Discoveries of Barbara Anderson

*Written by **Barbara Anderson** - Updated Thursday, 15 January 2009 13:32*



Barbara Anderson was a member of Jehovah's Witnesses from 1954 to 1997. She worked at Watchtower's headquarters in Brooklyn, NY, from 1982 to 1992 where during her last three years there, she researched the movement's official history (published in 1993) and did research as well as wrote a number of articles for their Awake! magazine. She has done extensive research on issues related to child sexual abuse in the religion leading to interviews on major TV and radio programs as an outspoken critic of Jehovah's Witnesses sexual abuse policies.

A Former Jehovah's Witness Insider Who Was an Eyewitness to Deceit

Life Altering Choice

I was born in Long Island, New York in 1940 to Polish Catholic parents. When I was an inexperienced, discontented fourteen-year old, I made a choice that for the next forty-four years of my life would narrow my opportunities to make choices—I joined one of the most aggressive, controversial religious groups, Jehovah's Witnesses, which became the center of my life. I put aside my heart's desire, the study of archeology, because of the religion's ban on higher education for their members. Hence, evangelistic activities took priority over education. I heeded their rules as to choice of friends, only Jehovah's Witnesses, and choice of a marriage mate, only one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Why would a youngster agree to allow her life to be so controlled? Not only was I idealistic at that young age, but bored. I was too young to make any valuable contributions to cure the world's problems, but desperately wanted to, an attitude which left me wide open for accepting a Bible Study offered by Jehovah's Witnesses. After all, Witnesses said they could explain good and evil and life's other mysteries. Very soon, I zealously embraced the Witness faith. Young, naïve and gullible, how was I to know my mind was being manipulated—through methods of indoctrination skillfully crafted and honed over decades—which made everything taught to me sound very convincing? Just the feeling of being wanted by people who spoke persuasively about things no one else seemed to know anything about kept me dependent and fascinated. And an empowering sense of belonging gave me the strength to stand up to critical Catholic relatives and friends. After three months of Bible Study, I was happy to go out in the Witness door-to-door preaching activity, and, in nine months, to be baptized along with my mother as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

After two years, my zeal convinced at least five adults to convert to my faith. In 1956, when I was 16, a Witness missionary, who was temporarily living in Long Island while waiting for entry papers to India, asked me to spend two summer months accompanying her in the "pioneer," or full-time missionary, work near Athens, Ohio. It was in an area that, during World War II, some fifteen years earlier, patriotic people tarred and feathered Witnesses because they refused to salute the flag and support the war effort. It was a bit unnerving when one angry man told us to get off his property or he would get his gun and run us out of the county like he did Witnesses years before. Never ones to be intimidated, we kept right on in our ministry.

Returning to school in the fall was stressful because I wanted to be in the preaching work, not wasting my days learning about a world which was going to end at any moment. It was a difficult time for me, but within a few months my family moved to South Florida where we made contact with the Witnesses and once again I had a whole new set of friends.

My Marriage

In 1957, at age seventeen, I teamed up with two other Florida girls and we accepted a Witness preaching assignment in Columbus, Mississippi. Not able to find part-time work in Columbus, a college town where students filled all the jobs, we left broke and discouraged after three months. Rather than return to Florida, we decided to go to New York where we knew volunteers were needed at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York. There the staff was preparing for the huge 1958 International Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses to be held at New York's Yankee Stadium and the Polo Grounds. We stayed with Witness friends in Long Island until we found an apartment and part-time jobs; then, a few days each week, we traveled thirty miles to do office work at the Brooklyn headquarters.

I met Joe Anderson a few months before the New York convention. His mother, Virginia, and I attended the same congregation in Hempstead, Long Island, and she introduced us. Joe's grandmother had been a Witness, although her commitment was rather minimal; consequently, her children were, for the most part, Jehovah's Witnesses "bystanders." Joe's parents moved to Dallas, Texas, from Tampa, Florida, when he was sixteen where his mother began to attend Witness meetings at a local Kingdom Hall. His father, an intimidating alcoholic, was totally disinterested in the Witnesses. The zealous religious camaraderie appealed to Joe, and, although his two sisters soon left the group, he teamed up with other Witnesses to engage in the pioneer work for three years in the Dallas area. (At that time, pioneers agreed to spend 100 hours each month discussing the Bible with non-Witnesses; now it's 70 hours. Pioneers usually have part-time jobs to support themselves financially.)

In 1956, Joe volunteered to work and live at the Brooklyn Heights complex known to Witnesses as "Bethel." This is the home of the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses, operating under the name, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Inc., of New York ["Watchtower Society"], where he operated one of their printing presses from 1956-59. And this is what Joe was doing when I met him in 1958. After we married in November 1959, we pioneered in West Palm Beach, Florida, until I became pregnant with our son, Lance, born, September 14, 1961.

