

THE DANGERS POSED TO CHILDREN
IF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
ALLOW THE TERM
'RITUAL ABUSE'
TO BE INCORPORATED
WITHIN PROPOSED NEW
WORKING TOGETHER GUIDELINES
FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

A reply from the
Sub-culture Alternatives Freedom Foundation
to the DoH Consultative paper
on amendments to Working Together

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PREAMBLE AND INTRODUCTION:

The Department of Health has announced changes to guidelines for social workers which will enable Satan Hunters within social work to re-activate the Satanic Ritual Abuse Myth and cause further damage to innocent children and their families . The DoH plan to officially incorporate the term 'Ritual Abuse' within the title 'Organised Abuse' thereby rubber-stamping the existence of Satanic Ritual Abuse regardless of the fact that research shows it to be a myth. There are major objections to this dangerous amendment which could open the floodgates to another socially destructive Satan Scare. This S.A.F.F. paper discusses the background and reveals the hidden agenda.

WHY THE SAFF QUALIFIES TO CONTRIBUTE:

The S.A.F.F. (Sub-culture Alternatives Freedom Foundation) was founded to represent the views of minority cultures and unorthodox beliefs in relation to the spurious claims of Satanic Child Abuse in 1989 and has the most accurate track-record of any independent observer-group on this subject. The S.A.F.F. was consistently first with research, caveats, contradictions and conclusions in every case. Had it not been for the public policy statements and discoveries of the S.A.F.F. Britain would have remained in the clutches of the Satanic Ritual Abuse Hysteria for much longer than it did. Without our help many more families and children would have suffered. Of all independent observers we have perhaps the most pertinent right to contribute our expertise towards this discussion on the planned amendment to Working Together.

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THE OBJECTIONS:

The foremost objection is that the term 'Ritual Abuse' itself is non-specific (not properly defined), has no basis in criminology or psychiatry, and is surrounded by immense confusion in the professional and the public mind. There are no definitive benchmarks for identifying 'Ritual Abuse'. The ones which were originally tried (Catherine Gould's infamous list of Satanic Indicators) were largely responsible for validating most of the Satan Scare cases of 1989/94. Therefore the use of the term is wholly reliant upon the prejudices and ignorances of the key workers in each case and as the Rochdale, Orkney, Bishop Auckland and many other cases in the 1990s show this is a fundamental and dangerous weakness. The term is unworkable and creates more problems than it solves.

The second objection is that demands for the inclusion of 'Ritual Abuse' within the terms of Working Together come from the same lobby of social workers who created and attempted to promote the scare in 1989/1994. As such, whether official definitions are arrived at or not, the effect of accepting the term 'Ritual Abuse' is to validate the approach of these people and lead to an unjust extension of their power shadow which serves no useful purpose in child care.

LACK OF DEFINITION IN THE TERM

'RITUAL ABUSE'

The term Ritual Abuse has never been properly defined even though it has been used repetitively over the past decade. Attempts at a definition by leading members of the lobby which promotes the idea of 'Ritual Abuse' are imperfect and are often contradicted and redefined by other workers in the same lobby.

There is no concrete evidence of the existence of any sub-set of child abuse which clearly qualifies for the term, yet it has become common parlance within social work because of its misuse by people who find it (consciously or subconsciously) convenient to their religious and cultural prejudices. Ritual Abuse, as claimed during Orkney and Rochdale cases, does not exist. It is a persistent fallacy which continues only because some social workers remain obsessed with it. Guidelines are not required for a fallacy, but are required to protect children from the effects of fallacy.

Lest we forget the facts of the situation; 84 young and vulnerable children were snatched from their parents in dawn raids and grilled repetitively until they 'confessed' fantasies which allowed prejudiced social workers to accuse their completely innocent parents of the most heinous crimes. Despite a hullabaloo which wasted over 20 million pounds of taxpayers money (money which could have gone to areas of child-care which are suffering underfunding **THERE HAS NOT BEEN ONE CASE OF SATANICALLY RELATED RITUAL ABUSE UNCOVERED** in the past decade. Moreover, every case sanctioned by the Department of Health during this period failed and did immense damage to public confidence in Social Work.

ORIGINS OF THE TERM

'ORGANISED ABUSE'

The term 'ORGANISED ABUSE' was officially sanctioned by the Department of Health as a diplomatic euphemism for Satanic Abuse when reporting on the social work blunders which occurred in the Rochdale Case.

It was used to DEFLATE the claims of Satanic Abuse, not reinforce them. There is of course no such thing as Satanic Abuse as the Governments' own report (THE EXTENT AND NATURE OF ORGANISED AND RITUAL ABUSE (Prof. Jean La Fontaine 1994) makes clear. The Department of Health used the phrase 'Organised Abuse' to classify the residue of cases which a coterie of social workers had claimed were connected with Satanic rituals and which they had originally called Satanic Ritual Abuse and which the DoH preferred to classify as abuse by multiple abusers, i.e. 'Organised Abuse'.

In effect the multiple-perpetrator scenario was already identified in Social Work and termed 'network abuse' or 'paedophile rings' but this didn't fit the bill in the claimed cases of Satanic Abuse because unlike Network Abuse (in which known paedophiles network together in groups to provide themselves with victims and distribute child-pornography) the claimed Satanic Abuse Cases of the time mostly involved families, friends and neighbours. The main features of both cases were 'multiple abusers'.

In the finality cases incorporating these claims fell into two types.

(a) There never really was any abuse, it was all worked up from coincidental circumstantial evidence by the paranoia of Satan hunters in social work.

(b) 'Regular' abuse had occurred and was reinterpreted as 'Satanic' by Social workers who believed that Satanic Ritual Abuse existed, when it didn't.

In the course of time the fears were found to be unproven. There was no abuse in type (a) cases and all of the 'evidence' held to indicate Satanic Ritual Abuse in type (b) cases fell apart at the first test; many of these so-called 'indicators' were extremely foolish and brought social work into disrepute. Those social workers who had supported the idea of Satanic Ritual Abuse closed ranks to hide the blunders. They tried to amalgamate the profile of 'multiple perpetrator family and friends abuse' under 'Organised Abuse'. From then on, for those who still believed that Satanic

Ritual Abuse existed, the term 'Organised Abuse' became a secret code for 'Satanic Ritual Abuse'. They would have never dared to admit it publicly then, for the media were taking a deep interest in the hysteria which was spreading throughout social work, but as time passed the Satan Hunters in social work continued to pursue this madness and represent, 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' within their clique as a subset of 'Organised Abuse'. With the coming of New Labour and new ministers who have little recollection of what went before the Satan Hunters have made their game-play and pressed the Department of Health into officially accepting the reality of Satanic Abuse by insisting that the term 'Ritual Abuse' should be officially recognised.

