

## Suicide, Murder, and Death in the Occult – Part 2

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There are other ways to die as a result of seeking the spirit world or other occult practices.

Professor Ed Gruss lists several cases of Ouija-board-inspired murders.<sup>1</sup> Pedro McGreggor, in *Jesus of the Spirits*, relates a case where four people were murdered by the actual spirits themselves.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Nandor Fodor discusses many more incidents in his *Encyclopedia of Psychic Science*. For example, a Franklin B. Evans was executed in Concord, New Hampshire, for the murder of a 12-year-old child. In his confession made just before his execution, he said that “for some days before the murder, I seemed to be attended continually by one who seemed to bear a human form, urging me on to the deed. At length it became fixed in my mind to take her life.”<sup>3</sup> Fodor relates another case where a spirit persecuted one woman for almost a year, setting fire to her house and even stabbing her in the back with a knife!<sup>4</sup>

Death magic also has a long tradition where occultists attempt to command spirits to kill other people.<sup>5</sup> Dr. Koch observes that persecution and defense magic are “among the most common forms of magic.”<sup>6</sup> The compilation *Demon Experiences in Many Lands* quotes three missionaries in Madras, India, who “won two men to Christ who were doing black magic using it to kill people.”<sup>7</sup> Koch refers to one woman whose “specialty was in causing sickness and in death magic; she has already committed several murders which the police had been unable to solve.”<sup>8</sup> He refers to another woman who used the *Sixth* and *Seventh Book of Moses*, *The Spring Book*, *The Spiritual Shield*, and many other dangerous texts. She:

...experimented in the area of magic persecution and death magic and she even boasted of having caused the deaths of her husband and daughter. She would inflict her enemies with diseases and claimed that she was able to cause eczemas, diarrhea, heart trouble, itching, stomach pains, swelling of the body and other things. After causing the death of all the members of her family, according to her own words, she then took on the job of a district nurse.<sup>9</sup>

Noted UFO/psychic investigator John Keel has personally researched on-site cases around the world. He observes:

In demonology, practitioners of witchcraft and black magic traditionally end up as victims of the very forces they hoped to control. Strange tragedies stalk them, and they fall prey to the phenomenon of possession. That is, some outside force seems to possess them, destroys their will power, and forces them to carry out anti-social acts ranging from arson to murder. This same kind of possession is apparent in many UFO contactee cases. There have been a number of senseless murders in which the killer's only defense was that he had been ordered to commit the act by "Martians."<sup>10</sup>

Another noted UFO researcher, astrophysicist and parapsychologist Dr. Jacques Vallee agrees. For example:

In the Soviet Union, not so long ago, a leading plasma physicist died in strange circumstances: He was thrown under a Moscow subway train by a mentally deranged woman. It is noteworthy that she claimed a "voice from space" had given her orders to kill that particular man—orders she could not resist. Soviet criminologists, I have been reliably informed, are worried by the increase of such cases in recent years.<sup>11</sup>

Jack Roper, the director of a Midwest countercult organization, has produced a computerized database on Satanism, witchcraft, Druidism, and other forms of paganism which lists hundreds of organizations involved in such activities. The introduction also lists several incidents of criminal occult activity, for example, 1) a physician involved in Satanism under investigation for multiple murders and 2) a student who murdered his school principal because his *animal* sacrifices to the devil were apparently not sufficient.<sup>12</sup>

In his ominous *Cults That Kill: Probing the Underworld of Occult Crime*, award-winning journalist Larry Kahaner supplies firsthand accounts of hideous torture, child molestation, murder, crime and cruelty that are almost impossible for the uninitiated to imagine. His purpose in writing this carefully researched book was "to show the far-reaching breadth of this type of crime."<sup>13</sup>

But even dabbling on the "innocent fringes" of occultism may carry a heavy price tag, at least for some people. Perhaps several hundred deaths have now been connected to imaginative games that role-play occult realities, such as Dungeons and Dragons.<sup>14</sup> Dungeons and Dragons alone has sold some ten million sets and has led many teenagers and adults into active occult practice.<sup>15</sup> Further, "There is many a psychiatrist who will testify to having to work with disturbed children whose trouble began with a fascination aroused by such fantasy games."<sup>16</sup>

In an age of occult revival and reality, even Halloween practices can present a problem:

In the opinion of Dr. David Enoch, former senior consultant psychiatrist at the Royal Liverpool Hospital and the University of Liverpool, Halloween practices open the door to the occult and can introduce forces into people's lives that they do not understand and often cannot combat.

