1994; Ben Davidson and Maureen Chua, 'Lim: I killed the two children as sacrifices to the deities', *Straits Times* [Singapore], April 15, 1983; Sit Yin Fong, *I Confess*, Singapore, Heinemann Asia 1989; Sit Yin Fong, *Was Adrian Lim Mad?*, Singapore, Heinemann Asia 1989.
- 4 Albert K. Cohen, *Delinquent Boys. The Culture of the Gang*, New York, The Free Press 1955, p. 129.
- 5 The literature on family violence is vast, but one overview that focuses on issues of 'abuse as abuse of power' in a manner that may have relevance to ritual abuse discussions is David Finkelhor, 'Common features of family abuse', pp. 17-28 in David Finkelhor, Richard J. Gelles, Gerald T. Hotaling, and Murray A. Straus (eds), *The Dark Side of Families: Current Family Violence Research*, London, Sage Publications 1983.
- 6 J. S. La Fontaine, 'Allegations of sexual abuse in satanic rituals', *Religion* 24 (1994) pp. 181-4.
- 7 For a discussion of child sacrifice in the ancient world, see Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel*, New York, Harper & Row 1990, pp. 132-8. In light of Frankfurter's claim that child sacrifices took place in public ceremonies, I noted with interest Smith's mention of an account given by Philo of Byblos who stated that "ancient peoples in critically dangerous situations" often saw their rulers offer children as sacrifices to "avenging deities. The children thus given up were slaughtered according to a secret ritual" (Smith, *Early History of God*, p. 135 [emphasis added]).
- 8 Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, London, Eyre & Spottiswoode 1967; Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, Revised and Expanded Edition, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1970, pp. 79-80.
- 9 Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, London, Chatto Heinemann 1975, xi, 1-15.
- 10 Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, pp. 16-59.
- 11 Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, pp. 75-98.
- 12 Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, pp. 248-51.
- 13 Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, p. 255.
- 14 See: Philip Jenkins, *Intimate Enemies: Moral Panics in Contemporary Great Britain*, New York, Aldine de Gruyter 1992; Jeffrey S. Victor, *Satanic Panic: The Creation of a Contemporary Legend*, Chicago, Open Court 1993.
- 15 Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies* (1989) (translated by Raymond Rosenthal, New York, Pantheon Books 1991, p. 8).
- 16 Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 10.
- 17 Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 77.
- 18 See Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, pp. 182-204.
- 19 Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*, p. 101. Three quarters of a century ago, a scholar had reached this same conclusion. F. W. Bussell stated that '[t]he old Norse myth of disembodied spirits hunting under the leadership of "Diana" or Herodias (!) becomes an assembly of females on terra firma to pay homage to their master, Satan' (Bussell, *Religious Thought and Heresy in the Middle Ages*, London, Robert Scott 1918, p. 756).