Unquestioning Devotion

My husband served as Presiding Overseer (chairman of the body of elders) in congregations we attended and set an example for the flock to follow, not just by talking the talk, but by walking the walk as he spent a total of twenty-five years in the pioneer ministry work. As a couple we were such zealous believers that over the years we converted over eighty people to our faith. In 1974 our family moved to Tennessee where we, along with a few dozen other Witnesses from South Florida, established a new congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

From the very beginning, I put faith in the Watchtower Society's theology and influence because they appeared to have Biblical answers to age-old questions about life, death, war and peace during a time of intense instability and insecurity in the 1950s "bomb shelter and cold war" years. As the years rolled by I was convinced I made the right choice when there continued to be an escalation of distressing conditions throughout the earth, which the Witnesses proclaimed was a sure sign the end of the world was imminent.

During the mid 1960s there was talk originating from the leaders of our organization saying 1975 would see the end of the present system of things. Worried that maybe we weren't doing enough for God, in 1968, Joe quit his job with Florida Power and Light Company to be replaced by part-time jobs for both of us as we once again went back into the pioneer work. Joe pioneered for three years and I pioneered for one, although I continued to pioneer on and off on a monthly basis when I could. Although the 1975 date set by Jehovah's Witnesses for the coming Apocalypse came and went, we were not deterred for we had too much invested in the religion to throw in the towel.

Exciting Invitation to do Volunteer Work

In 1982, the Watchtower Society invited Joe and me to become volunteer staff members at Bethel in Brooklyn where we were provided room and board with a small allowance in exchange for our labor. The year before, when he was nineteen, our son, Lance, volunteered to work at Bethel and was accepted. He was assigned to work in one of the Watchtower Society's numerous Brooklyn factories, tending one of their many high-speed printing presses which, along with the other presses, turned out literally hundreds of millions of pieces of Watchtower religious literature annually.

My husband was the reason we were invited to Brooklyn Bethel. When visiting our son in March 1982, Joe greeted Richard Wheelock, a high-ranking Watchtower Society printing press supervisor, whom he had worked for in the 1950s. When Richard found out Joe was a plumber, he started the ball rolling to have us invited to come to live and work at headquarters.

Incidentally, eight years later, on July 25, 1990, at 75 years old, Richard Wheelock committed suicide by stepping out of a third floor window in the building we lived in. He suffered from severe depression after his wife died five years previously.

Within a few months after relocating, we found out why Richard was so interested in Joe's trade. Unknown to the local Brooklyn community, including most of the Watchtower staff, negotiations were underway to purchase an old Brooklyn factory located right next to the East River on Furman Street. This neglected building was huge—over a million square feet of space— where armored tanks were built during WWII. Elevators were so large they could easily carry a large truck up and down the 13-stories. Within a short time after the purchase, our son was reassigned from the Adams Street printing facility to the Furman Street building to learn how to build and repair elevators. (Incidentally, after many years of renovation by volunteer workers, the building was sold in April 2004, making the Watchtower Society an enormous profit.)

In addition, the rundown 12-story Bossert Hotel, which opened in 1909 on Montague Street in downtown Brooklyn Heights, a local historic district, was secretly under consideration for purchase by Cohi Towers Associates, an organization formed by a number of wealthy Jehovah's Witnesses to purchase buildings for the Watchtower's use. Using Cohi Towers Associates to purchase buildings hid Watchtower's involvement and kept local opposition groups from knowing that another building in the neighborhood would be removed off the tax rolls. To reduce some of Cohi's property tax for the Bossert, I was assigned to provide the necessary information required to have the hotel listed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, after a few months my work ended because, I was told, the Cohi organization signed over the building to the Watchtower. To date, the Watchtower Society owns nearly twenty residential buildings in Brooklyn Heights, although in 2005 a few buildings were put up for sale as the organization down-sized to make its operations more cost-effective in New York.

When we visited Bethel that Saturday morning in March 1982, volunteer workers were hard at work renovating some old buildings and were ready to start work on the historic 12-story Standish Hotel (opened in 1903) which Watchtower had acquired a few years before. With all these purchases and the need for experienced plumbers in mind, that's why Richard arranged interviews with other Watchtower officials, and by the end of the morning we were invited to become members of the, then over 2,000 member, Watchtower staff in Brooklyn. Incidentally, by the time we returned to Tennessee nearly eleven years later, the Brooklyn Bethel staff numbered over 3,300 because of the prodigious growth of the Witness organization during the 1980s and early 90s.

Eagerly anticipating our new adventure, we returned home, put our affairs in order, and returned to New York in June 1982. Joe was assigned to the Construction Plumbing Department, which was renovating the plumbing at the old Squibb buildings, and I went to work in the Tape Duplicating Department. After a few

weeks, I developed a severe respiratory allergy to some work-related chemicals and was transferred to the Shipping Department where I did data entry work.

Worldwide Expansion

Approximately one year later, I became part of the Construction Engineering Department's staff as part of the secretarial pool. The department consisted of over one hundred people - draftsmen, engineers, architects, secretaries and other office workers - all somehow involved in the engineering, design and construction of new or renovated buildings used by Jehovah's Witnesses around the world at a time when the Witnesses were considered one of the fastest growing religions.

