

STIGMATA

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THE PROJECT STIGMA REPORT ON THE CONTINUING INVESTIGATION INTO THE OCCURRENCE OF ANIMAL MUTILATIONS

STIGMATA - 1981: The subscription cost for all 1981 issues is \$5.00. Present plans are to continue the current format, to be published quarterly once again.

BACK ISSUES: All four 1980 issues are now \$1.50 each (for numbers 8, 9, 10 and the current issue, #11). All four may be obtained at a cost of \$5.00. The only other back issues that are now available are No. 4 (Summer 1978) and No. 5 (Fall-Winter 1978). No. 4 and No. 5 are available at a cost of \$2.00 per copy. And, it is still possible that the remaining early issues will be re-published in the near future.

THE CHOPPERS...AND THE CHOPPERS - No longer available until further notice.

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NEXT ISSUE: Be firmly assured that livestock mutilations have not gone away. A very significant number of intriguing cases have occurred in the U.S. and Canada in 1980, and these incidents will be reviewed in detail in STIGMATA No. 12. As space permits, we'll review new books which we've received, including THE TERROR by Michael D. Albers; THE CATTLE MUTILATORS by John J. Dalton (both from Manor Books) and the long-awaited THE EXCALIBUR BRIEFING by Tom Bearden.

Our address:

PROJECT STIGMA - P.O. BOX 1094 - PARIS, TEXAS 75460 U.S.A.

THE THREE R's - On The Attack

Rommel, Kenneth M., Jr. (Project Director), OPERATION ANIMAL MUTILATION - Report of the District Attorney, First Judicial District, State of New Mexico (Santa Fe), June 1980.

Rorvik, David; "Cattle Mutilations: The Truth At Last" in PENTHOUSE magazine, September 1980.

Randi, James (The Amazing Randi); "Mutilation Madness" in the "Continuum" section of OMNI magazine, July 1980.

Rising into the public consciousness like abscessed boils, these three pieces of writing, of widely-varying length, formed a phalanx promulgating the idea of "classic mutilations" being caused by natural predators and scavengers. Attempting to erase any aura of mystery attending the mutilations, they offered (to an expectedly gullible and dully stupid public) "the truth at last". Or did they??

We discussed the then-upcoming OPERATION ANIMAL MUTILATION report (the Rommel report) in STIGMATA No. 9, and we now know that our "worst fears" have indeed been confirmed. During the course of the project (May 1979 - May 1980) 27 potential livestock mutilations, by Rommel's count, were reported in New Mexico. Rommel says that he personally investigated 15 cases and reviewed the evidence regarding the other 12; and that he reviewed 90 possible mutilation cases that were reported in New Mexico prior to May of 1979. Although the mutilation phenomenon is national (at least) in scope, Rommel's report concentrates on New Mexico (with exceptions, as we'll discuss below). In the paper, he decries the lack of (as he sees it) "surgical incisions" in the cases he examined, and he points to tracks, hair and/or droppings from animals and birds which have been found on or around some of the carcasses, and suggests that the presence of these elements precludes

the assignment of these cases to the "classic" category.

Rommel states that "at the outset" of this investigation, I had no preconceived opinions on how it was going to turn out...". To the contrary, he admitted to mutilation investigator David Perkins (as reported in TAOS Magazine and repeated in STIGMATA No. 9) that "he had reached his conclusions almost immediately after accepting the job".

In July of 1980 Project Stigma purchased and received a copy of the OPERATION ANIMAL MUTILATION report for \$10.00 plus postage. It is not known whether the report is still available for purchase. Interested parties should direct queries to the Office of the District Attorney (Eloy Martinez); First Judicial District; Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501. The softbound report is over 300 pages in length and consists of double-spaced typing on 8½" x 11" pages. Included are a number of photographs of mutilations reported during the life of the project.

After dismissing the 90 New Mexican cases prior to May of 1979 (with the exception of one case which is determined to be "human-induced"), Rommel writes at length (or dismisses at length) on the reports received during the project. He reports at moderate length on mutilation incidents in Colorado, Montana, Arkansas and Oklahoma, and then briefly summarizes the situation in other states (Canada is virtually ignored). He ends with his "Conclusions and Recommendations" and a 4-part appendix.

Project Stigma, in consultation with other investigating groups and individuals, has considered the question of the desirability, the necessity and the efficacy of pursuing a diligent, point-by-point refutation of Rommel's report. We, the independent investigative community, have had to weigh this need for a Rommel-rebuttal against concentrating our efforts on a continued direct investigation of the phenomenon itself. There are those who might suggest that to dwell on refuting Rommel's aberration would be to succumb to a sort of manipulation by Rommel and his supporters. Being, then, seriously constrained by a lack of time and finances, it is our decision that we will present these few words about Rommel, David Rorvik and James Randi and their ilk and then ascribe them properly to the realm of irrelevancy and go about our business. Other writers are preparing comments regarding Rommel & company, and these writings should appear in various forums in the near future.

Most of the evidence and information presented by Rommel is highly susceptible to opinion and interpretation. Rommel, of course, has his own opinions and it is up to the reader of the report to seek his or her own perspective of the presentation. Many people with a non-existent or rudimentary knowledge of the mutilation phenomenon will conceivably be impressed with Rommel's account, if they do not know any better. But those-in-the-know cannot miss at least two of the most glaring errors or weaknesses in Rommel's presentation, a neglect which, in itself, invalidates any claim of a definitive investigation. These are (1) his almost total avoidance of the "mystery helicopter" element and (2) the credulous and incomplete summary of activity in the states other than those on which he concentrates. The state-by-state short-shrift potshots are an insult to the informed reader's intelligence. Rommel queried "officials" in twenty states and received replies that indicated there had been no mutilation problem in those states. Whether he was all too eager to accept these official pronouncements at face value or simply didn't pursue adequate follow-up research, Rommel leaves it at that. Three of these 20 states are Mississippi, Virginia and Washington. Regular readers of STIGMATA and those well-informed on mutilation developments know better. Rommel lists STIGMATA in his bibliography, but he apparently never followed-up on the material we presented regarding the above states.