- 20 Recently a journalist levelled a similar criticism against the methodology of the FBI's Kenneth Lanning, whose work is always cited as evidence that no cases of intergenerational satanism have been proven. After speaking extensively with several satanic ritual abuse claimants, Leslie Bennetts asked Lanning 'whether he too has difficulty disbelieving all the women he has interviewed since I, like so many therapists, remain deeply troubled by how credible they seem. To my surprise, he admits he has never talked to a ritual abuse survivor. It turns out that, through all the years he has been investigating this phenomenon, his contact has been solely with other law-enforcement professionals and with therapists; he has never gone to the source of these reports, the women themselves. Several weeks later Lanning revised his story to say that he had spoken with "several dozen" survivors on an unofficial basis' (Leslie Bennetts, 'Nightmares on Main Street', *Vanity Fair* (June, 1993), p. 62.
- 21 La Fontaine, 'Allegations', p. 183.
- 22 On the therapeutic creation of false memories see Michael D. Yapko, *Suggestions of Abuse*, New York, Simon and Schuster 1994.
- 23 Lauren Stratford, *Satan's Underground*, Eugene, Oregon, Harvest House 1988. A summary of events that led to the publisher's withdrawal appeared in Ken Sidey, 'Publisher withdraws satanism story', *Christianity Today*, February 19, 1990, pp. 34-5. The investigation that led to this withdrawal was published in an issue of *Cornerstone* magazine, which is a Christian publication that does investigative stories. Another significant scandal about false satanic claims swirled around an investigation that *Cornerstone* conducted against preacher and comedian Mike Warnke, who claimed that he had been a satanic high priest. See: Jon Trott and Mike Hertenstein, 'Selling Satan', *Cornerstone* 21 No. 98, 1992, pp. 6ff; Joe Maxwell, 'Article claims Warnke's satanic past a fraud', *Christianity Today* (August 17, 1992), p. 50; Joe Maxwell, 'Will the real Warnke please stand up?', *Christianity Today*, October 26, 1992, p. 67; Perucci Ferraiuolo, 'Warnke calls critics satanists', *Christianity Today*, November 9, 1992, pp. 49, 52; Perucci Ferraiuolo, 'Warnke admits "Failure"', *Christianity Today*, May 17, 1993, pp. 88-9. For the misrepresentation issues involved with Rebecca Brown, M.D., author of *He Came to Set the Captives Free*, Chino, California, Chick Publications 1986, see: G. Richard Fisher, Paul R. Blizard, and M. Kurt Goedelman, 'Drugs, demons and delusion: the "Amazing saga of Rebecca and Elaine', *Personal Freedom Outreach* 9 No. 4, October-December, 1989, pp. 1, 8-15.
- 24 La Fontaine ('Allegations', p. 183) attempts to cast doubt on this account by querying about why mice and not other animals allegedly were used. A simple answer is that mice are readily available in Western Canada where Samantha remembers the incident occurring. La Fontaine also misrepresents the whitewashing account. Samantha never claimed that she was whitewashed, nor did I. Two years before the article appeared in which a journalist described a woman's testimony before a federally commissioned committee, Samantha stated that group members had smeared her body with a paste. In her interview, she did not indicate a colour of the paste, nor did she add to her account after reading the article. I mentioned Samantha's alleged paste smearing incident in the context of the whitewashing account because both involved similar body violations that may have a scriptural basis. La Fontaine fails to provide an alternative explanation, even after raising the spectre of unspecified psychological explanations.
- 25 The bibliography indicates that the television show aired on February 23, 1990, and that all of Gail's tape recording (from which the transcripts were typed) took place in 1988 and 1989. The specific date of this recording was April 14, 1989.
- 26 Frankfurter has a problem with my Masonic sources, calling them 'outdated' and 'sensationalistic'. He may not have known that I am fairly well versed with Masonic research, having written an encyclopedia entry on the organization a few years ago. (See: Stephen A. Kent, 'Freemasonry', *Canadian Encyclopedia* 2nd edn, Edmonton, Alberta, Hurtig Publishers 1988, p. 845.) Given the fact that I am discussing alleged deviance within Freemasonry, very little relevant material exists, which nonetheless is what I used. Frankfurter himself does not offer specific suggestions of better sources.
- 27 The group in Colorado is called the Social Movements Recovery Center. The newsletter and informal support groups in Thunder Bay and Fredericton call themselves the Stone Angels, and the Decatur, Georgia group calls itself the Survivors of Masonic Abuse (S.O.M.A.).

