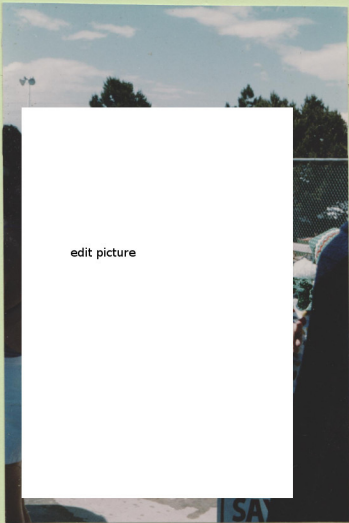


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CHILD ABUSE AND THERAPEUTIC BRAINWASHING

In some ways the most terrifying form of intervention in alleged "child abuse" cases is that carried out by therapists. Current radical feminist teachings that are in vogue with "sexual abuse" counselors are hysterical rantings unsubstantiated by data or scientific evidence. A small group has carried its anti-male ravings into the counseling profession. It really is no coincidence that one major book on how to "interview" [read indoctrinate] children says that five of its six authors "all happened to be motivated, strong-willed, and opinionated women." [1] While some psychiatrists are involved with the process most of the practitioners of this new witch-hunt are social workers.

Dr. John Money, Professor of Medical Psychology and Director of the Psychohormonal Research Unit at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine has had the fortitude to expose how this abuse theology weeds men out of the profession leaving women, usually radical feminists, its dominant practitioners. "The greater malpractice vulnerability of male as compared with female victimologists is such that the victimology profession[2] may become almost exclusively the province of women. Herein lies a fateful twist to the irony of history. A century ago, in the first round of women's fight for legal and political

equality with men, their liberation from the economic and vocational burden of unrestrained childbearing was at the cost of female abstinence and continence. Women became officially asexual, and it was their responsibility to restrain the animal passions of their men. Now, a century later, restraint has been changed to inquisitorial vindictiveness and vengeance against men." [3]

There have been several major, well-publicized, national child-abuse cases that used these witch-hunters to sniff out alleged molesters. In the McMartin daycare case the efforts of social worker Kee MacFarlane of the Children's Institute International, were crucial. MacFarlane and her minions helped sniff out Satanic abuse everywhere they looked. [4] The children who were "counseled" by CII staff came out of therapy with nightmarish stories of secret tunnels, ritual murders, animal sacrifices, etc. None of the children had such stories until they underwent "therapy" with MacFarlane's people. But no evidence has ever been found to substantiate any of the claims made by the children.

The *Minnesota Family Law Journal*, noted that "two recent psychiatric studies suggest that there is a far greater problem of false allegations that is more difficult to discern because both the accusing

parent and the alleged victim are convinced of the truth of the allegations." [5] What is hard to understand, to the average person, is how a child could come to believe they were molested when in fact they were not. Surely a child will not believe such things unless they are true.

But I think we can show that so-called therapeutic interviewing techniques often encourage false statements initially and that counseling sessions then reinforce those statements until the child is no longer capable of discerning reality from the fantasies of the "motivated, strong-willed, opinionated women" who interview and counsel them.

Dr. William McIver, a Clinical Psychologist, discussed the process by which children are indoctrinated by these social workers. In *The Oregon Defense Attorney* of June/July, 1985, Dr. McIver noted: "Unfortunately, ways in which children are currently being interviewed in these cases are damaging to them because, quite simply, they aren't being given the opportunity to tell the truth. Typically, it is the interviewer's need which are taken care of and not the child's. The story that is told is too often the one the interviewer wants to hear and not the actual one." [6]

The parent of one alleged victim at the MacMartin Preschool inadvertently verifies what critics have been saying about the case. This parent said:

"When we heard his [the son] initial disclosures during the Children's Institute International interview I still did not believe it. As a matter of fact he denied it right after the interview. More disclosures came out over a period of months and years from our talks, from therapy, and from interviews with the police and prosecutors. I know those disclosures were not coerced.

"Periodically, he would deny things he had said before, at times he would even deny being molested at all, only that others were. This is what we were confronted with. A cycle of disclosures and denials. I was confused and in anguish about this. It was not easy to believe all the disclosures but I eventually did because I know my son well.... At times they [the stories told by the child] were inconsistent and seemed unbelievable. But, taken as a whole, it was a clear message of the basic truth that he and many, many others had been sexually molested and terrorized at the McMartin school." [7]

Another parent told a similar story. On one television show the mother of an alleged victim said, "What people don't know, and I never even told Kee at CII, that we took our child to a psychologist prior to taking this child to CII and we told this psychologist that our child has behavior problems. Could you see what you could find out? And he had seen the child for awhile, and he couldn't figure out what was wrong, and he seemed fine—that our child seemed fine. Then I disclosed to him

that our child had gone to McMartin Preschool. Could you see if he was affected by what went on? So the psychologist continued to see our child, and still got nothing from our child. And the reason why he got nothing was because this child was so terrorized and so frightened that the only way you could get—" At this point the interviewer interrupted and asked, "So you're saying some psychologist missed it completely because they weren't as good as Kee. Is that what you're saying?" The mother responded, "Exactly. If you don't use the techniques that these psychologists like Kee, and therapists like Kee, provide, you can't get to the problem." [8] It should be noted that the mother is wrong as she says Kee

MacFarlane is a psychologist. In this case the parent, after learning about the alleged incidents at the Preschool, took the child to a psychologist who could not find any indications of abuse. Only after MacFarlane used her special "techniques" were charges of abuse made.

Dr. McIver says the process of indoctrination begins with the assumptions the interviewer carries into the session. "These interviews are narrow in focus and they are based on the assumption that abuse did occur and that 'children don't lie about this sort of thing'." [9] That such assumptions are made by these people is obvious from any investigation of the manuals they produce. For instance the Kee



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MacFarlane book, *Sexual Abuse of Young Children*, carries an essay by Shawn Conerly of Orange County, CA, Child Protective Services. Conerly laments that, "One very frustrating experience everyone encounters from time to time is the child who can't be reached, it is very easy to be hard on oneself for failing to reach children

They also do so in order to test the interviewer's reactions, persistence, and willingness to take the matter further. Therefore, it is not always in a child's best interests for the interviewer to accept an initial denial at face value. Asking a denying child if something 'may' have happened or if it happened 'sometimes' is frequently a

Children who say they haven't been abused are continuously asked the same question over and over, in various forms, sometimes for months or years.

who need to tell about sexual abuse. But this happens, and it is no one's failure. Sometimes children are just not ready to talk, and nothing the evaluator does can change that. Some children are in such pain that only with long-term therapy do they begin to tell." [10] Note that another option is totally ignored—some children do not tell because they have nothing to tell.