In his Colorado summary, Rommel claims to "completely discredit" the incident involving the death of Snippy the horse (Alamosa County, 1967). He dismisses it, yes; but he would not be able to discredit the total body of evidence in that case. There is much he doesn't report (and likely doesn't know). There is much to be written about the Snippy case at some point in the future, and we can assure every reader within eye-shot that it is not a case to be dismissed or rejected. Then, among the states that Rommel shrugs off one-by-one:

Arkansas: Rommel states that the first mutilations began there in April of 1978. We have three Arkansas reports in our files from 1977.

Idaho: Rommel reports he was informed by letter that "several" mutilations were reported in 1976, one in 1978 and one in 1979, and all were caused by predators or publicity-seekers. Incredible. As though the outbreak of 1975 never occurred.

Illinois: The only mutes there (three) were in Christian County between 1976 and 1978, according to the report. But in fact there have been reported potential mutilations (since 1975) in several counties, including: Cass, Greene, Hancock, Henderson, La Salle and Marshall.

Iowa: Rommel states that authorities feel that about 12 cases there are "human-induced", but that it is a "local situation". Furthermore, Rommel reports that none of these cases had actually been confirmed as mutilations by the veterinarians at Iowa State University.

Louisiana: Here's an intriguing comment - 15 cases reported - all of them "unexplained". In his appendix, Rommel reproduces several of the replies he received from the "officials" in a number of states, but he does not reveal any details regarding communications from Louisiana.

Texas: Rommel merely reports that human involvement was ruled out in all cases in which specimens were examined by the lab at Texas A & M University. End of problem for Texas, right? Wrong. Nearly a fourth of the state's 254 counties have reported mutilations, and some very real questions remain to be answered or explained about some of the stranger cases. A concerted study of mutilations in this state alone could easily be decidedly lengthy (the same could be said for Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Kansas, among others), yet Rommel dismisses it all with a shrug.

Wyoming: According to the state vet, all mutilations in that state were caused by predators. For the other side, see "A Weekend in April" in STIGMATA No. 4; and other mutilations, not so easily explained away, have been reported in Wyoming. One Wyoming investigator who has seen "mystery helicopters" as well as mutilations told Project Stigma that he would "take the stand" in any court of law - if it ever came to that - in order to refute Ken Rommel.

David Rorvik and James Randi produced articles supporting Rommel for PENTHOUSE and OMNI, respectively (the magazines are allied, both under the editorial auspices of Bob Guccione). James (The Amazing) Randi is a magician and escape artist who is an investigator and founding member of the pseudo-rational and arch-skeptical Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP). Randi debunks paranormal claims with a certain glee (such debunking is some-

times justified) and he apparently feels he's helped to put more ridiculous folly to rest with his one-page "Mutilation Madness" essay in OMNI. Randi, by the way (according to OMNI), refers to himself as a professional charlatan.

A couple of years ago, David Rorvik authored a book titled IN HIS IMAGE: THE CLONING OF A MAN, about what Rorvik claimed was the first successful human clone. The book's authenticity (Rorvik refuses to furnish proof) has been a matter of controversy. In his PENTHOUSE article, "Cattle Mutilations: The Truth At Last", Rorvik relies on two non-definitive works: the Rommel report plus a paper by sociologist James Stewart of the University of South Dakota which attributes the animal mutilation phenomenon to "collective delusion" (see STIGMATA No. 2, "Agreed: Someone Is Operating Under A Delusion). Like Rommel, Rorvik "mutilates" the Snippy case (Colorado 1967). He lumps 3 people - Drs. Wallace Leary and Robert Adams and an anonymous (by request) pathologist - into one "pathologist". He claims that the widely-reported UFO sightings in that San Luis Valley area of southern Colorado "actually took place several months before the (Snippy) incident". In fact, our investigation of the Snippy case and all its peripheral elements, a probe which began in 1970, has revealed a history of concerted UFO activity in the San Luis Valley - sightings and encounters which continued throughout the late 1960's and well into the 1970's. Rorvik reports inexplicably that: "It was in the wake of the initial wave of publicity surrounding the horse's death that animal mutilations began to be reported with vigor throughout the United States." This contention is, to put it mildly, not supported by the record. With the exception of a very few cases right around the time of the Snippy incident, the Snippy affair itself and its attendant worldwide publicity in 1967 was an essentially isolated occurrence. To be sure, mutilations did not begin to be reported "with vigor" until 6 years later.

Rorvik refers to a report compiled by Dr. Nancy Owen of the Department of Anthropology, University of Arkansas (see comments regarding this report elsewhere in this issue). Rorvik and Owen suggest that claimed "classic mutilations" are supposed to involve the removal of the same body parts. Not so. This has never been suggested by knowledgeable investigators. The parts removed have varied from case to case, though certain parts do predominate.

