

**“Satanism” as a media creation
and
why the Gauteng Education Department’s “anti-harmful”
strategy is unfounded.**

Prepared on behalf of the



By Francisco Fumarola and Bronwyn Katzke

Signs that reveal the dark side

FORMER national head of the occult-related crimes unit in the police, Kobus Jonker, points out some of the first signs exhibited by pupils experimenting with the occult:

- Occult signs like 666, the inverted pentagram, upside-down crosses and goat heads on their school bags and in exercise books;
- Self-mutilation;
- Change in dress code;
- Lack of personal hygiene;
- Rebellion;
- Drawing demons;
- Secretive group of friends;
- Nightmares.

Moulana Mohammad Seedat of the Channel Islam International Youth Foundation, part of the religious leadership who attended yesterday's meeting, said parents should look out for the following signs:

- Change in sleep patterns;
- Change in behaviour;
- Change in dress code;
- Body markings. – *Tebogo Monama*

Extract from *The Sowetan*, 19 March 2013

1. Introduction

I will herein attempt to illustrate how the recent cases of "Satanism" and "Satanic Crime" are a creation of a sensation seeking media, and I will also explore the history of the Satanic Panic that reached South Africa during the 1980's and reached its height during the early 90's.

Recent supposed cases of "satanic" crime are actually a remnant from the days of the Satanic Panic, which has left its mark on society and popular imagination. The Satanic Panic of the 80's and 90's led to the creation of what can be referred to as the "Christian myth of Satanism" as opposed to real Satanism as a religion and philosophy. The criminals who participate in supposed "satanic" crimes are actually the adherents of a warped and twisted view of "satanism", instilled into society through Christian leaders, so called "cult-cops" (like the former and current Occult Related Crime/Harmful Religions Unit within SAPS) and misinformation spread in schools about Satanism and the Occult by the above mentioned groups, who base their information on Christian prejudice and bias against minority religions.

The Satanic Panic can also be called a moral panic; as such a panic reflects the fears of a society dealing with change or transition. A moral panic happens when a society feels threatened in some manner; members of the society may feel that their traditional values come under attack as they have to face change. Under such circumstances a society may look towards something to blame for their discomfort or misfortune. The society which feels under threat may create an enemy and they will use this enemy to rally their community to a common cause. In the case of a largely Christian society the devil has always been a useful tool with which to keep the flocks in tow. The devil is a tool used to control through fear and the threat of the devil and his minions has always worked to get straying members of the society back to church and back to conformity. "Satanic Panic" and the Satanism myth are an invention and tool of Evangelical Christianity.

Afrikaner society and American society (where the Satanism myth and Panic originated) felt under threat as religion was pushed further to the margins with the advancements of science and technology, along with the spread of information through mediums such as television. New religious movements were developing, like the establishment of the Church of Satan in the 1960's and Neo-Pagan religions experienced an upsurge of interest. Interest in Eastern religions and transcendental meditation enjoyed a revival in popularity during the 60's. Conservative Christian society felt the pressures of competition with other faiths and the Satanism myth partially emerged as a result of this. The Satanism myth is in fact a long standing form of prejudice and means of slander against minority religions, which are depicted in the worst possible ways. The Satanism myth also frequently confounds unrelated belief systems including the practices and symbols employed i.e. symbols mainly used by Pagans are referred to as "satanic", as well as elements of popular culture, i.e. the peace symbol is claimed to be 'satanic'.

In recent statements to the media (*The Sowetan Newspaper*, 19 March 2013) by Moulana Mohammad Seedat (a religious leader included in the Department of Education's 'Memorandum of Understanding' initiative) it is clear to see that the Education Department is likely to base their "anti-harmful" strategy on the above mentioned warped view of Satanism; this "Satanism myth", which is a Christian creation. Such a tool of religious evangelism does not belong in our secular society, which guarantees freedom of religion and religious equality and it should not influence policies within government.

2. A brief overview of the “satanism myth” vs. actual Satanism

2.a. Legitimate Modern Satanism

This article is concerned with modern Satanism as a religion. While there are historical examples of Satanism and supposed Black Masses from 17th and 19th century France, these have little to do with modern Satanism and no direct links exist. The English Hell Fire Club can't really be referred to as religious Satanism as such organizations (including the Blue Blazers and Brimstone Boys from Ireland) were frequently only “gentlemen's clubs” where men could engage in drinking and sexual play with women called “nuns”. (Guiley, 2008). Some comparison can also be drawn between the witch-hysteria of the late Middle Ages and the modern Satanic Panic. Both of these consist out of false accusations levelled against innocent people as hysteria and panic grips society.