THIS IS A VERY DANGEROUS SITUATION. IT PUTS THINGS BACK RIGHT WHERE THEY WERE BEFORE ROCHDALE AND ORKNEY AND WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CAUSE FURTHER PERSECUTIONS OF INNOCENT FAMILIES THROUGHOUT BRITAIN.

DEMONOLOGY IN SOCIAL WORK

HOW SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE

WAS DISGUISED AS 'RITUAL ABUSE'

The small and subtle amendment which new ministers may well see as a reasonable request from social work activists will, in reality, create what the Satan Hunters in Social Work have been after for years. A Demonology which releases them from the professional restrictions which experience has shown to be necessary in social work but which constantly impede and frustrate their actions. History shows that therapists and social workers were unable to present a clear definition of Ritual Abuse in the early years of the hysteria because it was being developed 'on the hoof' and contradictions were frequent, even in the same camp. Because the Satanic Ritual Abuse Myth was the result of paranoia rather than reality, it depended on an unquestioning belief in it, rather than clear forensic analysis. Therefore when claimed cases came to court and failed due to their transparency, the Satan Hunters realised that they required a New Demonology (case histories / rationale / justification/collection of motifs and weight of circumstantial evidence etc) to be able to present a profile which would identify a separate type of abuse which they termed 'Ritual Abuse'. To establish Ritual Abuse as a genuine threat in the minds of those in social work who were more cautious.

They simply could not create this demonology WITHOUT reference to Satanism and the public disdain following their errors of 1989-91 was so extensive that the word 'Satanism' had now become taboo.

In order to gain interest and funding from the government, and the attention of more influential academic circles, they switched the term Satanic Ritual Child Abuse to 'Ritual Abuse' and expanded its parameters to include adult 'victims'. After being indoctrinated in psychologically experimental and untested counselling procedures these adult 'victims' provided stories from which the Satan Hunters in social work claimed to have built up over 1,000 case-histories which they interpret as involving 'Ritual Abuse'. This kind of therapy has been discredited many times. It involves an unquestioning belief in the theories of Multiple Personality Disorder or/and Recovered Memory Therapy. These techniques have caused great harm to the 'victims' who undergo them and the innocent people their confabulations have ultimately accused. Known by critics as False Memory Syndrome there has been a vigorous debate over their validity which has spanned many years; within and without the professional arena. The impact and meaning of the term 'Ritual Abuse' is herein

revealed. Type (a) cases which had previously produced confabulations of SATANIC indicators were now producing confabulations of 'Ritual Abuse' which were exactly as depraved in content, but without 'Satanic' or religious overtones. In short the confabulations were tailored (consciously or unconsciously) by the therapists to provide what was required. When shock-horror Satanism was fashionable during 1989 the confabulated experiences of 'victims' who underwent 'regression' were INTERPRETED by their therapists in Satanic ways. Now that the Satanic tag was taboo, the depravities were interpreted to fit the bill for 'Ritual Abuse' and did not have overtly Satanic components. This rehabilitated the growing number of Satan Hunters in social work and enabled them to pursue and develop their new demonology whilst not appearing publicly to have breached common sense and social work guidelines which the previous minister had invoked to stop the Satanic Ritual Abuse hysteria causing any more damage.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

A MODERN DAY WITCH HUNT

BY SECULARISTS

Here history is repeating itself. This is exactly the same set of conditions which occurred in the 15c when the ecclesiastics established the VERY SAME Satan Scare and developed a DEMONOLOGY to assist in targeting people whose life-style they disagreed with. In those days it took many decades to whip up public hatred against Witches. The advantages of the gullibility and superstition of the masses was tempered by the slowness of communications.

Today it has taken just a decade to establish in the popular mind the un-fact that there is a mortal threat to children and vulnerable adults from an imagined pan-global conspiracy of Satanists. Even with the use of the Internet and modern methods of communication the Satan Hunters had to overcome the credibility factor of selling a mediaeval fear to a modern audience.

As soon as Bodin, Binsfield, Remy et al invented their demonology in the 1500s, a new momentum was given to the witch-hunts in Europe and the incidences of cases increased on a logarithmic scale. Literally millions of innocent people were unnecessarily put to death in a series of state-sanctioned executions which rivals those of Hitler's' Final Solution. I would point out that THE PEOPLE WHO DEVELOPED THE DEMONOLOGY WHICH FUELLED THESE MASS HISTORICAL WITCH-HUNTS WERE THE VERY SAME ONES WHO TOOK PART IN THE FIRST STUMBLING PROSECUTIONS - JUST LIKE TODAY. The first prosecutions were partial, clumsy, and often inconclusive but it was from this earlier stage that the Demonology was developed. A demonology that was WHOLLY fiction, yet which sounded cohesive and was enough justification for the courts to order the extermination of hundreds of thousands of innocent people for heresies which involved claims of sacrificing babies and melting them down to make candles for supposed Black Masses. Only today the 20th century Satan Hunters claim that Satanists cook babies in microwave ovens and then eat them.

That historical situation is being replicated today in Britain. The people who imported, promoted and took part in the prosecution of early cases of alleged Satanic Abuse in 1989 are the SAME ones who are now trying to establish the "20th Century's New Demonology" of 'Ritual Abuse'. The fact that all their earlier cases failed one after the other is irrelevant to these people; and a warning to parents everywhere.

PARALLELS WITH THE DEMONOLOGIES

OF PREVIOUS AGES

AND THE PRESENT

SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE MYTH

After presiding as judge at a number of witch trials, Jean Bodin wrote his notorious *Demonomanie* (*Demonomania*) in 1580 to instruct other would-be inquisitors how to become a 'demonologist'. Prior to this the term 'demonologist' had not been known; although executions for Satanic Heresies had continually taken place. The difference is exceedingly important. Although a Christian, Bodin was NOT a member of the clergy. The development of experts in demonology (i.e. 'demonologists') marked the departure into secularism of the paranoid obsessions then current within theology. Just as the embodiment of the term 'ritual abuse' within Working Together will unleash another demonology within the Department of Health.

Within four years "*Demonomanie*" had been reprinted TEN times in various languages and caused the deaths of thousands of innocent people. The negative influence of this 1580 list of 'Satanic Ritual Abuse Indicators' has to be pondered on to be fully appreciated. Ten reprints in four years in a time when printing presses were licensed by the state shows how important the Manuscript had become. Sectioned into three parts the first covered the 'definition' of a witch and is replete with the very same rhetoric which suffuses modern day Satan Hunters' own literature. Bodin said a witch was:

'One who , knowing God's law, tries to bring about some act through an agreement with the devil'...

Virtually verbatim the intent apportioned to Satanic activity with children by today's Satan Hunters.

To quash any rational debate on the subject Bodin used a similar ruse to that of today's Satan Hunters.