Early on while I was with the department, a huge parcel of land at Patterson, New York, came into the Watchtower Society's possession. Unsure in the beginning what to use the property for, in time it was decided to develop it for use as an educational center. The original amount of money set aside for development, I was told, was fifty million dollars. When I left Construction Engineering in 1989, over one hundred million dollars had been spent, and the complex has continued to expand as the Brooklyn operation grows smaller. Although the official offices of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses are still located in Brooklyn, the Patterson location is becoming the hub from where officials direct their worldwide organization.

Construction of a 30-Story Building on the Waterfront

Later, I was assigned as secretary to one of the architects, a former missionary, who was designing a 30-story staff residence building for Brooklyn. In the middle of an afternoon when I was standing alone waiting for an elevator in the Watchtower office building where I worked, John ("Jack") Barr, one of the Governing Body members, approached. Jack asked about my work as we waited for the elevator. I told him how our engineering group was rushing to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The information in the huge EIS document was required and used by the City of New York to consider our request to have a zoning change at a location where the Watchtower organization wanted to build the 30-story residence building. There was significant community opposition to such a huge building located on the Brooklyn side of the waterfront overlooking the East River and the lower Manhattan Wall Street area since it would block that famous view.

I'll never forget Jack saying to me that day, "We have set aside fifty million dollars for this project, and it's amazing to see how the amount of money we have in the bank never decreases." Then he added, "Jehovah always provides!" all the while gesturing with his right hand drawing an imaginary horizontal line from left to right indicating the money stays constant. However, Jehovah did not provide approval for the zoning change. The residence building eventually was built a few blocks inland, next to the Watchtower Society's factories, far from what was considered as an ideal location.

Research Opportunities

Since the Brooklyn Heights district of Brooklyn where the Watchtower buildings are located is deemed an historic area, all new or renovated buildings must meet certain architectural criteria set by the local Landmarks Association. In time, an important part of my work assignment included researching local historical and architectural questions so we could meet those requirements. The restoration rules were so strict that in one instance we were obligated to duplicate the style of the original address numbers once located on the building by the front door of the Bossert Hotel. It seemed doubtful to many people this information could be found, but after considerable time spent researching at the Long Island Historical Society, I located an early picture of the front of the hotel in an old magazine advertisement. There the numbers could be seen clearly enough to be duplicated. After this discovery, recognition of my researching ability was never in question.

In 1989 I was transferred to the Writing Department to be research assistant to senior staff writer, Karl Adams. He was writing the history of our religion which eventually became a 750-page chronicle titled, *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, published in 1993.

Another senior writer, David Iannelli, was assigned to work with Karl on the book. During my first day in the Writing Department, David saw me standing alone in the Writing Department Library and came over to talk. I clearly remember him telling me how thrilled I should be to have been transferred to Writing. He said Bethelites would "kill" to get my job. I thought I knew what he meant and smiled.

Everybody who came to live at Bethel was picked to become part of the staff because of their excellent "spiritual" qualifications shown through participation in the evangelizing work. Rather than working at secular-type support jobs at Bethel, I knew, if given a choice, most Bethelites would have chosen to spend their work-day totally immersed in "spiritual" matters. The Writing Department was the hub which all Bethel revolved around because it was Watchtower literature that was the backbone of the religion; hence, I knew the Writing Department was the most coveted place to work.

David noted my grin and then repeated his words, this time more forcefully. He said, "I mean it, Bethelites would kill for the job you have been given and don't forget it!" Sobered and a bit confused by those words, I offered some small talk and walked away as I began to try to find my way around the library looking at the first question on my "to do" assignment sheet from Karl.

I would remember David's words later when there were times I wondered what I did wrong that God was punishing me for by having me transferred to this department. Yes, I worked with some extraordinarily good people, people I used to call my friends. But behind the scenes there were some who wished me ill and tried to sabotage my work because they wanted my job; or wanted me out of the way because I discovered they were dishonest. Being naïve, I made excuses for people who were outwardly friendly and helpful, yet a few times their help led me to take steps which caused Karl to scold me. As an example, almost two years in Writing, after a particularly difficult situation that led to the removal of a young woman from the department, Karl told me she was not the friend I supposed she had been, but had resented me because I got the job she coveted. Yes, David was right, some people would have "killed" to get my job!

Despite any negatives, day-to-day work in the Writing Department was exciting; my job was filled with interesting and challenging things to do. Each week, Karl would give me a list of questions he wanted answered, mostly regarding the early history of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, the origins of which go back to 1879. In this way, I learned a great deal about my religion. Often, while I was hunting for something specific, I would discover other important archival material long ago placed in old cabinets in many different locations and then forgotten.

