
They Couldn't Get My Soul: Recovered Memories, Ritual Abuse, and the Specter(s) of Religious Difference

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Abstract: During the 1980s and early 1990s, hundreds of women recovered memories of suffering extraordinary and nefarious torments at the hands of loved ones and trusted authority figures—a phenomenon that came to be known as satanic ritual abuse (SRA). In this article, I argue that late twentieth-century satanic ritual abuse discourse helped perpetuate intolerance toward non-Christian religions and foreclose conditions of possibility for benign religious difference in the United States. Psychological diagnoses related to satanic ritual abuse fueled popular anxieties regarding the sexual peril of American minority religions. Perpetuating diagnoses of satanic ritual abuse reinforced popular suspicions that religious minorities are dangerous, particularly when it comes to matters of sexuality.

Résumé : Au cours des années 1980 et 1990, des centaines de femmes américaines ont raconté avoir été victimes de violences religieuses extraordinaires de la part de leurs proches (famille et figures d'autorité). Ce phénomène a été désigné par le terme de SRA (satanic ritual abuse). Cet article avance l'hypothèse selon laquelle ces récits d'abus sataniques rituels ont soutenu et encouragé un discours d'intolérance envers les religions non-chrétiennes aux États-Unis. En effet, les diagnostics et suivis des témoignages d'abus ont alimenté l'anxiété populaire envers les périls sexuels présumés associés aux religions américaines minoritaires.

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“I completely blocked out the abuse . . . They were after my soul, but they couldn’t get it. I never willingly participated. They had my body, but they couldn’t get my soul.”

“Annette,” in *The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse* (1988)

“Thank God you understand.”

Michelle Smith to Dr. Lawrence Pazder, in *Michelle Remembers* (1980)

If you had peeked through the window of Annette’s childhood home, her family would have seemed “so proper and clean, they squeaked” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 419). To casual observers, her parents were respectable church-going citizens of a wholesome Midwestern community. But Annette remembers things differently. She remembers sexual molestation, torture, and mind control. She remembers her parents abusing her and letting church officials, business people, and town leaders abuse her. She remembers them using her body to birth infants intended for satanic sacrifices.¹ “I was what they called a ‘breeder,’” she recounts. “I was less than twelve years old. They overpowered me and got me pregnant and then they took my babies. They killed them right in front of me” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 417).

For almost forty years, Annette blocked this abuse from her memory. She was “just an ordinary housewife,” a Den Mother and church member “who never got too far away from her husband, her home, and her kids” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 418). But something was wrong: “I never understood why I felt the way I did. I felt worthless, dirty, unable to go forward in life” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 418). She began to fear she had been “born crazy” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 419). But as she neared fifty, Annette remembered being abused by her parents. Eight years later, memories of strange and ritualized abuses emerged. She recalls being shocked and heartbroken: “I couldn’t believe my parents had done such heinous things to me” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 419).

Annette is one of hundreds of women who recovered similar memories of suffering extraordinary and nefarious torments at the hands of loved ones and trusted authority figures—a phenomenon that came to be known as satanic ritual abuse (SRA) during the 1980s and early 1990s. Though very few mental health professionals credited satanic ritual abuse as a legitimate phenomenon, those few who did diagnosed a startling number of adult women as survivors, encouraging them to “recover” memories of ritualized abuse. (The methods used to treat these women have since been found to encourage the creation of false memories.) SRA-related diagnoses and treatments led to accusations of family members, and lawsuits, contributing to a broader public outcry against the national moral decay known as the “Satanic Panic.”

Critical engagement of the SRA phenomenon requires frank acknowledgement of several contradictory data points. Many women, like Annette, used the language of Satanic ritual abuse to identify their trauma, to authorize and overcome their feelings of powerlessness. Satanic ritual abuse rhetoric, moreover, drew unprecedented public attention to the prevalence of child abuse in contemporary American society, while exculpating American families—the primary perpetrators of child abuse, sexual or otherwise—by attributing abuse to a phantasmagoric folk devil. At the same time, SRA-related accusations and psychological diagnoses did substantial and concrete damage—to the women diagnosed, to the family members they accused on the basis of shaky “recovered” memories, and to the American body politic.

I argue that the empowerment of women diagnosed as SRA survivors came at the expense of American religious difference. A small but significant number of mental health professionals, including accredited psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers, adopted a religious script—Satanic ritual abuse—to explain the prevalence of women’s experiences of physical and sexual abuse. SRA-related diagnoses used Christian symbolism and language to shift the blame for women’s abuse beyond the domestic sphere. The “Satanic Panic” successfully located the abuse of women and children in the shadowy margins of American religion, foreclosing space for benign religious difference, and obscuring rampant domestic abuse by laying the blame at the cloven hooves of an imagined religious outsider.

Remembering *Michelle*: Scripting Satanic Ritual Abuse

Very few, if any, women have independently identified themselves as SRA survivors. Annette admits she was confused when the memories of ritual abuse first surfaced in therapy, but other survivors helped her make sense of what she was feeling. “If I hadn’t been around other survivors talking about their experiences, I wouldn’t have had any idea this stuff even existed,” she confesses (Bass and Davis, 1988: 419). Survivors’ shared memories of ritual abuse—usually recovered under the direction of a mental health professional trained to spot symptoms indicative of satanic practices—helped Annette make sense of her own pain and fear.

Annette recounts her recovered memories in the first edition of *The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*. Published in 1988, *The Courage to Heal* was a popular and influential self-help guide that suggested abuse survivors might repress traumatic memories only to recover them later in life, often with the help of a mental health professional. Annette’s story was one of fifteen personal accounts, and one of only two to include an explanatory codicil. This afterword warned readers about the looming threat of satanic ritual abuse.² In this epilogue, San Francisco Police Department investigator Sandi Gallant corroborates Annette’s account of extraordinary torments. “It does happen . . . When Satanism [*sic*] is involved, the child is used by the adults to align themselves more closely with their spiritual leader—in their eyes, Satan” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 421). Gallant and *The Courage to Heal* authors Ellen Bass and Laura Davis emphasize therapy’s crucial role in identifying and comprehending ritual abuse. Bass and Davis urge readers to “see a therapist who knows, believes, and understands the issue” (Bass and Davis, 1988: 421). Officer Gallant identifies Lawrence

Pazder as the foremost expert on the ritual abuse phenomenon and co-author of the controversial bestseller *Michelle Remembers* (1980).