- 28 Giovanni Filoramo, *A History of Gnosticism*, translated by Anthony Alcock, Oxford, Basil Blackwell 1990, pp. 183–4. Before reproducing Epiphanius' remembrance of a libertine group that offered sperm and menstrual blood as the body and blood of Christ, and ate aborted infants ('mixed in honey, pepper and other spices and perfumed oils to lessen the nausea'), Filoramo concludes that 'Epiphanius' account seems reliable. However coloured it might be, the very prudishness of the account guarantees the substantial truthfulness of the picture of the heretics that he presents' (p. 183). Worth mentioning is that this alleged group was not sacrificing infants in order to appease the presumed god of this world (i.e., Satan), but (according to its theology) was attempting to deny power to the god of this world whom its members believed thrived on the spiritual potency contained within sexual fluids.
- 29 The book that presents a dualistic interpretation in an attempt to explain a reputedly long tradition of satanism is H. T. F. Rhodes, *The Satanic Mass. A Criminological Study*, 1954, Toronto, Jarrolds 1968—a study that is long on insight but short on footnotes. Cohn (*Europe's Inner Demons*, pp. 56–9, 128–30) refutes claims that the Cathars translated dualism into Satanism. A more appropriate discussion of dualistic satanism appears in Diane E. Taub and Lawrence D. Nelson, 'Satanism in Contemporary America: establishment or underground', *The Sociological Quarterly* 34:3 (1993) p. 526.
- 30 These false charges are thoroughly discussed in Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, pp. 75–98. Worth noting, however, is that a Masonic source discusses these charges, which (it claims) involved 'heresy, idolatry, sorcery, immoral sexual practices of all types, infanticide and human sacrifice' (John H. Van Gorden, *Medieval Historical Characters in Freemasonry*, Lexington, Massachusetts and Bloomington, Illinois, Masonic Book Club 1987, p. 235). I mention this Masonic discussion of the Templars because I consider it plausible that deviants might use misconstrued history to sanctify their actions. Frankfurter did not realize that I was deliberately ahistorical in my two articles, since none of the accounts that I have gathered indicates that these alleged groups are comprised of history enthusiasts.
- 31 A large literature in French exists about these incidents, but a readily accessible book in English is Frances Mossiker, *The Affairs of the Poisons*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf 1969. While controversy exists about the extent of some people's involvement, I am not aware of any dispute over the essential accuracy of the Black Mass and child sacrifice claims. Excerpts from various interrogations and confessions appear in Gerhard Zacharias, *The Satanic Cult*, 1964, translated by Christine Trollope, London, George Allen & Unwin 1989, pp. 101–17.
- 32 Lorna Berman, *The Thoughts and Themes of the Marquis de Sade*, Kitchener, Ontario, Ainsworth Press 1971, p. 114; referring to Marquis de Sade, *Histoire de Juliette ou les Prosperities du Vice*, Vol. 2, Paris, Jean-Jacques Pauvert 1949, pp. 56–66. The quotes come from pp. 56 and 57.
- 33 Berman, *Thoughts and Themes*, p. 114; referring to Sade, *Juliette* 3, pp. 102–3.
- 34 Berman, *Thoughts and Themes*, p. 532; referring to Marquis de Sade, *Les 120 Journées de Sodome*, Vol. 3, Paris, Jean-Jacques Pauvert 1953, pp. 95, 103, 130.
- 35 Timothy d'Arch Smith, *The Books of the Beast*, London: Crucible 1987, p. 57, see 56. It is worth noting that Summers' 1920 pamphlet, 'The Marquis de Sade, a study in Alcolaginia', was the first separate work in English on Sade. Cohn (*Europe's Inner Demons*, pp. 120–1) knew about the Sade publication but not about his orchestration of Black Masses for homosexual seduction.
- 36 Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, *The Assault on Truth: Freud's Suppression of the Seduction Theory*, Toronto, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux 1984.
- 37 Sigmund Freud, 'The aetiology of hysteria', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* Vol. 3, translated from the German under the General Editorship of James Strachey, London, The Hogarth Press 1962, p. 203.
- 38 Jeffrey Moussaieff Mason (translator and ed.), *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887–1904*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 1985, p. 227 (letter from Freud dated January 24, 1897). Masson suggests that Freud may have believed that the origins of the harshness of the witches' judges lay in the fact that they, too, had been 'seduced in childhood . . . , inflicting the same torture on the witches that they underwent as children' (p. 226 n.2). Speculation of this kind, however, is unprovable. Interpretation of this 'scene' as fantasy comes from Masson, *Assault on Truth*, p. 105.
- 39 See Masson, *Assault on Truth*, pp. 57–106.

