Supernatural Support Groups: Who Are the UFO Abductees and Ritual-Abuse Survivors?

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In the 1980s two different groups emerged that exhibited a strikingly similar combination of the quasi-religious and psychotherapeutic—UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors. Both movements focused on healing members from victimization they had experienced at the hands of beings of often supernatural power. Further, both movements attempt to use techniques developed in psychotherapeutic circles, such as hypnosis, art therapy, and role playing, to recover "repressed" memories at the hands of these abusers. This article presents the results of surveys of 55 UFO abductees and 51 ritual-abuse survivors. Both UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors are compared to the general population in terms of their gender, age, race, marital status, education, and occupation. It is determined that the demographics of these two fledgling movements closely mirror those of other NRMs.

In the 1980s two different movements emerged that exhibited a strikingly similar combination of the quasi-religious and psychotherapeutic—UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors (Paley 1997). Both movements focused on healing members from victimization they had experienced at the hands of beings of often supernatural power. Further, both movements use techniques developed in psychotherapeutic circles, such as hypnosis, art therapy, and role playing, to recover "repressed" memories at the hands of these abusers.

In the mid-1980s an increasing number of support groups appeared that were centered around so-called UFO abductions. UFO abductee support groups attempt to help people recover repressed memories of victimization at the hands of extraterrestrials. Also in the mid-1980s an increasing number of therapists and support groups focusing on "ritual abuse" began seeking clients/members. Ritual-abuse support groups also attempt to recover repressed memories of past abuses. In this case, the abuse is believed to take place at the hands of secretive, underground, usually Satanic, cults. Although much has been written about both these movements, little of this research has focused on the members themselves.

Many sociological studies of flying saucer, or UFO, religious groups have appeared over the years. In fact, Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory developed based on observations of a small flying-saucer cult (Festinger, Riecken, and Schachter 1956). Although there are many case studies of UFO cults with origins in the beliefs of the contactee movement of the 1950s and 1960s (see, e.g., Balch 1995; Tumminia 1998; Tumminia and Kirkpatrick 1995; Wallis 1974), much less has been written about groups centered around UFO abductions (see, e.g., Bader 1999; Whitmore 1995).

Sociological research on the ritual-abuse phenomenon has focused mainly on critiques of the movement, such as surveys of ritual-abuse therapists and/or critiques of their methods (Bottoms and Davis 1997; Mulhern 1991), discussions of the investigative techniques used by law enforcement (Crouch and Damphousse 1991; Hicks 1991a, 1991b), and the construction of a "moral panic" surrounding Satanism (Jenkins and Maier-Katkin 1991; Nathan 1991; Victor 1991, 1994). An extensive body of research on ritual abuse has been accumulated outside of sociology, mainly centered on how to recognize ritual abuse and the symptoms reported by ritual-abuse survivors (Driscoll and Wright 1991; Jonker and Jonker-Bakker 1997; Young et al. 1991; Young 1992), the relationship between ritual abuse and multiple personality disorder (Brown 1986; Fraser 1990;

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Friesen 1991; Hector 1991; Ryder 1992), and discussions of types of abuses reported by survivors (Hudson 1990; Ryder 1992; Young 1992).

What has been lacking in research on both movements is sociological information on the "clients" themselves. Although sociological theory would provide hypotheses on the demographic characteristics of UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors, in fact, we know relatively little about members of either movement. Indeed, the study of so-called new age movements suffers from a dearth of basic demographic data (Lewis 1992; Mears and Ellison 2000).

Previous Research on the Demographics of New Age and Novel Religions

The primary purpose of this article is to present a demographic portrait of ritual-abuse survivors and UFO abductees. Since it is not possible to conduct a random sample of all abductees or ritual-abuse survivors, there is no way to ascertain whether the existing data is suitable for tests of significance. Therefore, the results are simply presented as raw numbers and percentages alongside data from the 1990 General Social Survey. Although it is not possible to test for statistical significance, there are some striking differences between members of the two movements and the general population.