Much damage is done by Christians who mix up Christianity with the occult by encouraging this practice, which is pagan at heart. For too many children, this annual preoccupation with evil leads to a deepening fascination with the supernatural, witches and the possibility of exercising power over others.

In the United Kingdom, the Association of Christian Teachers has produced a leaflet entitled *Hallowe'en* in response to this popularization of something intrinsically evil. They underline three reasons for concern about Halloween as an educational exercise.

1. If we suppose that witches and spirits are nonsense, why, then, encourage children to celebrate their mythical frolics and perhaps take them seriously? Paganism is hardly a cultural mainstay of all that is best in our society.

2. Suppose that in our folklore, witches and demons merely represent moral evil. Hallowe'en then tends to celebrate evil in the ascendant by the reversal of moral standards. If Nazi figures were regularly presented for children's admiration and affection there would soon be a public outcry. But lovable little witches are brought out every autumn. This disturbs the polarization of good and bad, right and wrong, in children's minds.

3. Hallowe'en does in fact encourage an interest and fascination in the occult and this invariably leads to more serious involvement and damage to the individuals concerned.<sup>17</sup>

*The Washington Post* provided several illustrations of the tragedy resulting from the revival of occultism in China, which it alleges is now "running rampant" as admitted even by Communist leaders.<sup>18</sup> The article briefly describes the conditions surrounding eight murders, three deaths, and two suicides related to occult practices. It also observes that literally millions of Chinese are ruled by superstitions and occult beliefs.

In our eight years of research on over 70 religious sects in America, we noted a theme of unquestioning obedience to the authority figure, "whether right or wrong." Unethical or criminal activity is justified on pragmatic grounds, and many disciples spoke of a willingness to either kill themselves or other people should their spiritual leader demand it.

We all remember the horror of Jonestown and the murder of Rep. Leo Ryan. Former members of Jim Jones' People's Temple admitted they signed a statement declaring they would "kill, destroy or commit any act necessary" to further the plans of Jones.<sup>19</sup> As a result, 900 murders and suicides in the Guyana jungle shocked the nation. But how many people were ever aware of Rev. Jones' connection to the occult? An article in *Christianity Today* indicated Jones apparently "believed he was 'guided' by a supernatural 'spirit,'" and researcher Dave Hunt refers to Jones' early involvement with South American spiritism.<sup>20</sup>

Ironically, in a 1981 interview, Leo Ryan's own daughter spoke of her devotion to the late Indian guru Rajneesh. She stated, "I've heard other people say if

Bhagwan asked them to kill themselves, they would do it.... If Bhagwan asked them to kill someone else, they would do it. I don't know if my trust in him is that total. I would like it to be, and I don't believe he would ever do that."<sup>21</sup> But as we document elsewhere,<sup>22</sup> even Rajneesh teaches there is nothing really wrong with murder as long as it is done "properly" in "higher consciousness."

Regardless, death may also occur from many other causes related to occult activity. For example, death may result from the psychic vampirism of a séance. This has long been noted, with probably hundreds of cases occurring since the beginnings of modern American spiritism in 1848. Mediums require that those present at séances allow themselves to become vampirized by the control spirit who utilizes their energy as well as the mediums' for its own purposes. In one case with medium d'Esperance, "The draw on the sitter proved fatal. The [ectoplasmic] phantom was grabbed, and an old lady, the mother of the spirit grabber, who apparently contributed most of the ectoplasm, was so seriously injured, that after much suffering, she died from the consequences (*Light*, Nov. 21, 1903)."<sup>23</sup>

Former medium Raphael Gasson warns:

During this process of entering and departing from the medium's body, the spirit demands absolute silence on the part of the sitters, as a sudden noise, movement, etc., may result in the medium receiving a violent shock to his system and may even go so far as to cause him to lose his life. Mediumship then is certainly not a thing to tamper with unless one is prepared to risk everything for it.... At my last séance ... all I could recall upon regaining consciousness was that... the spirits were trying to take my life by preventing me returning to my body.<sup>24</sup>