Finally, Rorvik, like Rommel and Stewart, ignores (beyond a token mention) one of the most pertinent elements of the very real mutilation problem: the unidentified, unmarked "mystery helicopters". We recently compiled and published a report cataloging the majority of the 200-plus incidents in our files in which one or more unidentified choppers have been observed in areas where mutilations have occurred. These are sometimes nothing more than low fly-overs; but all too often these helicopters - of varying sound, color, size and type - pay an inordinate amount of attention to livestock. We must look beyond coincidence to account for these mutilation/helicopter reports.

Ken Rommel, in his ostensibly definitive report which concentrates on New Mexico, barely mentions the unidentified helicopters. This is despite the fact that during the time of several mutilations in northeastern New Mexico in late 1975, sightings of unmarked low-flying helicopters - sometimes 5 to 7 at a time - created such an uproar that the Federal Aviation Administration launched an investigation - a probe about which the FAA has now conveniently forgotten.

All the eggs representing the validity of the mutilation phenomenon are not to be placed in the "mystery helicopter" basket. The truly classic and unexplained mutilations will stand on their own despite the debunkers. But the choppers are quite relevant. They must be explained. The failure of "The Three R's" to address themselves foursquare to the helicopter data only serves to substantiate the inconsequence of their presentations.

In future forums the debunkers' hand will undoubtedly be called and their interpretations weighed against all of the evidence. But, for the most part, they will deserve to be forgotten - and we'll do our part.

TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT

On page 220 of his OPERATION ANIMAL MUTILATION report, Kenneth Rommel quotes (or misquotes) from what he claims to be the "January issue of Stigmata"(sic). Actually, the quote is from the one-page January 1980 "Stigmata Supplement Number One", not from a regular issue

of STIGMATA. Portions of the quote as published by Rommel are:

Among items that are rumored to be in the works, however tentatively: an anthrology of commentary on the mutilation phenomenon... (our emphasis)

We wish we had a dollars (no, make that an ounce of gold) for every writer we've heard of within the past few years who promised (or threatened) to turn out a serious book on mutilations. (our emphasis)

The correct words as published by us are "anthology" in the first excerpt and "dollar" in the second. Could these just be inadvertant errors on the part of Rommel or Nancy Owen (who typed the manuscript)? Or could it be part of a program to discredit the "pro-mute" community by making us appear sloppy, careless or haphazard? Perhaps we make too much of it; but we mention it, as we state, for "the record".

THE ARKANSAS REPORT

Anthropologist Dr. Nancy H. Owen of the University of Arkansas (her husband, Dr. Jerome Rose, is associated with the same department of anthropology) was awarded a grant by the Arkansas Endowment For the Humanities (University Tower Building; Suite 1019; Little Rock, Arkansas 72204). As a result of her work she produced a final report titled: "Preliminary Analysis of the Impact of Livestock Mutilations On Rural Arkansas Communities".

Although there are a few informational errors - and much of Dr. Owen's presentation, like Rommel's, is subject to interpretation (perhaps not so much Owen's interpretation as that of her sources) - on the whole the 31-page report is commendably objective. Unlike James Stewart's paper on "collective delusion", Owen's report represents a viable and meaningful contribution to the perspective of the social sciences on the animal mutilation affair. Dr. Owen's family, by the way, are from New Mexico, and the anthropologist not only spends a good deal of time there - she helped Ken Rommel produce his final report.

It cannot be denied that the Rommel report is illuminating in its own way; but Owen's report, to be a tenth as lengthy - is superior. One point of interest that Dr. Owen makes: Her investigations and data-gathering activities concentrated on Benton County, Arkansas, and she sought to determine who the ranchers were who were reporting mutilations. That is - were they relatively young farmers and ranchers who might be newcomers to the area, as well as novice cattlemen? This, writes Owen, is what she initially suspected. She reports that, "...it seemed logical that young people relatively new to both Arkansas and cattle raising would be less familiar with dead livestock and predator damage and perhaps more susceptible to the more bizarre alternatives provided by the media."

But she found that (1) Approximately 60% of the ranchers were over 50 years old, implying considerable experience in the business (even though for some ranching is not a full-time occupation) - and (2) Two-thirds of the owners are Arkansas natives and many of the newcomers had been raising livestock before moving to Arkansas.

We at Project Stigma have contended that - while there are sure to be exceptions - for the most part, experienced farmers and ranchers know the difference between truly out-of-the-ordinary classic mutilations and the ravagings of scavengers and predators. Kenneth Rommel's contention seems to be to the contrary. He states that, although most people assume ranchers know this difference, he found in his investigation that this "was simply not true".

MUTES IN THE MOVIES

Two motion pictures in various stages of production will apparently be dealing to some degree with livestock mutilations. One, "Earthright", is being produced by World Amusement Company of Sherman Oaks, California. According to company spokesman Curtis Burch, filming has already been completed on "Earthright", and it could be released next spring. The UFO-suspense film stars Raymond Burr, Jan-Michael Vincent and Cybill Shepherd. Mutilations are not the central focus of the film, though they have their "role" to play. The other movie, an Alive Enterprises film, "Cows", has not begun casting or filming.

The Cult Connection

Since mid-1980 there has been a sort of revival of interest in the possibility that one or more groups of people (with occult or pseudo-occult philosophies and motivations) may be responsible for at least some of the livestock and small-animal mutilations that occur sporadically across the country (and in other countries, as well). Such an interest in cultists-as-culprits hasn't been noted since 1975. In that year, Donald Flickinger, an investigator for the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms branch of the U.S. Treasury Department, pursued the claims of Kenneth Bankston and Dan Dugan. Bankston and Dugan were inmates in the federal prison system who claimed knowledge of a group (which Bankston often referred to as "the Occult") which was responsible for everything from animal and human mutilations to a well-publicized Weathermen-attributed bombing at the University of Wisconsin to the theft of plutonium from the nuclear facility in Oklahoma which employed the late Karen Silkwood. To make a long story mercifully short: under scrutiny from Flickinger and others, the Bankston-Dugan scenario fell apart. After that episode, the cult hypothesis had largely lost its "legs", though it was never entirely rejected within the mutilation-research community.