Surprising Finds

One extraordinary discovery was that William H. Conley, an Allegheny, Pennsylvania banker – not Charles Taze Russell – was the first president of the Watch Tower Association formed in 1881. This was a thrilling find for no one at headquarters knew Conley was the first president, or that Russell's father, Joseph, was vice president and Charles Taze was secretary-treasurer. The appointment was based on shares purchased for $10.00 each. Because I handed over the source document almost immediately, I'm not certain of the exact number of shares Conley purchased, but I think it was 350 for $3,500. However, I do remember that Joseph Lytel Russell purchased 100 shares for $1,000.00, and Charles Taze purchased 50 shares for $500.00. When I looked at page 576 of the new Witness history book where the Conley information was noted, it is curious why Karl Adams did not include the fact about Joseph Russell's vice-presidency. Also omitted was the number of shares purchased by each man.

These important facts were noted on the first page of a small, red, cardboard-covered accounting-style notebook where I also found the original hand-written organizational charter. The paper was folded over twice, with one side pasted to the inside cover. Through handwriting comparisons, there is no doubt in my mind that Charles Taze Russell's wife, Maria, penned this first charter. I found the little notebook in an old paper file folder inside a file cabinet in a walk-in concrete vault located in the middle of the Watchtower's Treasury Department at 25 Columbia Heights.

During one of my frequent forays into old records at Watchtower headquarters, I found at the bottom of an old file cabinet in the Executive Department's Branch File Room, an aged-looking brown paper grocery sack with twine around it. The bag contained a transcript of record of the famous 1913 Canadian libel lawsuit filed by Pastor Russell against Rev. J. J. Ross. When the case came before the Grand Jury on April 4, 1913, that body returned with a finding of "no bill," that is, there was insufficient evidence to stand up in court, and the case was dropped (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 8, 1916, page 12).

Recently I was told that many years ago the Writing Department archives contained a copy of this transcript on record, but it disappeared. I know now that my discovery assured that Watchtower archives had a copy for use by Karl to answer an important question many researchers have been curious about—How did Pastor Russell answer when asked by a Canadian court whether or not he could read Greek? I gave the sack with its important contents to Karl without reading any of the material. It is certainly curious that Karl did not comment then, nor later in the Witness history book about this noteworthy libel lawsuit which dominated the front page of prominent Canadian newspapers of the time.

In the same cabinet in another old, very brittle brown paper bag, there were a few hundred yellowed-with-age letters in all shapes and sizes which, to my knowledge, no one knew about. The letters were written apparently in response to Rutherford's request for Bible Students (as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known) to relate their experiences of persecution during World War I. In the letters, the Bible Students told how their refusal to salute the flag or to support war efforts resulted in severe beatings, tar and feathering, and jail without charge or trial. (Rutherford reproduced many of these letters in the Watch Tower Society's *The Golden Age* magazine, later renamed *Consolation* and today called *Awake!*, as of September 29, 1920.) And also within the sack, I came upon important letters, forgotten documents and interesting newspaper clippings, all relevant to the events of those difficult years.

In four old desk drawers in the same area, I found heaps of miscellaneous pictures and postcards. The piles included old convention pictures; professional and personal pictures of the third Watchtower president, Nathan H. Knorr; picture post cards addressed to Knorr including one from his wife, Audrey, before they were married, and never before reproduced, pristine studio portrait photographs of Charles Taze Russell. One especially important find was the best set of sixteen photos ever seen at headquarters of the inside and outside of the early Russell Bible House, and many of the photos included Pastor Russell sitting at his desk or in his library.

In one of these drawers, finding personal photographs of the second president of the Watchtower Society, Joseph F. Rutherford, was, for me, one of the most disagreeable and revolting discoveries. Rutherford was clad in a dark-colored, one-piece, skin-tight, sleeveless swimsuit which covered him down to his thighs, a garment popular in the late 1920s and 30s. He had a huge belly, and appeared to be having fun romping on a large patio which overlooked the ocean. I seem to remember there were other people in a few photos lying on chaise lounges. The photo I'll never forget was a close-up of Rutherford's face; he was about a foot from the camera with his tongue stuck out as far as it could possibly go. He looked to me to be inebriated.

And there was the time when I was going through a large file cabinet in the office of the fourth president of the Watchtower Society, Fred Franz, when he was frail and blind and no longer using his office, I found letters from President Rutherford addressed to Franz dated in the 1930s. One letter contained a question which Rutherford asked Franz to answer for a forthcoming issue of the *Watchtower* magazine. In every

Watchtower, there was a column containing Rutherford's answer to a specific Bible question. The letter confirmed to me that Franz, who, in 1926, joined the editorial staff as a Bible researcher and writer for the Society's publications, wrote the answers to those questions, but Rutherford took the credit. The letter was specific. It did not ask Franz to research the question, but to answer it for a particular Watchtower column. This led me to wonder just how many of the twenty-three books and sixty-eight booklets Rutherford claimed to have written were in actuality authored by Franz?