Occultist Brennan offers another example in a different area:

But fascination is not the only danger. Any reader with experience of mental illness knows the strength of psychic forces. On some levels of the Astral, these forces are met head on. The effect on an unprepared personality can be staggering. Dream deaths have actually been recorded in the Philippines.<sup>25</sup>

Sometimes even the dying process itself carries an added weight of agony. "Many occultists and magic workers, especially those who have cultivated the black arts and signed themselves over to the devil in their own blood, die horrible deaths. This is especially true when a ready successor is not provided to carry on the nefarious practice."<sup>26</sup> Occult literature and biographies supply many illustrations of this fact, known only too well by the tortured family members of the dying.

In conclusion, when life is so precious and death so consequential for those outside of Christ, it is nothing short of lunacy to risk one's life by tampering with the occult. But for those still living, there can be yet other consequences of occult activity.

## Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> Edmund Gruss, *The Ouija Board: Doorway to the Occult* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1975), pp. 86-87. In "The Ouija Board Temptation," in Ebon, *The Satan Trap*, p. 172, Kent Jordan refers to a similar case; see also Stoker Hunt, *The Ouija: A Most Dangerous Game*; cf. *The Fortean Times*, No. 52, p. 34; Maury Terry, *The Ultimate Evil: The Chicago Tribune*, May 6, 1981; *The Los Angeles Time*, Jun. 20, 1984.
- <sup>2</sup> Pedro McGreggor, *Jesus of the Spirits* (New York: Stein Day, 1960), p. 199.
- <sup>3</sup> Nandor Fodor, *An Encyclopedia of Psychic Science* (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel, 1974), p. 266.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 292.
- <sup>5</sup> Kurt Koch, *Between Christ and Satan* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1962), p. 81; J. Halifax-Grof, "Hex-Death," *Parapsychology Review*, Sep.-Oct. 1975, p. 20.
- <sup>6</sup> Koch, *Between Christ and Satan*, p. 81.
- <sup>7</sup> Moody Press, a compilation, *Demon Experiences in Many Lands* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1960), p. 22.
- <sup>8</sup> Koch, *Between Christ and Satan*, p. 79.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.
- <sup>10</sup> John Keel, *Our Haunted Planet* (Greenwich, CT: Fawcett, 1971), p. 128.
- <sup>11</sup> Jacques Vallee, *Passport to Magonia* (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery Co., 1969), pp. 131-132.
- <sup>12</sup> Jack Roper, *A Sorcery Iceberg in America* (Milwaukee, WI: CARIS, 1985), introduction.
- <sup>13</sup> Larry Kahaner, *Cults That Kill: Probing the Underworld of Occult Crime* (New York: Warner, 1988), p. viii.
- <sup>14</sup> Bob Larson, *Satanism: The Seduction of America's Youth* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1989), p. 201; Russ Parker, *Battling the Occult* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), pp. 16-17; cf. John Weldon and James Bjornstad, *Playing With Fire* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1984).
- <sup>15</sup> Parker, *Battling the Occult*, pp. 16-17.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.
- <sup>18</sup> *The Washington Post*, Mar. 30, 1984.
- <sup>19</sup> *Christianity Today*, Dec. 5, 1978, p. 38. Dave Hunt, *Cult Explosion* (Irvine, CA: Harvest House Publishers, 1980), p. 157; *The Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 24, 1978.
- <sup>20</sup> Hunt, *The Cult Explosion*, p. 221.
- <sup>21</sup> *The Los Angeles Time*, Jan. 19, 1981.
- <sup>22</sup> John Ankerberg, John Weldon, *The Coming Darkness* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1993), chapter 13.
- <sup>23</sup> Fodor, *Encyclopedia of Psychic Science*, p. 237.
- <sup>24</sup> Raphael Gasson, *The Challenging Counterfeit* (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing, 1966), p. 87.
- <sup>25</sup> J. H. Brennan, *Astral Doorways* (Red Wheel Weiser, 1972), p. 9.
- <sup>26</sup> Merrill Unger, *Biblical Demonology* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1972), p. 95.