

**The Emerging Issue of Ritual Abuse-Torture: Foeticide
and Infanticide in the Private Sphere of Family and
Guardian Relationships**

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Ritual Abuse-Torture (RAT) Defined

Ritual abuse-torture refers to pedophilic parents, families, guardians, and like-minded adults who abuse, torture, and traffic their own and other children using organized violent group gatherings coded as 'rituals and ceremonies'.¹

During these violent gatherings, rituals and ceremonies - acts of sadistic horrification are inflicted against the humanity of the enslaved girl child because of her gender and her body's reproductive functionality. If the girl child is unable to 'escape' from the RAT family/guardian/group she becomes an enslaved adult woman. Her gender and her body's reproductive capacity increase her vulnerability to the harms that will be inflicted upon her. It is this continuum of the girl child's and the woman's gendered reproductive victimization within the context of ritual abuse-torture families/guardianships and like-minded others that we address in this paper. And that we submit as additional information to the Working Group on the Girl Child, NGO Committee on the Status of Women – Geneva Conference of NGOs with Consultative Status with the United Nations (CONGO) for their report entitled *A Girl's Right to Life Female Foeticide and Girl Infanticide*.

A Canadian Historical Perspective

Ritual abuse-torture was first identified in Canada in 1993 in a report issued by the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women. The Canadian Panel had heard from many women from all regions of Canada who identified themselves as having survived ritual abuse and torture.² At that time the Canadian Panel listed ritual abuse-torture as an under-acknowledged form of relational violence. It remains so today. Ritual abuse-torture remains an invisible crime as the *Canadian Criminal Code* does not include a section on torture by non-state actors – mothers, fathers, kin and like-minded non-kin - under which ritual abuse-torture charges could fall. As a result, no statistics are kept and the prevalence of ritual abuse-torture in Canada remains unknown. This situation is mirrored in other industrialized countries. We refer to industrialized countries because, to date, our

¹ Sarson, J. & MacDonald, L. (2007). Ritual Abuse-Torture in Families. In N. A. Jackson (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Domestic Violence* (pp. 603-611). New York: Routledge.

² Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women. (1993). *Changing the Landscape: Ending Violence ~ Achieving Equality* (pp. 45-47). Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

participatory research tracking the occurrence of RAT on a map³ on our website, (www.ritualabusetorture.org) suggests that ritual abuse-torture may have Eurocentric roots.

With the establishment of our website our knowledge became global, informed mostly by female youth and women who have contacted us to share their past and present painful RAT ordeals. Some are presently trying to ‘escape’. Women and youth report that siblings remain behind; others speak of nieces and nephews, cousins, or others which they say are likely being harmed. From these heartfelt testimonials it is clear that ritual abuse-torture victimization continues to occur and will not be prevented unless it first becomes acknowledged, named, and understood as an emerging human rights violation and a form of non-state actor torture that occurs in the private sphere.

The Violent Themes of Ritual Abuse-Torture Victimization

Now into our fourteenth year of working with the reality of ritual abuse-torture victimization, common themes of brutality have emerged. Firstly, such families/groups are organized and have inter-connections locally, nationally, or transnationally with other RAT families/groups as well as having affiliations with other organized criminal groups. Testimonials and reports indicate RAT families/groups engage in various criminal activities such as drug and gun trafficking, or money laundering, and ‘outsider’ human trafficking. There is also ‘insider’ human trafficking within and between RAT families/groups. According to a Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC) report human traffickers are generally involved in these various forms of crime⁴ thus giving support to the women’s testimonials that RAT families/groups also engage in a variety of criminal activities.

Acts of relational brutality inflicted by ritual abuse-torturers also includes many forms of terrorization, all forms of abuse, drugging, physical, sexualized, and mind-spirit torture, rampageous pedophilia, bestiality, pseudo-necrophilia and necrophilia, and acts of horrifications. Much of this brutality is committed during violent family/guardian/group gatherings which victimized girls (and boys) and women call ‘rituals and ceremonies’. Women who have survived ritual abuse-torture victimization report having endured acts of foeticide and infanticide committed against them when they were enslaved pubescent girls as well as when they were captive adult women.