The Olin Moyle Lawsuit

In the Legal Department's library, I found two volumes containing the transcript of record of a libel lawsuit filed in October of 1940 by Olin R. Moyle against twelve Watchtower executives and Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Inc. of Pennsylvania and Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Inc., of New York. As I perused the books, I saw that Moyle won his lawsuit with the court awarding him $30,000 in damages. Not familiar with the lawsuit, I brought the volumes to Karl Adams who expressed surprise at what I handed him. He said he also had no knowledge of the Moyle lawsuit which went to trial in 1943. I still find it difficult to believe Karl knew nothing about the case because Karl was fourteen when the trial took place and he joined the Watch Tower staff just a few years later when the Moyle verdict was still a well-known sore subject among the Witnesses.

As important as the Olin Moyle trial was in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses, and why it was not included in the Witnesses' history book, I can't answer. After I left Bethel, I was asked this same question by two prominent Witness elders and their wives in 1994 when I was visiting Burbank, California. It was my work as the major researcher for the history book which fascinated them, and the reason they accepted a dinner invitation from my hosts.

George Kelly, one long-time Witness whom I met that evening, had been the personal secretary in Bethel to well-known Witness attorney, Hayden C. Covington. (In 138 of the cases presented to the U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of Jehovah's Witnesses, Covington had served as attorney for 111 of them.) Olin Moyle was the Watchtower Society's attorney from 1935 until Rutherford ousted him in 1939. His replacement was Covington who took over as attorney, representing the Society in the 1940 compulsory flag saluting in public schools lawsuit, Minersville School District v. Gobitis.

The other man accompanying Kelly to the prominent Burbank, California, elder's home where I was staying was Lyle Reusch, a long-time special representative of the Watchtower Society in the United States who began his full-time ministry in June 1935 when he entered Bethel. Both men declared their astonishment and displeasure that the Moyle trial was not mentioned in the 1993 history book. Before and during the time of the Moyle trial, Kelly and Reusch were closely associated with the Watchtower Society. They told me they had been curious to see how the author of the history book would present this most egregious episode where Watchtower leaders, specifically Rutherford, libeled their own in-house Witness attorney in the Watchtower magazine.

According to the trial transcript, Moyle's problems began after he wrote a personal letter to Rutherford in which he expressed his aversion to Rutherford's excessive drinking and extremely abusive behavior to others, behavior which he personally observed and heard complaints about. Arthur Worsley, a long-time Bethel staff member well-known to Kelly and Reusch, was one of the people who complained to Moyle about the indignities heaped upon him by Rutherford. Rutherford was so incensed by Moyle's criticisms he dismissed Moyle and his wife from Bethel and placed their personal effects out on the sidewalk. Moyle was shocked by the treatment but the facts show he did not retaliate in any way. Not content with throwing Moyle out of Bethel, Rutherford and his associates viciously maligned the man's character in the *Watchtower* magazine, leading Moyle to file a libel complaint against all parties responsible.

I brought up the name of Arthur Worsley to Kelly and Reusch. We discussed Arthur's part in the Moyle trial and both men agreed Arthur testified falsely during direct examination. I told them, after reading the Moyle transcript, I spoke with Arthur, a good friend, about his testimony for the Watchtower defense. Olin Moyle alleged that one morning in the Bethel dining room Arthur had been unjustifiably publicly denounced without cause by Rutherford. Arthur complained to Moyle how humiliating the incident had been. However, in court Arthur said he thought Rutherford was *justified* in denouncing him for his actions. He said the scolding wasn't out of order and, much to Moyle's amazement, Arthur said he did not complain to anybody.

Yet, Arthur told us about the dining room incident and condemned Rutherford for humiliating him. We also discussed why he testified under oath that he never heard any filthy language at the Bethel table, or why he denied that liquor was glorified at the table, when, in fact, he told us the opposite. Clearly upset, Arthur sadly replied that Rutherford would have dismissed him from Bethel if his testimony had substantiated Moyle's allegations. And because he had nowhere else to go, he lied to the court.

No matter, after listening to extensive testimony, the court decided Rutherford and other Watchtower officials were guilty of libel. Arthur told us that Watchtower officials were so angry with Moyle they paid him the $30,000 damages he was awarded in *silver coins*, thereby labeling him a "Judas."

By ignoring the Moyle story, Watchtower omitted a particularly offensive and unpleasant episode which could not be whitewashed, one that would soil the rather unsullied image of the organization which the history book was endeavoring to project. In no uncertain terms, these Witnesses that evening made clear their displeasure with the Moyle lawsuit omission, and, also, with the obvious historical revisionism by Watchtower leaders to present, for the most part, an untarnished, fault-free history and not, as its foreword suggests, one that was truthfully "objective and … candid."

Searching for Answers

At one point in my work, Karl gave me part of the Russell divorce transcript of record, particularly that of Charles Taze Russell's cross-examination. He did not make available the transcript of Maria Russell's cross-examination, and I did not question why then, but years later, out of curiosity, I read it. Then it became obvious why Karl did not want me to read Maria Russell's side of the story—he knew I would be stunned when I read that Mrs. Russell was awarded the divorce because the court believed Pastor Russell was guilty of the many indignities she claimed he heaped upon her. She proved she was not guilty of the malicious rumors her husband spread: that she was a supporter of women's rights (dirty words in those days); that her object was to obtain control of the *Watch Tower* magazine, and that she parted from him because of her desire for personal prominence. Yet, down to this day, Watchtower revisionists continue to repeat these falsehoods.