Michelle Remembers, the earliest and most influential narrative of satanic ritual abuse, is a firsthand account of Michelle Smith's memories of captivity, torture, and molestation by a group of devil worshipping cultists. Michelle Proby ("Smith," for the purposes of the account) recovered her memories of these atrocities under the guidance of her co-author, therapist, and eventual husband Dr. Lawrence Pazder. Following *Michelle's* publication, Smith and Lawrence Pazder emerged as the world's foremost specialists in satanic ritual abuse. They led workshops for numerous law enforcement departments, who identified satanic elements in hundreds of criminal investigations. Pazder and Smith gave expert testimony and guided psychological evaluations of children who bore witness to satanic ritual abuse in cases like the McMartin Preschool trial, the longest and most expensive criminal trial in American history. The authors also directed seminars for mental healthcare professionals, who in turn diagnosed hundreds of women with SRA-related maladies. Pazder and Smith's narrative of ritual abuse, disseminated through their publications and their influence throughout the criminal, legal, and mental health communities, incited America's Satanic Panic (De Young, 2004: 21; Frankfurter, 2006: 56; Richardson, 1997: 66; Victor, 1998: 111).

But despite numerous criminal charges, legal proceedings, and mental health diagnoses related to satanic ritual abuse, no credible evidence emerged to substantiate activities like those that Michelle and Annette remember surviving. The abuses Smith recounts in *Michelle Remembers*—evidence cited in *The Courage to Heal* and in hundreds of mental health seminars and lectures—directly contradict the accounts of her siblings (absent from the memoir) and local police records of the times and places in question. A decade-long federal investigation yielded no credible evidence to corroborate any allegation of satanic ritual abuse (Lanning, 1992). The editors of *The Courage to Heal* excised Annette's story from all subsequent editions and repressed/recovered memory syndrome remains a contested psychological diagnosis (Richardson et al., 2009: 566). Through the publication of *Michelle Remembers* and the dissemination of his expertise (through seminars, workshops, and distributed materials), Pazder molded Michelle Smith's memories into a repeatable narrative of ritual abuse, later codified and institutionalized in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM). Pazder's diagnosis and treatment of Smith, and the dissemination of his perspective and beliefs regarding satanic ritual abuse, aided the infusion of Christian sensibilities and symbolism into a presumably secular institution—that is, the American mental health profession—and its therapeutic practices. Therapists who accepted Pazder's expertise also followed his prescribed treatment course, often using hypnotic age regression to infantilize (primarily women) patients. *Michelle Remembers* is the ur-text of satanic ritual abuse diagnosis and treatment; as such, it is helpful to look closely at the script it establishes.

Michelle Smith first met with Dr. Lawrence Pazder in 1973 to discuss "problems . . . rooted in her family background and upbringing"; they renewed their therapeutic relationship in 1977 when Smith became depressed and physically ill after suffering a miscarriage (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 5). From the summer of 1976 until late November 1977, several days a week, often for five to six hours a day, Smith narrated

gruesome and sometimes impossible incidents of abuse with heavy religious overtones. She relates being beaten, thrown in the air, sodomized, restrained, forcibly contorted, smeared with filth, and made to assist in infanticide-by-crucifix and the murder of an imaginary friend (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 97). Months into counseling, Pazder identified Smith's molesters as satanists, and specifically as members of the Church of Satan (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 116–117).

Smith and Pazder's relationship was emphatically hierarchical: Pazder behaved *in loco parentis* toward a 27-year-old woman.³ Smith took on the corollary identity of child to Pazder's paternal therapist. Smith recounted her memories of abuse in a child's voice, often with her head on Pazder's shoulder or holding his hand (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 19, 32).⁴ Describing his unconventional therapeutic methods, Pazder explained that he "realized that the only way he could assist the child—and therefore the woman whom the child had become—was to *allow her* to relive the entire ghastly experience" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 25, emphasis added). Her psychiatrist frequently thought of and referred to Smith as a girl or a child: "there was no mistaking it: *a girl of perhaps no more than five* lay on the couch before him" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 46, emphasis added).⁵ Pazder further encouraged Smith to speak and think as her child-self, even beyond the duration of their sessions (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 82, 71, 114, 195). He gave Smith a doll as part of their work together, encouraging her to "*embrace that little girl* [i.e. herself]—that little girl who was so abandoned and wounded" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 63, original emphasis). *Michelle* proposes that Pazder facilitated Smith's memory-recovery through the adoption of a specifically parental empathy. Pazder's infantilization of his patient was pronounced, and this dynamic would shape subsequent accounts of and treatment plans for psychopathologies identified with satanic ritual abuse.

While it was Pazder, not Smith, who provided the ecclesiastical framework that would shape Smith's recollections, Smith does identify anti- or inverted Christian religious elements early in her remembered abuses. She notes, for instance, that her captors muttered that "they'd show God" while they sodomized her and smeared her with filth (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 26–27). She recounts observing many adults engaging in "ritual sex, apparently"; the combination of abuse and ritual sex led Smith to conclude that her captors "sound[ed] to [her] like witches" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 36, 47). She expresses concern about revealing these memories to Pazder, because Pazder was a Roman Catholic and "witches are against the church" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 48). Smith is convinced of the deliberate nature of the abuse, if uncertain of the perpetrators' religious leanings, and the elaborate ritualism and grotesque severity of the abusive incidents reinforces her convictions (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 16, 51, 84). But Pazder insisted that "Michelle's tormentors . . . were not ordinary cultists" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 77). He explained that this group had "carr[ie]d out a calculated assault against all that [was] good in [Smith]" and that "the only group [he knew] about that fits [Smith's] description is the Church of Satan" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 116–117). Pazder explained that this Church of Satan was a worldwide organization bent on the destruction of goodness and children (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 127–128). Pazder's religious worldview informed his identification of Michelle's sexually abusive and religiously transgressive tormentors as antagonists of the Roman Catholic Church, which is to say, satanists.