Previous research on participation in the new age activities and membership in new religious movements provides some hypotheses as to membership in the UFO abductee and ritual-abuse survivor movements. First, one should expect the majority of abductees and ritual-abuse survivors to be female. All types of religious groups tend to have a higher percentage of females than males (Miller and Hoffman 1995; Stark 2002). But novel religious movements tend to be quite disproportionately female (Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark, Bainbridge, and Kent 1981). Participation in new age activities such as astrology also exhibits a disproportionate female to male ratio (Feher 1992; Marks 1978). Stark and Bainbridge (1985) argue that new religious movements especially appeal to women because such groups frequently provide a greater opportunity for positions of leadership for females than do traditional religious groups. Further some new age groups and movements emphasize female power or aspects of spirituality such as intuition or emotion that are associated with the feminine, thereby attracting more women than men (Mears and Ellison 2000).

Much of the research on age and participation in new age movements is based on the particular historical circumstances of the baby boom generation and increasing interest in Eastern religions in the 1960s (see, e.g., Brown 1992; Melton 1986). Mears and Ellison (2000) argue that new age consumption should be greatest among younger adults, as they will be the most attracted to novel ideas. On the other hand, Stark and Bainbridge (1985) found that subscribers to a popular magazine covering occult and new age topics, *Fate Magazine*, is skewed toward persons older than the general population. Thus, the research on participation in new age movements and consumption of new age materials does not provide clear hypotheses as to the age distribution of UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors.

Research and theory of the effects of marital status on participation in new age groups is also limited. Mears and Ellison (2000) suggest that marital status may be related to consumption of new age materials. Marriage, they argue, is a socially approved, conventional institution. Therefore, people who reject marriage may also reject conventional ideas and be consequently more likely to express interest in unconventional topics and movements.

Perhaps the most developed area of theory about the demographics of participation in the new age and unconventional religious movements is regarding socioeconomic/occupational status. For example, Stark and Bainbridge argue that cults tend to recruit disproportionately from the "more favored segments of the population" (1985:395). The early Mormons drew their first members from the more prosperous, educated areas of New York (O'Dea 1957). People with higher levels of education should be more attracted to new religious ideas, since higher education typically involves a greater exposure to the unconventional (Stark and Bainbridge 1985). Further, Kelly

(1992) argues that new religious movements tend to be created by those that express creativity in all other fields—middle-class intellectuals.

Of course, education tends to be highly correlated with occupational status and income. Therefore, we should expect members of new religious movements or people expressing interest in new age topics to come primarily from more prestigious occupations than members of sects or mainline denominations. Adler (1979) found that members of witches covens tended to have their origins primarily in professional and white-collar occupations. Kelly (1992) argues that new religions are created precisely by the same sorts of persons who exercise creativity in all other fields, that is, middle-class intellectuals. Stark and Bainbridge (1985) report that converts to Mormonism emerge disproportionately from professional, managerial, and technical careers.

Research on the race/ethnicity of participants in new age movements suggests that they are disproportionately white (Roof 1993). Such a finding is not particularly surprising, given the high correlations frequently reported between education, occupation, and race (see, e.g., Sikmus 1978; Wilson 1987). If whites in the United States have significantly higher levels of income, then they should also have higher levels of occupational prestige, greater levels of educational attainment, and, hence, fit more closely the profile for cult membership. In sum, previous research suggests that if the UFO abduction and ritual-abuse survivor movements operate similar to other novel religious groups and new age movements, their membership should be composed of a disproportionate number of highly educated, middle to upper-middle class, white females engaged in professional occupations.

The Challenges of Surveying UFO Abductees and Ritual-Abuse Survivors

Since most of the available data regarding UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors centers around the types of experiences/abuse reported and the recognition of the abuse, this article provides data from surveys of members of both movements. Both groups proved very challenging to survey. In attempting to contact UFO abductees the author found that many are leery of social scientists and others who wish to study them. There are a couple of reasons for this wariness. First, abductees are frequently the subject of ridicule in the popular media and the abductees assume that any survey or research would be used for similar purposes. Many UFO abductees have also developed elaborate conspiracy theories regarding government cover-ups of the reality of UFOs and extraterrestrial life (Bader 1995a). Some, in fact, believe that members of the government will try to silence them if their story becomes public.