- 40 For an extensive analysis of the references to the Kapalikas throughout Indian literature, see: David N. Lorenzen, *The Kapālikas and Kālāmukhas*, New Delhi, Thomson Press 1972, pp. 1-71. The most recent mention of the group that I am able to find is a 1970 reference in: Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, *Evolution of Hindu Sects*, New Delhi, Munishriram Manoharlal 1970, p. 135. For mention of some followers living in Bengal around 1920, see: Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 5, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidas 1975, p. 4.
- 41 Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality, and Freedom*, translated by Willard R. Trask, Princeton, Princeton University Press 1973, p. 297.
- 42 Dasgupta, *A History*, p. 2; see also: Dakshina Ranjan Shastri, 'The Lokāyatikas and the Kapālikas', *The Indian Historical Quarterly* 7 (1931).
- 43 Lorenzen, *The Kapālikas*, pp. 85, 86; K. R. Van Kooj, *Worship of the Goddess According to the Kālikāpurana*, Leiden, E. J. Brill 1972, p. 8. The best known temple in South India at which devotees offered human sacrifices is Śri Saila (i.e., 'the Holy Mount'). See: R. W. Frazer, 'Śiva', in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* 11, edited by James Hastings, Edinburgh, T&T Clark 1920, p. 92.
- 44 Eliade, *Yoga*, pp. 297-8.
- 45 Reproduced in Jan Hollingsworth, *Unspeakable Acts*, New York, Congdon & Weed 1986, p. 148.
- 46 Hollingsworth, *Unspeakable Acts*, p. 475.
- 47 Hollingsworth, *Unspeakable Acts*, p. 480.
- 48 Denise Gamino and Pamela Ward, 'Terror at the Daycare', *The Vancouver Sun*, December 19, 1992.
- 49 The most detailed (and highly critical) discussion of this case is: Gary Cartwright, 'The Innocent and the Damned', *Texas Monthly*, April, 1994, pp. 100ff.
- 50 See: R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany*, Yale, Yale University Press 1988, p. 199; Colin Holmes, 'The ritual murder accusation in Britain', in *The Blood Libel Legend: A Casebook in Anti-Semitic Folklore*, Alan Dundes (ed.), Madison, Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, 1991, p. 99.
- 51 J. S. La Fontaine, *The Extent and Nature of Organised and Ritual Abuse*, London, HMSO 1994, p. 31.
- 52 Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder*, p. 228. The tragedy, of course, is that so many people were unjustly and often brutally punished before reason prevailed.
- 53 Paul and Shirley Eberle, *The Abuse of Innocence*, Buffalo, Prometheus Books, 1993, p. 363. The significance of the Disney plastic bag is that it contained a copyright date (1982) which provided the earliest time that the alleged tunnel could have been filled in with dirt.
- 54 Eberle, *Abuse of Innocence*, p. 373.
- 55 Roland C. Summit, 'The dark tunnels of McMartin', *The Journal of Psychohistory*, 21 No. 4, Spring, 1994, p. 407.
- 56 Gary Stickel, 'The tunnels found at the McMartin Preschool: a preliminary report', in the author's private collection, 1 pp.; also reproduced in Tate, *Children for the Devil*, p. 297. I also have a photograph of this plate that was taken at the site itself.
- 57 Stickel, 'The tunnels'.
- 58 Lloyd Demause, 'Why cults terrorize and kill children', *The Journal of Psychohistory* 21 No. 4, Spring, 1994, p. 506 and n.7. This is a serious charge, but I confirmed with Renee Kostick of the American Prosecutors Research Institute (APRI) in Alexandria, Virginia that the Eberles had published a pornographic magazine, *Finger*, which (among other things) included child pornography. APRI has many editions of the publication on file. I obtained the title of this publication, along with the title of their current 'tabloid', the *Los Angeles Star*, from Summit, 'Tunnels', p. 416 n.10.
- 59 Norma Meyer, 'Charles Buckley: no secret rooms on campus', *The Daily Breeze* [California], April 25, 1989, p. A3.
- 60 David Finkelhor, Linda Meyer Williams with Nanci Burns, *Nursery Crimes: Sexual Abuse in Day Care*, Beverly Hill: Sage Publications 1988, p. 59.
- 61 Finkelhor and Williams with Burns, *Nursery Crimes*, p. 61.
- 62 Finkelhor and Williams with Burns, *Nursery Crimes*, p. 61.
- 63 Finkelhor and Williams with Burns, *Nursery Crimes*, p. 62.
- 64 Finkelhor and Williams with Burns, *Nursery Crimes*, p. 63.
- 65 Finkelhor and Williams with Burns, *Nursery Crimes*, p. 64.