The religiosity of Smith's abuse narrative remains vague until the point where Pazder, rendered religious expert by dint of his Catholic background, identified her captors and their abuses as satanic. Pazder expressed a paternalistic pride in Smith's lack of religious certainty: he recounted that the satanic "pattern" of Smith's memories "had been apparent to [him] for some time, and he was pleased [when] Michelle be[gan] to recognize it" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 114–115). Pazder emphasized Smith's religious ignorance repeatedly, often coupling his assertions with her "discovery" of allegedly unfamiliar religious objects, like the crucifix and the Bible. After being doused in blood, Smith unconsciously—but deliberately, Pazder insisted—smeared the blood onto her tormentors in the shape of a cross:

"When you were reliving it—do you know what your hands were doing while you were telling me about wiping the blood on them?" [Pazder asked.] "No, I don't understand what you mean." Dr. Pazder took her hands and helped her to an erect sitting position. "Okay, now I want you to show me how you wiped it on them. Show me again, now." Michelle . . . hesitantly began to move her hands in front of her, up and down, side to side. "I just . . . wiped it on them . . . like this . . . and this . . ." "What are you making on them?" "Making on them? I don't know. You mean . . . I don't understand. Oh, I see. Crosses." "Yes, crosses." "I didn't realize I was making crosses on them." "You were very clearly making crosses on all of them." (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 44)

As with his identification of her tormentors as satanists, Pazder here provided an explicitly religious framework through which Smith interpreted her memories, going so far as to give Smith a cross and offer to facilitate a conversation between Smith and Pazder's parish priest (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 49–50). Pazder insisted that because Smith came from a "harsh, devastated family [in which] there had been no religious observance whatsoever," her impulse to make the sign of the cross on her captors must have "come from a very deep part of [Smith.] It is a very symbolic and powerful thing to do," he explained (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 45).⁶ The Satanists' aversion to the crucifix, and Smith's own unconscious religious sense, are what reveal the symbol's significance (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 104). Pazder, in his role as parent-therapist, consistently encouraged Smith to understand her emerging memories through the lens of his own Roman Catholicism.

The language and symbolism that permeate *Michelle Remembers* present religion in a universal and essentialized dichotomy: Christianity (undifferentiated and indistinguishable from Roman Catholicism) and anti-Christianity. The authors characterize non-Christian practices as dangerous, predatory, and abusive toward innocent women and children. The satanic abuses Smith remembers took the form of inverted Christian practices. Her captors abused her in a room that looked like a church (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 116, 103). When Smith recounts that she was forced to eat ashes, Pazder observes that

if the ashes they tried to make her eat . . . were really the ashes of the woman who had been killed—the lump [a humanoid growth under Smith's mother's skirt, which Smith smashed with a bottle]—[her captors] may have been trying to use it to pass on, symbolically, the

spirit of that person . . . In the Christian Holy Communion, there was great emphasis on consuming the body and blood of Christ. Perhaps this business of the ashes had some relation to that, in a contrary sort of way. (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 96)

Smith and Pazder note that her tormentors observed the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar in reverse (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 117, 153). In discussing these incidents with the local parish priest, Pazder explained that Smith's captors "were involved in something very definitely anti-Christian" (130). Under hypnosis, Smith recalls a ritual in which her tormentors "sang like a priest does . . . but weird" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 187). When Satan emerges from the flames during "the feast of the Beast," he first draws the Christian cross in the air and crosses it out in mid-air, destroying it (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 228). Throughout *Michelle Remembers*, Smith's narrative, guided by Pazder's religious worldview, consistently identifies her abusers as predatory anti-Christians.

Pazder shaped Smith's narrative of abuse and recovery—and thus future accounts and treatments of ritual abuse—in significant ways. Pazder presented himself not as a dispassionate secular medical authority, but as an emotionally invested, religiously knowledgeable stand-in for Smith's absent father. *Michelle Remembers* leaves no space for benign religious difference; the text and its authors characterize religion as either benevolent Christianity or as dangerous, abusive, sexually predatory anti-Christianity. Following the book's publication, Smith emerges as the paradigmatic ritual abuse survivor, and Pazder as the leading expert in the phenomenon. *Michelle's* litany of one patient's puerile dependence upon a therapist/father and the persistence of its Roman Catholic interpretive framework would repeat itself in the diagnoses and treatments of subsequent ritual abuse survivors. The two key elements—an infantilizing treatment plan for SRA and the identification of child abuse as a nefarious supernatural occurrence—would shape American psychology for the next decade. Mental health professionals convinced of Pazder's expertise would replicate his infantilizing and Catholically-inflected treatment plan, encouraging adult women to articulate experiences of abuse in child-like and supernatural terms.

Diagnostic Demonologies

It is perhaps not surprising that the trauma of one woman, raised in a Roman Catholic household, enrolled in a parochial school, under the therapeutic guidance of a devoutly Roman Catholic man, would find expression in the language and symbols of Roman Catholic mysticism. It is noteworthy, however, that so many mental health professionals accepted this "satanic phantasmagoria" as gospel (Mulhern, 1994: 284). Medical anthropologist Sherrill Mulhern (1994: 265) asserts that these therapists, in an "ultrascientific psychodemonology," ignored their "own irrational premises" in diagnoses and treatments of ritual abuse-related pathologies. The psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers who identified survivors of ritual abuse followed *Michelle's* script, prompting patients and clients to craft improbable narratives of supernatural abuses while encouraging them to revert to their child-selves. Mental health professionals meaningfully

incorporated Pazder's infantilizing treatment methods and Roman Catholic worldview into subsequent diagnoses and treatments of satanic ritual abuse. In this way, a presumably secular field absorbed and perpetuated an intolerant religious dichotomy between Christianity and violent, predatory anti-Christianity. The rhetoric of satanic ritual abuse Pazder and Smith introduced into American mental health discourses created a paradigm for child sexual and physical abuse narratives, one which perpetuated religious intolerance while infantilizing adult women patients.