Throughout the MacFarlane book the various authors assume that any child who is interviewed has been abused. The whole secret of the interview is for the interviewer to get the child to admit the abuse. MacFarlane admits: "The process of telling what happened in small pieces frequently begins with denial of any involvement in any sexual acts or unwanted touching. [Unwanted is redundant here since victimologists deny even the possibility of wanted touching.] Molested children often deny abuse when first questioned, in order to protect themselves and others.

way of gleaning the first indications of acknowledgement of abuse. It has been astounding to see the number of children who have been willing to acknowledge that 'sometimes' they were touched in sexual ways, and who later have fully described molestation, but who initially said, 'no' without any qualifiers to an inquiry. This type of faltering acknowledgement, especially by a young child, has occurred so frequently that we have termed it the 'no-maybe-sometimes-yes syndrome.' Again, it is an interviewers accepting reactions to a child's disclosure that 'maybe it happened sometimes' that can give a child permission to acknowledge further what actually happened and how frequently it occurred." [11] MacFarlane does not indicate how an interviewer can distinguish between an initial "no" that results because no molestation occurred and a "no" that is part of her alleged syndrome. A child who says "no" because they weren't molested will be badgered until they

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say "maybe—some- times—yes."

MacFarlane tells us that the children who continue saying "no" need long-term therapy and counseling. During counseling sessions she says it may be necessary "to ask children for information several times or in several different ways during an interview, when the interviewer believes that the information is accessible to the child but is not forth-coming." [12] Conerly tells us that "Some children will only disclose information after they have spent months or years working with the same person." [13] In other words, children who say they haven't been abused are continuously asked the same question over and over, in various forms, sometimes for months or years before they final end the process by

saying they were abused.

But badgering alone is insufficient to convince a child that they have been abused when no such abuse took place. A child's mind must be carefully manipulated until the child comes to believe something that is patiently untrue. And that is done through a process of brainwashing in so-called counseling or therapy sessions. I should make it clear that I do not believe that these people are purposely manipulating the minds of children to produce these horrendous results. It seems clear that these people actually believe that abuse of these proportions actually exists. Because they assume such abuse exists in the cases they are investigating, the whole purpose of their therapy is to root it out.

Their entire theoretical framework encourages actions that would produce indoctrination in their victims even if indoctrination was not the intent.

Dr. McIver explains some of the methods used to reinforce the concept of abuse in the child's mind and to encourage the initial accusation. "Interviewers—verbally and non-verbally through facial expressions and the manner in which they respond to the child—pay more attention to these sorts of communications than to anything else a child might be trying to express. (I know of cases where the interviewer has congratulated the child for making allegations and became perturbed when it didn't.)

"In this setting (which is 'high pressure' to the child, especially a young one), a strongly biased interviewer can shape a child's responses by a method called 'successive approximation.' Simply put, this means reinforcing or rewarding the child (through smiles, hugs, or statements like 'good girl...don't you feel better now...that's the way') for statements leading up to and finally including those the interviewer wants to hear." [14]

MacFarlane's manual to sniff out abuse confirms Dr. McIver's analysis. Conerly tells readers that "Any response from the child should be positively reinforced." [15] A typical interview may follow a pattern similar to this:

"Did somebody touch you in

places that made you uncomfortable?

"No."

"You don't have to hide things from me. You can tell me anything you want to. It must be hard to tell real secrets. But you can trust me. What happened?"

"Nothing."

"You don't have to be ashamed. It wasn't your fault. Did you get touched in your privates, maybe?"

"Well, maybe."

"Good! See how much better it is to tell the truth. I'm so proud of you. It really takes a brave girl to tell these things. You're so big and strong you can tell me the truth. Somebody touched you down in your privates?"

"Yes."

"See I told you you don't have to be afraid. No one is going to hurt you anymore. I'm here to protect you and help you. You want to tell people this secret, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Now tell me exactly what happened?"

"They touched my private parts."

"Who touched you?"

"I don't know."

"Come on, don't be afraid. Remember you can tell me the truth. Did your daddy touch you?"

"No."

"Couldn't he have touched you there sometimes?"

"Maybe."

"Where were you when he touched you?"

"In the garage."

The entire process goes like this.

The interviewer asks leading questions that plant insinuations in the child's mind. Then if the child responds negatively the interviewer gives them negative feedback. If the child says anything that remotely corresponds with the accusations then they are rewarded, sometimes with toys or candy, but always with verbal affirmation and praise. Suzanne Long, another counselor, wrote an essay "Guidelines for Treating Young

Once the scenario is created
the child is reinterviewed to
help them get the story right
-- to remove inconsistencies
in the story.

Children," which is printed in the MacFarlane book. In this chapter she suggests that, "Two rituals are helpful in this endless and creative process. One is giving prizes. Children love a small container with prizes such as stickers, gum, candy, and other small items. In order to get the prize, the child must 'work hard,' which means talking about things that are hard to talk about; such topics may include the molestation, the child's sadness and hurt, and so on. The prize can also be a reward for the child's struggle in sticking to a subject or completing a task." [16] The interview continues until a scenario is created. Once the scenario is created the child is reinterviewed to help them get the story right—to remove inconsistencies in the story.

The Memphis Commercial

Appeal published two examples of the types of interviews conducted by these therapists.

"What's Miss Francis doing while children are in the other room?"

"I don't know"

"Come here... I want to talk to you a second. (Boy's name), you do know. Look at me. Look at me. You know about the secret. But see, it's not a secret any more, because (another child) told us about it and (another child) told us about it, and your parents want you to tell us... You can be a very good boy and tell us about it..."

"I don't know."

"Yes, you do."

Notice how the therapists told the child that there was a "secret" and that Miss Francis did things while the other children were gone. She told the child that two other children have already told her the secret and that the boy's parents want him to tell her as well. When the boy says he doesn't know anything she bluntly tells him that he does. She is calling the child a liar and says he can be a "good boy" by revealing the secret like his friends.

In another excerpt we see how the therapist tells the child that he was molested.

"She did it to you, too."

"No, she didn't do it to me."

"It's not your fault, ok?"

"She didn't do it to me."

"Yes, she did; yes, she did."

It just doesn't seem possible that the therapist is trying to find out if "abuse" took place. This line of questioning is clearly intended to intimidate the child

into claiming that he was molested.
[17]

"This sort of attention is often quite new for a child," says Dr. McIver, "and it is a most powerful reinforcer. That is, it greatly increases the likelihood that the child will say the same things and demonstrate the same things again. And, the more a child repeats something (and don't we all suffer confusion about one or another story we've told ourselves many times over the years?), the more it becomes believable and the more believable the child becomes on the witness stand." [18] And because the therapists assumes abuse the questions all point in that direction. I contend that if the therapists all believe in UFO

abductions that the child would soon be telling tales of outer space and flying saucers.

To show how biased the interview process is lets look at one question that MacFarlane calls a "neutral statement". This is one question which she contends doesn't lead the child into making statements, thus it is neutral. "It must be hard to tell that secret but I know that it wasn't your fault." [19] This "neutral" statement presumes a "secret" and presumes "fault". It is not neutral.