"...[these crimes] are so conspiratorial that presumption and conjecture are sufficient proofs"...

or as the Satan Hunters would put it today

'these Satanists are so clever and have powerful friends in high places, the police force etc, that it is almost impossible to

get proof of Satanic Abuse, yet, for the sake of the children we must believe it and elevate circumstantial evidence to proof'...

which is an argument used many times during the aborted cases of 1989/1994.

As a lawyer Bodin knew the rules of law yet his approach to obtaining convictions of the people who were randomly accused of witchcraft is very similar to that of today's' Satan Hunters.

"One must not adhere to the ordinary rules of prosecution" , he said

"for proof of such evil is so obscure and difficult that not one out of a million witches would be accused or punished if REGULAR legal procedure were followed.'...

Lastly the most telling parallel between Bodin and today' Satan Hunters in social work is his list of rules of law for pursuing Witches.

- (1) The names of informers are to be kept secret.
- (2) Children are to be FORCED to testify against their parents.
- (3) Suspicion is sufficient ground for torture for popular rumour is never misinformed.
- (4) A person once accused should never be acquitted unless the falsity of the accuser or informer is clearer than the sun.

This just about replicates exactly the standards of evidence which today' Satan hunters required for setting the Orkney and Rochdale cases into motion.

LESSONS FROM THE

ROCHDALE & ORKNEY CASES

After Lord Clyde's Orkney Inquiry and the Social Services Inspectorate inquiry into the Rochdale Satanic Abuse case the Department of Health amended the Working Together guidelines with one very important addition to check the activities of the New Demonologists. This was:

Whenever a case of abuse which involved multiple perpetrators was suspected the key social workers on the case must immediately contact the director of social work before taking any action whatsoever.

This check on the precipitate activities of the New Demonologists has probably saved hundreds of innocent parents from bogus accusations of ritual abuse. It was a key piece of wisdom from the DoH; yet it looks as though the new ministers are about to scrap it.

The many blunders of the Orkney and Rochdale period, where a total of 84 innocent children were snatched from their families for no good reason, could all have been stopped before they started if the Social Services had kept a proper check on Satan Hunters in their staff and spotted that they were being fed this Myth by cadres of Christian fundamentalists disguised as do-gooders within their ranks. Their disinformation clearly caused 100% belief in susceptible social workers (such as, for example, those thousands who are members of the Association of Christian Social Workers - people who are regularly lectured to by Sectarian 'experts' in Satanic abuse - and who regularly read evangelist magazines which contain articles promoting the idea that Satanic Abuse is real).

Susceptible people like these had been goaded into believing the Satanic Ritual Abuse Myth by people who pretended to value children foremost but whose main purpose was in fact to create evidence of Satanic activity as proof of Jesus' 2nd coming. All those who require proof of this conclusion should read The Book of Revelation where the prototype of the Satanic Ritual Abuse Myth and its relationship with Armageddon is clearly laid out almost word for word. However, instead of curing the hysteria of Satanic abuse within the social services, that earlier juxtaposition by the DoH of the term 'Organised Abuse' for 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' in 1991 created a gateway which has enabled Satan Hunters in social work to actually establish their madness further behind the scenes. Few members of the public realise that Satan Seminars are still being held regularly, and that Satanic Abuse teaching aids are being produced and distributed to social work students and trainees at universities

and in training seminars whilst the Department of Health turns a blind eye.

The fact is that today, 10 years after the first Ritual Abuse allegations were muted and then discredited, a large and growing group of social workers, (many of whom are too young to experience and understand the mistakes made in 1989/90) sincerely believe that satanic abuse takes place and that it is part of their job to deal with it! Even though all evidence, research and understanding is to the contrary.

The point is this. Are people who believe this Satanic Abuse nonsense really the type we should trust with the power to take away other people's children? Furthermore, why is it that the Department of Health appear to be pandering to them? After ten years and the waste of millions of pounds of taxpayers money which could have gone to help children in REAL need, NOT ONE CHILD has been saved from the ever elusive Satanic Abusers; but 84 innocent children and their parents had their lives virtually destroyed by these senseless Satan hunters in social work. The mere fact that the DoH is even considering this amendment reveals the ignorance of the new ministers about the historical situation.

HOW A LACK OF PROPORTION IN CASES
AND INFERIOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PRODUCED THE WILD GOOSE CHASE
OF SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE

Whilst satanically obsessed social workers chase after mythical Satanists hundreds of children are being abused right under their noses! The S.A.F.F. have provided the Department of Health with unequivocal and incontrovertible statistical evidence that AT LEAST three children will be sexually abused by Christian Clergymen EVERY WEEK. We originally undertook the research to obtain a sense of proportion. To show how disproportionate resources were being put into unearthing Satanic Abuse. However we were utterly shocked at the results of our report THE BLACK MUSEUM OF PRIESTLY ABUSE - (available free from the SAFF in return for 4x26p stamps). If there IS a threat to children from without the family, then THIS IS IT.

Based on research into successful prosecutions which spanned the same 10 year period during which the Satan Hunters in social work were wasting millions of pounds of social services resources on the wild goose chase of Satanic Abuse and repetitively telling the British Public that their kids were in danger of being abused by mythical Satanists, over ONE THOUSAND innocent children were sexually abused by the very priests and vicars whom their parents had taught them to trust. The very same group of people that many of the Satan Hunters in social work were turning to for help to build their Demonology about supposed Satanic Abuse.

We challenged the NSPCC, which bears a great deal of the responsibility for promoting the idea of Satanic Ritual Abuse, to open a dedicated telephone help line for the many children who were being abused by priests. The reasoning is simple. Many of the child-welfare groups and organisations are run by volunteers from the priesthood. Often priests and vicars are used as go-betweens by local social service departments and get privileged knowledge. Perverted priests use their authority to sexually abuse their child victims over long periods and so the threat of them being able to short-circuit a complaint to the authorities is very real. Hence a dedicated line guaranteeing that information on clergy abuse would be received and acted on by non-religious personnel would be a life-saver to these abused children. And what did the NSPCC do? Initially they said they could not afford a new Helpline. We said that they didn't pay for the ones they already had - the DoH funds them

and they could fund this one too! But the NSPCC wouldn't do it.

Then the NSPCC said that they could deal with the problem within their existing format without specifying it as Clergy Abuse. We asked why they couldn't do that with Satanic Abuse as well and had chosen instead to ask for more funding for it?

In our eyes they were not taking the matter of Clergy Abuse seriously enough. It appeared that the PROVEN threat to thousands of children from Clergy Abuse does not play as much as the UNPROVEN and mythical threat of Satanic Abuse. What is going on here? On one hand a child in Rochdale watches a Video Nasty, fantasises to gullible social workers about Satanists and a dozen kids are scooped overnight.