The author faced similar difficulties when attempting to survey ritual-abuse survivors. A common theme in the therapeutic literature about ritual abuse is the constant danger posed by the Satanic cults that survivors have escaped. For example, Ryder (1992) reports that Satanic cults will use "triggers" to lure the survivor back into the cult, or may try to kill the survivor should his or her memories threaten the group. Thus, survivors and their therapists displayed considerable reticence about letting a stranger talk to or survey them. A discussion of how the surveys were conducted, therefore, is in order.

The UFO Contact Center International

To secure surveys of UFO abductees, the author contacted a large UFO abduction support group, the UFO Contact Center International (UFOCCI). The UFOCCI is based near Seattle, but has more than 30 affiliate centers around the United States and in Canada. The author first approached the founder and leader of the group in December 1989, asking for permission to conduct a survey of group members. To provide incentive, the author offered to include questions regarding the types of experiences reported by the abductees and to provide a summary of the findings to the group. Initially, the group refused the request, citing concerns that the findings might be forwarded to a "government agency" or that the government might somehow be able to

identify the abductees from the survey. However, the author was invited to attend group meetings to make a case for the survey.

After attending several group meetings and becoming familiar with the members, the subject of a survey was again raised. Members were assured that the questionnaires would be entirely anonymous and that no reported findings would include their city or state of origin. Members were also reminded that they were free to leave blank any item that made them uncomfortable. Upon reviewing the questionnaire, several members of the group agreed to complete it. The author was also given permission by the group's leader to contact the UFOCCI's affiliate centers regarding the survey. The head of each affiliate center was contacted by phone and informed about the survey. Approximately one-third of those affiliate centers declined to participate, for one or both of the reasons noted above. Those affiliate centers that agreed were sent the requested number of questionnaires with return postage. Of 217 surveys eventually distributed, 55 were returned.

The survey contained a series of demographic questions, including gender, age, marital status and history, occupation, income, number of children, and religious background. At the group's request, the survey also included several items regarding the abduction experience itself, such as the number of reported abductions, the abductee's feelings about the experience, dates of abductions, and methods used to recover memories.

Surveying Ritual-Abuse Survivors

Since there existed no known means of contacting individual ritual-abuse survivors, the author decided to utilize the methods of Driscoll and Wright (1991), using therapists as the vehicle of distribution. However, initial attempts to survey ritual-abuse survivors by cold-calling therapists were uniformly rejected. Realizing that the surveying of survivors would require the backing of someone known in the field, the author contacted a prominent "cult cop" in Ohio—a retired police officer who makes a living lecturing church groups, community groups, and professional organizations about Satanism and ritual abuse. After several meetings, he agreed to endorse the project, providing assurance to therapists that survivors would not be harmed by their participation in the project.

Therapists were given several incentives to participate in the study. First, they were informed that the questionnaire was completely anonymous, so that they could assure their patients that cult members could not locate them with the information. Second, the therapists were told that the project was endorsed by a well-known authority on ritual abuse. Finally, therapists were promised a report summarizing the findings of the survey, which included several questions regarding the survivor's experiences, history of abuse, and methods used to recover the memories.

A snowball sampling process was utilized, as many therapists provided the names of others working with ritual-abuse survivors. In all, 24 therapists were contacted, of which 16 agreed to participate. The author then sent each therapist the requested number of questionnaires, with return postage. Therapists then informed their clients of the project. Those that agreed to participate completed the survey. Of 150 questionnaires mailed to therapists, 51 were returned.

In addition to questions about the survivor's abuse history, the survey included a set of questions designed to reproduce Bennett's Past Month Isolation Scale (PMI) (Bennett 1980) and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CESD) (Ross and Mirowsky 1984). A set of demographic questions asked respondents about their gender, age, occupation, income, education, race, and marital status.

Comparing UFO Abductees and Ritual-Abuse Survivors to the General Population

Although extant theory regarding affiliation with occult and new age groups provides hypotheses regarding how UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors should differ from the general population, such a comparison requires an important caveat. The surveys were conducted through UFO support groups and ritual-abuse therapists. It is possible that there is a large body of

abductees and/or ritual-abuse survivors who do not have contact with support groups or therapists. Therefore, the findings below may reflect an "elite" bias—with only the relatively wealthy and educated able to afford therapy. This concern is particularly relevant with regards to the ritual-abuse survivors in this study, as they were contacted through paid therapists. The UFO abductees, on the other hand, belonged to support groups that do not charge for their services. Should future studies manage to gather data from ritual-abuse survivors and UFO abductees who are not in a group or therapy setting, such data will provide a useful comparison to the findings presented below.