MacFarlane recognizes that such therapeutic "methods" lead to legal problems. "Some professionals, especially those in legal and criminal



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justice systems, caution interviewers not to ask focused questions; not to suggest that information is already known; not to indicate any expectation of certain responses; and not to support children in any way for their statements or answers to inquiries. This may be generally sound advice regarding the desire to interject as little influence as possible into an interview, especially in those cases that may result in litigation.... Unfortunately, such advice may not be in a child's interest if the child is young, frightened, and sexually abused." [20]

MacFarlane goes on to say that, "In the best of all possible worlds, it would be advisable not to ask children leading questions, in order to avoid the concern that children are responding to suggestions that certain things occurred or that they are being compliant and acquiescent to an adult authority figure. But, in the best of all possible worlds, children are not sexually assaulted in secrecy, and then bribed, threatened, or intimidated not to talk about it. In the real world, where such things do happen, leading questions may sometimes be necessary in order to enable frightened young children to respond to and talk about particular subjects. Although they may present legal problems later on, leading questions, on the other hand, should not be viewed as some form of illegal activity on the part of the interviewer." [21]

And if the constant barrage of questions and the use of leading

questions still doesn't produce an accusation the counselors have one more tactic up their sleeve. "In cases where children consistently deny abuse but where there are strong reasons to suspect its occurrence, some interviewers have tried to determine whether or not children know any details about abuse by asking them what they *think* an experience would have been like if it *had* happened to them. In some instances, this has provided the only credible information that has indicated whether or not a child has been molested." [22] In fairness we should point out that MacFarlane says this is a "high-risk" technique that "should be used with caution, especially where legal action could result."

Psychiatrist Lee Coleman, has long been a nemesis of MacFarlane and her fellow abuse-hunters. Coleman in-vestigated MacFarlane's role in the famed McMartin trial and concluded: "They [the children] have not told the interviewers that they have been molested. It's the interviewers that have been telling *them* that they have been molested. Now if you don't believe it—and there's no reason why you should—watch the videotapes." [23] "I think this McMartin case is as shocking as any I know of, because after having seen the tapes...*All* the interview methods are bad. I have not seen a single case yet where these interview techniques are not leading and manipulative. But of all the ones that I've seen, the McMartin interviews by Kee MacFarlane and Sandra Krebs

and Shawn Conerly, these are the worst, and, I would say, the most shocking thing I have seen is the fact that the state of California and United Way are funding that group. I understand that the State of California has given them \$300,000 more money—to people who are, essentially, indoctrinating children into the belief that they've been molested." [24]

The Eberle's describe one such videotape with an interview of a "victim." "On the television screen the woman tells the child, 'You can be a big help to the other kids if you tell... You're older than the other kids, and smarter... If you don't tell us, you can't help the other kids... Do you know what the other children said? Do you believe it? Now let's just pretend...' and she starts undressing the dolls: "... just make believe."

"Some of the children," she says, "feel that Frank and Illeana were bad."

"Another lie," Coleman comments. "None of the others said that."

"Just pretend," the woman says, undressing the doll. "I wonder if they played the game with their clothes off."

The child is falling asleep. His eyelids are drooping. He's been interrogated for hours." [25]

In numerous cases, especially the McMartin case, MacFarlane and her cohorts were haunted by these videotapes. Juries and judges could actually view the tapes and see how the technique was manipulative and

deceptive. But the tapes play an important role in assuring that the child won't retract the carefully rehearsed story of abuse. MacFarlane says, "The likelihood that sexually abused children will take back their disclosures of abuse is beginning to be well documented in this field. One of the most therapeutic uses of videotaped interviews that we have found is as a deterrent to such initial retractions." [26] "Because of the high rate of retraction by victims of child sexual abuse, taped interviews are being viewed as a means of impeaching the testimony of child witnesses who contradict all of their previous statements about abuse, and on the witness stand say that nothing happened to them." [27]

Another virtue of these videotapes, according to MacFarlane, other than in court, is that they may be used in other "legal proceedings which are aimed at protecting other children from an alleged abuser. These include the monitoring by state licensing boards or investigatory bodies of public and private day care facilities as well as the determination by state licensing boards of examiners whether or not individuals may be permitted to retain licenses to teach, practice, or engage in other licensed activities. These legal or quasi-legal investigations may not involve prosecution or criminal court sanctions but they may lead to administrative hearings, where videotaped interviews are deemed admissible, particularly for the purpose of determining whether

administrative action is possible without the potential of traumatizing children with further testimony.”[28]

So MacFarlane and the abuse-sniffers are faced with a problem. The videotapes are very beneficial but they can be used against the counselors and therapists. Instead of being weapons for the prosecution they often end up tools for the defense. “Those who utilize nontraditional interview methods and who ask directed or leading questions in order to get children talking about what might or might not have happened—may be in for a hard time in court. Their techniques and professionalism will be challenged by the defense and by experts hired by the defense to view the videotapes and proffer critical opinions. The most common tactic usually involves trying to show that the interviewer led, coached, or played upon the suggestibility of the child, who then alleged child abuse in order to please the questioning adults. Interviewers also have been accused of ‘brainwashing’ children during interviews into ever after believing that they had been sexually abused.”[29]

Now how MacFarlane solves this problem is unique and creative. She first discounts destroying the early tapes because, “some of our colleagues in the legal profession take a very dim view of such actions....erasure of a taped interview may be regarded as destruction of evidence—an act that can carry legal penalties.”[30] So the solution to this dilemma “is not to tape

initial interviews when children have not previously disclosed abuse, where they are initially very frightened, or where there is the likelihood of more than one child victim in a case. Some interviewers have considered taping the third or fourth session, after children have had some time to overcome their initial fears or embarrassment, are less contradictory

**Instead of erasing the
incriminating tapes just don't
make them in the first place.**

and prone to denial, and do not require as much support or encouragement in order to describe the abuse.”[31]

This is, perhaps, one of the most deceptive actions I have ever heard of. MacFarlane is saying that because early taped interviews give strong impressions that the children are being carefully brainwashed into believing they have been abused that the early interview sessions should not be videotaped. She is suggesting that the videotaping only begin after the child has become convinced of the abuse and gotten the scenario straight. Instead of destroying evidence after the fact she has come up with a way of destroying it before the fact. Instead of erasing the incriminating tape just don't make it in the first place. Incredible!

It is clear that MacFarlane has every reason to be afraid of any video taped records of her interviews. In the infamous McMartin molestation case

videos of MacFarlane "interviewing" children were the key factor in the jury finding the defendants not guilty. Jurors in the case repeatedly pointed to the interview process as the major flaw in the prosecution's case. Juror John Breese said, "We did not get in the children's own words their stories. The interviewers asked leading questions in such a manner that we never got the children's story in their own words." Juror Brenda Williams said, "If the tapes had not been introduced, I would have been able to believe the testimony of the children a little more." Williams also noted that, "I believe that the children believed that what they were saying was true when they testified. But I couldn't tell whether the children were saying what happened to them or repeating what they had been told and what they had heard their parents telling other people." Another juror, Mark Bassett, said, "There seemed to be no holds barred, the more fantastic the story you come up with the better." [32] The tapes showed that MacFarlane "appeared to encourage children to make accusations of abuse. At times, she praised those who claimed they were molested and chided those who denied it." [33] MacFarlane and her fellow therapists were very successful. In just a few months they interviewed 400 children and concluded that at least 350 of them had been molested. Of course, prior to the interviews, not one single child ever volunteered the information that they had been molested.