The Church of Satan was founded in 1966 by Anton Szandor Lavey. The term “Satanism” as referring to an actual religious practice was very rarely used before the founding of the Church of Satan. The Satanic Bible written by Lavey (1969) clearly condemns harming children or animals.

“8. Do not harm young children, for they are the future.

9. Do not kill non-human animals unless you are attacked.”

None of its rituals call for human sacrifice or murder. The movement has been called “secular humanism with a devil's mask” and it seeks to place “man” (referring to humanity and containing both genders) on the forefront of attention as opposed to an aloof concept of divinity. Satanism is usually concerned with the here and now and the enjoyment of life and its pleasures. Satan is seen more as a symbol of personal freedom, individual empowerment and rebellion, and rituals are seen in a theatrical light to excite the mind. A splinter organization known as the Temple of Set placed renewed emphasis on a mysticism and occult practice and yet neither of these organizations practiced or condoned the criminal activities attributed to them by outsiders (human sacrifice, infanticide, cannibalism etc). LaVeyan Satanism has also been “atheistic Satanism”.

As modern Satanism grew, other groups emerged and a movement of theistic Satanism arose. A few such groups (but not all) drew from LaVey's writings (as a starting point) and elements from general occultism to form their own practices and beliefs. Other theistic Satanists may reject LaVeyan Satanism entirely. In Theistic Satanism, Satan can be considered as an actual deity or spiritual force, usually still seen as a positive force of empowerment and individual freedom. Theistic Satanist, Diane Vera, has been very vocal in speaking out against Satanic Panic and against crimes committed in the name of Satan or Satanism. She calls such criminal elements, “Satanism's criminal fringe”. Most theistic Satanists are indeed law abiding and concerned with their own spirituality and growth. With regards to the beliefs of Theistic Satanists, Diane Vera asks the question: “What exactly does Satan do that is so *evil* from a Christian point of view?”

She answers this question by stating that he mainly prods humans to question the Christian conception of God and even think for themselves. Vera calls Satan the “Muse of our Civilization”, as progress or change in science, philosophy, music and arts were (and are) frequently labelled as “evil” or “of the devil” by fundamentalist Christianity.

Regardless of whether one agrees with the above mentioned views or not, these beliefs have every right to exist as they are practiced within the confines of the law and are constitutionally protected.

2.a.i. More information on Satanism.

South African Satanists speak out in defence of their beliefs.

<http://www.volksblad.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Satanis-Ons-offer-nie-mense-of-diere-nie-20110407>

<http://www.beeld.com/MyBeeld/Briewe/Ek-is-n-trotse-satanis-hier-is-die-waarheid-20110424>

Resources on LaVeyan Satanism

<http://www.churchofsatan.com/Pages/Youthletter.html>

<http://www.churchofsatan.com/>

<http://www.modernchurchofsatan.com>

Diane Vera's Theistic Satanism main page

<http://theisticsatanism.com/>

<http://theisticsatanism.com/Muse/summary.html>.

2. b. The Satanism Myth and the sources of Satanic Panic

The Satanism myth is covered in an article titled *South Africa's Satanic Panic* (by Francisco Fumarola)

<http://www.penton.co.za/?p=630>

And....*Why we SHOULD speak out against an SAPS occult-related crimes division in South-Africa* (by Francisco Fumarola)

<http://www.penton.co.za/?p=2576>

Francisco Fumarola also compiled a list of sources with regards to the phenomenon of Satanic Panic, including the origins of Satanic Panic. Also included are articles debunking those who spread these myths and various media sources.

<http://www.penton.co.za/satanic-panic-sources-and-resources/>

2.b.i. The Satanism myth in brief.

The Satanism myth perpetuated by the Satanic Panic phenomenon accepts the existence of a world-wide and vast conspiracy of Satanists with none other than Satan himself at the helm. These conspirators are frequently seen controlling the world in secret in preparation for the coming "end times"; they infiltrate everything from the music industry to children's programming and even churches. The mythic Satanists supposedly revel in slaughter, and according to a few accounts, hundreds or even thousands of human sacrifices take place every year. Kidnapping, rape, cannibalism, group sex, and blood drinking are apparently common activities. Animal abuse takes place at an alarming rate, usually involving domesticated cats as their favoured victims. Lesser members and smaller groups are frequently used as shock troops to terrorize and commit atrocities.