Gender and Age

The gender breakdown of both the UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors conforms to previous research regarding gender and cult membership. A majority of UFO abductees, 63 percent, were female; fully 100 percent of the ritual-abuse survivors were female, a finding suggesting that the ritual-abuse movement is, indeed, primarily a female one.

The age distribution does not aid in the debate over whether members of new religious movements will be especially young or especially old, for the differences between the two groups and the general population in age is not striking. The average age of respondents to the 1990 General Social Survey was approximately 46 (45.97). Ritual-abuse survivors skew slightly older with an average age of 48 (47.7). The UFO abductees were slightly younger with an average age of 44 (43.69). Neither of these findings suggests that the ranks of either movement are composed of disproportionate numbers of the young or the old.

Table 1 presents selected demographic characteristics of the UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors (marital status, race, educational attainment, and occupation), compared to respondents of the 1990 General Social Survey.

Marital Status

The results do not provide strong support for the contention that members of novel religious movements will be primarily composed of people who reject the institution of marriage. The UFO abductees, in fact, closely resemble the general population in marital status. Approximately 23 percent (22.6 percent) of UFO abductees were single, compared to approximately 19 percent (19.3 percent) of respondents of the 1990 General Social Survey. Abductees also show similar proportions of the married, 54.7 percent versus 53 percent in the GSS, and the divorced and separated, 18.9 percent compared to 15.2 percent in the GSS.

Ritual-abuse survivors, however, do exhibit interesting differences from UFO abductees and the general population. Only 28 percent of ritual-abuse survivors reported that they are currently married compared to more than half of respondents to the 1990 General Social Survey. Ritual-abuse survivors also reported higher levels of divorce and separation than the GSS. Approximately 36 percent of ritual-abuse survivors reported that they are currently divorced or separated, compared to only 15.2 percent of respondents to the General Social Survey. There is a prosaic explanation for the high levels of divorce, besides suggestions that the single are more attracted to novel movements. Although many ritual-abuse survivors initially accuse their parents of being involved in Satanic cults, those allegations frequently expand during prolonged therapy to include others in the survivor's life, such as brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and spouses. Allegations against spouses, and the inability of spouses to accept increasing amounts of therapy and expanding claims that include more family members and friends, may lead to increased rates of divorce among those who claim ritual abuse.

Race

The author's personal survey of the UFO and ritual-abuse literatures led to the impression that both movements were primarily composed of white members. The majority of UFO abduction

TABLE 1
SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF UFO ABDUCTEES AND RITUAL-ABUSE SURVIVORS, COMPARED TO GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY (GSS 1990)

	UFO Abductees	Ritual-Abuse Survivors	General Social Survey
Marital Status			
Single	12 (22.6%)	16 (32.0%)	265 (19.3%)
Married	29 (54.7%)	14 (28.0%)	727 (53.0%)
Divorce/Separated	10 (18.9%)	18 (36.0%)	208 (15.2%)
Widowed	2 (3.8%)	2 (4.0%)	171 (12.5%)
	$n = 53$	$n = 50$	$n = 1{,}371$
Race			
White	48 (88.9%)	50 (100.0%)	1,150 (83.8%)
Black	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	159 (11.6%)
Other	6 (11.1%)	0 (0.0%)	63 (4.6%)
	$n = 54$	$n = 50$	$n = 1{,}372$
Education			
Less than college	16 (32.0%)	6 (12.0%)	1,238 (53.8%)
Some college +	34 (68.0%)	44 (88.0%)	632 (46.1%)
	$n = 50$	$n = 50$	$n = 1370$
Occupation			
White collar	29 (56.9%)	18 (37.5%)	534 (41.6%)
Blue collar/other[1]	4 (7.8%)	3 (6.3%)	343 (26.7%)
Not in labor force[2]	18 (35.3%)	27 (56.3%)	408 (31.8%)
	$n = 51$	$n = 48$	$n = 1{,}285$

[1]The blue collar/other category combines the following job types—blue collar, farm/forest, and service.
[2]The "not in labor force" category combines the following job statuses—retired, homemaker, student, and unemployed.

accounts have been written by or about white females. Although Barney Hill, who was involved in one of the first widely reported UFO abduction cases, was an African-American male, his example did not lead to black involvement in the UFO movements. The ritual-abuse literature also suggests that its membership is primarily white.