On the other hand we find GENUINE EVIDENCE of an ongoing threat of repetitive abuse of hundreds of children each year and are ignored. This update to the Working Together guidelines has NO amendment about the DEFINITE PROVEN THREAT TO CHILDREN OF RENEGADE PERVERT PRIESTS, but contrarily attempts to establish an unnecessary amendment which gives the Satan Hunters carte blanche to kick-start their scare off again! Is this not clear evidence of prejudice?

We went back to the NSPCC and pointed out to them that in their leaflet on child abuse which is meant to educate parents and others, there was a pie- chart depicting percentages of risk from various abusers. This did not have a section on the PROVEN risk of Clergy Abuse. We said that it would make sense if there was just a mention of this risk. Perhaps a diplomatic note to parents that they should tell their children that they could come to them, their teachers or the police and would receive understanding if a member of the clergy tried to make them do something which they felt was wrong? Considering that such warnings are already contained within the NSPCC leaflet in reference to strangers and family members we didn't think this was too much to ask. The NSPCC said they would consider it as they were at that moment updating their leaflet. We were pleased, but a month later the new leaflet was published without any mention whatsoever of Clergy Abuse.

The NSPCC was at the forefront of campaigning to alert the public to what they perceived as dangers from Satanic Abusers. Dangers which, unlike the grindingly persistent instances of Clergy Abuse, quite simply evaporated in the course of time.

The SAFF BLACK MUSEUM statistics shows that the largest group of sexual abusers of children outside the family are THE CLERGY yet no one will ever know because the NSPCC don't think it important enough to mention and the Department of Health appear too occupied with whether or not to validate 'Ritual Abuse' within the Working Together guidelines.

We have pursued this thread at length to provide a sense of proportion

over the obsessively detailed interest within social work over spurious claims of Satanic Ritual Abuse, wherein every small piece of circumstantial evidence is pored over and elaborated into claimed proof of the dangers; whilst there is an almost universal disinterest in a genuine, proven, ongoing and very horrific threat to children of serious, long-term sexual abuse by Priests and vicars. After reading what follows, when you come to weigh the intensity of interest in one against the disinterest of the other, it will help you find the REAL reasons why we think that instead of stopping the rot the decision by the Department of Health to actively support Satan Hunter Social Workers by adopting their poisoned terminology will create a situation where more tragedies like those in Orkney and Rochdale are bound to occur.

WARNINGS AND PREDICTIONS OF

FUTURE TRAGEDIES IF THE DoH

VALIDATE THE TERM 'RITUAL ABUSE'

In order to achieve their prejudiced intent the Satan Hunters within Social Work must get Labour New Blood in the Department of Health behind them. Many of the newcomers (including ministers) will not know that the term 'Organised Abuse' was a form of political expediency used to sweep the term 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' under the carpet.

Because none of the social workers who caused the initial cases were ever disciplined they are still employed in social work and free to work to 'vindicate' themselves unhindered. To accomplish their ends the Satan Hunters in social work have to change the nuance of the term 'Organised Abuse' in the DoH Guidelines. That is exactly what is happening as the DoH presents its new consultation paper on changes to 'Working Together'

The Labour ministers appear not to know that IT MEANS TWO DIFFERENT THINGS.

The first people to use the term 'Satanic Ritual Child Abuse' were fundamentalist Christians in the U.S.A.

Fundamentalist Christian therapists developed the signifiers (the new Malleus Maleficarum) to identify such abusers and delighted in the occult terminology. They rushed to teach the mechanics of 'Satanic abuse' to both religious and secular social workers and therapists. Whilst this religiously inspired cadre permanently developed the 'Satanic' aspect, the secular social workers quickly dropped the word 'Satanic' from the term and began to talk of 'Ritual Abuse' instead. This injected a convenient ambiguity in U.S.A. therapy/social work circles which was eventually imported into the U.K. and which has NEVER been sorted out. Basically the origins of the terms 'Ritual Abuse' and 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' are the SAME. They mean the same thing.

This overlap between the fundamentalist and therapist groupings was a continuous process because the therapists required the 'signifiers' and many of the early 'victim impostors' which the fundamentalist circuit could supply, in order to create the demonology necessary on which to build a platform to pursue their own interests. This tandem approach was imported intact into the U.K. British therapists used the term 'Ritual Abuse' but invariably resorted to supposed Satanic symbols; supposed Satanic Intent and supposed Satanic

motivations as 'proof'. These were always provided by the Christian fundamentalists. Parallel to this 'sanitised' approach by professionals, the fundamentalists created a circus of shock-horror which began the first wave of the hysteria in the media in 1988/89. Both secular and fundamentalist Satan Hunters attended the notorious Satan seminars where therapists, social workers and sectarian bigots swapped inaccurate, misleading, often fictional 'evidence'. When the fundamentalists went too far and the media caught them out, during the Rochdale and Orkney cases, the religionists were used as whipping boys by the 'professionals'. Which is why the fundamentalists got all the blame for Rochdale and Orkney. Nobody asked where the discernment of the 'professionals' had got to! The DoH were so shell-shocked with the massive publicity and controversy that they announced a research project to find out the truth about the claims. Professor Jean La Fontaine's report *THE EXTENT AND NATURE OF ORGANISED AND RITUAL ABUSE* (ISBN 0113217978 HMSO) took several years to complete and was accepted by the previous Conservative government as the definitive overview.

HOW THE TERMS 'ORGANISED ABUSE',
'RITUAL ABUSE' AND SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE
WERE ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED
AND THE PITFALLS OF VALIDATING THEM.

The terms 'Ritual Abuse', 'Organised Abuse' and 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' were used indiscriminately and interchangeably during the first wave of the Satanic Child Abuse Hysteria. We can show a traceable development and constant misuse of these terms, an understanding of which will illustrate just how dangerous it would be for the Department of Health to allow the acceptance of 'Ritual Abuse' in the Working Together guidelines.

The first official meeting between Satan Hunters and the DoH occurred at the Elephant and Castle shortly after the infamous Cook Report programme on Satanic Abuse (widely credited with starting the hysteria) in 1989. Representatives of the main child-welfare groups and charities attended. Talk was of 'ritual abuse' not Satanic abuse but the MEANING was of Satanic Ritual Abuse as clearly outlined in the Cook Report programme and just as clearly indicated in the NSPCC press conferences at the time. That is, the abuse of children in a Satanic ritual framework.

Talk of SATANIC abuse was rife in the media too and many of the Satan Hunters in social work collaborated with them. Child charities (such as Childline) invited unqualified and inexperienced Christian fundamentalist speakers to seminars to instruct their staff about SATANIC abuse (not 'Ritual Abuse'). As in the U.S.A., British social workers preferred the term 'Ritual Abuse' but accepted virtually every misdirection and claim the fundamentalists made. What the social workers may not have known was that the British fundamentalists were being taught by American fundamentalists who had created the myth in the first place. American therapists travelled to the U.K. to lecture on SATANIC abuse. Some of these were later thoroughly discredited, yet the affects of their lectures is still ongoing. In effect both sides WERE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME THING; 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' and using information and data supplied by the fundamentalists. Only later did the social workers backtrack and claim that their 'Ritual Abuse' was different and had nothing to do with the Satanic Abuse promoted by the fundamentalists. In fact it has its source full square in the fundamentalist camp.