³ Persons Against Ritual Abuse-Torture. (no date). *Ritual abuse-torture global prevalence map* [On-line]. Available: <http://www.ritualabusetorture.org>.

⁴ Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC). (2005). *2005 Annual report organized crime in Canada*. (Cat. # PS61-1/2006, ISBN: 0-662-49337-0). Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, Ottawa, ON. Available: [Criminal Intelligence Service Canada](http://www.cisc.gc.ca) (accessed 14 November 2006).

Female youth and women report:

A. Forced impregnations, foeticide, and infanticide

1. ***Forced impregnations and forced abortions.*** The former result from being raped by individuals – RAT kin or like-minded non-kin - or result from the violent pedophilic RAT family/group rapes – gang rapes – inflicted during the violent organized ‘ritual and ceremonial’ gatherings. Forced abortions are reported to occur to avoid detection or performed during sado-necrophilic family/group gatherings. Women reporting on their childhood ordeals describe that the tissue of aborted fetuses is cannibalized and that they were forced to ingest the foetal tissue as a method of shattering them with overwhelming shame, guilt, and blame; so much so, that the enslaved girl child or woman is effectively silenced by the perpetrators about this crime, sometimes forever.
2. ***Forced impregnations and infanticide.*** These impregnations occur within the context of the ritual abuse-torture victimizations described above. However, when the impregnations are permitted to develop until term or near-term women describe that the delivered infants were frequently drowned in a bucket of water and destroyed, burned, buried, ‘disappeared’ or sado-necrophilically ‘sacrificed’ – killed – or cannibalized during the violent RAT family/group gathering. Women also report that infanticide (as well as foeticide) occurred in various familiar settings secured by the perpetrators such as in their home, business, or farm surroundings, in the out-of-doors, or by professionals such as doctors and nurses for example who used their positional power and prestige to secure and misuse the hospital facilities in which they work. Some women also informed us that they were raped during labour and/or following delivery by the RAT perpetrators.
3. ***Forced impregnation and delayed infanticide for the facilitation of infant pedophilia and pornography.*** Such an occurrence was told to us by a European woman who stated she herself had been born into and victimized by her family who inflicted ritual abuse-torture. At age 16 she states she delivered, in the privacy of her uncle’s home, a female child she named Louise. The woman identified this uncle as one of her main RAT perpetrators along with her mother who was a nurse. The delivery was reason for the RAT perpetrators to collectively gather as a group, committing brutalities which the woman states included watching the group eat pieces of the placenta and being forced to eat some of the placenta her-Self. She also reports being forced to witness her baby Louise being finger-raped by her uncle as well as being object raped. The birth of Louise was never registered. Louise, imprisoned in the basement of this uncle’s home, was tortured and raped for the production of infant pedophilic pornography. This woman states that her uncle would telephone her at her worksite when he was torturing Louise so that she would hear Louise’s screams over the telephone. He threatened that she must remain silent and never tell about Louise or Louise would be further harmed or killed and it would be her fault. This woman reports that Louise was eventually killed at eighteen months of age during a pedophilic-

necrophilic family/group gathering ('ritual') in which she was forced to participate. For almost 20 years this woman could not cope with integrating this horrific ordeal into her conscious reality. She continues to be terrified that she would not be believed if she reported this horrific crime to police authorities.

B. Forced impregnations, foeticide, infanticides, and disappearances as misogynistic 'weapons' used against the gendered reproductive functionality of the victimized girl child or woman