The myth of Satanism emerged with the accounts of so-called occult or satanic "survivors". Descriptions of all sorts of atrocities attributed to "Satanists" and "witches" reached its height during the 1980's and early 90's. These "survivors" frequently claimed to have held high-ranking positions within satanic organization until they found Jesus Christ and were saved from the clutches of evil. Yet, there have always been problems with these kinds of anecdotes.

These stories usually contain fantastical elements and descriptions of supernatural events which are hard to confirm or prove - claims of real werewolves, feats of supernatural strength and meetings with the devil as a flesh and blood individual abound. The claimants would claim to have witnessed horrible crimes including human sacrifices and sexual perversions, and yet these claimants have never been able to provide law-enforcement with factual data such as dates, locations and the names of perpetrators. These claimants have never been able to help police uncover the bodies of victims and their claims have never led to arrests or the uncovering of the vast conspiracies they claimed to have come out of.

No evidence has ever emerged of the claims made by these survivors. During the height of the Satanic Ritual Abuse Scare in the United States the Federal Bureau of Investigation had to step in to investigate. In the 1992 "Lanning Report" or "Investigator's Guide to Allegations of Ritual Child Abuse", special agent Kenneth Lanning made it very clear that no evidence existed to point to a vast and organized satanic conspiracy.

No evidence could be found that Satanism posed a real or significant threat to society. The Lanning report warns against the kind of mistakes frequently made by South African police of attaching religious labels to crimes and of approaching crimes with a religious agenda or belief that the officer is engaging battle with the “forces of darkness”. Lanning also indicates that so-called “occult” or “satanic” connections may be arbitrary; a crude rendition of a pentagram could result in a “satanic” label attached to a crime. If we apply the same reasoning to every crime-scene a Bible on the scene or ownership of a Bible indicates a “Christian crime”. (For more background see <http://www.penton.co.za/satanic-panic-sources-and-resources/>)

You can read the whole text of the Lanning Report at the Religious Tolerance website (conveniently divided into smaller segments).

http://www.religioustolerance.org/ra_rep03.htm

You can also read it at the Internet Sacred Texts Archive

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/pag/lanning.htm>

The satanic or occult “survivors”, frequently reveal that they know nothing about the actual belief systems or practices that they claim to have come out of. They confound different belief systems with each other. These individuals are usually born-again Christians who feel the need to make up stories due to a need for attention or due to psychological issues. A few cases of supposed “satanic ritual abuse” emerged after sessions of hypnotic regression. Debates arose concerning the phenomenon of “False Memory Syndrome” and whether hypnotic regression is at all reliable (see <http://www.penton.co.za/satanic-panic-sources-and-resources/> for more detailed information on the occult “survivors”)

South Africa also had its own satanic “survivors”, including Phil Botha and Dave Griesel. Griesel claimed to have belonged to a satanic organization called the Order of Darkness (a name also used by Kobus Jonker). He claimed that the organization had 165, 000 members in South Africa. Apparently his biggest task was to infiltrate and destroy churches, supposedly with plenty of success. Griesel states that the sacred books of Satan include an “Unholy Black Book” and a “Book of Shadows”. Yet, a Book of Shadows is a term used mainly in some Neo-Pagan systems, especially Wicca, to refer to a book containing collections of recipes, spells or rituals. The term “Book of Shadows” emerged from Gerald Gardner who contributed to the creation of the modern religion of Wicca. Griesel also claims that Sybil Leek was a South African Satanist and “Top-Witch” in the country, while in truth she was an English witch and contributor to the Neo-Pagan movement and the development of Wicca. Botha made similar fantastical claims, including that there were about 90, 000 Satanists in South Africa. He also claimed that he drank the blood of cats.

<http://www.rapport.co.za/Weekliks/Nuus/Waar-is-al-die-sataniste-20110416>

Despite the fact that no evidence existed of a satanic threat, the Satanic Panic continued in South Africa even up to the present day. The Panic was kept alive by the Occult Related Crimes division of the SAPS under Kobus Jonker. The unit was to deal with the perceived “satanic threat” of which no evidence existed in the first place. Jonker proclaims himself a born-again Christian and he accepts the existence of the devil or Satan as a literal reality. Jonker also adheres to a fundamentalist interpretation of scripture. When the ORCU was disbanded in 2001, former members started their own anti-occult ministries and they are still consulted as “occult experts” by the media, spreading misinformed religious propaganda against minority religions.