In 1979 one began to hear that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was investigating the possibility that a cult or cults could be behind the wave of mutilations that swept across Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1979 (and recurred, though more quietly, in 1980). Then, in 1980, as isolated mutilation incidents began to be reported in Iowa, authorities in that state, it was said, were concentrating on the cult-link. And in late 1980, a veteran mutilation investigator in New Mexico was also seeking "pay-dirt" in cult possibilities, based on new evidence.

A curious series of events began to unfold in Canada in mid-1980, as reported to us by an investigator whose identity and location we will protect. He discovered that an organization known as "Sons In Satan's Service" (S.I.S.S.) attempted to rent an athletic stadium in a small prairie city for what was termed a "service". The investigator writes:

It was reported to me, by someone who should know, that the "service" was, in effect, to be an initiation ceremony for potential members who had indicated a desire to join the S.I.S.S.

About 1,000 members from the USA and other locations in Canada had been invited (or ordered) to attend. Apparently, someone in charge of booking the stadium for events became suspicious, found out what the S.I.S.S. is about and cancelled the booking. According to reports I received, there are 16 members of S.I.S.S. in and around (the city), one of whom is a farmer living near the community of (a nearby town).

In August 1980 a bull mutilation occurred a few miles from the residence of the farmer mentioned by the investigator. Strangely, the RCMP officer who investigated the mutilation case told the farmer-victim to spread the news of the mutilation around and even to contact the media about it (altogether atypical of RCMP methodology). Another mutilation, of a 6-year-old black angus cow, occurred in the same general area in the early autumn of 1980. Returning to the investigator's report:

From the information I have, S.I.S.S. is a satanic cult which in its "services" offers sacrifices to Satan. In some areas, notably in the USA, those sacrifices include offering human sacrifices. One of the cult's initiation requisites is, according to reports, that a potential new member must follow prescribed procedures to go out and bring back various parts of an animal. The S.I.S.S. emblem is a circle of flowers with a baby in the centre. The reports I have received also point towards the possibility that members of the medical profession may be involved with S.I.S.S. and that the human babies they sacrifice from time to time come from aborted fetuses.

The same investigator reports on another development:

This may or may not be connected, but it is a strange occurrence that possibly bears further investigation. On the evening of Saturday, August 9th (editor's note: 2 days after the discovery of a mutilated bull in the area) I received a visit from a man and his wife (so he said) claiming to be interested in talking about mutilations, UFOs, etc. The man said he is a pilot in the Canadian Air Force stationed at Moose Jaw (Saskatchewan). As it turned out, I did most of the talking. He and his wife just listened and had a rather

strange look on their faces as I related some of the incidents which had been occurring last year and this year in this area. He carried with him a small briefcase and when I asked him what he had in the briefcase he replied, "Oh, it's nothing. I just carry it with me all the time as part of a hobby/business my wife and I are involved in". When I pressed him further as to what this "hobby/business" was, he refused to answer, saying that it was getting late and he and his wife had to leave as they were on their way to Moose Jaw. Moose Jaw, incidentally, does have an air force base located two miles from the city. The man said his name was Don Upshur and his wife's name was Elizabeth (pseudonyms; the real names are on file with Project Stigma). In appearance, Don was neatly dressed, as was his wife, but their faces were the strange thing.....completely expressionless, as I related some of the stories of UFOs, mutilations, etc. As the evening went on, I became more and more suspicious of him and questioned him on various aspects of the air force and his flying experiences (I served for three years in the air force myself) and he repeatedly seemed to be trying to "sluff off" giving any answers to my questions. At one point in our rather one-sided conversation he let it slip that he was afraid of heights. I immediately asked him how he could fly jet planes if he was afraid of heights, to which he answered that planes didn't bother him since he was in control. Since I have a fear of heights myself, I was really suspicious that this man could claim to be a jet pilot and also claim to be afraid of heights. He seemed to get a bit nervous about this line of questioning.

The "Upshurs" soon departed, but our source made a mental note to check up on them. Then, in a letter to Project Stigma in September of 1980, the Canadian investigator continued his report:

In my investigations into the S.I.S.S. here, I have encountered one telephoned death threat, back on Thursday, Sept. 11th. The anonymous caller said, and I quote: "You know the digging you're doing into animal mutilations and into the S.I.S.S.? Well, you'd better lay off or you may end up like one of the mutilated cattle yourself!". The caller's voice was that of a male and it was a long distance call. The only people whom

I know realize I am "digging" are three local people (all women) who have supplied me with a great deal of information about the S.I.S.S. locally. Just this past weekend, in the spot where the mutilated bull was found south of (a nearby community), a girl herding cattle was shot with a shotgun. She was rushed to a hospital and received emergency treatment. A number of pellets were removed from her face (the shooting was at long range for a shotgun). The incident occurred at night and was in close proximity to a deserted farmhouse where, informants have told me, the S.I.S.S. sometimes holds their ceremonial meetings! Was this girl a victim of accidentally blundering onto the scene of one of their meetings? I have contacted her and she refuses to discuss anything about the incident. Police likewise.