Michelle Remembers would eventually sell hundreds of thousands of copies, despite the absence of independent verification for any of Smith's memories or for the international satanic conspiracy she alleged (Nathan and Snedeker, 2001: 45). The publication of *Michelle Remembers* and the authors' successful efforts to publicize the work conferred Smith and Pazder with expert status in ritual abuse and related psychological diagnoses, psychogenic amnesia (better known as repressed memories) and multiple personality disorder.⁷ In numerous public appearances, Pazder and Smith deliberately popularized the core diagnosis in *Michelle Remembers*: the idea that "the trauma of ritual abuse allegedly experienced early in life was so severe that memories of it had been deeply repressed" and were only accessible through extensive therapeutic intervention (Richardson, 1997: 66). *Michelle Remembers* guided subsequent therapeutic treatments of SRA survivors by providing a repeatable narrative for the articulation of abuse, a script that mirrored Pazder's Roman Catholic worldview and infantilizing approach.

The authors' most significant contribution to American mental health discourse followed Pazder's presentation to the 1981 national meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, in which he first identified the phenomenon of religiously motivated child torture and exploitation he called "ritual abuse." Ritual abuse, according to Pazder, included "repeated physical, emotional, mental and spiritual assaults" that are carried out through the "systematic use of symbols, ceremonies, and machinations designed and orchestrated to attain malevolent effects" (De Young, 2004: 24, 32). During *Michelle Remembers*' extensive promotional tour, Pazder and Smith popularized diagnoses related to ritual abuse in training seminars for social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists (De Young, 2004: 24). The authors facilitated a number of workshops for mental health professionals, designed to help recognize, diagnose, and treat symptoms of ritual abuse.

A minority of mental health professionals were responsible for the majority of satanic ritual abuse diagnoses. Only 11–13 percent of surveyed therapists had direct experience with even one case of alleged satanic abuse (Bottoms and Davis, 1997: 112). An even smaller number accounted for a huge proportion of reported cases: 2 percent of therapists surveyed had seen hundreds of cases each (Bottoms and Davis, 1997: 112). Participants in national and regional conferences of the International Society for Study of Multiple Personality Disorder and Dissociation were most likely to diagnose patients with SRA-related disorders. These conferences hosted workshops and training sessions on identifying symptoms of satanic ritual abuse. Attendants widely circulated non-peer reviewed presentations via cassette tapes and photocopies, disseminating ritual abuse theories to broad audiences (Bottoms and Davis, 1997: 116–117). These materials frequently cited *Michelle* and Pazder's subsequent lectures on the diagnosis and treatment of satanic ritual abuse.

But diagnoses of SRA-related mental health maladies were not limited to the margins of American psychological treatments. The American Psychiatric Association published the third volume of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-III) in 1984; for the first time, the DSM included psychogenic amnesia and multiple personality disorder as verifiable diagnoses, and additional criteria for diagnosing multiplicity pursuant to satanic abuse (MPD-SRA) (Hicks, 1991: 142). In the wake of *Michelle Remembers* and DSM-III, “cult-survivor stories proliferated, as did the survivors themselves” (Hicks, 1991: 142).⁸ By the end of the 1980s, psychiatric hospitals and mental healthcare providers had begun to capitalize on the massive proliferation of recovered memory diagnoses (Nathan and Snedeker, 2001: 236).

Given Pazder and Smith’s active involvement in promoting concerns about satanic ritual abuse’s prevalence and the reality of survivors repressing memories of such abuses, it follows that the diagnoses and treatment of SRA survivors would mimic Pazder’s model. Journalists Nathan and Snedeker show that therapists who reported cases of satanic ritual abuse “were especially likely to have attended special workshops dealing with ways to identify and treat ritual abuse and repressed memories” (Nathan and Snedeker, 2001: 236). Most of these “special workshops” included materials that drew on Pazder’s writings. Folklorist Bill Ellis (2000: 116) notes that during the 1980s, a “conduit of information” about satanic ritual abuse and its related diagnoses formed among mental health professionals working with patients who told—or were encouraged to tell—stories like Michelle Smith’s. Such stories followed Smith and Pazder’s script regarding the demonic motivations of child abusers and Pazder’s treatment plan for ritual abuse, based in age regression hypnosis.

Following Pazder’s example, psychologists and psychiatrists employed unconventional and often traumatic therapeutic methods to elicit, from their patients, narratives reminiscent of Michelle Smith’s. As media scholar Barbara Fister (2003: 3) observes, “personal testimony of childhood memories [of abuse] recovered through therapeutic intervention became a staple feature of ritual abuse narratives—just as ritual abuse episodes became a staple feature of recovered memories.” Like Pazder had with Smith, therapists encouraged women to speak in child voices, to identify as “adult children,” and to locate their identities in early (and often completely fabricated) experiences of abuse (Jenkins, 2004: 182; Kaminer, 2000: 209). Psychologists and psychiatrists thus modeled their approaches on *Michelle Remembers*’ narrative of religiously-motivated abuse revealed by the infantilizing treatment course, encouraging SRA survivors to mimic Smith’s age regression to facilitate healing.

Despite the absence of corroborative evidence for recovered memories of satanic ritual abuse, very few therapists challenged clients’ fantastic narratives.⁹ Indeed, memories of ritual abuse seldom emerged without therapeutic intervention. Mulhern warns that “memories of satanic blood rituals only emerge after a patient has been involved in the process of recovering memories for an extended period of time” (Mulhern, 1994: 279).¹⁰ Mental health professionals trained to diagnose SRA-related ailments pushed patients for abuse narratives similar to Michelle Smith’s; such therapists often identified patients’ denial that such abuses had taken place as symptomatic of ritual abuse-induced psychogenic amnesia (Richardson, 1997: 66). Wright (2005: 123–124) notes that “by putting patients in an altered state of consciousness, some therapists believed they were

uncovering repressed memories of ritual abuse, usually involving family members. Some of these patients were confined involuntarily for extended periods of time and heavily sedated by powerful drugs.” Over and above the ethics of so radical a treatment course, psychologists Bette Bottoms and Suzanne Davis (1997: 112) note that the techniques these satanic ritual abuse seminars promoted—“suggestive ‘memory recovery’ techniques such as hypnotic age regression” (first suggested by Pazder in *Michelle Remembers*)—“can produce false memories and iatrogenic symptoms in clients.” Satanic ritual abuse claims often emerged following controversial techniques later proven to produce false memories and treatment-related illnesses like increased social anxiety, depression, and isolation (Bader, 2003: 675, 677).