Jim Harding (then child care officer and now Director of the NSPCC)

was quoted as using the term 'SATANIC'.

'he said the ceremonies often involved "satanic rites". participants sometimes slaughtered animals or drank blood..'(Independent March 13th 1990)-

You can see therefore that the social work community was at this point having its cake and eating it. When it wanted shock-horror it allowed the Satanic aspect to the fore - when speaking more professionally, at lectures etc, they tended to use the term 'Ritual Abuse' IN EFFECT THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT THE SAME THING.

Ministers and their secretaries at the Department of Health should be under no illusion. Let there be no mistake. The fundamentalists and the social workers were TALKING ABOUT THE SAME THING - THE SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN IN SATANIC CEREMONIES.

The NSPCC used the term Ritual Abuse or an even more unspecified term 'bizarre' in their literature. But in the Cook Report (made with NSPCC involvement and support) 'Satanic Ritual Abuse' was unequivocally named as the cause. The (since discredited) Cook Report caused countrywide hysteria and the fundamentalists went right over the top with claims of cannibalism and sacrificing babies to the Devil. We have no evidence whatsoever of any social worker, charity or therapist involved in the pursuit of 'Ritual Abuse' giving any statement which contradicted what the fundamentalists were saying during this period.

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE SATAN MYTH AND THE
COMPARATIVE USE OF 'RITUAL ABUSE'

By the time the Rochdale blunders were surfacing and a few open-minded journalists began questioning the assertions which the fundamentalists had made, the Satan hunters in social work had nailed their colours to the mast and were in deep trouble. They sought an escape from the SATANIC terminology. These hypocrites denied ever using or condoning the term 'Satanic Abuse' and claimed they had only spoke of 'Ritualistic Abuse'. When the SAFF tried to cut through the sensationalism and discover where this anti-occult propaganda was coming from we found that the press-release published by the NSPCC to coincide with the Cook Report was much less 'satanically inspired' than newspaper reports of it. It did include outrageous claims that children may have been killed in ritualistic ceremonies which in our view was an utterly irresponsible thing to broadcast on the flimsy evidence that the NSPCC held. However most every newspaper (local and national) carried additions to the NSPCC report which included claims of Devil Worship, blood sacrifice, Witchcraft and other motifs which were clearly satanically connected but were not in the original press-release. We discovered that much of the satanic overload had resulted from the Press Conference held by the NSPCC. Journalists added the Witchcraft and occult connections to their reports and this distorted image was subsequently published country-wide. This set the sensational style of reporting for the next few months.

We challenged the NSPCC over this corruption of their News Release. We asked them to clarify their report and make clear that they were not including pagans or other occultists in their list of suspicious practices; but they became bullish. They refused to take any action whatsoever. The NSPCC Policy Information Officer (Kevin Barrett) wrote:

'it is not the Society's job to take any step in connection with an alleged misinterpretation by newspapers of the Society's press release'.

It was a statement the NSPCC were soon to regret.

Coverage of the NSPCC's annual report a few months' later increased the claims of Satanic Activity:

"CHILDREN FORCED INTO SATANIC SEX RITUALS" (Daily Mail);

"NSPCC AT WAR WITH DEVIL RITUALISTS" (Evening News)
"CHILDREN FORCED TO KILL ANIMALS IN SATANIC RITES" (Telegraph);

'Jim Harding believed the versions of the cult sacrifices that the society had been told...
....the incidence of WITCHCRAFT and devil worship was causing a great deal of anxiety'...
.....there have been human sacrifices with children being forced to eat part of a human heart..'

These are just a small selection of the truly horrific claims made in connection with the NSPCC during this period and we have no doubt that without the backing of this very well respected organisations such claims would have more likely been taken with a very large dose of salt.

However, by December of the same year the Scare was faltering. The Rochdale case (which the Satan Hunters hoped would 'prove' the existence of Satanic Abuse) failed utterly and all Satanic Claims were dropped.

On 10th March 1991 the Mail on Sunday headlined; NSPCC SAY SORRY FOR 'WILD STATEMENTS' and stated that the NSPCC had backtracked on its warnings of satanic sex rituals admitting that

'there was not a shred of evidence to support its claims ... we regret having been associated with wild statements about satanism.'

Yet, typical of the confusion and unreliability of the entire episode, within days the NSPCC appeared to be switching round again.

SATANIC ABUSE CLAIMS JUSTIFIED says NSPCC (Daily Telegraph)
'Jim Harding said,

"What we profoundly regret is the way those words were taken by some elements of the press and distorted".

Kevin Barratt's words rang in our ears. It is not our job to correct any misinterpretation by the press, he had said when we warned the NSPCC of the dangers to children and others from the escalating hysteria of the time.

We had earlier written to explain to the NSPCC that the Satan Scare claims were bogus and were invented by Christian fundamentalists in the U.S.A. and were being imported and promoted by British fundamentalists. We cautioned the NSPCC of the consequences of allowing the scare full reign and offered our help in getting

at the truth. We asked them to slow down the hysteria in the press. They had said it was none of their business to do so - now they were complaining about what the press were doing!

Blaming the press for distorting stories became a regular propaganda exercise used by many social workers and therapists in the next few months to escape censure. The facts show that the Satan Hunters used the press most forcibly and for the first couple of years of the scare were given every advantage by the media. It was only when their claims produced tragedies like those in Rochdale and Orkney that the media, rightly, demanded more evidence and became critical of what they were being told by the Satan Hunters in social work.

This contrast between the public hysteria which the scare caused and what the official publications of the NSPCC (and others) actually stated, mirrors the development of the terminology we use today and is important enough to relate in detail.

The NSPCC press release which coincided with the Cook report was dated 17 July 1989 and headed "RITUALISTIC ABUSE". It concerned 'ritualistic ceremonies'. It did not mention Satanic Abuse (even though the papers the day after were full of that) nor did it include the term 'Organised Abuse' but the subject of the press release clearly appeared to be the abuse of children in an occult framework. This indicates that when social workers today use the term 'Ritual Abuse' they mean 'Satanic Ritual Abuse'. By accepting the term 'Ritual Abuse', the DoH is actually being asked to validate Satanic Ritual Abuse.

By 12th March 1990 the first mention of 'ORGANISED ABUSE' appeared in the NSPCC's Annual Report. It also mentioned 'Ritualistic Abuse' and 'Sex Rings'. This is more proof of the definite Satanic links in the term 'Ritual Abuse'.