Don Upshur, I found out, is indeed a pilot with the Canadian Air Force, stationed at Moose Jaw, but there are many strange things about him. I took a gamble at the beginning of September and called him at the air force base. I bluntly asked him if he was still interested in UFOs, animal mutilations, etc. He replied that indeed he was. That's when I sprang it on him. I asked him if he knew anything about the S.I.S.S. The reaction I got over the telephone was expected. He stammered and said, "How do you know about that?". I took a further gamble and said, "I know all about it, Don". He reacted again by exclaiming, "You know too damned much". Then he hung up and I haven't heard from him since, although when he previously visited me, he said he would stop by frequently. The information on the local "operations" of the S.I.S.S. which I have in my possession indicates that a number of farmers and professional people are involved from the (surrounding area), including one doctor (who is an acupuncture specialist) and at least one lawyer and perhaps several teachers.

Back on the U.S. scene: Two articles appeared in the KANSAS CITY (Missouri) TIMES in August of 1980 (our thanks to Steve Hicks for furnishing copies). They describe possible cultist activity along the Missouri River near St. Joseph, Missouri. Reports included the dis-

covery of an open grave, a jogger who witnessed what was apparently a "satanic ritual" in caves along the river. Later investigation by the authorities disclosed a cave in a rock quarry. Painted on the inside walls were white crosses and, in black, the word "Sabeth". The Buchanan County Sheriff's Office had been informed by the San Francisco Police Department in California that an investigation was being conducted into a group of 10 to 15 cultists "believed to be traveling across the country, performing satanic rituals - among them animal mutilations and human sacrifice".

Then, as further indication of the type of activity that such a group could be involved in: On July 16, 1980, an article appeared in the BELVIDERE (New Jersey) NEWS (credit: Lucius Farish; UFO News-clipping Service; Route 1, Box 220; Plumerville, Arkansas 72127), a portion of which follows:

Pet owners should be made aware of increased activity of occult groups in both Sussex and Morris counties. Animals are sometimes obtained from pounds and shelters, but more often than not they are simply taken from cars or off the property of their owners, warns the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Black female cats are used for sexual abuse, and often their heads are bitten off as part of the ritual. Dogs are also used and are held by the neck and the hair burnt off. All animals are bled and the blood is used in the ceremony. The sexual organs and bladder are also used. The rituals include the drinking of the animal blood, the soaking of bread (signifying the body of Christ) in the animal's urine as an act of desecration. Large animals such as horses, cows, goats and sheep are also used. In Budd Lake, hundreds of animal bodies in various stages of mutilation and decay were found by Mt. Olive Police...the aftermath of an occult ritual. Smaller scale sacrifices are taking place in the Sussex towns of Lake Neapaulin, Wantage, Hamburg and Vernon. Many people have reported their pets suddenly missing. Others have had the animals return near death in a mutilated condition. It is very difficult to catch these people. It would be necessary for someone to infiltrate their group. This is difficult and dangerous because they check out people very carefully

before allowing them to participate. We do know that sacrifices are often, several times a week, and that the High Sabbath is sometime in late August and many animals will be collected at that time. The High Sabbath has been held in the past at Stokes State Forest, but it is not known whether it will be there again this summer.

Eric Plasa is director of law enforcement for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, headquartered in New York City. On August 10, 1980, an article concerning his investigations (titled "The Cult Hunter") appeared in the SUNDAY NEWS MAGAZINE in New York City (credit: Ruth Borne). Plasa, the story notes, "has made a career lately of tracking to their lairs those who would slaughter animals and drink their blood in a religious fervor." For a while Plasa attempted only semi-successfully to infiltrate cults from within - especially the Santeria, "a major cult imported here from Africa via Cuba". Later, Plasa...

...emerged from the underground to fight the slaughter from the outside. Sometimes he and his men would arrive too late and find only the remains - a snake's body or a goat's head. But there were also the dramatic rescues where they would arrive moments before the carnage or, horrifically, while it was being carried out. As in the time they burst in upon 15 cultists in the Bronx, quaffing the blood of chickens and prepared to consume the vital fluid of 62 more animals, already decapitated for the purpose. "Sixty-two animals for 15 people. That was overkill", says Plasa, still shocked. "Even the high priests would disapprove. These people hoped by going to extreme lengths to show their devotion, they'd receive more in return from the gods." The gods: Obatala, who demands pigeons and white canaries; Yemaya, hungry for ducks and turtles; Eleggera, who is appeased only by bulls, oxen and white mice.

Plasa told reporter Sherryl Connelly that, in his contacts, during infiltration, with the Babalawos, the high priests of the Santeria, he found that "his grip on reality was being shaken". Plasa said, "It wasn't that came to believe this stuff. It was just, at times, I would begin to doubt that all I had been taught about the cosmos was necessarily correct".