2.b.ii. The Satanism myth taken apart in Academic Sources

The myth of Satanism exists within Christianity and it is spread by pastors and “cult-cops”. Schools frequently allow talks by such adherents of the Satanism myth, where pupils need to be informed about the “dangers” of Satanism and the Occult (nothing but biased religious views and prejudice).

The Satanism myth is strongly instilled within South African Society. Academics, such as Sociologist Jeffrey S. Victor and Folklorist Bill Ellis, have thoroughly examined the phenomenon of Satanism and Satanic Panic –

they identify it as folklore and urban legend. Ellis (2000) identifies a phenomenon known as “legend tripping” where individuals may act out existing myths and urban legends, fulfilling these myths in the process. Some troubled young people who decide to rebel, may choose to draw upon the mythical version of Satanism to shock and terrify. Acts of vandalism, animal mutilation or even murder and blood drinking may take place.

Yet, these youngsters do not have anything to do with real Satanism or Occultism. At best they can be considered a criminal fringe or dabblers. To blame the whole religion of Satanism or Occult practices in general as the cause of their destructive behaviour is illogical. Most Satanists and Occultists are law abiding. We also don't blame the whole of Christianity if a mother murders a child and claims that she did so under orders from God or heavenly voices. (For more information and more sources see <http://www.penton.co.za/satanic-panic-sources-and-resources/>)

2.b.iii. The Psychology of the Satanism Myth

It is important to note that any dabbling or experimentation with the myths of the Satanic Panic phenomenon usually occurs in the teenage years. Adolescence is most marked by the adolescent's psychological need to establish their identity as an individual outside of their family unit. In a healthy family unit there is open communication and parental guidance and involvement, and an adolescent's exploration is supported as they psychologically transition from child to functioning adult. However, in conservative and dysfunctional family units an adolescent's attempts to establish their own identity is too often met with resistance- it is then that healthy exploration turns into rebellion, and rebellion is commonly aimed at familial taboos.

Given that 80% of South Africans claim Christian adherence, it goes without saying that the greatest taboo for Christian families is the rejection of Christianity and the acceptance of its 'opposite'- Satanism. It should then be noted that if the only form of Satanism a teenager is exposed to are the Satanism myths (by way of schools, teachers, parents and other authority figures), it becomes obvious what teenagers will attempt to practice in a bid for validation by parents, teachers and authority figures in the lives of those teenagers.

Another factor that is ignored by the media and supporters of Satanic Panic myths is the aspect of pre-existing psychological issues in adolescents. Within Satanic Panic myths exists a list of “warning signs of occult involvement”, which note common fictional ‘symptoms’ such as wearing black, listening to heavy metal music, watching horror movies etc. However, within this set of alleged symptoms are clear indicators of mental health issues and possibly physical ailments:

“-Severe mood swings, a drop in school marks, intense introspection, depression, sleep disturbances, frequent nightmares, paranoia or excessive fear/anxiety.

-Inappropriate sexual tendencies or fantasies.

-A sudden or rapid change in attitudes towards authorities. A rebellious, sullen spirit towards parents.

-Secretive and withdrawn. Some places of the child's room are locked and out of reach of parents, brothers and sisters.

-Lack of empathy towards others the hurt of others, be it people or animals in distress.

-Suicidal tendencies and self-destructive behaviour.

-Drastic personality changes. (From a perfectionist to a room where you can find the wardrobe on the floor.)

-Use of illegal drugs of any kind; alcohol abuse

-Evidence of cruelty to animals.

-A philosophy or attitude that shows a reversal of norm, eg bad is good and good is bad.

-Self mutilation, including cutting oneself or marking with tattoos.

-Obsessive preoccupation with death and gruesome and bizarre methods of dying.

- Animosity towards Christianity, the church and Jesus Christ. Resistance and hate towards God and religious leaders.
- Unusual body movements, such as twitching, tics, rocking, glazed eyes, head banging, moaning or groaning and chanting.
- Different sexually transmitted diseases.”