The survey findings (see Table 1) confirm this impression of the popular literature from each movement. Although approximately 12 percent (11.6 percent) of respondents to the General Social Survey were black (closely mirroring the percent black in the U.S. population), none of the surveyed abductees or survivors reported their race as black. A substantial majority of UFO abductees (88.9 percent) report their race as "white." The remaining 11.1 percent of abductees reported races other than black or white—specifically, the remaining abductees indicated their race as native American. UFO abductees appear to be primarily a movement composed of white females. The survey of ritual-abuse survivors, however, consisted *entirely* of white females. No survivors reported a race other than white.

Education

As do the findings for gender and race, the educational attainment of UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors (see Table 1) appear to conform to the membership trends for new religious movements. As noted above, previous research suggests a strong relationship between education and interest and membership in novel religious movements. The survey findings suggest that the

ranks of UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors are, indeed, drawn from the elite. Less than half (46.1 percent) of respondents to the General Social Survey have attended college. However, the majority of UFO abductees (68 percent) and an even greater majority (88 percent) of ritual-abuse survivors have attended college.

Occupation

To compare the occupations of UFO abductees, ritual-abuse survivors, and respondents to the 1990 General Social Survey, those occupations were coded as either white collar, blue collar/other (including blue collar, farm and forest, and service occupations), and "not in the labor force" (including the unemployed, homemakers, students, and retired persons).

The findings for UFO abductees (see Table 1) suggest that the movement does indeed gather membership from favored segments of the population. Less than half of respondents to the General Social Survey (41.6 percent) reported a white-collar occupation. By comparison, approximately 57 percent (56.9 percent) of abductees reported white-collar jobs. Comparatively few abductees hold non-white-collar occupations (7.8 percent vs. 26.7 percent in the GSS). A sample of the white-collar occupations reported by UFO abductees includes "electronics technician," "professor," "therapist," and "marketing/sales rep."

Ritual-abuse survivors, however, reported slightly lower levels of white-collar occupations (37.5 percent) than respondents to the General Social Survey (41.6 percent). Among those survivors who *are working*, most have white-collar occupations (85.7 percent), reporting jobs such as "sales manager," "registered nurse," "receiving supervisor," and "marketing coordinator." Nevertheless, ritual-abuse survivors apparently experience rather high levels of unemployment—56.3 percent of ritual-abuse survivors are not in the workforce, compared to 31.8 percent of the General Social Survey. Given the high levels of education reported by ritual-abuse survivors, this is a curious finding. These results, coupled with their high divorce rate, suggests that ritual-abuse survivors may have difficulty maintaining normative lifestyles upon discovery of their memories of abuse.

Indeed, other questions on the survey indicate that ritual-abuse survivors in support groups do become increasingly dysfunctional due to their memories of abuse. The ritual-abuse survey included questions allowing the creation of Bennett's Past Month Isolation Index (PMI) (Bennett 1980, 1985), which measures the extent to which an individual has objectively isolated himself or herself from others, and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CESD), which measures depression. The National Survey of Families and Households (Center for Demography and Ecology 1990) also includes these scales. Compared to NSFH respondents, the ritual-abuse survivors exhibited significantly higher levels of objective isolation and significantly greater levels of depression (Bader 1995b). These findings suggest that ritual-abuse survivors may be initially drawn from "favored segments" of the population, but the experience of recovering memories of Satanic abuse increasingly distances the survivors from that background.

What cannot be determined from these data are whether increasing isolation and dysfunction are endemic to the ritual-abuse survivor experience, or the result of belonging to a support group. This survey could capture only those survivors that were actively involved with a therapist and/or support group. Thus, it is possible that the more functional survivors have never attended or have stopped attending support groups.