Juror Williams also gives us

further insight into how MacFarlane would conduct interviews. "I had a problem with the kids being told at the beginning of the interview that a secret police was watching Ray, and if he attempted to get near the kids, he would be arrested. I found that with CII they would question the kids about some of their friends that went to the school, and if that child had been interviewed, they would use that child's name a lot. They would tell them that that child had been in, that child had told them about the secrets that happened at the school. The kid's parents were very happy now, because they had finally revealed these secrets. I had a problem with that." [34]

Early in the McMartin case the press played an important role in whipping up the hysteria that surrounded it. But as the case dragged on the press had more time to actually sit back and look at the evidence and because of this they started seeing the case for what it was. One reporter noted the taped interviews were crucial in changing the attitude of the press. "Reportorial doubts were also aroused by the courtroom playing of taped interviews during which the children's original accusations often seemed to be made in response to leading and suggestive questions asked by social workers at Children's Institute International. [35] Even the staid *California Lawyer*, reported that "the fatal defect in the prosecution's case was the badgering of the child witnesses by therapists at Children's Institute International." [36]

Kee MacFarlane, "who had conducted most of the interviews for the institute, remained adamant that she had done nothing wrong." [37] The same evening that the verdicts were unsealed she publicly fought with the judge in the case, William Ponders. Ponders said, "There's no question there were leading questions involved in the interrogation of the children. That's quite different from what we do in a courtroom." MacFarlane was stunned and claimed that "One of the places where you see leading questions the most is court." But MacFarlane didn't seem to realize that leading questions are only allowed when directed to a hostile witness. The facts are that the questions directed to the

children by MacFarlane and her cohorts would never have been allowed if asked by the prosecution. Ponders said, "I don't think leading questions are appropriate. I think phrasing the question differently is appropriate. But you cannot suggest to a witness the answer you expect the witness to give." [38]

Juror Mark Bassett noted that the testimony of the so-called "experts" was quite revealing. "I thought some of the expert testimony about the children told you more about the expert than the child. I mean, if the expert says children are always 100 percent believable and then you have a child who is not believable, either the expert is



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extremely biased or they've never seen anything like that child before." [39]

Even the Los Angeles District Attorney, Ira Reiner, admitted that MacFarlane's interviewing techniques were very problematic. "What we had here are these social workers questioning the children, asking very leading and very suggestive questions of the children. They'd have little Bobby sitting there, and they'd say to Bobby, 'Did the bad teacher touch you in a yucky way in this place right here?' And they would push a few times. And Bobby would continue to say no. Then they'd say, 'Wait a minute, Johnny has already told us what happened. Now, you're just as smart as Johnny, aren't you?' And after a little bit of this, then maybe Bobby would say, 'Okay.' He'd nod his head, 'Yeah, it happened that way.'" [40] Reiner's comments originally were made right after he became District Attorney and the case could be attributed to his predecessor. However after several years of his office running the case he wasn't nearly as critical. When the jury found the McMartins not guilty on almost every count and were deadlocked (a majority for not guilty) on thirteen other charges filed against Ray Buckey it seemed the case had finally come to an end. But Reiner is a candidate for State's Attorney and the lobbying of the so-called McMartin parents paid off. Reiner refiled the charges against Buckey and the longest trial in American history begins again.

LET'S PLAY A GAME

So far we have concentrated on the obvious manipulative techniques used by the abuse-sniffers but there are other, more subtle techniques that encourage false accusations. We must put the entire interview with a child within a context. Does the child understand what they are being asked? Do they know this is a serious issue or do they see it as a game? Do they understand the difference between reality and "let's pretend." I contend that the interviewers have created a process of interviewing that tells the child it's all a game of make believe. Let's look at some of the ploys and techniques used which give this message to the child.

Shawn Conerly, one of the interviewers in the McMartin fiasco and a co-author of the MacFarlane book, suggests various methods which put the child at ease and help elicit confessions of abuse. Some of those methods include:

DOLLS

Conerly says that, "If possible the evaluator should have a set of anatomically correct dolls. Observing a child play with dolls with correct genitalia is a good way to observe the child's reaction to sexual material and the child's knowledge and level of sophistication about sexual behaviors. It is not unusual for an anxious child to throw a doll across the room upon discovering that the doll has a penis. Often this same child will return to the



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same doll that was thrown later on in the interview period or at another session. Sometimes the child takes a peek to ascertain that the doll really does have a penis. Sometimes the child won't say a word but will go to the doll and be physically abusive with the part of the doll's anatomy that is offensive or has caused the child pain."^[41]

This is almost like reading tea leaves in a cup. The interviewer gives the child a doll with a penis, something that the child will find very strange since dolls never have sexual organs. Then the interviewer watches the child and interprets their actions. A child who reacts in disgust or throws the doll away presumably is responding to the "part of the doll's anatomy that is offensive or has caused the child pain"

which I presume to mean the part that abused them. In other words if a child is negative to the doll having sexual organs then it is proof of abuse. But if a child plays with the doll's penis, looks at it, touches it, or whatever, that can be taken as evidence the child has been abused and is "prematurely" interested in sexual matters. Thus the only response that may not indicate abuse is one that totally ignores the penis on the doll. But this is the response that is least likely to happen since the child is being presented with something they have never seen before—a doll with a penis. It would seem highly unusual for a child, who is familiar with normal dolls, not to respond to a doll with penis.

We should also remember how children use dolls. To them dolls are

toys. They are something to play "pretend" with. They play "house" with them and other games. They talk to them and make up stories to tell them. Sometimes they make up stories that they say the doll told them. I remember as a child coming across Ken and Barbie dolls and showing friends how you can strip the dolls and put them in sexual positions. This act, on my part, would have been accepted as proof that I had been sexually abused which would have been very incorrect. I learned about sex by watching television, talking to the neighborhood kids and reading books. Placing the dolls on top of each other would have been considered exhibiting sexual knowledge beyond my years thus *prima facie* evidence that I had been

abused.

ART MATERIAL

Interviewers are also encouraged to bring in art supplies: crayons, pencils, paper, etc. The child is encouraged to draw pictures. "Another technique is to ask the child to draw a picture and then dictate a story to the evaluator." But drawings and telling stories are "make believe." They are a means by which children tell fables and fictions that they have created who have heard. Certainly a child who has been peppered with leading questions could draw pictures that reflect an abusive situation.

THE BAG PERSON



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Conerly suggests that the interviewer "carry all the material around...in a large, colorful bag." The interviewer approaches the child, introduces herself and then, "The child is invited to 'play' and examine the contents of the bag." [42] It is also suggested that the interviewer may want to crawl "into the room on all fours and if possible, [sit] under a piece of furniture." Another variation is for the interviewer to "enter while wearing a funny hat, mask, or cape, and then offer the child a mask, hat, or cape to wear. This provides a nonverbal invitation to play a pretend game." [43] It is hard to believe that Conerly is actually suggesting that the child be given nonverbal invitations to play pretend games. Certainly the last thing a rational interviewer would want, when trying to determine sexual abuse, is to encourage the child to "play pretend games." In another chapter of the MacFarlane book it says that "it is vital first to establish rapport by spending time playing and talking with them. The use of art materials, puppets, anatomically correct dolls, and other toys will greatly facilitate a medical interview." [44]

MacFarlane has suggested that it may be beneficial for the interviewer to dress up as a clown. She also says that, "talking about sexual body parts is not something most children are terribly comfortable with, it is not as difficult as it may seem; it can be turned into an activity that is nonthreatening or even fun..." [45] The words and deeds of the interviewers convey the wrong

message to the child. This is a game that we are going to play. They encourage the children to tell stories with dolls and puppets, to draw pictures and to pretend what sexual abuse might be like if it had happened. Throughout the whole process the child is encouraged to disassociate their accusations from reality. Yet, the interview process should have getting at the truth as its main goal. But the therapists contend the main goal is not truth but psychological counseling. And since they assume the abuse took place why even discuss the issue of getting at the truth?