Source: Servamus Special Community Edition: Drugs & Occult-Related Crime

The most likely root for these alleged psychological and physiological symptoms is that the Satanism myths do not cause psychological disturbances (as supporters of Satanism myths, such as Kobus Jonker, claim), but that these mythical notions of Satanism are attractive to those with pre-existing, and all too often undiagnosed, mental conditions. For a teenager or adult battling an undiagnosed mental illness, the myths of Satanism present possible validation for their symptoms which can lead to such individuals developing an affinity with these myths and ultimately fulfilling them.

What is lacking in the media, SAPS and government institutions such as the Department of Education, is a basic understanding of the psychology behind teenage involvement and experimentation with these Satanic Panic myths. This is in addition to a complete lack of acknowledgement of the real issues at hand and such institutions' choice to scapegoat legitimate minority religions who are not only protected under the constitution, but whose adherents practice their beliefs within the confines of the law.

3. The Satanism myth as media construct

The media shares great blame in contributing to a Satanic Panic and the enforcement of the Satanism myth. Cases of supposed Satanism are constructed as such by the media. The media may also refer to former Occult Related Crimes Unit members and Christian anti-occult ministries for their information on minority beliefs such as Satanism and Occultism. In all cases where the media refers to a crime as a “satanic crime” or an “occult crime”, they usually base their use of such labels attached to crimes on nothing more than rumours and conjectures.

3.a. How the media creates Satanism, the “Graveyard Murder”

It was Danie Krügel who first called the Van Eck murder case a “satanic killing”. It should be noted that Krügel has ties to Auksano (Christian anti-occult ministry located in Bloemfontein) and to former occult-unit member Johan De Beer. Krügel called the Van Eck case one of the “most gruesome satanic murders”. Soon the press started focussing on any small link to supposed Satanism – it turned out to be a colossal waste of time focussing on “Satanism”. What did their beliefs have to do with motive? Conveniently, the press ignored the history of mental illness and other problems.

The Satanic Panic surrounding the murder of Michael Van Eck begins....

<http://www.dieburger.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Huis-van-gruwels-20110407>

<http://www.volksblad.com/Rubrieke/WatsJouStorie/Die-opspoororder-en-die-onmoontlike-masjien-20110408>

Soon the case spiralled out of control in the media and we can see how it elevated into a full-blown case of “satanic panic”. We can see how elements within Christianity could use the myths that arose around this case to further their own agenda's.

The devil is on the loose!

<http://www.volksblad.com/Rubrieke/Brandpunt/Die-duiwel-is-nou-los-20110406-2>

South Africa must be on its knees and turn back to the Christian God. Note how the case is labelled an “occult murder” and Van Eck suffered an “occult death”- clear misuse of the term “occult” which refers to the diverse arts of magic, alchemy and divination.

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/SA-hoort-op-sy-kniee-na-man-se-okkulte-dood-20110412>

<http://www.volksblad.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Menings-Satanisme-bose-geeste-kry-skuld-20110408>

<http://www.volksblad.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Welkom-moord-wek-wyd-kommer-20110407>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Ma-wil-haat-na-okkulte-moord-20110422>

The story surrounding the case becomes a “moral panic” with a specific purpose within a Christian context. The youth are turning their backs on God/Religion and should turn back or we will all suffer the consequences.

<http://www.dieburger.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Moord-op-Welkom-man-moet-jonges-op-verkeerde-pad-se-lewens-verander-20110413>

<http://www.volksblad.com/MyVolksblad/Briewe/Gebedsgroep-nodig-na-grafmoord-20110408>

In comes Auksano again with Barbara and Johan De Beer

<http://www.volksblad.com/NoordKaap/Nuus/Die-duiwel-is-los-in-BFN-Vrystaat-en-Noord-Kaap-20110413>

The sensationalistic *Beeld* and *Volksblad* is desperate to find the Satanism/occult connection. They refer to the account of Lauren Stratford. Yet, Lauren Stratford is one of the debunked “occult survivors” described in the full Sources and Resources article.

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Menslike-maskers-uiters-waardevol-vir-sataniste-wys-outobiografie-20110408>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Vel-op-vermoorde-se-gesig-bestem-vir-rite-20110408>

<http://www.volksblad.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Ramirez-moorde-dalk-nageaap-in-verminking-van-Welkom-man-20110408>

Ambiguities about Chane’s actual beliefs arose. She denied any connection to Satanism. We should also ask just what exactly did Chane’s beliefs have to do with anything. Clearly, it had nothing to do with motive and should not have played such a big role in this case and the media. The Sunday Tribune even called Chané the “Welkom Witch”.