The raid in which the 62 animals were rescued was carried out on Saturday, June 7, 1980. At the time, ASPCA special agent Tom Langdon (an associate of Plasa's) told the Associated Press about the cult of Santeria: "They either bite, tear off or cut off the animals' heads and drain all the blood from their bodies into vessels on the floor and also drip the blood over different deities and gods that are on the floor. They also drink the warm blood as it drips out of the animals". In March of 1979, what was at first termed a "voodoo altar" was discovered in a chicken yard ten miles west of Miami, Florida. The altar featured a human skull which had placed on top of a scorched head of a goat. On top of the human skull was the freshly-decapitated head of a chicken. Dade County authorities deduced that the setting was related to the Santeria cult. A year later, in March of 1980, the apparent remnants of a ritual were discovered in the Cook County Forest Preserve in Metropolitan Chicago, Illinois. Found at the site were six decapitated chickens, "two goats with their insides removed, a whole fish, several candles, two pair of jeans and two pair of men's underwear"(CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, March 24, 1980). Reporter Brian J. Kelly interviewed the Rev. J. Gordon Melton, director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion (and well-known to many readers as a book reviewer for FATE magazine). Though chickens are usually associated with voodoo, Melton suggests that the presence of goats indicated a possible Santeria ritual. Similar discoveries - sometimes just animals, with no candles or other paraphernalia - are made from time to time across the country. In February of 1974 seven cats were found stacked neatly in the shape of a pyramid in a mountain thicket near Bluefield, West Virginia. Close examination revealed that the tongues had been either ripped out or cut off. And in April of 1980 the carcasses of two dogs and seven cats were discovered "mutilated and stacked" in a deserted railroad yard in Somerville, Massachusetts. One dog was beheaded, the other had a stake through its head, and the seven cats had apparently been burned alive (MIDDLESEX NEWS, Mass.; credit: Loren Coleman).

In a course at the FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia, law enforcement officers can familiarize themselves with cult rituals, practices and philosophies. Lt. William Reichert of Jupiter, Florida, took the course and he told the PALM BEACH (Florida) POST (April 1979; credit: Bob Pratt) that, "In cults they have doctors, they have butchers, they have all kinds of specialists".

December 1979 saw the publication of a paperback book entitled JAY'S JOURNAL by Beatrice Sparks (Dell Books; P.O. Box 1000; Pinebrook, New Jersey 07058; \$1.95 plus 75¢ for postage and handling). The book purports to be the diary of a 16-year-old high school boy (though the location is not disclosed, the boy evidently lived in Utah) who eventually committed suicide. Before that, though, he joined a secret occult society simply called "O". In his journal he writes of joining in their sometimes bloody rituals, including the adroit and adept mutilation of cattle in western range country. According to the account, the "O" group flourishes in many high schools across the country. Documentary producer Linda Moulton Howe of Denver, Colorado, after having read JAY'S JOURNAL, consulted with a Catholic counselor (who was, in fact, formerly an occult practitioner). He dismissed the idea of cults being involved with the cattle mutilations, saying that none of the pagan organizations are organized or disciplined enough - and he drew a distinction between psychic phenomena and "real supernatural experience". He told Linda Howe that "he deals with a lot of young people who are psychic, feel out of it among other kids, turn to stuff like witchcraft and pagan rituals but have no other motive for their acts beyond their desperate confusion. He said the ceremony described in JAY'S JOURNAL might be unique to a given cult and not nationwide".

We'll close with a couple of Canadian opinions on the viability of the "cult" scenario. On November 7, 1979, the following article appeared in THE MELVILLE (Saskatchewan, Canada) ADVANCE (Credit: Denis Corneau, editor). The author is an acknowledged cult expert, the Rev. Colin Clay of St. Andrews College in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan:

CATTLE MUTILATIONS...CULTS DEFINITE POSSIBILITY AS CAUSE

There is a definite possibility that the cattle mutilations which have been occurring recently may be the work of members of one or more "satanic" cults. In fact, there now seems to be only two viable theories: (a) they are the work of several mentally-deranged individuals; perhaps one such person began the mutilation series with one or two acts in Alberta which were then copied elsewhere by similarly disturbed people in that province and in Saskatchewan; (b) they are the work of several "satanic" cults who would use the organs they remove from

the animals in the course of their secret rituals. A complete, academic study of the phenomenon would require us to examine a variety of different traditions under the headings (a) Witchcraft, (b) Devil-worship, (c) Occultism (which would include a number of relatively innocuous pastimes such as astrology, clairvoyance and spiritualism). As we know, the third group has attracted an enormous following in the 20th century, although Christians and Jews have, throughout history, been in opposition to it.

There are sufficient similarities between the "black" side of witchcraft and devil-worship for us to treat them together in this in stance. Both of these are very ancient - pre-dating the Old Testament by many centuries. The Old Testament includes condemnations e.g. Exodus 22:18, Deuteronomy 18:10, the story of the witch of Endor in 1 Samuel 28: 7-25, and in the New Testament, Galatians 5:20. Both Christians and Jews continued to be fascinated with the "black arts" however, and repressive measures were taken against witches in the middle ages, particularly at the time of the Inquisition. The Reformers were as opposed to witchcraft as were the Catholics, and Protestant Europe and North America executed many alleged witches in the 17th century.

The fundamental principle of both witchcraft and devil-worship is based on the assumption that "the world, the flesh and the devil" are to be enjoyed - not suppressed, and that Christianity has set out a series of commandments which inhibit men and women from expressing themselves completely. A close association with magic encourages the use of amulets and other superstitious objects. As the "High Priest" of modern Satanism in North America (Anton La Vey of San Francisco) puts it, "Evil spelt backwards is live". He once appeared on the Johnny Carson show wearing a horned hood and brandishing a ceremonial magic sword and explained that his church altar is a live and naked woman to symbolize the "pleasures of the flesh"(THE OCCULT EXPLOSION; Nat Freedland, 1972, p. 168). According to Freedland, in the Church of Satan in San Francisco the walls are black, the lights red, and the decor includes a deformed skeleton and stuffed animals. Even the bathroom has black towels and black toilet paper! If we can express it in such a way, La Vey's Satanic Church is quite legitimate. In fact, I believe that in California, it is registered as a fully legal religion, authorized, among other things, to conduct marriages.

