

# Animal sacrifice

## Experts discover little evidence of ritual killing here

This is the final story in a three-part series examining animal cruelty.

By Janice Brunson  
staff writer

Jack McMahan, a former North Carolina police officer and Florida sheriff turned humane officer, cautions against reading his employment manual at night "because it's sorta scary."

McMahan, a seasoned officer who investigates animal cruelty for the Michigan Humane Society, is the organization's specialist on ritual killing, perhaps the most chilling form of cruelty visited upon helpless animals.



Clues are rarely left behind.

In the six years he has been an animal investigator McMahan has observed only one certain instance of animal sacrifice.

In early 1987, the body of a black pit bull was discovered on a carpeted altar beneath a makeshift arch of bricks in a deserted foundry along Detroit's riverfront. The dog had been stabbed in the heart. Nearby,

the staked head of a doll was missing its left eye. Left is symbolic of Satan.

"WE THINK whoever did it knew only a little (about the occult)," McMahan said, because knowledgeable Satanists would remove the right eye that represents God.

Although an extensive investigation failed to turn up any clues, McMahan suspects the scene was the activity of teens dabbling in the occult.

Steve Doran of Southfield, a former private detective who has written a handbook on the occult and now consults on the subject, agreed.

Doran said, to the best of his knowledge, there is no organized Church of Satan in Michigan. Moreover, most of those practicing the occult are bored teens, many living in rural areas with little else to do. There is no increase in occult activity now. It is simply more public, said Doran.

The common denominator of all occult activity, according to Doran, is why people become involved.

"They're after the promise of ultimate power. It's a very individualized religion, getting something for nothing. People set their own criteria, based on their own needs," he said.

Doran first encountered the occult in 1981, while a security officer for the U.S. Marine Corps. Within two years, he encountered another two incidents, each involving enlisted

men in Korea and Okinawa.

"The more I learn, the more I realize how little I actually know and understand about it all," Doran said.

OCULT PRACTICES often include animal sacrifice, according to Detective Larry Jones of the Boise, Idaho, police force who founded Cult Crime Impact Network in 1987 after realizing "there was a tremendous lack of information on occult-motivated crime."

"Animal sacrifice sounds benign enough, until you look at some of the mutilation and torture involved, and think about the personal commitment it takes to do such things," Jones said.

The network, which collects and disseminates national information on occult-related crime and stages workshops to increase awareness on the subject, includes law enforcement officials, members of the judiciary, social workers and psychologists who rely on one another for information on subjects little known or understood.

The topic is immense. There are countless practices, each with their own complicated rituals, symbolism and delites: Satanic cults like the

Church of All Worlds, the Temple of Truth or the better known Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO), and voodoo, Santeria and Palo Mayombe, based on primitive African and West Indies religions.

Two-thirds of the American public believe the devil exists, and half of those see evidence that he directly affects their lives, according to an article on Satan in this month's issue of Life Magazine.

DIANE DASKALAKIS of Plymouth Township is certain that Satanic worship is alive and well, "bred" throughout society and, in particular, the Plymouth-Canton school district which she and others in the area who share her convictions have targeted for change.

They have organized as Citizens for Better Education. And Daskalakis, self-taught on the twin subjects of witchery and Satanism, has emerged as a leader of the conservative Christian group.

Some months ago, Daskalakis said she explored underground tunnels at the abandoned Wayne County Child Development Center on Sheldon and Five Mile roads. Based on a video tape of the astonishing experience,

the facility, closed since 1978, appears to have hosted a myriad of activity since.

"We found two, one outside and one inside," Daskalakis said, referring to what she said are sites of animal sacrifice, complete with altars, skeletons, boiling pots and hides. Graffiti-covered walls proclaim "Satan lives" and "die," in addition to such satanic symbols as triple-6's and five-point stars.

The skeleton outside is likely a cat, the bones boiled clean or worn clean with lime. A clot of fur hide is heaped nearby. Inside, the decomposing carcass is clearly that of a cat.

TEEN FRANKS or Satanic worship?

Capt. Philip Prensell of Northville Township police said a co-investigation with Michigan State Police concluded the facility has been damaged by vandals but "there is no evidence to indicate occult activity."

Daskalakis concludes otherwise. "Unbelievability is attached to the topic. Because we're more aware, we're more able to identify signs," she said. "The future? There is going to be more of it, lots, lots, lots more."

### Fair housing seminar set

A seminar on fair housing amendments aimed at government employees, health providers and others is scheduled 9 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, June 27, in the Oakland County Commission auditorium, 1200 North Telegraph, Pontiac.

Mental Health Law Project, will discuss the impact of new fair housing amendments which took effect March 11, 1989 as they relate to the disabled.

A question and answer period will follow.

Beth Pepper, attorney for the

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