



# Satan's Silence: Ritual Abuse and the Making of a Modern American Witch Hunt

*By Debbie Nathan, Michael Snedeker*

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Communities throughout the United States were convulsed in the 1980s and early 1990s by accusations, often without a shred of serious evidence, that respectable men and women in their midst many of them trusted preschool teachers secretly gathered in far reaching conspiracies to rape and terrorize children. In this powerful book, Debbie Nathan and Mike Snedeker examine the forces fueling this blind panic.

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### **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Journalist Nathan and lawyer Snedeker, both involved in debunking ritual-abuse cases, have produced a thoughtful investigation of how and why such cases have led to "moral panic" over the past 15 years. They trace how emerging theories about sex abuse—which proclaimed children's truthfulness—led to a situation in which social workers supplanted police as investigators, and how changes in family and gender relations (including victimology feminism) fueled social preoccupation with demonology. They look closely at several cases, including the notorious McMartin case in California, which led to paranoiac attitudes toward public child care and to a growing "ritual-abuse industry." Reproducing case transcripts, the authors show how children's testimony was led; nevertheless, civil libertarians shied away from challenging such cases: "demonization of child sexual abuse as society's ultimate evil has rendered it so holy as to be virtually immune to reasoned analysis." The authors believe that real sexual abuse, especially incest, is underreported, and recommend that investigators be better trained as well as granted only limited immunity from malpractice. More broadly, they see a need to educate children in such a way that they develop psychological and sexual integrity.

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From the Publisher

A powerfully written book that goes beyond documenting individual abuse cases to sound a general alarm about a dangerous national hysteria.

About the Author

Debbie Nathan is a nationally published journalist whose award-winning critiques of ritual sex abuse prosecutions appear in her essay collection, *Women and Other Aliens*. She lives in New York. Michael Snedeker practices law in California. Author of a novel (*Down in the Valley*) and a handbook of prison law, he lives in Portland, Oregon.

### **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Pauline Jefferson:**

Satan's Silence: Ritual Abuse and the Making of a Modern American Witch Hunt can be one of your nice books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nevertheless delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to set every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing Satan's Silence: Ritual Abuse and the Making of a Modern American Witch Hunt but doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource data that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information may drawn you into fresh stage of crucial thinking.

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**Linda Harris:**

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