To add more problems to these techniques most of the interviews are videotaped with the camera and camera-operator clearly visible to the child. MacFarlane says that many children are very aware of the camera and ask about it. She suggests telling them it's like a private television that only plays on your own television. But children watch television for entertainment. That's where they see Bugs Bunny, Star Trek, and hundreds of other shows that they understand are fictional. Television is where people make up stories and everyone has a fun time. Again, because the videotaping is done so openly, the child is encourage to enter the land of make-believe where they play pretend games with the nice lady in clown suit with all the toys. Dr. Coleman expressed similar concerns, "I have serious problems with the use of any dolls, as a fact-finding process. Because dolls are something children play with. Can you imagine giving a

child a doll for a present, and saying, 'You cannot pretend with this doll. You can only do things that would really happen. No pretending.' That violates the child's entire life experience. That's what a doll is for—to make up stories." [46]

It becomes very clear that the real child abuse is not discovered through these interviewing techniques but the interviewing techniques are themselves child abuse. The 400 children interviewed in the McMartin case were most definitely abused but the abuser wasn't Ray Buckley. The real abusers were those people who twisted the minds of young children into believing the bizarre charges of Satanism and animal sacrifices. The reason no evidence was ever found to corroborate the charges is because no such evidence exists. The trauma the children experienced is quite real. Because these children have become convinced that these charges were true they are equally as traumatized as if the acts had actually taken place.

FOOTNOTES

(1) Kee MacFarlane, *Sexual Abuse of Children*, p.xviii.

(2) Money defines victimology as "a bastard science because it is not dedicated to finding out the cause and prevention of child abuse, but to victim ascertainment by means of enforced brainwashing of children to make enforced accusations, enforced confessions, and obligatory treatment by unproved methods. The confessions

are put to use in what amount to heresy trials for the purpose of convicting offenders. John Money, *Lovemaps*, Buffalo, Prometheus Books, 1988. p.157.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 158.

(4) MacFarlane is clearly one of the central figures in the new witchhunt. She believes that there is a secret international conspiracy of pedophiles which runs day care centers around the United States. Paula Hawkins, the Right-wing former Senator from Florida, who was the major architect of most of the national legislation dealing with so-called "child protection" legislation, said:

"There's even evidence that there may be a wide national network of 'child predators,' according to Kee MacFarlane, director of a child sexual abuse center at the Children's Institute International in Los Angeles.

"MacFarlane told our Senate Subcommittee on Children, Youth, and Families that she believes 'we're dealing with a conspiracy, an organized operation of child predators designed to prevent detection.'

"She warned that preschool facilities could be used for both the selling of children into prostitution and for child pornography." [4] Paula Hawkins, *Children at Risk*, Bethesda, Adler & Adler, 1986, p. 67.

(5) *Minnesota Family Law Journal*, July/August, 1985, p. 227.

(6) Dr. William McIver, *The Oregon Defense Attorney*, June/July, 1985, p. 1.

(7) Robert Salas, Letter to the editor, *Los Angeles Times*, February 1, 1990,

- p. B6.
- (8) On *The Jane Wallace Show*, Show #38, January 19, 1990.
- (9) McIver, p. 1.
- (10) MacFarlane, p. 39.
- (11) MacFarlane, p. 82.
- (12) MacFarlane, p. 84.
- (13) MacFarlane, p. 45.
- (14) McIver, p. 1.
- (15) MacFarlane, p. 37.
- (16) MacFarlane, p. 224.
- (17) T. and S. Charlier, "Justice Abused: A 1980s Witch Hunt," *The Commercial Appeal*, Six part series printed in January, 1988.
- (18) McIver, p. 2.
- (19) MacFarlane, p. 178.
- (20) MacFarlane, p. 86.
- (21) MacFarlane, p. 87.
- (22) MacFarlane, p. 81.
- (23) Paul and Shirley Eberle, *The Politics of Child Abuse*, Seacacus, Lyle Stuart, 1986, p. 95.
- (24) Eberle, p. 100.
- (25) Eberle, p. 155.
- (26) MacFarlane, p. 169.
- (27) MacFarlane, p. 176.
- (28) MacFarlane, p. 179
- (29) MacFarlane, p. 191.
- (30) MacFarlane, p. 192.
- (31) MacFarlane, p. 192.
- (32) Seth Mydans, "For Jurors, Facts Could Not Be Sifted From Fantasies," *New York Times*, January 19, 1990, p. A14.
- (33) "After the Verdict, Solace for None," *People*, February 5, 1990, p. 74.
- (34) ABC News - Nightline, Show #2259, January 18, 1990.
- (35) David Shaw, "Media Skepticism Grew on McMartin Case," *Los Angeles Times*, January 21, 1990, p. A32.
- (36) Mark Thompson, "The Longest Trial Finally Ends," *California Lawyer*, February 1990, p.30.
- (37) MacFarlane, p. 19.
- (38) Ibid.
- (39) Thompson, p. 30.
- (40) CBS News - 60 Minutes, Volume XXII, Number 20, February 4, 1990.
- (41) MacFarlane, p. 33.
- (42) MacFarlane, p. 37.
- (43) MacFarlane, p. 38.
- (44) MacFarlane, p. 53.
- (45) MacFarlane, p. 72.
- (46) Eberle, p. 154.

edit pictures

THE PRIEST AND THE ACOLYTE

This story originally appeared in December, 1894 in the only issue of The Chameleon published by John Bloxam at Oxford. Bloxam, an undergraduate, had approached Oscar Wilde concerning the publication and Wilde agreed to write for the publication. When the small publication finally appeared it was condemned and Lord Queensberry was infuriated with the unsigned story and assumed that Wilde was its author. Queensberry, already upset with Wilde's affair with his son, Alfred Douglas, who also wrote for Bloxam's publication, continued to harass Wilde and was finally able to push Wilde into a foolish lawsuit that ended with Wilde's imprisonment and total demoralization.

The prosecution in Wilde's trial used this publication to attack Wilde. They particularly drew attention to two poems by Douglas, "Two Loves" and "In Praise of Shame" and to the Bloxam short story. Bloxam, who later became a clergyman, never again published.

Part One

"Pray, father, give me thy blessing, for I have sinned."

The priest started; he was tired in mind and body; his soul was sad and his heart heavy as he sat in the terrible solitude of the confessional ever listening to the same dull round of oft-repeated sins. He was weary of the conventional tones and matter-of-fact expressions. Would the world always be the same? For nearly twenty centuries the Christian priests had sat in the confessional and listened to the same old tale. The world seemed to him no better; always the same, the same. The young priest sighed to himself, and for a moment almost wished people would be worse. Why could they not escape from these old wearily-made

paths and be a little original in their vices, if sin they must? But the voice he now listened to aroused him from his reveries. It was soft and gentle, so different and shy.