- 66 Judy Steed, *Our Little Secret. Confronting Child Sexual Abuse in Canada*, Toronto, Random House 1994, p. 126.
- 67 Steed, *Our Little Secret*, p. 108.
- 68 Jack Walker, 'Man charged with slaying baby', *The Ottawa Citizen*, March 3, 1990, p. A24.
- 69 See: *The Globe and Mail*, 'Grim assignment', March 16, 1990, p. A10; Stuart McCarthy, 'Officials Digging for Baby', *The Edmonton Sun* [Alberta, Canada], March 16, 1990, p. 46.
- 70 *Edmonton Journal* [Alberta, Canada] 'Hint satanic cult linked to abuses', March 11, 1990, p. C11; Ian MacLeod, 'Prescott Police study possible link between sex crimes and cult', *Ottawa Citizen* March 10, 1990, p. 1.
- 71 *The Globe and Mail*, 'Police drop murder charge against man after witness changes story about baby', April 18, 1990: A10.
- 72 Steed, *Our Little Secret*, p. 125.
- 73 I await the published results of a British study conducted by Bernard Gallagher of Manchester University that was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Department of Health. Gallagher and La Fontaine collaborated on their initial data collection (La Fontaine, 'Allegations', p. 5). 'The survey identified 149 cases of organized abuse and 62 of "ritual" abuse. The report says the extent of organized abuse had been underestimated', and Gallagher indicated that "[w]e have to look at how it is that men are brought up so that they think they can abuse children" (Tom Sharratt, 'Organized child abuse "Widespread"', *Guardian Weekly*, June 26, 1994, p. 9). When I contacted Gallagher by telephone on October 3, 1994, he told me that 'we ought to keep an open mind about the possibility of satanic ritual abuse'.
- 74 See, for example, the comments that Elizabeth Loftus made about Ingram in: Larry Witham, 'Distortion, creation of "Memories" fairly easy', *The Washington Times*, June 15, 1994, p. A9.
- 75 Lawrence Wright, 'Remembering Satan—part I', *The New Yorker*, May 17, 1993, pp. 60–81, and 'Remembering Satan—part II', May 24, 1993, pp. 54–76. Wright had telephoned noted psychiatrist Judith Herman about the case, and she found his biases and closed-mindedness so disturbing that she wrote a brief article about their conversation and the larger issue of false memories. Reflecting back on their exchange, Herman remembered that '[a]s I hung up the phone in frustration, I wondered whether quaint ethical principles like accuracy and impartiality had become obsolete at *The New Yorker*'. See: Judith Herman, 'Presuming to know the truth', *Nieman Reports*, Spring, 1994, p. 44. See also: Ethan Watters, 'The devil in Mr. Ingram', *Mother Jones*, July/August, 1991, pp. 30ff. Worth noting is the role that Lauren Stratford's discredited book, *Satan's Underground*, seems to have played on daughter Ericka's 'memories' of satanic abuse. Ericka mentioned her father's 'ritual meetings' in her letter to the court in its pre-sentence investigation. See: Department of Corrections, Thurston County, Washington, 'Paul Ross Ingram, pre-sentence investigation,' Thurston #88-1-752-1, Victim Statement [from Ericka Lynn Ingram], February 28, 1990, p. 2.
- 76 The Superior Court of the State of Washington in and for the County of Thurston, State of Washington, Plaintiff, Paul Ross Ingram, Defendant, No. 88-1-752-1, 'Report of Proceedings', Vol. VII (February 1, 1990), p. 905.
- 77 Washington vs. Ingram, p. 906.
- 78 Wright, 'Remembering Satan—II', pp. 66–8.
- 79 Washington vs. Ingram, p. 908.
- 80 Washington vs. Ingram, pp. 910–3. Lawrence Wright fails to quote this important document in his update of the *New Yorker* articles (*Remembering Satan*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf 1994).
- 81 My source for members of the organization's advisory board comes from Lana Lawrence, 'False Memory Syndrome Foundation advisory board members', *Moving Forward* (A News-journal [sic] for Survivors of Sexual Child Abuse and Those Who Care for Them), 2 No. 5, September, 1993, p. 5. Frankfurter also cites work by additional board members George K. Ganaway and Elizabeth Loftus. Among the best articles about the creation of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation, plus discussions of what seem to have been inappropriate sexual boundaries in the household of the founders when they were raising their children, is: Stephen Fried, 'War of remembrance', *Philadelphia* (Magazine), January, 1994., pp. 66ff.