Therapeutic practices modeled on Pazder’s example elicited traumatic and traumatizing accounts of falsely remembered abuses from patients undergoing SRA treatments. Mental health professionals—swayed by the Smith/Pazder narrative—credited improbable, sometimes impossible, patient accounts of supernatural abuse notwithstanding an absence of corroborative evidence. By encouraging patients to echo Smith’s abuse narrative and mimicking Pazder’s treatment course, mental health professionals victimized and infantilized abuse survivors. Satanic ritual abuse diagnoses persisted throughout the 1980s and into the early 1990s, despite the improbability of patients’ abuse narratives and the lack of empirical evidence for such occurrences. The tenacity of SRA diagnoses demonstrates the iterative nature of Pazder and Smith’s narrative. Ostensibly secular mental health professionals accepted Pazder’s Christian interpretation of Smith’s recovered memories and encouraged patients to echo Smith’s religious language in their narratives of abuse. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers emulated Pazder’s treatment course and likewise employed infantilizing, traumatizing, and ultimately deleterious techniques to encourage patient memories of ritual abuse. Paradoxically, however, *Michelle Remembers* and its authors also provided women a script through which to articulate their own experiences with abuse and fostered unprecedented public discourse about the problem of child sexual abuse in late twentieth-century America.

Sex Abuse as Religious Predation

Michelle Remembers’ most lasting influence on satanic ritual abuse accounts is also among the least pronounced in the book: the connection of satanic ritual abuse with child sexual abuse. Scholars of satanic ritual abuse contest the extent to which the abuses Smith recounts were sexual. Sociologist Mary de Young (2004: 32; see also Medway, 2001: 177) observes that “Michelle had never remembered sexual abuse by her satanic captors,” which (de Young suggests) explains why Pazder’s original definition of satanic ritual abuse as “repeated physical, emotional, mental and spiritual assaults” omitted sexual elements. Several other scholars have emphasized how lurid the descriptions of abuse throughout *Michelle Remembers* are (Hernstein and Trott, 1993: 280; Medway, 2001: 177). There are fewer than ten pages of *Michelle Remembers* that describe sexual assaults, and none of these incidents are as graphic as later accounts of satanic ritual abuse would be.

Nevertheless, it is as inaccurate to claim that Smith and Pazder’s account is lurid or pornographic as it is to assert that Smith did not recount any explicitly sexual abuse. Malachi holds her by her “neck and groin” while throwing her up into the air (Smith

and Pazder, 1989: 18). She is kept naked against her will (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 24, 125). Smith is kissed by an adult woman and raped and sodomized with “colorful sticks”: “they stuck those sticks not just in my mouth. They stuck them everywhere I had an opening... They are putting *ugly* in me” (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 25–26, original emphasis). One incident leaves her bleeding “between her legs” (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 34). She is exposed to group “ritual sex, apparently” (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 36). During another incident, “a woman inserted something into her bottom” (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 60). The satanic “nurse” who supervises Smith in the hospital gives Smith enemas: “it’s such a terrible pain down there... I felt like I’d lost control down there” (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 81). Smith is forced to “helplessly defecate[e]” on a crucifix and a Bible; “when Michelle saw that she had soiled them, she was horrified” (Smith and Pazder, 1989: 101). The sexual abuse Smith remembers is perpetrated by strangers, and almost exclusively by women, in sharp contrast to the finding of child protection advocates but in keeping with 1980s satanic ritual abuse memories (De Young, 2004: 76). The anal focus of Smith’s accounts likewise diverges from most domestic child sexual assault, but corresponds to later satanic ritual abuse accounts (Nathan, 1991: 85).¹¹ However fantastic these memories were, they irrefutably contained sexual elements. Though the sexual nature of the recounted abuses were by no means the most violent or most frequent, *Michelle Remembers* nevertheless set the stage for a moral panic that indelibly connected satanic ritual abuse with child sexual abuse.

While Pazder’s initial definition of “ritual abuse” omitted the sexual aspects of Smith’s memories, *Michelle* inspired a literary genre marked by extensive and disturbing accounts of child sexual assault. De Young observes that “in the linguistic economy of the moral panic [SRA accusations] soon would spark, ritual abuse became synonymous with sexual abuse—but not with the ‘ordinary’ kind of sexual abuse that occurs within families. With its ceremonial trappings, costumes and rites, ritual abuse was something altogether different” (De Young, 2004: 32). Pazder quickly modified his definition of “ritual abuse” to incorporate this extraordinary prevalence of supernatural child sexual abuse (De Young, 2004: 32). And, as I noted above, psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers swayed by Pazder’s account often pushed survivors for abuse narratives with satanic elements similar to those Smith observes.

Like Smith before them, these women did not independently identify themselves as the victims of depraved religious predators. Rather, as Nathan and Snedeker (2001: 236) note, by the mid-1980s satanic ritual abuse accusations were being made “by adults receiving psychotherapy who, as a result of pressure and suggestion by their therapists and from self-help books, were remembering family-based childhood ritual abuse they supposedly had forgotten for years.” The majority of satanic ritual abuse survivors (87.5%) had no memories of ritual abuse prior to psychological treatment (Bader, 2003: 675, 677). Very few women identified their own experiences or recovered memories as specifically satanic without therapeutic intervention.

“Ritual abuse survivor” is not a neutral or broad psychological identification. Sociological studies of the satanic ritual abuse survivor phenomenon reveal that survivors are predominantly white women whose average age range is in the mid-forties (Bader, 2003: 673–674).¹² While almost 90 percent of satanic ritual abuse survivors surveyed attended

college, studies indicate a lower-than-average participation in white-collar occupations (Bader, 2003: 675). Several scholars have suggested that satanic ritual abuse survivors become increasingly socially dysfunctional (experiencing depression or isolation) following their diagnoses, which may also contribute to a high incidence of marital problems (Bader, 2003: 675, 677; Bottoms and Davis, 1997: 7). Most satanic ritual abuse survivors engage in therapy sessions more than once a week; medical insurance usually does not cover these treatments (Bader, 2003: 675–676). Reporter Louisa Thomas (2008: 151) further asserts that “requiring women to assume the role of ‘victim,’ a person who is perpetually in recovery, has been criticized for being disempowering as well as being a suppression of women’s rights to sexual, psychological, and economic freedom.” Women who recover memories of ritual abuse under therapeutic guidance often deteriorate socially and psychologically after an SRA-related diagnosis.