Although no direct mention was made of devil worship, satanism or satanic abuse in the NSPCC's press release, the following days' headlines were even wilder than previously.....

RITUAL CHILD ABUSE RIFE
GANGS LURE CHILDREN TO SATANISM
SATANIC CULTS ABUSE YOUNG
HUMAN SACRIFICES AT WITCHCRAFT CEREMONIES
CHILDREN FORCED TO KILL ANIMALS IN SATANIC RITES
SATANIC ORGIES' YOUNG VICTIMS
CHILDREN OF FIVE DRINK BLOOD SAYS NSPCC
WE CAN PROVE RITUAL ABUSE SAYS NSPCC
NSPCC SAYS RITUAL ABUSE CLAIMS STILL BEING MADE.

The link between 'Ritual Abuse' and 'Satanism' is nowhere more clearer made than in these headlines.

However, in another of those catch-as-catch-can situations on this issue the NSPCC denied responsibility for any of those headlines in a letter dated March 29th. They wrote;

"[our] statement did not talk about Satanic or Occult Abuse."

The danger of misuse of the term, by the media, and by other social workers was and is still IMMENSE. From here on the NSPCC did not use the term 'Satanic Ritual Abuse'. Throughout social work there began the rigmarole of using euphemisms to refer to things which were essentially rooted in the Satanic Ritual Abuse Myth.

The very next month (April 1990) the term 'Organised Abuse' was used in exclusive connection with the term 'Ritualised Abuse' in an NSPCC appeals leaflet.

By October 1990: The NSPCC were mailing out a Christmas appeal to the public asking for money to cope with 'Organised Abuse' and linked it with the term 'Ritualistic Abuse' and 'Sex Rings'

On October 5th 1990 Dr Christopher Brown (then Director of the NSPCC) was interviewed on the Jimmy Young show and said

"Let me make it clear that we are not talking about anything to do with Satanism or religious belief or the occult or anything like that.. what I am talking about are children who are 'organised' into forms of abuse where parents or other adults are using rituals to frighten the children....'

That's clearly not the impression which the public had been given.

On March 11th 1991 in response to the growing public concern that something had gone drastically wrong in Rochdale and Orkney the beleaguered Virginia Bottomley (then Health Minister) announced that she wanted all social workers to undergo retraining in child interview methods and how to separate fact from fantasy (Daily Mail). It was widely believed (correctly - as Prof. La Fontaine's report acknowledged later) that social workers had indoctrinated children with fantasies of Satanic Abuse through persistent questioning. One child was interviewed over 100 times until he 'confessed'!

Those who had been involved in the first wave of allegations about Satanic Abuse were now in a defensive position. A week later (19 March 1991): the NSPCC's Christopher Brown said that 'seven teams were still reporting Ritual Abuse'

but refused to go into details or identify any of the cases to The Times reporter.

It is abundantly clear that by 'ritual abuse' the NSPCC meant child abuse as part of bizarre occult rituals whether the abusers were committed occultists/Satanists or whether the rituals were simply used to frighten the children into compliance and this view has been repeated many times by them. Think carefully.

What this actually means is that inclusion of 'Ritual Abuse' within the term 'organised abuse' in Working Together means ACKNOWLEDGING AND ACCEPTING the existence of Satanic Ritual Child Abuse.

After this things cooled somewhat but in a pamphlet advertising training for social workers published in September 1991 the NSPCC used the term 'Organised Abuse' in relation to 'intervention' (lifting of children from families). This was the great blunder of the Orkney and Rochdale fiascos which struck fear into the hearts of all parents. The leaflet went into detail about the training course without mentioning the term 'Satanism' or 'ritual abuse' at all.

In November 1991 The NSPCC had linked the terms again. 'Ritualistic and Organised abuse' was mentioned in a leaflet for another training day.

This constant self-contradiction, ambiguity, impreciseness, changing of definitions, misuse of terminology and promotion of generalisations by those involved in the Satan Scare could be put down simply to unprofessionalism. Social Workers might say it was because Ritual Abuse was a new phenomenon and they were on a tight learning curve. In which case why did they refuse help and expertise from the SAFF when we offered it to them? Of all the lobbies involved in the Satan Myth Scare the SAFF is the only one which has, in the course of time, been proven right in its every conclusion; yet the NSPCC weren't interested in our participation or expertise.

And the British Association of Social Workers actually rejected our application for associate membership! When we lost patience with the NSPCC's recalcitrance to our offers of help and said we were going to publish criticisms of their handling of the situation the NSPCC actually paid a firm of blue-chip solicitors to threaten us with legal action!

We believe that the Satan Hunters in social work wanted to have their cake and eat it. A lack of definition at this point worked grossly in the favour of promoting the scare and the interests of the Child Scare Industry. Ritual Abuse was the Ultimate Scare, arrived at after a succession of previous scares started by the Child Care Industry to enhance its power-base. Satanic Ritual Abuse was the Ultimate Justification for social work itself. Every awful thing that could possibly harm children could be

rolled into one symbolic scare and because it was unreal, it was finite. Suspicion was everything. Mystery was evidence enough of wrongdoing. The Satanic Ritual Abuse scare provided a platform and fallow ground for the whole of social work ad infinitum. No more boring old feet-on-the-ground hard-edged get-your-sleeves-rolled-up common-or-garden helping out of single-mums, distraught old ladies, or wayward youths. Satanic Ritual Abuse actually brought a kind of glamour and concentrated direction to social work - and was a much better proposition for social work activists than getting a bloody nose in some deprived client's bed sit.

Although the NSPCC was indubitably amongst the front runners in promoting the idea of Ritual Abuse, other child welfare charities were equally as opportunistic. The National Children's Home actually placed a large advertisement in a national newspaper asking for donations to deal with the threat of Ritual Abuse!

At around this time a parallel development in leading edge social work was the 'phenomenon' of 'networks' which, they purported, were gangs of paedophiles who 'networked' together in order to share pornography and target child victims. Of course 'networking' was not something new. It had always been a concomitant feature of the paedophile subculture, but in the search for innovation and uniqueness the social workers working on these cases coined the phrase 'network abuse' and spoke of 'rings' of paedophiles in order to differentiate them from single-perpetrator abuses.

There were several cases at that time in which paedophile groups had been extremely cunning in their organisation. Although none of these were in any way occult or satanically connected the resultant tortures of their victims fitted the expectancies of the Satan-hunters who awarded Satanists with devilish cunning, organisational expertise, and incipient evil for evil's sake. Hence a number of articles began to appear in the social work press which confused the issue by mentioning 'network abuse' 'paedophile rings' and 'Ritual Abuse' as though they were part of the same phenomenon.

Even though the Satan hunters had no evidence that any Satanic rings actually existed they used the 'network abusers' phenomenon as an example of the mechanics which they expected Satanic abusers to use and then maintained (without one jot of proof) that is what the Satanists did. Evidence of one was 'proof' of the other!