<http://www.volksblad.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Paartjie-het-geloof-van-eie-gehad-se-oud-vriend-20110408>

<http://www.rapport.co.za/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Welkom-moord-Sy-vra-ma-vir-nog-n-Bybel-20110409>

<http://www.volksblad.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Moordenaars-sou-waarskynlik-steeds-moord-gepleeg-het-20110407>

Beeld and other sources changed their tune as more evidence emerged.

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Dis-nie-satanisme-20111123> (Note how even Kobus Jonker testifies here that it is not Satanism. Of course he still has to make it clear that they may have experimented and dabbled.)

<http://www.m.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/Skinning-murder-unique-expert-testifies-20111122>

<http://www.dieburger.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Beskuldigde-kan-verhoor-word-20120416>

The damage was done and the public was made aware that Satanists were out there and a threat to their safety.

3.b. Kirsty Theologo burnt in a “Satanic Ritual”

The second case of 2011, it too received a sensationalistic headline and further fuelled the idea that Satanism was apparently a real problem and threat. Yet again, these young men created their own rituals and yet again they were acting out and fulfilling the Christian mythical ideal of what Satanism should be as espoused by cult-cops and concerned pastors. This was another case of “legend tripping” and “tabloid prophecy fulfilment” even if an actual ritual may have formed part of their motive. It later emerged that drug abuse may have played a role in this tragic event. Also note that they used a Bible in their rituals and read from Revelation. Whatever strange beliefs these youngsters adhered to, there is no actual evidence that it had anything to do with real occult practices or real Satanism.

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Kirsty-Theologo-Die-storie-tot-dusver-20120329>

The following headline links the crime to a mythical battle between God and the devil

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Sterf-in-ritueel-Duiwel-wen-nie-20120221>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Honde-vergiftig-na-ritueel-dood-ma-vrees-20111104>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/2-meisies-gebrand-in-ritueel-20111023>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Ritueel-18-jarige-sterf-na-sy-brand-20111028>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Slagoffer-van-sataniese-ritueel-sterf-20111028-2>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Ons-wou-Kirsty-offer-aan-Satan-20111116>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Nog-2-aangekla-oor-branddood-na-Satansritueel-20111101>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Satan-saak-Ma-by-hof-20120221>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Satanisme-saak-Twee-mans-borgtog-geweier-20111117>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Brand-ritueel-Toets-hul-bloed-20111025>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Nog-2-aangekla-oor-branddood-na-Satansritueel-20111101>

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/four-appear-over-girl-in-satanic-ritual-1.1164949#.UGcTTaBNh0I>

<http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/satanists-quoted-the-bible-1.1180405>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Satanisme-saak-Twee-mans-borgtog-geweier-20111117>

Drugs involved in this case. Only Satanism in the label attached to the crime by the media.

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2013/04/17/mom-tells-of-satanic-attack-that-killed-her-daughter>

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2013/04/18/kirsty-theologo-wanted-to-be-sacrificed-in-satanic-ritual-court-hears>

3.c. Kyle Mudaly's Suicide

Note that the family denied any "satanic" involvement in the update. The star found near the body was said to be a "Star of David", meant for protection. Also note that rumours and a Blackberry Messenger broadcast claiming that Kyle had "supernatural powers" contributed to the "satanic" label. This nonsense detracts from the real motives behind this incident. Dr. Dale Wallace provided a voice of reason in the one article stating that the satanic label may hide bullying, family or psychological problems.

<http://www.looklocal.co.za/looklocal/content/en/chatsworth/chatsworth-news-general?oid=6156033&sn=Detail&pid=1171669&Update--Ritualistic-worship-linked-to-boy-s-suicide>

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/satanic-cult-fear-in-suicide-1.1378292#.UGcRQ6BNh0I>

<http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/satanic-cult-fear-in-suicide-1.1378292#.UGcRQ6BNh0I>

3.d. Teenager frightens herself with a Ouija board – Satanism blamed

Playing with an Ouija board is equal to Satanism and a girl frightening herself is equal to the occult being a danger to society?