- 82 Quoted in Larry Witham, 'Satanic ritual abuse: modern horror or hoax?', *The Washington Times*, June 15, 1994, p. A9.
- 83 The most accessible statement about people's ability to bury, then (often decades later) recover traumatic memories is Lenore Terr, *Unchained Memories*, New York, Basic Books 1994. An example of this pattern occurring for a Brown University ethics professor, Ross Cheit, appears in Miriam Horn, 'Memories lost and found', *US News and World Report*, November 29, 1993, p. 52. A new angle on the issue of buried and recovered memories appears in Jennifer J. Freyd, 'betrayal-trauma: traumatic amnesia as an adaptive response to childhood abuse', *Ethics and Behavior* 4 No. 4 Decettiber, 1994 (forthcoming).
- 84 For a discussion about memory distortion in children recalling traumatic events that has relevance for adults, see David P. H. Jones, 'Ritualism and Child Sexual Abuse', *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 1991, p. 167.
- 85 In one of the more peculiar criticisms of my research, La Fontaine implies that something amiss hides in the fact that the number of informants jumped from at least 10 (cited in a conference paper) to at least fourteen alleged survivors whose interviews I had tape recorded, and that I was imprecise about the number of informants. As an academic herself, surely La Fontaine realizes that researchers refine their theorizing by receiving collegial feedback and acquiring additional data. This process is basic to the scientific enterprise, and it explains why my two articles (published in July and October, 1993) present more informants and a more elaborate conceptual model than my November, 1991 conference paper. On the one hand, La Fontaine ('Allegations', p. 183) seems to realize that this process of intellectual growth explains new elements found in my published articles. On the other hand, she expresses surprise that my published 'data differs quite markedly from that used in an earlier version of the paper given to the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion' ('Allegations', p. 181). Put simply, I got more informants and I developed more theory before I published.

Since the late Spring of 1990, I have taped thirty-eight interviews with ritual abuse claimants, and collected six diaries from them and additional people. I have received tapes from a fellow researcher who interviewed a mutual contact, and I also have received copies of transcripts and related material from other researchers. In addition, I have spoken (sometimes at length) with other claimants but have not gained permission to interview them formally or copy their private written material. Research assistants check all of my interviews' typed transcripts against the tapes before I quote them. If La Fontaine has doubts about the existence or contents of these tapes, then I invite her to my University where I will make tapes and transcripts available for her verification.