He gave the blessing and listened. Ah, yes! he recognized the voice now. It was the voice had heard for the first time only that very morning: the voice of the little acolyte that had served his Mass.

He turned his head and peered through the grating at the little bowed head beyond. There was no mistaking those long soft curls. Suddenly, for one moment, the face was raised, and the large moist blue eyes met his; he saw the little oval face flushed with shame

at the simple boyish sins he was confessing, and a thrill shot through him, for he felt that here at least was something in the world that was beautiful, something that was really true. Would the day come when those soft scarlet lips would have grown hard and false? when the soft shy treble would have become careless and conventional? His eyes filled with tears, and in a voice that had lost its firmness he gave the absolution.

After a pause, he heard the boy rise to his feet, and watched him wend his way across the little chapel and kneel before the altar and turned to say the words of confession to the little acolyte whose head was bent so reverently towards him, he bowed low till his hair just touched the golden halo that surrounded the little face, and he felt his veins burn and tingle with a strange new fascination.

When the most wonderful thing in the whole world, complete soul-absorbing love for another, suddenly strikes a man, that man knows what heaven means, and he understands hell: but if the man be an ascetic, a priest whose whole heart is given to ecstatic devotion, it were better for that man if he had never been born.

When they reached the vestry and the boy stood before him reverently receiving the sacred vestments, he knew that henceforth the entire devotion of his religion, the whole ecstatic fervour of his prayers, would be connected with, nay, inspired by,

one object alone. With the same reverence and humility as he would have felt in touching the consecrated elements he laid his hands on the curl-crowned head, he touched the small pale face, and raising it slightly, he bent forward and gently touched the smooth white brow with his lips.

When the child felt the caress of his fingers, for one moment everything swam before his eyes; but when he felt the light touch of the tall priest's lips, a wonderful assurance took possession of him: he understood. He raised his little arms, and, clasping his slim white fingers around the priest's neck kissed him on the lips. With a sharp cry the priest fell upon his knees, and, clasping the little figure clad in scarlet and lace to his heart, he covered the tender flushing face with burning kisses. Then suddenly there came upon them both a quick sense of fear; they parted hastily, with hot trembling fingers folded the sacred vestments, and separated in silent shyness.

The priest returned to his poor rooms and tried to sit down and think, but all in vain: he tried to eat, but could only thrust away his plate in disgust: he tried to pray, but instead of the calm figure on the cross, the calm, cold figure with the weary, weary face, he saw continually before him the flushed face of a lovely boy, the wide star-like eyes of his new-found love.

All that day the young priest went through the round of his various duties mechanically, but he could not

eat nor sit quiet, for when alone, strange shrill bursts of song kept thrilling through his brain, and he felt that that he must flee out into the open air or go mad.

At length, when night came, and the long, hot day had left him exhausted and worn out, he threw himself on his knees before his crucifix and compelled himself to think.

He called to mind his boyhood and his early youth; there returned to him the thought of the terrible struggles of the last five years. Here he knelt, Ronald Heatherington, priest of the Holy Church, aged twenty-eight: what he had endured during these five years of fierce battling with those terrible passions he had fostered in his

boyhood, was it all to be in vain? For the last year he had really felt that all passion was subdued, all those terrible outbursts of passionate love he had really believed to be stamped out for ever. He had worked so hard, so unceasingly, through all these five years since his ordination — he had given himself up solely and entirely to his sacred office; all the intensity of his nature had been concentrated, completely absorbed, in the beautiful mysteries of religion. He had avoided all that could affect him, all that might call up any recollection of his early life. Then he had accepted this curacy, with sole charge of the little chapel that stood beside the cottage where he was now living, the little mission-chapel that was the most distant of the several

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grouped around the old Parish Church of St. Anselm. He had arrived only two or three days before, and going to call on the old couple who lived in the cottage, the back of which formed the boundary of his own little garden, had been offered the services of their grandson as acolyte.

"My son was an artist fellow, sir," the old man had said: "he never was satisfied here, so we sent him off to London; he was made a lot of there, sir, and married a lady, but the cold weather carried him off one winter, and his poor young wife was left with the baby. She brought him up and taught him herself, sir, but last winter she was taken too, so the poor lad came to live with us — so delicate he is, sir, and not once of the likes of us; he's a gentleman born and bred, is Wilfred. His poor mother used to like him to go and serve at the church near them in London, and the boy was so fond of it himself that we thought, supposing you did not mind, sir, that it would be a treat for him to do the same here."

"How old is the boy?" asked the young priest.

"Fourteen, sir," replied the grandmother.

"Very well, let him come to the chapel tomorrow morning," Ronald had agreed.

Entirely absorbed in his devotions, the young man had scarcely noticed the little acolyte who was

serving for him, and it was not till he was hearing his confession later in the day that he had realized his wonderful loveliness.

"Ah God! help me! pity me! After all this weary labour and toil, just when I am beginning to hope, is everything to be undone? and I to lose everything? Help me, help me, O God!"

Even while he prayed; even while his hands were stretched out in agonized supplication towards the feet of that crucifix before which his hardest battles had been fought and won; even while the tears of bitter contrition and miserable self-mistrust were dimming his eyes — there came a soft tap on the glass of the window beside him. He rose to his feet, and wonderingly drew back the dingy curtain. There in the moonlight, before the open window, stood a small white figure — there, with his bare feet on the moon-blanchéd turf, dressed only in his long white night-shirt, stood his little acolyte, the boy who held his whole future in his small childish hands.

"Wilfred, what are you doing here?" he asked in a trembling voice.

"I could not sleep, father, for thinking of you, and I saw a light in your room, so I got out through the window and came to see you. Are you angry with me, father?" he asked, his voice faltering as he saw the almost fierce expression in the thin ascetic face.

"Why did you come to see me?"



edit picture

The priest hardly dared recognize the situation, and scarcely heard what the boy said.

"Because I love you, I love you — oh, so much! but you — you are angry with me — oh, why did I ever come! why did I ever come! — I never thought you would be angry!" and the little fellow sank on the grass and burst into tears.

The priest sprang through the open window, and seizing the slim little figure in his arms, he carried him into the room. He drew the curtain, and, sinking into the deep arm-chair, laid the little fair head upon his breast, kissing his curls again and again.

"O my darling! my own beautiful darling!" he whispered, "how

could I ever be angry with you? You are more to me than all the world. Ah, God! how I love you, my darling! my own sweet darling!"

For nearly an hour the boy nestled there in his arms, pressing his soft cheek against his; then the priest told him he must go. For one long last kiss their lips met, and then the small white-clad figure slipped through the window, sped across the little moonlit garden, and vanished through the opposite window.

When they met in the vestry next morning, the lad raised his beautiful flower-like face, and the priest, gently putting his arms round him, kissed him tenderly on the lips.

"My darling! my darling!" was

all he said; but the lad returned his kiss with a smile of wonderful almost heavenly love, in a silence that seemed to whisper something more than words.