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Tiener-in-hospitaal-by-satanisme-betrek-20120528>

<http://news24.com/volksblad/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Satanisme-Hospitaal-reageer-20120528>

3.e. Free-State "satanic" gangs

These so-called "occult" or "satanic gangs", if these rumours are true, are merely "legend trippers" and "tabloid prophecy fulfillers" who use "satanic trappings" to frighten and intimidate. In numerous articles about these gangs to be found in sources other than *Beeld* and *Volksblad*, these gangs are not linked to Satanism or any occult practices. The only time the occult or satanic connection is made is also when Auksano happens to comment on the cases.

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Bfn-se-666-nes-20120530>

<http://www.beeld.com/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Skoolhoofde-praat-oor-okkulte-20120531>

<http://www.volksblad.com/Opinie/Hoofartikels/Skrikwereld-van-die-okkulte-20120530>

<http://m.news24.com/volksblad/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Gerehabiliteerde-bendelid-vertel-van-boosheid-20130412>

<http://m.news24.com/volksblad/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Al-jonger-kinders-se-siele-gesteel-20130411>

The following article does not mention Auksano or even Satanism/Occult- nothing about an alleged spiritual motive at all. It does, however, mention a political motivation and drug use.
<http://theweekly.co.za/?p=9757>

3.f. Teenager stabbed in “satanic ritual”

The “Satanism” in the tragic case of Keamogetswe Sefularo was simply based on rumours mentioned by family and friends and blown out of proportion by the media. The following articles directly or indirectly link the crime to “Satanism”.

<http://www.thenewage.co.za/mobi/Detail.aspx?NewsID=86169&CatID=1008>

<http://www.thepost.co.za/teen-in-satanic-stabbing-to-be-tested-1.1485144>

<http://m.news24.com/news24/SouthAfrica/News/Girls-attackers-drank-her-blood-20130306>

This Looklocal article confirms that the much emphasized “satanic” aspect was merely based on rumours and hearsay. No real satanic practices took place and yet the damage had been done and the public has the idea of rampant, out-of-control, Satanism implanted within their minds.

<http://www.looklocal.co.za/looklocal/content/en/randfontein-westonaria/randfontein-westonaria-news-crime?oid=7038381&sn=Detail&pid=489914&Update--Randfontein-schoolgirl-murder>

3.g. Teenager victimized and tormented due to false accusations of Satanism

Without clarity on what Satanism actually is and as long as superstition runs rampant in schools, false accusations against suspected Satanists will be levelled. Such false accusations will ruin lives and cause far more damage than any real beliefs of Satanism or Occultism ever will.

Unfortunately, if the Education Departments buy into the Satanism myth of Christianity, they will likely identify the arbitrary “signs of Satanism” as identified by former Occult Unit members. These “signs” and “symptoms” usually include nonsense such as wearing black and wearing black nail polish, listening to certain kinds of music and having an interest in certain kinds of literature. Anyone found with these “symptoms” can easily be mislabelled as a Satanist. Note how this example below ended in the poor girl being prayed over and asked to accept Jesus, at least one religion’s agenda can be furthered.

<http://www.looklocal.co.za/looklocal/content/en/chatsworth/chatsworth-lifestyle?oid=7018373&sn=Detail&pid=1171669&UPDATE---Satanic--Westcliff-pupil-speaks-out>

3.h. The South African media is so biased against the occult that they blame the actions of right-wing Christian groups on Occultists.

<http://m.news24.com/nuus24/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Okkulte-groep-wou-glo-kerke-opblaas-20111126>

<http://www.thenewage.co.za/mobi/Detail.aspx?NewsID=36540&CatID=1008>

The article above blames an occult group for an attempted act of terrorism. Yet, the article fails to mention that this “occult group” is in fact not an occult group at all but rather a right-wing Christian “Israel Vision” group. Among the men arrested was Gunther Jurgens Kotze the so-called “boer-viking”. He is the same person who had a run in with the law when he vandalized a monument with an obelisk he believed was the “penis of Satan”.

<http://m.news24.com/beeld/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Boere-Viking-spog-hy-vernietig-monument-20101104>

<http://152.111.1.87/argief/berigte/citypress/2010/11/08/CP/8/Rapviking.html>

Gunther does have a lot of information on what he calls Luciferianism (he includes Pagans and “hippies” under this term) and Satanism all over his Facebook pages (eventually removed due to reports). Yet, he believes that in the “last days” he will get to kill Pagans, Satanists and Witches as commanded by God. This clearly illustrates the incompetence of the police involved and of the media who called this case an “occult” case. They found a random piece of paper with the word “Lucifer” and they call the group an “occult group”, the evidence they found was likely some of Gunther’s “research”.