Further Characteristics of UFO Abductees and Ritual-Abuse Survivors

Several items were asked of UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors to gather specific details regarding their experiences. Although not the focus of this article, a brief summary of some of the characteristics of each type of encounter is warranted in order to facilitate understanding about the claimed experiences of UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors.

Betty and Barney Hill, whose story provided the prototype for modern UFO abduction stories, claimed only one abduction experience (Fuller 1966). With some exceptions, other early abductees, such as Travis Walton, also reported single experiences (Barry 1978). Thus UFO abductions were akin to being "in the wrong place at the wrong time." Modern UFO abductees, however, report multiple abduction experiences leading to a belief amongst abductees that the extraterrestrials target and continue to follow certain people throughout their lifetimes. Respondents to the UFO abduction survey indicated that they had been abducted on an average of 10 occasions. Since the UFO literature suggests a split in the abduction subculture between those who view the experience as akin to kidnapping/rape and those who see the aliens in a positive light, the survey asked respondents to indicate their feelings about the experiences. The findings suggest that the subculture may be moving toward a more positive model of UFO abductions—the majority of the respondents (88.2 percent) find at least some positive aspects to the experience (indicating that they feel entirely positive, mostly positive, or a mixture of positive and negative about the abductions).

As discussed above, there has been significant overlap between the increasing popularity of multiple personality disorder (now referred to as dissociative identity disorder) as a diagnosis and claims of ritual abuse (see, e.g., Brown 1986; Fraser 1990; Friesen 1991; Hector 1991; Ryder 1992). The survey of ritual-abuse survivors indicates that MPD is a part of the survivor experience. Eighty-six percent of survivors reported that they have multiple personalities and the mean number of personalities reported was *100* (median = 50). Consistent with earlier surveys of ritual-abuse survivors, most (87.5 percent) were not aware of the ritual abuse, or of their numerous personalities, until they began therapy. Survivors reported many different reasons for entering therapy in the first place, such as bulimia and other eating disorders, marital problems, depression, and nightmares. Ritual-abuse therapy also appears to be a very intensive endeavor, as survivors report attending sessions more than once a week (mean = 7 times a month), the majority of which is not covered by insurance (57.4 percent of ritual-abuse survivors reported that their sessions are not covered). The findings also suggest that vast conspiracy theories are common in the movement. A little more than 53 percent (53.2 percent) of ritual-abuse survivors believe that the group that abused them is national or international in scope.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to add to the minimal research available on the membership in new age/novel religious movements in general, and the UFO abduction and ritual-abuse survivor movements in particular. Of course, groups such as UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors present the researcher with difficulties when attempting a survey of membership. As noted above, these groups are particularly leery of outsiders, resulting in barriers to entry. Also problematic is the fact that their memberships are diffuse—spread out over different support groups and centered around a variety of therapists. This is a problem that researchers experience in general when trying to study new age movements for with such groups/movements there are no clearly defined boundaries or specific denominations from which to draw a sample (Lewis 1992).

The lack of a central organization from which to draw samples raises the issue of whether the demographic data presented in this article are indeed representative of UFO abductees and ritual-abuse survivors. Although it provides some of the first data on either movement, the survey findings are hardly surprising to anyone with a detailed knowledge of either movement's literature. The author had a strong impression from reading the personal stories of abductees and ritual-abuse survivors, viewing their documentaries, and attending their meetings, that their ranks were primarily composed of highly educated, white females. The survey findings merely confirm that impression. Although a detailed content analysis of the UFO abductee and ritual-abuse literature is beyond the scope of this article, such an analysis would confirm these findings.

Furthermore, the findings are in line with what researchers know about who is attracted to novel religious movements and with the limited previous research on the membership of the UFO and ritual-abuse subcultures. UFO abductees fit the profile of people who will be attracted to NRMs. Their ranks appear to be composed of mainly middle to upper-middle class, highly educated, white females. The ritual-abuse movement also appears to be composed of those who would be attracted to other novel movements, consisting entirely of white females, most of whom have higher levels of education than the general public. As noted above, there is evidence to suggest, however, that ritual-abuse therapy may lead to marital and employment problems. With their fears about victimization and prevalent uses of conspiracy theories, both movements are difficult to survey. It is hoped that this data will spur further research on the membership of novel religious movements and the recent resurgence in movements that mix the therapeutic and the spiritual.

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