"I wonder what was the matter with father this morning?" said one old woman to another, as they were returning from the chapel; "he didn't seem himself at all; he made more mistakes this morning than Father Thomas made in all the years he was here."

"Seemed as if he had never said Mass before!" replied her friend, with something of contempt.

And that night, and for many nights after, the priest, with the pale tired-looking face, drew the curtain over his crucifix and waited at the window for the glimmer of the pale summer moonlight on a crown of golden curls, for the sight of slim boyish limbs clad in the long white night-shirt, that only emphasized the grace of every movement, and the beautiful pallor of the little feet speeding across the grass. There at the window, night after night, he waited to feel tender loving arms thrown round his neck, and to feel the intoxicating delight of beautiful boyish lips raining kisses on his own.

Ronald Heatherington made no mistakes in the Mass now. He said the solemn words with reverence and devotion that made the few poor people who happened to be there speak of him afterwards almost with awe; while the

face of the little acolyte at his side shone with a fervour which made them ask each other what this strange light could mean. Surely the young priest must be a saint indeed, while the boy beside him looked more like an angel from heaven than any child of human birth.

Part Two

The world is very stern with those that thwart her. She lays down her precepts, and woe to those who dare to think for themselves, who venture to exercise their own discretion as to whether they shall allow their individuality and natural characteristics to be stamped out, to be obliterated under the leaden figures of convention.

Truly, convention is the stone that has become head of the corner in the jerry-built temple of our superficial, self-assertive civilization.

"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

If the world sees anything she cannot understand, she assigns the basest motives to all concerned, supposing the presence of some secret shame, the idea of which, at least, her narrow-minded intelligence is able to grasp.

The people no longer regarded their priest as a saint, and his acolyte as an angel. They still spoke of them with

bated breath and with their fingers on their lips; they still drew back out of the way when they met either of them; but not they gathered together in groups of twos and threes and shook their heads.

The priest and his acolyte heeded not; they never even noticed the suspicious glances and half-suppressed murmurs. Each had found in the other perfect sympathy and perfect love: what could the outside world matter to them now? Each was to the other the perfect fulfillment of a scarcely preconceived ideal; neither heaven nor hell could offer more. But the stone of convention had been undermined; the time could not be far distant when it must fall.

The moonlight was very clear and very beautiful; the cool night air was heavy with the perfume of the old-fashioned flowers that bloomed so profusely in the little garden. But in the priest's little room the closely drawn curtains shut out all the beauty of the night. Entirely forgetful of all the world, absolutely oblivious of everything but one another, wrapped in beautiful visions of a love that far outshone all the splendour of the summer night, the priest and the little acolyte were together.

The little lad sat on his knees with his arms closely pressed round his neck and his golden curls laid against the priest's close-cut hair; his white night-shirt contrasting strangely and beautifully with the dull black of the other's long cassock.

There was a step on the road outside — a step drawing nearer and nearer; a knock at the door. They heard it not; complete absorbed in each other, intoxicated with the sweetly poisonous draught that is the gift of love, they sat in silence. But the end had come; the blow had fallen at last. The door opened, and there before them in the doorway stood the tall figure of the rector.

Neither said anything; only the little boy clung closer to his beloved, and his eyes grew large with fear. Then the young priest rose slowly to his feet and put the lad from him.

"You had better go, Wilfred," was all he said.

The two priests stood in silence watching the child as he slipped through the window, stole across the grass, and vanished into the opposite cottage.

Then the two turned and faced each other.

The young priest sank into his chair and clasped his hands, waiting for the other to speak.

"So it has come to this!" he said: "the people were only too right in what they told me! Ah, God! that such a thing should have happened here! that it has fallen on me to expose your shame — our shame! that it is I who must give you up to justice, and see that you suffer the full penalty of your sin! Have you

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nothing to say?"

"Nothing — nothing," he replied softly. "I cannot ask for pity: I cannot explain: you would never understand. I do not ask you anything for myself, I do not ask you to spare me; but think of the terrible scandal to our dear Church."

"It is better to expose these terrible scandals and see that they are cured. It is folly to conceal a sore: better show all our shame than let it fester."

"Think of the child."

"That was for you to do: you should have thought of him before. What has his shame to do with me? it was your business. Besides, I would not spare him if I could: what pity can I feel for such as he—?"

But the young man had risen, pale to the lips.

"Hush!" he said in a low voice; "I forbid you to speak of him before me with anything but respect"; then softly to himself, "with anything but reverence; with anything but devotion."

The other was silent, awed for the moment. Then his anger rose.

"Dare you speak openly like that? Where is your penitence, your shame? have you no sense of the horror of your sin?"

"There is no sin for which I

should feel shame," he answered very quietly. "God gave me my love for him, and He gave him also his love for me. Who is there that shall withstand God and the love that is His gift?"

"Dare you profane the name by calling such passion as this 'love'?"

"It was love, perfect love: it is perfect love."

"I can say no more now; tomorrow all shall be known. Thank God, you shall pay dearly for all this disgrace," he added, in a sudden outburst of wrath,

"I am sorry you have no mercy; — not that I fear exposure and punishment for myself. But mercy can seldom be found from a Christian," he added, as one that speaks from without.

The rector turned towards him suddenly, and stretched out his hands.

"Heaven forgive me my hardness of heart," he said. "I have been cruel; I have spoken cruelly in my distress. Ah, can you say nothing to defend your crime?"

"No: I do not think I can do any good by that. If I attempted to deny all guilt, you would only think I lied: though I should prove my innocence, yet my reputation, my career, my whole future, are ruined for ever. But will you listen to me for a little? I will tell you a little about myself."

The rector sat down while his

curate told him the story of his life, sitting by the empty grate with his chin resting on his clasped hands.

"I was at a big public school, as you know. I was always different from other boys. I never cared much for games. I took little interest in those things for which boys usually are so much. I was not very happy in my boyhood, I think. My one ambition was to find the ideal for which I longed. It has always been thus: I have always had an indefinite longing for something, a vague something that never quiet took shape, that I could never quiet understand. My great desire has always been to find something that would satisfy me. I was attracted at once by sin: my whole early life is stained and polluted with the taint of sin. Sometimes even now I think that there are sins more beautiful than anything else in the world. There are vices that are bound to attract almost irresistibly anyone who loves beauty above everything. I have always sought for love: again and again I have been the victim of fits of passionate affection: time after time I have seemed to have found my ideal at last: the whole object of my life has been, times without number, to gain the love of some particular person. Several times my efforts were successful; each time I woke to find that the success I had obtained was worthless after all. As I grasped the prize, it lost all its attraction — I no longer cared for what I had once desired with my whole heart. In vain I endeavoured to drown the yearnings of my heart with the ordinary pleasures

and vices that usually attract the young. I had to choose a profession. I became a priest. The whole aesthetic tendency of my soul was intensely attracted by the wonderful mysteries of Christianity, the artistic beauty of our services. Ever since my ordination I have been striving to cheat myself into the belief that peace had come at last — at last my yearning was satisfied: but all in vain. Unceasingly I have struggled with the old cravings for excitement, and, above all, the weary, incessant thirst for a perfect love. I have found, and still find, an exquisite delight in religion: not in the regular duties of a religious life, not in the ordinary round of parish organization; — against these I chafe incessantly; — no, my delight is in the aesthetic beauty of the services, the ecstasy of devotion, the passionate fervour that comes with long fasting and meditation."