The following articles confirm that Gunther was among the men arrested. No more mention of the Occult.

<http://mdbp.org/perspektief/gunther-jurgens-kotze/>

<http://m.news24.com/rapport/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Soos-iets-uit-die-Wilde-Weste-20111126>

The media issued no apology or correction for pathetic and biased reporting.

4. Education Department denies that there is evidence of a growth of Satanism in schools

The spokesman of the Gauteng Department of Education, Charles Phahlane, denies that there is evidence of a growing problem of Satanism in schools and yet he claims that they need an “anti-Satanism” strategy anyway. As already illustrated above, attacking legitimate belief systems, which have nothing to do with the recent criminal actions, is discriminatory. Note, "No statistics regarding incidents of Satanism".

<http://m.news24.com/nuus24/Suid-Afrika/Nuus/Dept-ontken-satanisme-probleem-20130319>

<http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2013/03/19/education-department-seeks-divine-intervention>

5. In Conclusion

The Gauteng Department of Education, along with the rest of South Africa, has been duped by religious propaganda against the Occult and against minority belief systems. Enforcing and supporting such religious propaganda, a product of Evangelical Christianity, is in violation of Religious Equality and the constitutional rights of adherents of minority belief systems.

Unfortunately, religious discrimination against minorities has always been in schools. In my own high school the “points based” punishment system listed “Satanism” and “Occult involvement” as the worst possible offences, right along with drug abuse and bringing weapons to school – causes for instant and severe disciplinary action, including expulsion. Of course the Satanism and Occultism listed as “offences” were based on warped Christian views on such subjects. If the Education Departments around South Africa, actually want to do something about these issues, they need to fight superstition – not encourage it and feed into it by having “religious leaders” pray for or exorcise suspected “Satanists”. Drive the fear-mongering pastors and the “cult cops” from schools and the hysteria and legend tripping will also die down, unfortunately the harm to the current generation has already been done.

6. Sources

Bromley, D. G. 1991. *The satanic cult scare*. Society. May/June.

California Office of Criminal Justice Planning. 1989. *Occult crime: A law enforcement primer*. Sacramento, California.

Carlson, S., & LaRue, G. 1989. *Satanism in America*. Buffalo, NY: Committee for the Scientific Examination of Religion. Gala Press, El Cerrito, CA.

Ellis, B. 2000. *Raising the Devil: Satanism, New Religions and the Media*. Lexington. University of Kentucky Press.

Ellis, B. 1989. Death by folklore: Ostension, contemporary legend, and murder. *Western Folklore*, 48, 201-220.

Guiley, R.E. 2008. *The Encyclopedia of Witches, Witchcraft and Wicca*. 3rd ed. New York. Facts on File.

Hicks, R. 1991. *In Pursuit of Satan: The Police and the Occult*. Buffalo, NY. Prometheus Press.

Lewis, J.R. 2001. Who serves Satan? A Demographic and Ideological Profile. *Marburg Journal of Religion*. Volume 6. Number 2.

Download: <http://www.uni-marburg.de/fb03/ivk/mjr/pdfs/2001/articles/lewis2001.pdf>

Victor, J. S. 1989. A rumor-panic about a dangerous satanic cult in western New York. *New York Folklore*, 15(1-2), 23-49.

Victor, J. S. 1991. Satanic cult 'survivor' stories. *Skeptical Inquirer*, 15(3), 274-280.

Victor, J.S. 1993. *Satanic Panic: The Creation of a Contemporary Legend*.

Victor, J.S. 1998. *Moral Panics and the social construction of deviant behaviour: a theory and application to the case of ritual child abuse*. Sociological Perspectives v41, n3.

Download: <http://learn.uci.edu/media/W03/99012/Victor.doc>

Review of *Satanic Panic* by Institute for Psychological Therapies. Hollida Wakefield.

http://www.ipt-forensics.com/journal/volume5/j5_3_br6.htm

A South African study and Master's Thesis by Danielle Dunbar. *The Devil's Children:*

Volk, Devils and Moral Panics in White South Africa, 1976 – 1993. University of Stellenbosch. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

<http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/20179>

Apartheid's Demons: Satanism and Moral Panic in South Africa by Nicky Falkof, Wits University Faculty of Media Studies.

http://www.academia.edu/1846467/Apartheids_Demons_Satanism_and_Moral_Panic_in_South_Africa