Further, while reading the account of the death of Charles Taze Russell in the December 1, 1916 *Watch Tower*, I discovered Charles Taze Russell and his wife had a celibate marriage. This really took me by surprise. When I inquired whether this obscure fact was going to be published in the new history book, the answer was, "No, the Governing Body decided the information might cause many of the flock to stumble."

An important teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses is that, after the apostles died around the end of the first century after Christ, a great apostasy developed producing imitation Christians from whom the Roman Catholic Church was eventually established. Nonetheless, the Witnesses say, there were always "true" Christians on earth from the death of the last Christian apostle up until the days of Charles Taze Russell and his associates all of whom adhered closely to the original teachings of Jesus and his apostles. One memorable and lengthy assignment from Karl was to identify these true Christians.

My examination was based upon four points or standards which the "sons of the kingdom" needed to have in common to link up with each other; three of those standards were rejection of the Trinity, hellfire, and immortality of the human soul. However, the fourth standard was the most difficult—there had to be acceptance of the ransom sacrifice of Christ, that is, as defined by Jehovah's Witnesses. For months the Writing Department brought in relevant library books from Europe and the United Kingdom, as well as the United States. I read English translations of important foreign-language books discussing break-a-way nonconformist religious groups before and after the Orthodox Reformation, including groups during what is commonly called the Radical Reformation period. To say the least, it was extremely fascinating to study early Arian movements, along with the Lollards, Waldenses, Socinians, and Anabaptists with a critical eye.

Subsequently, my careful analysis of the facts convinced Karl there was not one generation of true Christians linking to a succeeding generation based on the four points as outlined above. Karl closed this research project by promising this assertion would never again be made, although, to this day, the teaching has not been abandoned. On page 44 of the book, *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, the best Karl could say in answer to the question, "What happened to true Christianity after the first century?" was, "True Christianity, then, was never completely stamped out." Then he said, "Throughout the centuries there have always been truth lovers" and proceeded to list a few outstanding Bible loyalists.

During another assignment Karl gave me, I examined the entire 1917-18 period to see what led up to the federal indictments of President Rutherford and his associates by the government of the United States for, among other things, conspiring to violate the Espionage Act of June 15, 1917 and attempting to actually do so; also, obstructing the recruiting and enlistment service of the United States during World War I. When Rutherford learned the government objected to pages 247-53 in *The Finished Mystery*, the seventh volume of the series *Studies in the Scriptures,* Rutherford directed those pages be cut out of all copies. Later, when it was learned distribution of the book would be in violation of the Espionage Act, Rutherford directed that distribution be suspended. Despite all such efforts, Rutherford and seven of his closest associates were sentenced to long terms in a federal penitentiary, but were later released after the close of the war.

When Karl and I read Rutherford's words in the transcript of record, Rutherford et al.v. United States, we were quite flabbergasted at the fawning, conciliatory statements he made as he attempted to appease the court and the government, a government which Rutherford frequently labeled as "Satanic." There is no doubt that Rutherford endeavored to mollify the authorities in every possible way. As Karl put it, it was clear the second president of the Watchtower Society compromised his integrity. We concluded that Rutherford's guilt must have been the reason why, when he came out of prison, he vowed to go *full speed ahead* to announce the Kingdom message, no matter how severe the persecution. One thing was plain from my research of the Rutherford years — Rutherford deliberately stirred up trouble by attacking religions and governments and baiting the clergy, thereby inciting acts of retribution against individual Bible Students. This frequently resulted in Rutherford howling, "Persecution!"

During the two years I assisted Karl Adams my research work revealed surprises, good and bad, about the organization, although even the negative discoveries did not influence me to doubt my beliefs. Of course, I was disappointed in behavior that brought reproach on the organization. However, it was not my nature to admit to any nagging suspicions I might have had about whether the things I had been taught were true. As a committed believer, it was easier to believe objectionable behavior by the leaders of the Watchtower Society was just "people junk," and not in any way a reflection upon the truthfulness of the religion as a whole.

Unforgettable People

When I learned I would become part of the Writing Department's staff, I believed it would be a privilege to associate daily with the most spiritual men in Bethel, the men who were providing the flock with up-to-

date spiritual insight into the scriptures. The directors of Writing were three Governing Body members, Lloyd Barry, Jack Barr, and Karl Klein. College graduate Lloyd Barry was the brains behind the operation of the department. (Starting in 1992, it was Barry who was responsible for the Society's more compliant attitude toward young Witnesses pursuing higher education, which stance changed in November 2005.) I liked Lloyd very much. One day I told him how much I enjoyed reading the Society's old New Zealand Branch correspondence. He immediately wanted to know how it was that I was privy to reading confidential data. For a moment he forgot that as Karl Adam's researcher for the new history book, I was assigned to read such material. When I reminded him of the fact, he laughed.