"Have you found no comfort in prayer?" asked the rector.

"Comfort? — no. But I have found in prayer pleasure, excitement, almost a fierce delight of sin."

"You should have married. I think that would have saved you."

Ronald Heatherington rose to his feet and laid his hand on the rector's arm.

"You do not understand me. I have never been attracted by a woman in my life. Can you not see that people are different, totally different, from one

another? To think that we are all the same is impossible; our natures, our temperaments, are utterly unlike. But this is what people will never see; they found all their opinion on a wrong basis. How can their deductions be just if their premises are wrong? One law laid down by the majority, who happen to be of one disposition, is only binding on the minority *legally*, not *morally*. What right have you, or anyone, to tell me that such and such a thing is sinful for me? Oh, why can I not explain to you and force you to see?" and his grasp tightened on the other's arm. Then he continued, speaking fast and earnestly.

"For me, with my nature, to have married would have been sinful: it would have been a crime, a gross immorality, and my conscience would have revolted." Then he added, bitterly: "Conscience should be that divine instinct which bids us seek after that our natural disposition needs — we have forgotten that; to most of us, to the world, nay, even to Christians in general, conscience is merely another name for the cowardice that dreads to offend against convention. Ah, what a cursed thing convention is! I have committed no moral offence in this matter; in the sight of God my soul is blameless; but to you and to the world I am guilty of an abominable crime — abominable, because it is a sin against convention, forsooth! I met this boy: I loved him as I had never loved anyone or anything before: I had no need to labour to win his affection — he was mine by right: he loved me, even as I loved him, from the first: he was the

necessary complement to my soul. How dare the world presume to judge us? What is convention to us? Nevertheless, although I really knew that such a love was beautiful and blameless, although from the bottom of my heart I despised the narrow judgment of the world, yet for his sake and for the sake of the Church, I tried at first to resist. I struggled against the fascination he possessed for me, I would never have gone to him and asked his love; I would have struggled on till the end: but what could I do? It was he that came to me, and offered me the wealth of love his beautiful soul possessed. How could I tell to such a nature as his the hideous picture the world would paint? Even as you saw him this evening, he has come to me night by night, — how dare I disturb the sweet purity of his soul by hinting at the horrible suspicions his presence might arouse? I knew what I was doing. I have faced the world and set myself up against it. I have openly scoffed at its dictates. I do not ask you to sympathize with me, nor do I pray you to stay your hand. Your eyes are blinded with a mental cataract. You are bound, bound with those miserable ties that have held you body and soul from the cradle. You must do what you believe to be your duty. In God's eyes we are martyrs, and we shall not shrink even from death in this struggle against the idolatrous worship of convention."

Ronald Heatherington sank into a chair, hiding his face in his hands, and the rector left the room in silence.

For some minutes the young priest sat with his face buried in his hands. Then with a sigh he rose and crept across the garden till he stood beneath the open window of his darling.

"Wilfred," he called very softly.

The beautiful face, pale and wet with tears, appeared at the window.

"I want you, my darling; will you come?" he whispered.

"Yes, father," the boy softly answered.

The priest led him back to his room; then, taking him very gently in his arms, he tried to warm the cold little feet with his hands.

"My darling, it is all over." And he told him as gently as he could all that lay before them.

The boy hid his face on his shoulder, crying softly.

"Can I do anything for you, dear father?"

He was silent for a moment. "Yes, you can die for me; you can die with me."

The loving arms were about his neck once more, and the warm loving lips were kissing his own. "I will do anything for you. O father, let us die together!"

"Yes, my darling, it is best: we will."

Then very quietly and very tenderly he prepared the little fellow for his death; he heard his last confession and gave him his last absolution. Then they knelt together, hand in hand, before the crucifix.

"Pray for me, my darling."

Then together their prayers silently ascended that the dear Lord would have pity on the priest who had fallen in the terrible battle of life. There they knelt till midnight, when Ronald took the lad in his arms and carried him to the little chapel.

"I will say Mass for the repose of our souls," he said.

Over his night-shirt the child arrayed himself in his little scarlet cassock and tiny lace cotta. He covered his naked feet with the scarlet sanctuary shoes; he lighted the tapers and reverently helped the priest to vest. Then before they left the vestry the priest took him in his arms and held him pressed closely to his breast; he stroked the soft hair and whispered cheerily to him. The child was weeping quietly, his slender frame trembling with the sobs he could scarcely suppress. After a moment the tender embrace soothed him, and he raised his beautiful mouth to the priest's. Their lips were pressed together, and their arms wrapped one another closely.

"Oh, my darling, my own sweet darling!" the priest whispered tenderly.

"We shall be together for ever soon; nothing shall separate us now," the child said.

"Yes, it is far better so; far better to be together in death than apart in life."

They knelt before the altar in the silent night, the glimmer of the tapers lighting up the features of the crucifix with strange distinctness. Never had the priest's voice trembled with such wonderful earnestness, never had the acolyte responded with such devotion, as at this midnight Mass for the peace of their own departing souls.

Just before the consecration the priest took a tiny phial from the pocket of his cassock, blessed it, and poured the contents into the chalice.

When the time came for him to receive from the chalice, he raised it to his lips, but did not taste of it.

He administered the sacred wafer to the child, and then he took the beautiful gold chalice, set with precious stones, in his hand; he turned towards him; but when he saw the light in the beautiful face he turned again to the crucifix with a low moan. For one instant his courage failed him; then he turned to the little fellow again, and held the chalice to his lips:

"The Blood of our Lord Jesus

Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul into everlasting life."

Never had the priest beheld such perfect love, such perfect trust in those dear eyes as shone from them now; now, as with face raised upwards he received his death from the loving hands of him that he loved best in the whole world.

The instant he had received, Ronald fell on his knees beside him and drained the chalice to the last drop. He set it down and threw his arms around the beautiful figure of his dearly loved acolyte. Their lips met in one last kiss of perfect love, and all was over.

When the sun was rising in the heavens it cast one broad ray upon the altar of the little chapel. The tapers were burning still, scarcely half-burnt through. The sad-faced figure of the crucifix hung there in its majestic calm. On the steps of the altar was stretched the long, ascetic frame of the young priest, robed in the sacred vestments; close beside him, with his curly head pillowed on the gorgeous embroideries that covered his breast, lay the beautiful boy in scarlet and lace. Their arms were round each other; a strange hush lay like a shroud over all.

"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

IN THIS ISSUE:

Child Abuse and Therapeutic Brainwashing

The McMartin Preschool sexual abuse case was a massive witch-hunt. But how could so many children come to believe that they participated in Satanic rituals if it didn't happen? This article clearly shows how therapeutic techniques brainwash children even if the therapist has no such intention. A special expose that shows how anyone can become a victim of the child abuse industry. **Page 1.**

The Priest and the Acolyte

A classic short story first published in 1894. A moving narration of the love that a priest discovers for his young acolyte and a passionate defense of individualism against the collective and a positive defense of intergenerational relationships. **Page 20.**