Paradoxically, rhetorics of satanic ritual abuse have also allowed survivors to articulate feelings of despair, helplessness, trauma, and defiance. *Michelle Remembers* became a “milestone publication,” a model through which middle-aged, middle-class white women in therapy came to remember surviving satanic ritual abuse (Richardson, 1997: 66). Hundreds of affluent, middle-aged white women appropriated elements of Smith’s narrative to express their own resolve to survive in the wake of damaged and damaging childhoods. Bottoms and Davis (1997: 112) assert Smith and Pazder’s essential role in this process: “only after the [SRA] phenomenon was well known (after seminal accounts such as *Michelle Remembers*) did many individuals . . . decide that they too suffered from [satanic ritual abuse].” Annette’s story, with which I began this article, is one such account. Annette recounts being tortured, forcibly impregnated, and programmed to “either die, go crazy, or to grow up and go back to them,” but instead, she breaks free of her tormentors (Bass and Davis, 1988: 418). She credits her Christian faith, her therapist, and other SRA survivors for giving her the strength to survive her traumatic past. Annette and other survivors found a way to voice their experiences of suffering and their will to endure through claiming a narrative like Michelle Smith’s as their own.

Annette’s account and hundreds of similar ritual abuse narratives are defiant rejections of victimization. Scholars of the American satanic ritual abuse moral panic have suggested that *Michelle Remembers* and the satanic ritual abuse allegations which followed its publication held metaphorical, if not verifiable, truth for survivors (Allen and Midwinter, 1990; Bass and Davis, 1988: 418; Hicks, 1991: 146). Religious studies scholar Kelly Jo Jarrett (2000: 294) argues that “recovered memories spread so far and so fast throughout American society because patriarchal family structures and male-dominated society are sexually traumatic for a great many children and adult women.” She insists anti-SRA activists “helped women articulate the traumas of sexual violence and gender oppression,” despite the questionable facticity of their accounts (Jarrett, 2000: 294). While there is no material evidence of the kinds of abuses Smith, Annette, and hundreds of other survivors remembered, the language and symbols of satanic ritual abuse provided a vocabulary for women to articulate, make meaning of, and survive experiences of violence, trauma, and fear (Gunn, 2005: 115).

The dissemination of satanic ritual abuse narratives did more than empower individual women like Smith and Annette, however. Widespread concern about the SRA phenomenon drew unprecedented public attention to the problem of child sexual abuse.

Reports of child sexual abuse doubled from the 1970s to the 1980s (De Young, 2004: 11). Psychological treatment for the lingering damage of abuse became a booming therapeutic industry (Armstrong, 1996: 77). Bass and Davis's best-selling popular psychology handbook *The Courage to Heal* appealed to a broad audience, strongly discouraging skepticism toward recovered memories of child sexual abuse. "Be willing to believe the unbelievable . . . No one fantasizes abuse . . . Believe the survivor," such texts exhorted therapists and self-identified survivors alike (Jenkins, 2004: 182). The DSM-III further validated women's claims and mental health professionals' diagnoses of repressed/recovered memories. As noted above, both *The Courage to Heal* and the DSM-III highlighted the satanic ritual abuse phenomenon, lending further credibility to accounts like Smith's and Annette's. Bottoms and Davis (1997: 2) propose that these women's memories "swept the abuse of women and children into the public eye, enabling real victims to gain deserved public belief and recognition." The widespread outrage at the incredible horrors of satanic ritual abuse helped draw public attention and resources toward child sexual abuse awareness and prevention.

Rhetorics of satanic ritual abuse—shaped by *Michelle Remembers* and disseminated by the authors themselves and the genre they inspired—shifted accusations of child sexual abuse from within American households to the realm of the supernatural during the 1980s and early 1990s. Sharply diverging from anti-abuse campaigns of the 1970s, ritual abuse awareness campaigns located incest and child sexual abuse not in the home, but in the religious and sexual machinations of a fantastical and wholly imaginary international satanic conspiracy. The social delusion of Satanic Panic led medical professionals to disseminate diagnoses that both victimized and empowered women while perpetuating discourses of intolerance toward American religious outsiders.

The publication and promotion of *Michelle Remembers* transmitted a specific narrative and therapeutic treatment for satanic ritual abuse—one that emerged out of Pazder's religiously-inflected infantilizing relationship to Michelle Smith, that was adopted by mental health professionals, and was echoed by their patients. This narrative paradoxically victimized and empowered SRA survivors, contributing to their social and psychological deterioration while providing a framework through which to articulate experiences of abuse and reject victimization.

This core narrative—Michelle's story, which became Annette's story and the story of hundreds of women like them—was a driving force in America's Satanic Panic. This narrative, shaped by Pazder's Roman Catholic worldview and perpetuated by dozens of psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers, constructed child sexual abuse as an otherworldly phenomenon perpetrated by sexually predatory religious outsiders. By encouraging SRA survivors to mimic and recreate Smith's story, mental health professionals perpetuated a discourse that traded on Americans' fear of religious difference. Satanic ritual abuse rhetoric allowed survivors to speak about their experiences, but also animated popular imaginings of religious outsiders as depraved and dangerous. In this way, the presumably secular field of American psychology foreclosed conditions of possibility for benign religious difference (Ellis, 2000: 116).

Why did the language of satanic exploitation resonate for so many women? Why did these stories of supernatural abuse so capture the attention of the American public? Armstrong has noted that feminist activism against child sexual abuse during the

1970s was largely ineffective (Armstrong, 1996: 242–243, 250–251). The introduction of a satanic—that is, an inverted Christian—element drew unprecedented public attention to child sexual abuse accusations (Armstrong, 1996: 243). Why were Americans so willing to “believe the children” when they spoke about devils and blood sacrifice, but not when they narrated domestic trauma such as incest and other sexual violence?