1. **'Breeders'**. In ritual abuse-torture families/groups some women inform us they were told they were 'breeders' - used for 'breeding' purposes for the RAT family/group. We suggest that forced impregnations, foeticides, and infanticides serve the perpetrators pedophilic, sado-necrophilic, and cannibalistic desires and pleasures as described in the previous section. Women and girls who were/are forced to endure this form of objectification suffer harm to their relationship with Self in addition to the reproductive violations.
2. **Self-hatred connected to foeticide and infanticide**: The horrification caused by foeticide and infanticide within the context of RAT victimization causes deep spiritual wounds which forces victimized girls and women into 'condemned isolation' - of immobilization, isolation, and Self-blame (Jordon quoting Jean Baker Miller)⁵. Blaming themselves they believe the perpetrators who shout at them: "it's all your fault!" and this results in massive emotional Self-hatred in the minds of girls and women chronically victimized. We cannot count the number of times we have listened to victimized women's voices echo words such as, "I hate my vagina." "It's my vagina's fault that I got sexed." "If I didn't have a vagina I wouldn't have gotten pregnant." Sentences that replay the distorted misogynistic beliefs they were forced to internalize and that frequently trigger Self-harming behaviors including conditioned suicide.

C. Reproductive harms, losses, and grief

1. **Infertility and loss**. Reproductive damage can occur during sexualized tortures and the forced impregnations and abortions inflicted by the perpetrators of RAT thus the woman lose her ability to have a child and to be a mother.
2. **Reproductive harms and losses**. Women have surgery such as hysterectomies because of internal injuries from the sexualized tortures. For some women body torture memories are misunderstood and thus misdiagnosed and unnecessary surgical interventions occur. Body torture memories mean that when a woman has escaped and is attempting to reintegrate her relationship with Self the healing journey feels like 'double torture' as one woman called it. Having body torture

⁵ Jordon, J. V. (2000, April 28-29). *Learning from the margin: New models of strength*. Paper presented at Learning from Women Conference offered by the Department of Psychiatry at The Cambridge Hospital and The Stone Center at Wellesley College, Harvard Medical School Department of Continuing Education, Boston Park Plaza Hotel, Boston, MA.

- memories means that a woman re-experiences the physical torture pain as if it was happening in the present – this is an extremely debilitating process to get through.
3. ***'Forced chosen abortion' and loss.*** These are the words of one woman who stated she and her partner chose – 'were forced to choose' – to have an abortion because, in her opinion, having an infant would have placed the infant and her-Self at grave risk of being harmed by the RAT family/group into which she states she was born. A risk maximized because of civil society's ignorance about organized ritual abuse-torture victimization which prevented her and her partner from obtaining informed police and legal protection.
 4. ***Decision not to have a child.*** Based on the risks that a woman believes she faces if she has a child some women chose not to become pregnant or be a mother.

Attitudes of Misogyny and Misopedia

Girls and women suffer, as gendered female persons with the potential to reproduce, when reproductive tortures such as foeticide and infanticide are forced onto them. Reproductive tortures come attached to attitudes and beliefs such as misogyny which underline violence and discrimination against women globally. Similarly we suggest there are historical socio-cultural and relational attitudes that underline all forms of violence and discrimination against the child person. The word *misopedia* means the hatred of children; hatred that is expressed by devaluation, objectification, dehumanization, animalization⁶ and disregard for children. Thus, just as misogynistic attitudes underline violence and discrimination against women globally we suggest *misopedic* attitudes underline all forms of violence and discrimination against the child person. The girl child however suffers exponentially because of her gender thus her reproductive capacity. She experiences both misopedic and misogynistic attitudes that contribute to the relational violence and discrimination she endures including the reproductive tortures of foeticide and infanticide inflicted by RAT families/groups.

Interventions

Constructive naming and understanding of emerging forms of violence such as ritual abuse-torture within families/guardian, and liked-minded groups are essential to meet the specific caring requirements of the girl or woman so victimized. This is where this paper starts – with naming and sharing our knowledge of ritual abuse-torture and its connection to the harms of foeticide and infanticide that the enslaved girl or woman has/are/and will continue to endure if left in the darkness of an unnamed form of relational violence. Torture by non-state actors in the private sphere, in this case, ritual abuse-torturers, needs the attention of civil society at all levels – protective, prosecutorial, preventive, educative, and at policy levels.

⁶ We use this term because so many of the women who have endured ritual abuse-torture in their families/group express to us how they felt like an animal, were treated like an animal, and housed like an animal.

PERSONS AGAINST RITUAL ABUSE-TORTURE

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