SOCIAL SERVICES INSPECTORATE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE ADOPTION

OF THE TERM 'ORGANISED ABUSE'

By the time social worker blunders in the Orkney case were coming to light the Social services Inspectorate had delivered their damning report on the failed Rochdale satanic abuse allegations. Although the public had expected the manic idea of Ritual Abuse to be now excised entirely from social work practice the therapists and social workers regrouped by seizing on the term 'organised abuse' as a catch-all which encompassed all group abuse. That is, replaced the terms 'network abuse', 'ritual abuse' and 'Satanic Abuse'. This enabled the Social Workers to treat the blunders as though they had been caused by a technical problem in the social work system rather than by fanatics who overran their authority and broke all the social work guidelines in order to pursue their mania. By using the term 'Organised Abuse' as a kind of SECRET CODE WORD to represent Satanic Ritual Abuse the Satan hunter social workers and therapists were able to continue their fifth column in social work, hold seminars, distribute information, teach students and network freely on the subject without professional or media criticism. So 'Organised Abuse' (a totally unspecified and undefined term) became a very useful alternative politically and publicly.

Unbelievably, in a document about terminal maladministration on Satanic Ritual Abuse allegations in the Rochdale case, the terms 'Satanic', 'Ritual' and/or 'network' never appeared. There was only one fleeting reference to the nub of the matter. :

"Department of Health guidance does not yet address this issue [large scale police/social services abuse investigations] in the context of ORGANISED ABUSE."

So from April 1991 onwards both the Department of Health, Satan Hunter Therapists and social workers clearly began using the term 'Organised Abuse' as a euphemism for Satanic Abuse. Whilst those who didn't believe in the existence of Satanic Abuse used the term and thought they were talking about 'paedophile networks'. This can clearly be seen when one takes into consideration the comments in the recent DoH draft guidelines [5:34] in which it says

'ACPCS are expected to agree procedures for dealing with 'organised abuse' cases. Senior managers should be informed as soon as suspicions about the existence of organised abuse emerges..'

This requirement, to refer a case of this kind directly to the director of social work before taking any action whatsoever, was designed by the Department of Health specifically to avoid Dawn Lifts of Children from family homes by obsessed Satan hunter social workers. It had nothing to do with 'paedophile networks' and the last thing it was intended to be was an open-house invitation for social workers to use it to establish the existence of 'Ritual abuse'.

Ironically, at the same time that this development was occurring; partly in response to the heightened awareness of child abuse and the continuous exposure of allegations in the media; a massive phalanx of hidden child abuse has been unearthed in social work hostels, children's homes and young offenders institutions throughout the country. This gave an added impetus to belief in 'Organised Abuse'. As the climate of belief widened more and more genuine victims came forward to tell their stories. Some of them went back decades but none of them involved Satanic or Occult aspects.

The Frank Beck case was the watershed. So grave were these abuses which involved many perpetrators who had spent years abusing children whilst working under-cover in social work and child care agencies that it might be said that the social services were glad to focus attention on spurious cases of Satanic Abuse instead. So well organised were these paedophile networks within social work and so extensive were they in periods of time that they thoroughly embarrassed the entire child welfare system and made their allegations about a handful of supposed satanic abusers look like a dereliction of duty. The fact was that there were hundreds of people being abused by perverted social workers and all the social work mafia could see were phantom Satanists. However by cleverly reclassifying these 'paedophile social worker networks' under the catch-all of 'organised abuse' the child welfare establishment quickly consigned the massive amount of ongoing institutionalised abuse, (which we and many others had tried to bring their attention to for many years) into the melting pot of Ritual Abuse, thereby fuelling the myth that highly organised, networks of repetitive abusers must be inherently evil (therefore by qualification Satanic) and that this was evidence that ritual abuse did in fact exist!

The Satan Hunters have consistently pressured the Department of Health on this issue, bombarding them with reports and case information which they believe are evidence of Satanic Abuse. They're not, but the DoH appears to be crumbling and giving in to their irrationalism for it has capitulated into recommending an official definition of the term 'Organised Abuse' and appears intent on including the bogus term 'Ritual Abuse' within that definition in the next social worker guidelines. This will, of course, give the Satan

hunters carte blanche to pursue any madcap Satanic Abuse allegations simply by reclassifying them as 'Organised Abuse' instead. This will undoubtedly create more havoc amongst unsuspecting innocent families throughout the land. Any young family with an alternative or unorthodox belief will be vulnerable to victimisation.

WHY RECENT RESEARCH INTO

ORGANISED ABUSE

MAY BE DEFICIENT

The DoH consultation paper attempts to justify the need for an official definition of 'organised abuse' by referring to

'post 1991 research' into the incidence and nature of 'organised abuse.'

As far as we are aware there have only been three pieces of research done on 'organised abuse' since 1991. The most eminent is that by Jean La Fontaine. It concluded that Satanic Abuse did not exist in any of the cases claimed by the Satan hunters and that the handful of cases of Abuse which she found historically which might have been considered to have an element of Ritual were insignificantly different to normal abuse to qualify for a new phalanx of the child abuse industry. This able report thoroughly concluded the Satan Scare of the 1990s. Accepted by the previous Tory government as the definitive overview of the scare its findings appear to have been totally ignored by the incoming Labour government. Why?

The second piece of research was done at Manchester University. It also involved known Satan Hunter therapists and social workers whose track record of the compilation and misinterpretation of satanic signifiers in cases of child abuse is well known. That research solely concerns itself with Satanic Ritual Abuse (not network abuse) and is clearly not an objective report. It is promoted by Satan Hunters in social work therefore does not apply to 'organised abuse' per se but specifically to claims of Satanic Abuse.

The third research was again produced by avowed Satan Hunters in direct response to the conclusions of Prof. Jean La Fontaine's original report and in a declared attempt to undermine its conclusions. They maintained that Satanic Ritual Abuse does exist and gained funding from the DoH to pay for a hotch-potch of biased and misrepresented research. The value of this can be gauged from the way that one of its contributors presented their report to the public. He is a committed fundamentalist and edits a Christian evangelical newspaper with a wide circulation. He printed

SATANIC ABUSE: IT'S A REALITY!

in banner headlines on the front page of his newspaper, and then went on to make the same old Satanic Ritual Abuse allegations which were disproved years before when he had told the world that he had found an actual video showing Satanic Abuse and it turned out to be a ten year old piece of performance art by a little known rock band which you could buy off the shelf at any good Music store!

Note carefully that this is a significant replay of the original method which the fundamentalists used to hike the story in 1988/89. There is a very real and grave danger that more tragedies like Orkney and Rochdale will be generated by these people if the civil servants at the DoH don't realise how they are being manipulated.