If Anton La Vey's Church of Satan is something of a "showcase" for those fascinated by witchcraft and satanism, it is certainly not in such open congregations that the bizarre happenings in Alberta and Saskatchewan would find general support. But the current preoccupation with the occult, and the publicity given to groups like the Church of Satan, make it relatively easy for small congregations or "covens" to spring up across the country, and the availability of books on black magic, the "Black Mass", devil worship and other related topics make possible a large number of amateur, "do-it-yourself" satanic cult organizations.

The author and evangelist David Wilkerson estimates that there are more than 400 groups of witches practising in the United States today. We may assume that there are a considerable number active in Canada also. Most of these would follow the traditional rituals: the "altar" is the naked body of a female volunteer from the group; sacred objects that have been used in Christian churches are sometimes used; e.g., candles and chalices. In some parts of the United Kingdom, satanic groups have been known to seek out consecrated communion hosts for use (or abuse) in the ritual. A token form of "human sacrifice" usually takes place in the ritual, at which time a volunteer from the group is symbolically whipped. In keeping with the belief that pleasure is all-important, and that the body represents sensual pleasure, most (if not all) satanic rituals would be performed with all participants naked.

It is noticeable that in the recent spate of cattle mutilations, sensory organs (e.g., eyes, ears, tongue, heart, genitals) have been carefully removed. It seems very likely that these would be incorporated into the ritual - possibly by drying, grinding, and adding the powder to a liquid which the devotees would then drink together - possibly from a chalice-like vessel. This would be interpreted as a union with the sensual, erotic feelings of all living creatures.

As suggested earlier, it seems highly unlikely that these mutilations would be performed by any overt satanic or witchcraft groups. But it is distinctly possible that they are the work of small, secret "covens". With respect to the latter, one can only make what is at best an "educated guess", but based on some suggestions made to me when making enquiries about satanism when in the United Kingdom some years ago, I personally believe that the perpetrators of these bizarre mutilations are members of (1) very small, secret groups of 8-10 people in each;

that (2) they are not strictly satanists, but have formed "covens" of like-minded people whose principle fascination is with the 'pleasure' aspect of satanism, that (3) they consist of middle-aged, reasonably affluent couples, probably living in residential areas, who have become bored with the daily routine and with the bland nature of their family life and are looking for something that is erotic, bizarre, daring and highly secretive. It is not difficult for these groups to obtain information on the various rituals of witchcraft and satanism. How they find each other, to form such a group, is a mystery; but similar groups have been brought together for other so-called "adult" activities. It is imperative for all concerned that absolute secrecy be maintained - those involved have too much at stake.

I put this forward as a suggestion only, but I think, myself, that it is quite likely to be true. There may not be many such groups, but if one had started the mutilations in Alberta, it is probable that others heard about it, were attracted to the idea, and followed suit.

Another Canadian researcher, who has addressed himself to the possibility of cultist involvement in the Alberta-Saskatchewan mutilation siege, furnished the Royal Canadian Mounted Police with his findings, which he summarized for Project Stigma:

In a population of one-and-a-half million people, cultists would be very thin on the ground, and in contact with very few of a like mind. The highest incidence of "cultism" in Alberta is Christian cultism, and not "satanic", "witchcraft", "voodoo" or what have you. None of the latter were sufficient in number or sufficiently organized to carry out what we seemed to be faced with in these cattle mutilations. Of cultists I have met in my life (and I have met many of varied persuasions), few would be brave enough to approach a live bull in an open paddock at night bearing a sharp instrument with the intent of removing the animal's family jewels or internal organs. Most cultists prefer huddled meetings with candles and incense in house basements - from my experience. The history of animal sacrifice reveals no evidence of activity quite like that reported by the press in the "mute" cases. Further, "satanic", "witchcraft", "voodoo" or any

other folk religion were seldom innovative or imaginative - such people usually stick to rituals that have been passed down from earlier practitioners. In my opinion, "cultists" were not responsible for "mute" attacks, because if we were to believe and base our opinions on press reports, we could only come to the conclusion that those attacking the animals had flight capability of an unfamiliar order, plus advanced surgical training.

Whether all of the evidence pertaining to classic mutilations can be explained by the actions of cults remains a matter for serious debate and conjecture; and, indeed, we have our doubts. And for the purpose of this report we have admittedly and arbitrarily omitted all the other possible origins of mute-causation. One might attempt to make a case for the proliferation of information about cults as a deliberate program of disinformation, designed to steer mutilation research away from other realms. Again, conjecture. Perhaps the most likely conclusion to be reached at this point is, yes, some cults and cultists have apparently been involved in some acts of animal (and human) mutilation. Precisely how this fits into the larger picture (if at all) remains to be determined.

Letters

Personally, I think that aliens are behind this. One reason could be curiosity of animal life on Earth. A second reason, which might seem a little "far-out", is that the aliens enjoy the taste of these certain parts of the animals they mutilate. Now, why so many mutilations? Maybe the word has gotten out to other aliens that there is "good eating" on planet Earth. Now thirdly, the aliens may be trying to scare us! Or maybe impress with their extraordinary surgical ability. As for the helicopter sightings around the mutilated corpses: If they are advanced enough to build and fly extraterrestrial spacecraft, they are probably very capable of building a mere helicopter. Now, why would they use helicopters? To confuse us is one possibility; another is to make us think that earthlings are performing these mutilations. Let the UFO critics and skeptics think

(Continued)

what they want. Maybe they are afraid to face the fact that we are not alone in all of God's creation. Myself, I believe in UFOs and alien beings. If I ever meet one, I hope it will be a peaceful encounter.

