

January 2, 2008,

Vice Chancellor Loessberg-Zahl,

I have thoroughly reviewed the research study, "Characteristics and Sources of Allegations of Ritualistic Child Abuse" which was published in 1994. I will be writing a journal article and a book, which will include information about this study, but before I do I want to give Gail Goodman and the other researchers an opportunity to respond and to correct me if I have come to any conclusions that are based on an incorrect interpretation of their work. The issues that I am raising are really quite serious. I discovered what I consider to be clear and unacceptable bias by the main researchers, the exclusion of substantial data without explanation, numerous methodological errors, and conclusions drawn without any supporting evidence, and in some instances, in spite of supporting evidence, which contradicted their conclusions. Because of this, I am directing this cover letter to you, in hopes that you can oversee the response by Dr. Goodman.

One of the more disturbing issues is that I discovered an article in 1994, written by Daniel Goleman of the New York Times, about this study. He claimed in his article that: "In a survey of more than 11,000 psychiatric and police workers throughout the country, conducted for the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, researchers found more than 12,000 accusations of group cult sexual abuse based on satanic ritual, but not one that investigators had been able to substantiate." I am including a copy of this article. I have searched the internet and discovered that this same misinformation is on at least 50 web sites.

I believe the New York Times reported inaccurate numbers and I hope you will agree with me. It appears that Study One, which canvassed psychiatrists, social workers and psychologists, examined at most 1,061 ritual abuse allegations. Study Two, which canvassed District Attorney's Offices, Social Services and Law Enforcement, appears to have examined at most 412 cases of ritual abuse. Study Three was about repressed memory which used the same cases from Study One. Study Four was about children which used different numbers, and is not relevant, and Study Five was about religion (which I did not critique), which also used the same numbers as Study One and Two. Dr. Goodman concluded that relatively few clinicians and relatively few agencies encountered cases of ritualistic or religion-related child abuse during the decade of the 1980's. However, I was unable to tell exactly how many professionals in both Study 1 and Study 2 reported ritual abuse allegations which is why that question is included within the body of my letter/report. Regardless, I am contesting her finding, due to the number and amount of reports she arbitrarily excluded.

If you agree that Dr. Goodman did not evaluate 12,000 allegations of satanic ritual abuse, can you explain why this study - worldwide - has been characterized as having "unsubstantiated" 12,000 ritual abuse allegations? If my numbers are correct, has there been any effort by these researchers or UCDAVIS to correct the above claims? Unfortunately, this study has been used to claim that the scientific community found that

the satanic ritual abuse of children does not occur, which is completely false, and endangers both child and adult victims of satanic ritual abuse.

I am requesting that a response be given to each one of my questions; I have included a disc to make that possibility easier. If you agree with my finding that there are too many errors in this study, I am requesting that UCDAVIS formally withdraw this research study, admit to the many methodological errors which nullify its results, provide an apology to the public, including a correction in writing about the mistaken numbers which were provided to Daniel Goleman of the New York Times by most likely Dr. Gail Goodman as the lead researcher, and censure the researchers involved. I believe that what occurred in this study is actually academic fraud.

I was an investigative social worker at Child Protective Services and have investigated ritual abuse and the politics surrounding this topic for 15 years. I have spent considerable time reading your research study and formulating question and so would appreciate it if you treated my observations and concerns with utmost seriousness which this subject matter deserves. I have a Masters Degree in Psychology and therefore do not have the same training in research statistics as a Ph.D. so my lack of my complete understanding of your statistical analysis may be somewhat elementary to you. However, I have several colleagues who are Ph.D's and they do not understand this study either.

If you would, please phone or write me after receiving this letter and let me know first, if you will be responding, and second, how long that response might take. If there is to be no formal response to my questions, please send me a letter, informing me of this decision. If a cursory response is given in response to my questions which do not address the issues that I have raised, then I will have to elevate this matter to the Board of Regents or perhaps State officials.

Sincerely,

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Proof Lacking for Ritual Abuse by Satanists

By DANIEL GOLEMAN

New York Times (1857-Current file); Oct 31, 1994; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2004) pg. A13

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Tales of satanic ritual abuse, with well-organized cults sacrificing animals and babies and engaging in sexual perversion and cannibalism, is the stuff of tabloid television. Now the first empirical study of its actual prevalence, based on information from district attorneys, social service workers, police officials and psychotherapists, suggests that these tales are usually just that — figments of imagination.

Although the survey found occasional cases of lone abusers who used ritualistic trappings, it found no substantiated reports of well-organized satanic rings of people who sexually abuse children.

In a survey of more than 11,000 psychiatric and police workers throughout the country, conducted for the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, researchers found more than 12,000 accusations of group cult sexual abuse based on satanic ritual, but not one that investigators had been able to substantiate. The organizers of the survey say it is the first authoritative national survey on the subject.

Over the last decade, accusations of molesting by cults have been made in thousands of cases and in retrospective claims by adult patients in psychotherapy who say they were abused as children. Combined with sensationalistic press coverage, these lawsuits and other reports have led many people to believe that there is a nationwide network of satanic groups preying on the young.

"After scouring the country, we found no evidence for large-scale cults that sexually abuse children,"

said Dr. Gail Goodman, a psychologist at the University of California at Davis, who directed the survey.

"Since the McMartin preschool case, there have been claims of ritualistic and sadistic child abuse in cases all over the country, and we've been concerned," said David Lloyd, director of the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. "The survey was to see just how well-founded these concerns are — if these are just based on mistaken perceptions or there is some firm evidence."

The survey included 6,910 psychiatrists, psychologists and clinical social workers, and 4,655 district attorneys, police departments and social

Extreme cases of cultism rarely occur, a study says.

service agencies. They reported 12,264 accusations of ritual abuse that they had investigated.

The survey found that there was not a single case where there was clear corroborating evidence for the most common accusation, that there was "a well-organized intergenerational satanic cult, who sexually molested and tortured children in their homes or schools for years and committed a series of murders," Dr. Goodman said.

But Dr. Goodman said her group did find "convincing evidence of lone perpetrators or couples who say they are involved with Satan or use the claim to intimidate victims."

One of the best-documented cases, reported by a district attorney in the South, involved four boys and a girl whose grandparents are accused of molesting them from age 4 into early adolescence; the case came to light when the children refused to visit their grandparents.

"The grandparents had black robes, candles, and Christ on an inverted crucifix — and the children had chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease, in their throats," said Dr. Goodman, citing the district attorney's report.

But the overall results show little or no support for the more extreme claims, Dr. Goodman said, adding, "If there is anyone out there with solid evidence of satanic cult abuse of children, we would like to know about it."

There are, of course, people who will be unswayed by this new study because of their belief that abusive satanic groups do exist but are successful at eluding detection. But previous smaller studies done by the Michigan State Police, the Virginia Crime Commission, the Office of the Attorney General in Utah and the British Government had similar findings.

Many psychotherapists who have been vocal about a supposed epidemic of sexual abuse by well-organized satanic rings have grown more cautious of late. "There's clearly been a contagion, a contamination of what people say in therapy because of what they see on TV or read about satanic ritual abuse," said Dr. Benet Braun, a psychiatrist who heads the Dissociative Disorders Unit at Rush-North Shore Medical Center in Chicago.