It is significant that section 5:35 of the DoH draft guidelines alludes to research but does NOT specify or notate that research. The waters are further muddied by the editors referring to

'research into...The nature and extent of organised and ritual sexual abuse....'

which is almost verbatim the title of Prof. La Fontaine's definitive report. However as can clearly be seen in her report Professor La Fontaine's DOES NOT provide justification for or recommend the adoption of the term 'organised abuse' as an umbrella term to include 'Ritual Abuse'. She looked at each separately and concluded that there was no evidence of Satanic Ritual Abuse in any of the cases the Satan hunter social workers had claimed. Just which reports are the DoH relying on and why?

Why is it necessary to mix up 'Organised Abuse' with so-called Ritual Abuse? This is not only folly, it is fantasy. There has not been one case of multiple perpetrator child abuse which has been successfully prosecuted through the courts which has categorically proved the existence of a satanic or ritual conspiracy (which is what Satanic Ritual Abuse means). The allegations made by Satan hunters in connection with ritual abuse are WHOLLY autonomous from those which occur in 'organised' abuse (about which there is ample evidence and statistical information).

This new DoH definition of 'Organised Abuse' is imprecise and unspecific; almost worthless in practice - so why is it being attempted? What is wrong with calling paedophiles who form gangs to abuse children 'network abusers' or 'paedophile rings' as before? Who will benefit from the amendment? Only the Satan Hunters I am afraid.

The definition of 'Organised Abuse' does not identify a new type of perpetrator and it does not help classify other types of abuse. It is in fact an additional layer of unnecessary complexity. The only thing it achieves is an opening for Satan Hunters within

social work to spread their poison.

All forms of child abuse involve perpetrators (individually and collectively) using 'an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for sexual abuse so this is not peculiar or exclusive to a definition of 'Organised Abuse'. On this basis one may ask the DoH if they will include Clergy Abuse within the same definition for we have proven that priestly abusers also 'use position and authority to recruit children for sexual abuse'.

Would it not therefore be more productive to have one definition for 'network abuse' and one for 'ritual abuse' instead of confusing the two under 'Organised Abuse'? In fact, as I shall show below, this has already been done. Prof. Jean La Fontaine adopts independent definitions in her report.

But in giving the reasons why the DoH thinks they should include 'ritual abuse' under the banner of 'Organised Abuse', these new draft guidelines contradict themselves in several major areas. It is as though little thought has been given to the effects.
e.g.

"...no type [ritual or network abuse] was clearly distinguishable and no feature was exclusive to any"

Which proves our point that rolling several distinct types of abuse under the panoply of one unspecific generalisation can only lead to increased complexity, not less.

and again:

'cases in which there was corroborative evidence of ritual abuse were extremely rare and evidence that adults had performed rituals of recognisably occult significance was virtually non-existent. '

We disagree. Cases are not 'virtually' non-existent. They ARE non-existent. Surely if the DoH is ready to admit what every informed party already knows, that there is infinitesimal evidence to support allegations of Ritual abuse after one of the widest and longest witch-hunts in modern history, during a period when literally THOUSANDS of other cases of child abuse have occurred, that must mean it effectively DOESN'T exist. So what is their purpose in lumping it under 'Organised Abuse'?

The unfocussed nature of this paper is again evident when the authors state:

'All this evidence tended to support the view that it was unhelpful

to regard ritual abuse as a phenomenon distinct from child sexual abuse..... rather focusing solely on allegations which are difficult to prove in court'

This statement is typical social-work speak. What the reports' authors are actually saying is this; Satan Hunters in social work still believe that Ritual Abuse exists. We (the DoH) aren't going to enter into debate or contradict them. We think it best if Satan hunters who find what they think is a ritual abuse case treat it as an ordinary case of child abuse because we don't want any of those manic allegations which are difficult to prove in court and cause a rumpus in the press. Therefore we will include it under the nebulous 'Organised Abuse' and the Satan Hunters can pursue their prejudices in disguise.

Prof. La Fontaine has already systematically defined the parameters of the terms 'Organised Abuse', 'Ritual Abuse', and 'Satanic Abuse' in her definitive report. SHE LISTS THEM ALL DISTINCTLY FROM EACH OTHER on page 3. The people who have edited the draft guidelines cannot have even read it. If they have and STILL have chosen to go with the new definition then it can only be seen as a capitulation to the Satan Hunters within social work.

WARNING SIGNS FOR A NEW WAVE OF SATAN HYSTERIA

We alert the DoH and the people of this country to the fact that the only possible effect of including the term 'Ritual Abuse' within the term 'Organised Abuse' will be to create fallow ground for Satan Hunters within social work who WILL cause more suffering to children and their parents by pursuing vendettas against non-conformist families.

Our research has shown that many of the people within social work who were instrumental in promoting the scare at the start of the hysteria in 1989 are still influential in social work today and are still pursuing a sterilised version of Satanic Ritual Child Abuse under the term 'Ritual Abuse'. Indeed, despite the catalogue of atrocious mistakes made by some, many are still pursuing their madcap beliefs today, often behind closed doors.

We have shown that the NSPCC did originally claim an occult/Satanic connection and still believe that children are abused in occult type rituals. According to newspaper reports the current director of the NSPCC was a firm believer in that scenario and was involved in spreading the idea of Ritual Abuse during 1989. In short little has changed since then except perhaps the more subtle methods used by Satan Hunters to get their theories accepted. We believe that the attempt to get the Department of Health to accept the term 'ritual abuse' is part of that ongoing campaign and should be strongly resisted.

Those people who have not yet made up their mind should remember these words: The only thing which 'incriminated' one of the Orkney families and caused their children to be taken away from them at dawn was having a Dennis Wheatley novel on their bookshelf!

Ritual Abuse DOES NOT EXIST. After a world-wide witch-hunt lasting a decade and the attentions of hundreds of thousands of Satan hunters (professional and otherwise) there is absolutely no incontrovertible evidence to support it anywhere. It is purely a figment of the imagination of Sectarian Satan Hunters and social-workers-on-the-make.

If the Department of Health does not immediately and unequivocally reject it from these guidelines then the Satan hunters in British social work WILL have their official Demonology and will have opened the floodgates to massive religious persecution of the British Public on a scale not seen since Mediaeval times. If the DoH allow them to institutionalise 'ritual abuse' within this definition, it will take years, perhaps decades of suffering to

put right. The department has a duty to get this right. We urge the department NOT to amend the guidelines in this way and we warn them in the strongest possible terms of the consequences of doing so. We ask every responsible person and organisation connected with it to support our call for the term 'Ritual Abuse' not to be officially validated and to shun those who persist in promoting it.

Please write to: Mike Murnane, Social Care Group, Working Together Amendments, Department of Health, Room 114, Wellington House, Waterloo Road, London SE1.

Ends:
Leeds, Yorkshire, May 1998.