I suggest that the efficacy—the believability—of this rhetoric owes much to its willingness to trade on religious intolerance. SRA survivors’ sense of liberation-through-narrative came at the expense of marginalizing American religious outsiders. Ritual abuse rhetoric, at least among mental health professionals, was not explicitly based in religious intolerance. Rather, the sexualized definition of ritual abuse and the identification of child abuse as primarily and specifically perpetrated by anti-Christians fueled popular imagination of religious outsiders as sexually suspect (Goodwin, 2014: 59).

While mental health professionals who diagnosed ritual abuse-related disorders never challenged the premise of an underlying satanic conspiracy, the prevailing therapeutic discourse tended both to downplay satanic imagery and to emphasize the sexual elements of the remembered abuses. De Young argues that therapeutic emphasis on the sexual nature of these abuses necessarily secularized the rhetoric surrounding ritual abuse (De Young, 2004: 94–97). De Young is right to note that Pazder modified his definition of ritual abuse in 1987 to incorporate this extraordinary prevalence of supernatural child sexual abuse (De Young, 2004: 94–97). However, she fails to note that Pazder’s definition also specifically retains religious language and symbolism. That is, Pazder insisted that ritual abuse of children manifested as “repeated physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual assaults combined with a systematic use of *symbols and secret ceremonies* designed to turn a child against itself, family, society and *God*” (Lanning, 1992). I suggest that rather than shift public discourse away from religious deviance, this rhetorical emphasis on sexual predation retained and amplified suspicion toward anti-Christian religious outsiders. Given the extensive influence of *Michelle Remembers* and its authors on the discourse of satanic ritual abuse, we cannot isolate the perverse religiosity of ritual abusers from their practices. The efficacy of the ritual abuse narrative depended in no small part on a judicious mobilization of prejudice against minority religions and particularly on the persistent public suspicion of religious outsiders’ sexual predation (Ellis, 2000: 285). To dismiss the American public’s willingness to believe the worst of religious outsiders is to misunderstand the satanic ritual abuse phenomenon.¹³

As I have argued elsewhere, American minority religions—instantiated or imagined—are accused of and punished for sexual transgression far out of proportion to the number of religious minorities actually engaging in non-normative sexual practices (Goodwin, 2016). Indeed, the American public *expects* sexual misconduct from religious minorities (Winston, 2008). And when we as a nation, out of fear for our children and our future, imagine our ultimate enemy, it manifests as both anti-Christian and sexually predatory.

In the case of the Satanic Panic, anti-ritual abuse rhetoric capitalized on the persistence and prevalence of Americans’ conviction that religious nonconformity requires sexual transgression. By tracing the provenance of satanic ritual abuse from Pazder and Smith’s narrative through a presumably secular institution—American psychology—and the survivors who claimed this story as their own, we may observe the public response

Fessenden (2006: 63, 2) observes in *Culture and Redemption*: an impulse to treat “religious diversity as a threat to national unity,” and to brand religious outsiders (even imagined ones) as necessarily irrational, suspect, and dangerous. The discourse of satanic ritual abuse borrowed and capitalized upon Pazder’s own Roman Catholic worldview, collapsing a panoply of religious difference into a morally unambiguous dichotomy, Christianity and anti-Christianity. Rhetorics of ritual abuse during the 1980s and early 1990s fostered suspicion of non-Christian religions—particularly religious Satanism, Setianism, Neopaganisms, and Witchcraft.

While there is no credible evidence to suggest that any group of Americans has ever practiced satanism in the ways described by Pazder and Smith or by the adult women who recovered memories of childhood ritual abuse, witchcraft and Satanism did emerge as American religious and philosophical practices in the late 1960s. Anton Szandor LaVey founded the Church of Satan in April 1966, combining Randian neoliberal philosophy and highly stylized religious performances. LaVeyan Satanism rejected and dismissed but did not invert Christian symbolism and practices. Lt. Col. Michael Aquino, a former member of the Church of Satan, founded the Temple of Set in 1975; Setianism is a ritualistic religious practice that draws heavily from the western esoteric tradition and the writings of Aleister Crowley in particular. American witchcraft developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a mode of expressing second wave feminists’ search for non-patriarchal religious authority, feminine manifestations of the divine, and myths and stories that articulate these longings. For religious Witches, Wiccans, and other Neopagans, the Witch is a symbol of radical religious innovation and political resistance to patriarchy. Religious witches embrace the Witch as a narrative trope signaling secret knowledge and resistance to religious and political patriarchal domination. Satanists, Setians, Witches, and Neopagans were common targets of popular suspicion during the Satanic Panic.¹⁴

The founders of the Church of Satan and its offshoot, the Temple of Set, were direct targets of public SRA accusations following the publication of *Michelle Remembers* and its pursuant moral panic. Pazder initially identified the Church of Satan as Smith’s tormentors, but rescinded the accusation when LaVey threatened to sue the authors for libel (De Young, 2004: 24–25; Medway, 2001: 175; Smith and Pazder, 1989: 116–117).¹⁵ Religious and philosophical groups that publicly identified with Satanism were frequent targets for ritual abuse accusations. The American public made little distinction between the imaginary perpetrators of ritual abuse, self-identified Satanists, and other forms of occult religiosity, however. Rhetoric used by law enforcement officials, media pundits, social workers, and the general American public demonstrates significant slippage among these categories. Prominent talk show hosts, including Geraldo Rivera, Oprah Winfrey, and Phil Donahue used terms like “witch” and “satanist” interchangeably (Hicks, 1991: 289). Criminal justice analyst and former police officer Robert Hicks notes that law enforcement officers influenced by “cult cop” seminars—sessions shaped by Pazder and Smith’s influential account—frequently failed to distinguish among indigenous religions, Wicca, Satanism, and SRA perpetrators (Hicks, 1991: 40, 114–115, 137). Criminal prosecutors frequently construed a suspect’s interest in the occult as damning evidence during this period. The conviction of Damien Echols, Jessie Misskelley, Jr., and Jason Baldwin—better known as the West Memphis Three—was probably the highest profile conviction for “Satanic Ritualistic Homicide”; this conviction relied

in large part on characterizing Echols' interest in the occult and Wicca as evidence of murderous intent (Pitzl-Waters, 2011).¹⁶ It is not surprising, then, that religious witches and Neopagan groups have taken great pains to distance themselves from imaginary satanists as well as Satanists and Setians (Bonewits, 2005; Zell and Zell, 1999).