Lloyd was from New Zealand and I had been reading about Watchtower missionary Frank Dewar, a New Zealander, and how his evangelistic adventures in Indonesia in the 1930s had reminded me of the movie character, Crocodile Dundee. There wasn't a mountain high enough or river deep enough to keep Frank from reaching remote peoples with the Witness message. Lloyd told me Dewar was his favorite missionary and Crocodile Dundee's movies were his favorite movies, that is until the actor who played Dundee left his wife and married his co-star.

In the new history book, on page 446, Karl Adams revealed that when Frank Dewar was going to Siam, "[H]e made a stopover in Kuala Lumpur until he could get together enough money for the rest of the trip, but, while there, he was in a traffic accident — a truck knocked him off his bicycle. After recuperating," Karl wrote, "with just five dollars in his pocket, he boarded the train bound from Singapore to Bangkok. But with faith in Jehovah's ability to provide [italics mine], he got on with the work."

What was omitted from the account in the history book was a very human ingredient — In the accident, Frank was knocked unconscious and woke up later in bed in what appeared to be a rundown hotel, but in reality was, as Frank told it, a house of ill-repute where he was nursed back to health by kindly prostitutes. If the author had included this part of Frank's experience, the story would have truly been "candid history" which the publishers had promised to tell. However, since the incident did not fit in with the way the author slanted the Witnesses' historical record, it was omitted.

It was obvious to me in 1989 that Karl Klein's best years were behind him. He was decrepit, cranky and quite child-like, a man who people avoided because of his peculiar way of speaking and obvious eccentricity due to age. Frequently, I saw Karl idle when he finished reading the final draft of Watchtower books or magazines sent to him for his approval.

Starved for attention, one day in 1992, Karl Klein excitedly told me and other Writing staff about the suggestion he made to the rest of the Governing Body which became "new light" that morning even though he knew Bethel procedure forbid such a disclosure. At breakfast, 6,000 Bethel staff members in communal dining rooms located in three New York towns heard announced during a discussion that Jehovah did not need to vindicate his name, but his chief purpose is the vindication of his sovereignty. The Witnesses previously taught since 1935 that Jehovah's main purpose was not the salvation of men but the vindication of his own name. And Karl Klein made sure, fifty-seven years later, we knew he was God's visionary in this matter as he excitedly told anyone who would listen that this change was due to him.

And Jack Barr, whom we considered a personal friend, was a kindly man but walked in Barry's shadow and did his bidding. Unfortunately, he was weak—not the proverbial "iron fist in a velvet glove," but a "limp fist ...". Barr's dispositional weakness became evident during a time when Lloyd Barry was out of town and it took three senior writers to put enough pressure on Barr, as next in command, to keep the factory press room from capitulating to Ted Jaracz's orders not to print the April 8, 1992 *Awake!*, which contained material Jaracz did not support, although he was out of line by making such a demand. The job assignment of each Governing Body member was clearly delineated and Writing Department editorial decisions were not Jaracz's business, just like decisions of the Service Department, under Jaracz's command, were not the affair of Barry, Barr or Klein.

Then there was the time I complained to Jack about one notoriously insufferable senior Writing Department staff member who had just been appointed as an Assistant to the Governing Body. The man had threatened me because he thought I was prying into his involvement with the disappearance of a very valuable archival item on loan to the Society. I thought the situation merited an investigation as to whether this unethical behavior should cause the man to be removed from his position. After Jack heard me out, he informed me that the man's appointment was irrevocable because "He was appointed by Holy Spirit," which was the way Jack evaded doing the right thing in this matter.

One of my most memorable friendships in Writing was with Harry Peloyan, a senior staff writer and coordinator (editor) of the *Awake!* magazine. Harry was a Harvard graduate and had been part of the Bethel staff since 1957. There was a sharp mind under Harry's gray hair, and his intelligence didn't seem to diminish with age. This talented and charismatic person converted to the Witness religion when he was a young adult, although, he said, it cost him dearly because he gave up a well-paying career to come to Bethel, and his affluent father disinherited him when he wouldn't leave the Witness religion. Up until this day Harry is still firmly convinced only the Witnesses have the "truth." However, from our conversations I came to see that his opinions and beliefs weren't set in stone, for he was quick to opt for a change in viewpoint if he believed a theological teaching was not scriptural or an organizational rule was objectionable.

It was always a pleasure to converse with Harry on subjects we both were passionate about, whether religious or secular, although we didn't always agree but treated each other's opinions with respect. Frequently, his knuckles were purple when he clasped his hands tightly together on his desktop while he argued a point during a stimulating discussion. His anger at those who stood in the way of change to a more compassionate organization was always bubbling beneath his seemingly calm exterior and could quickly erupt when he was ticked off.