I am imprecise about the number of satanic abuse claimants with whom I have spoken or interviewed only because of the difficulties that I have classifying some of the accounts. One woman, for example, gave me a taped interview and five illustrated diary books of extraordinary ritual abuse. She did not mention a satanic figure as a worship object in either the interview or diaries, but she speaks of herself as a satanic abuse survivor. I am uncertain, therefore, how to classify her. Similarly, a man spoke to me about violent ritualized sexual abuse and murder that he remembers, and he considers himself a satanic abuse survivor. Again, I am uncertain about how best to classify his claims. Other of my accounts present additional classification ambiguities.

- 86 My sources tell me that the investigating officers informed Mary's father that his adult daughter was remembering abuse by neighbors and clergy, never realizing that she soon would name her father as a major ritual participant. Consequently, her father and his associates had ample time to eliminate potentially corroborating evidence (if in fact they were guilty). In Samantha's case, police allowed a person whom she accused of ritual abuse to take a polygraph through a private company, and then received only excerpts of the results in a letter from the man's lawyer. Police then used an unscientific Freudian interpretation (involving snakes as penises, etc.) to explain away her account.

Police did locate a man (alive!) whom Gail claimed to have killed in a cult-related murder. Another investigator, who was not in law enforcement, also located the same man and got him to acknowledge knowing all of Gail's friends. Suspiciously, however, he denied knowing her even though the two of them and her friends had worked very closely together. While the investigator was convinced that the man was lying about not knowing Gail, neither he nor Gail herself could explain her apparently false memory that she had killed the

individual. Before meeting Gail, however, I met a younger sister who intimated sexual assaults by her grandfather, and Gail spoke of similar incidents when I interviewed her some time later. It seems likely that *something* traumatic happened in Gail's family, but I remain uncertain about what it was. Thus far, another bizarre claim that Gail made about ritual abuse has checked out. I provide these examples because La Fontaine ('Allegations', p. 182) attempts to discredit these accounts because they have not led to prosecutions. Were she to work more closely with claimants, then perhaps she would appreciate even more fully than she does (see La Fontaine, *Extent and Nature*, pp. 26-7) the difficulties that agencies have investigating adult memories of abuse from long ago. An extensive analysis of inter-agency difficulties investigating child allegations of ritual abuse is Linda Maxwell, 'Investigating ritual abuse: an emerging social problem', Unpublished Master of Social Work Thesis, Graduate Programme in Social Work, York University (Toronto), 1991. Sexism, which is rampant in police forces, probably hinders investigations in cases that involve sensitive sexual material.

- 87 Frankfurter objected to what he considered to be a simplistic division that I made between social scientists and the mental health community over the issue of intergenerational satanic abuse. Certainly (as I suggested) the debate is complex even within disciplines, but recent events in Britain showed how this crude division nonetheless has merit. When La Fontaine, who is an anthropologist, concluded her report for the Health Secretary that "'exposed the myth of satanic abuse", a child psychologist and two psychiatrists immediately challenged her findings. See: *The Guardian*, 'Therapists reject Bottomley's "Exploded Myth" claim', June 3, 1994, p. 2.

STEPHEN A. KENT is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, University of Alberta. He received his B.A. in sociology from the University of Maryland (College Park) in 1973; an M.A. in the History of Religions from the American University in 1978, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Religious Studies from McMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario) in 1983. He has published articles in *Philosophy East and West*, *Journal of Religious History*, *British Journal of Sociology*, *Sociological Inquiry*, *Sociological Analysis*, *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, *Quaker History*, *Comparative Social Research*, *Journal of Religion and Health*, and *Religion*. His current research concentrates on non-traditional and alternative religions.

Department of Sociology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G 2H4