Such distinctions were mostly lost on anti-SRA advocates and survivors. For diagnosed survivors of ritual abuse, witches and satanists—rendered interchangeable in popular discourse—were perpetrators of unthinkable violence toward and exploitation of children. Construction of non-Christian religion(s) as necessarily perverse and predatory distracted from a larger problem: the sexual abuse of American children. The literal demonization of non-Christian religions deployed a normalized conservative Christian sexual ethic, which suspects religious outsiders of sexual predation. Aligning child sexual abuse with anti-Christian religious practice foreclosed conditions of possibility for benign religious difference, and thus limited Americans' religious freedoms by reinforcing mainstream suspicions about the sexual depravity of religious outsiders.

Conclusion

The Satanic Panic, despite its fatuous rhyming moniker and often scarcely credible events, deserves closer scholarly scrutiny. The rough decade between 1980 and the early 1990s comprises an important moment in contemporary American history: one in which lawmakers of a presumably secular state expressed concerns about the embodied influences of evil on American citizens, in which reputable mainstream journalists reported on the dangers of creative material (including music, books, and games that encouraged the players to imagine themselves in fantastic situations and surroundings); in which the American public was actively and articulately afraid of the devil, who emerged during this time period as a threat to *Americans*, rather than merely to Christians. This period is important to understanding late twentieth-century American culture, as moral panics provide crucial insights into a culture's values and commitments—particularly with regard to that culture's sexual norms (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 2009: 18).

The Satanic Panic allowed the American public to acknowledge the reality of child sexual abuse, while attributing those abuses to an imagined religious antagonist. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers encouraged ritual abuse survivors to echo the script provided by Smith and Pazder in *Michelle Remembers*, thus (perhaps inadvertently) incorporating Roman Catholic symbolism into a presumably secular discipline. This adoption of a Roman Catholic worldview as a way to make meaning of ritual abuse accusations facilitated a forceful exclusion of non-Christian religions from late twentieth-century understandings of American identity. The rejection of imagined, inverted Christianity can be read not as religious intolerance, but as a desire to protect the nation and its children. Corroboration of satanic ritual abuse by an ostensibly secular institution—psychology and psychiatry—reinforced American anxieties about unconventional religions and their practitioners' supposed sexual depravity. Ritual abuse diagnoses and treatment methods relied upon discourses that reified suspicions about American religious outsiders as necessarily dangerous and exploitative of women and children.

In these ways, American psychiatric discourse furthered popular suspicions of minority religions. Members of the Church of Satan, the Temple of Set, and other public occultists

faced active persecution by law enforcement and media. Witches, Neopagans, and other practitioners of earth-centered traditions are still at some pains to disassociate themselves from imaginary satanists and professed Satanists and Setians alike. By foreclosing conditions of possibility for benign religious difference in the last decades of the twentieth century, ritual abuse rhetorics perpetuated attitudes of intolerance toward American religious outsiders—making literal demons of the folk devils of the Satanic Panic.

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Notes

1. In describing the targets of accusations regarding ritual abuse throughout this article, I refer to these as satanists with a lowercase s. These satanists, for whom no evidence exists, should not be confused with Satanists, members of the Church of Satan, or with Setians, members of the Temple of Set.
2. Diane Hugs' account, which directly follows Annette's, includes an explanatory section on Multiple Personality Disorder, a phenomenon frequently but not exclusively associated with satanic ritual abuse during the 1980s and early 1990s (Bass and Davis, 1988: 422–430).
3. This is particularly troubling, given that the two later divorced their spouses to marry each other (Allen and Midwinter, 1990).
4. The prologue describes Pazder taking Smith's hand "and squeez[ing] it, as he had so many times before when reassurance was needed" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: xvii). The authors take some pains to describe Pazder as "tall, blue-eyed, and tan even in February," though there is no initial mention made of Smith's physical appearance (Smith and Pazder, 1989: xvii).
5. Compare Bishop de Roo's prefatory note regarding the book's message coming from a five-year-old child (who was actually a twenty-seven-year-old woman), as well as Pazder's preface, which makes reference to the "psychological tenacity of a five-year-old child in the face of sheer madness" (Smith and Pazder, 1989: ix, xv).
6. This narrative contradicts Smith's father's account of their family's religiosity (Allen and Midwinter, 1990).
7. Psychogenic amnesia is a condition under which the patient suppresses traumatic memories; psychiatric professionals are now more likely to diagnose patients with "false memory syndrome," a condition often caused by repressed memory therapy that produces "memories" of events that never occurred. Multiple personality disorder is now categorized as dissociative identity disorder and is no longer associated with satanic ritual abuse, though it is closely associated with child sexual abuse.
8. Hicks (1991: 147) further notes that while Smith was never diagnosed with MPD-satanic ritual abuse, "on the . . . lecture circuit, Smith present[ed] herself as an MPD exemplar."
9. A national survey of psychotherapists failed to identify a single therapist-corroborated SRA accusation accompanied by reliable enough evidence to corroborate that accusation (Jenkins, 2004: 11; Victor, 1993: 546).

10. This mirrors Annette's narrative presented in *The Courage to Heal*.
11. See Nathan (Nathan, 1991; Nathan and Snedeker, 2001) in particular on the role of witness contamination and coercive interview techniques, both influenced by *Michelle Remembers*, in producing testimony of satanic ritual abuse.
12. Indeed, Bader records no incidence of SRA reports made by people of color.
13. Fister (2003: 5) notes that *Michelle Remembers*' claim to religious authority helped bolster the book's appeal to American audiences.
14. This is not mere coincidence, obviously. Satanists, Setians, Neopagans, and religious witches draw from—and in the case of LaVey, deliberately employ as shock tactics—the same shared pool of symbols and images that inform an American cultural imaginary with regard to what witches, satanists, or all things occult should look like or how they should behave (Gunn, 2005: 96).
15. The events Smith remembered took place in 1954. LaVey did not found the Church of Satan until 1966.
16. Echols, Baldwin, and Misskelley were released in 2010 on a plea agreement after 18 years of incarceration (on death row, in Echols' case). There was no physical evidence to connect the three to the murders.

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