God bless,
A Michigan reader (name on file)

After carefully reviewing (Kenneth) Rommel's final report, a 297-page manuscript consisting of his fifteen personal mute investigations, necropsy and analytical data, plus various state and federal correspondence, I find that it is not a definitive study of the total mutilation phenomenon but only briefly scratches the surface to this most perplexing problem. A number of facts concerning this mystery have been overlooked in this report, and the report in itself seems to be a vendetta against certain outspoken individuals that emphasized human involvement in these mutilations. Those of you who have the report will notice that my name was listed in the acknowledgement section in the front since some of my research into the UFO phenomenon was discussed by Rommel within the pages of this report; however, he did not use all of my research and merely used that research which would further support his conclusion.

I can agree with some of Rommel's findings, but I cannot agree with his conclusion to the entire phenomenon. There were a number of reported mutilations in various states that were due to predation and scavenger activity, just as a few were due to pranksters and natural causes, but there were those that cannot be placed in these categories and remain unexplained. I find it rather unusual to say the least to keep hearing of knife cuts supposedly done on the animal after it had died of some natural disorder or disease. This would seem to indicate that someone is always in the right place at the right time. to cut on the already dead animal in many different states, and in some areas that are very isolated and away from public roads, etc. Yet, this has been indicated by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, state agencies, and just recently the veterinary pathologist in Canada working with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

There are three points to consider here: (1) Certain individuals are lying about their findings; (2) farmers and ranchers are doing it; and (3) someone is just damn good at locating a dead animal after it has died

and does their carving on it for some unknown motive. It seems highly unlikely that items number (2) and (3) would satisfy all of the findings to date. Let's use a little common sense!

Tommy Roy Blann (August 1980)
1002 Edmonds Lane - No. 152
Lewisville, Texas 75067

NOTES, COMMENTARY AND FOLLOW-UPS

Correction: Re: "A Mutilation Documentary" in STIGMATA No. 10 - On page 5, in discussing the case of Judy Doraty, featured in the documentary, "A Strange Harvest", we stated that Mrs. Doraty and her family all observed a calf being "sucked" up through a beam of light into a UFO. As far as was known, only Mrs. Doraty herself observed the levitation of the calf (she was standing outside her car while the other witnesses remained in the car). Our thanks to Linda Howe, who wrote, produced, directed and edited "A Strange Harvest", for pointing this out.

And in regard to another UFO-abduction/mutilation case, one that we mentioned only briefly on the back page of STIGMATA No. 10: The incident occurred in Colfax County, New Mexico in the spring of 1980. A woman and her young son were driving along a highway when they observed one or more UFOs. They subsequently somehow found themselves aboard a craft where the mutilation of an animal was witnessed. After the incident was reported to authorities, the witnesses were hospitalized. Reliable sources indicate that, although the boy is okay, the woman attempted twice to commit suicide while hospitalized, and it was thought at one time that "something" may have been implanted into her during an "examination" on board the craft. Members of a prominent UFO investigative organization are probing the occurrence, and we will hope to eventually learn more details.

Thanks for recent plugs given to STIGMATA by: THE STARK FIST OF REMOVAL (Newsletter of the Church of the SubGenius)(The SubGenius Foundation; P.O.Box 140306; Dallas, Texas 75214; \$1.50 per copy); also SLUGGO (P.O.Box 755; Austin, Texas 78767; \$2.00 per copy); and THE MUFON UFO JOURNAL (103 Oldtowne Rd.; Seguin, Texas 78155;\$15.00)

In STIGMATA No. 5, we voiced our support for the use of competent and proven psychics in the analysis of mutilation data. We are, in fact, continuing to pursue this avenue of investigation ourselves (an up-date on the results will be published in the near future). Thankfully, we are not alone. Writer and paranormal investigator Peter Jordan has compiled and published a fascinating, (possibly) groundbreaking report entitled GLIMPSES THROUGH A LOOKING GLASS - subtitled "Four Psychics and Their Readings On The Subject of Unexplained Cattle Mutilations". Indeed there are some curious correlations among the psychics; but as Peter Jordan admits confirmation of the readings is difficult if not impossible at the present time and "only time will tell". But it's a start. GLIMPSES THROUGH A LOOKING GLASS is available at a cost of \$5.00 per copy, postpaid, from: Peter A. Jordan; 217 Connecticut Road; Union, NJ 07083.

Peter Jordan has also authored an article on the livestock mutilation phenomenon which will appear in an upcoming issue of SCIENCE DIGEST.

Follow-Up: In STIGMATA No. 4 (Summer 1978) we published what we knew of the story of a woman we called "Mrs. L.", a series of episodes we termed "Ordeal In Arkansas". We have probably received more inquiries about that story than about any other material we have published. To be sure, if the account could be verified, it could easily be of paramount significance. "Mrs. L's" identity and location are now known. She does, indeed, live in south Texas, and she contacted the headquarters of the Mutual UFO Network for help in unravelling and understanding her experiences. The case is currently under investigation by MUFON and hopefully the complete story will be available for dissemination in the near future.

We have been advised that an updated version of the 1976 novel, THE MUTILATORS, by Mervin Casey is now available. We have not seen a copy, but the book can be ordered for \$7.45 postpaid from: MODI, Ltd.; P.O. Box 22104; Denver, Colorado 80222.

The articles-in-the-works on mutilations scheduled for LIFE and NEW WEST have apparently been shelved, and it's doubtful they will ever appear in print.

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