We talked about raising children with its inherent joys and aggravations, although Harry and his dear wife, Rose, who died in 2005, did not have any children. Back in the 1990s, part of the *Awake!* format was to feature articles which demonstrated how application of Biblical counsel made for better lives. Consequently, when our son wrote us a thoughtful and kind letter of appreciation for his wonderful Witness upbringing, Harry had it reproduced on the back page of the August 8, 1993 *Awake!* as an example of successful child rearing by parents who followed the Bible's advice.

There was always a need for fresh ideas to keep people interested in reading Watchtower literature. Therefore, I observed that Harry conversed with a wide circle of friends at headquarters as well as outsiders about current issues and topics of interest. He was one of many members of the Writing Department's staff to quietly lament that too many people who held the reins at Watchtower, including most of the Governing Body, were stuck in a 1950s frame of mind. It was my observation that the decades of sheltered existence in Bethel limited Watchtower leaders' familiarity with today's pressing and complicated societal problems which the flock experienced; yet, these same naive people believed illumination came only through them.

Incidentally, during the time I was providing answers to research questions for Karl Adams, Harry read some of my material and noticed I had a bit of a flair for writing. Under his and Colin Quackenbush's tutelage, I wrote part or all of seven articles for the *Awake!*. Most of these articles were researched and written after my work day was over. In time, I realized many *Awake!* articles were written by men and women outside of the Writing Department and edited by staff writers. Harry, whose desk always seemed to be clear of work, frequently used outside authors for articles assigned to him which he put through the system under his own name. I've wondered to this day if he authored any of the many books and brochures he told me he wrote. Even if Harry didn't write the material, did he ever check the quoted sources provided to see if they did indeed back up statements made? Or was Harry responsible for textual dishonesty through misrepresenting quotations?

Alan Feuerbacher, a Watchtower theological critic, documented many quotations taken out of context in publications Harry purportedly wrote. I would like to believe Harry was a responsible writer and was not aware of sources quoted out of context by those who submitted their articles to him.

Respect for Women

Harry was an advocate against the abusive domination and tyranny of women and children by rigid, domineering patriarchal men in the faith who used Bible teachings as a whip. Both of us were privy to information about too many unhappy Witness wives complaining of their husbands' misuse of their authority as head of the house.

I remember the time I was in Harry's office in January 1992 when I was telling him and another senior writer, Eric Beveridge, what I had heard from Witness women during my vacation. According to them, too many men in the organization treated women with disrespect and as inferiors. One angry woman told me about a Witness who claimed she was raped by a man, who also was a Witness, when she was cleaning the man's house. When questioned, the man admitted to the elders they had sex, but he said it was consensual and he expressed repentance. She denied it was consensual and said she was raped. She was disfellowshipped for lying; he was not disfellowshipped because he admitted and regretted his sin. Witness women who knew the accused were outraged because the man did not have a good reputation and they believed he was not trustworthy. (Incidentally, no one reported the rape to the authorities.)

Harry and Eric were not happy about my tales. The discussion led Harry to authorize Eric to write an *Awake!* series addressing the "women problem" and assigned me to do the research. The result was the July 8, 1992 *Awake!*, a 15-page series of articles, the cover title being, "Women Deserving of Respect." After this *Awake!* was published, many letters of appreciation from women were received. Most disconcerting to us was the fact that 75% of the letters were not signed because the women said they were afraid of retaliation at home and in the congregation if the Watchtower sent their letter to the body of elders in their hometown for follow-up.

***Awake!* Articles Discuss Molestation**

The organization has a confidentiality policy which requires Witnesses involved in any judicial case to only talk about it with the judicial committee, or otherwise remain silent. Consequently, the first time I heard about child sexual abuse within the organization was around 1984.

A young woman I worked with in the Construction Engineering Department excitedly told a group of us about a prominent elder in the congregation where she attended in upstate New York before she moved to Bethel, who was arrested for pedophilia. I found out later the molester had been convicted and sent to prison where he served three years. This popular and charismatic elder molested his daughter and many other young girls in his congregation for many years by frightening them into not talking, a feat easily accomplished on young children by an authority figure.

At the time I thought this behavior was an aberration, but later I found out just how wrong I was. The evidence that there were more than just the case related above where children of Jehovah's Witnesses were molested and kept silent about the abuse, was the authorizing of a series of articles in the January 22, 1985 *Awake!* the cover title being, "Child Molesting, Every Mother's Nightmare." From my past experience with the Writing Department I knew that it was doubtful that the Society would have had a cover series of articles dedicated to the problem unless the child sexual abuse revelations were on the increase within the Witness organization and Witness leaders knew parents needed instruction how to protect their children from being molested and how to recognize signs of molestation. Sadly, though, there was little information in the articles provided to help caregivers and victims deal with the impact of abuse; neither was there a

directive to immediately report abuse to the authorities. In fact, in the upstate New York case, it was school officials who notified the authorities about the sexual abuse of one of the children.

Shortly before I finished my work on the Witness history book, there appeared a series of articles in the October 8, 1991 *Awake!* again dealing with child molestation. The title on the cover was, "Healing the Wounds of Child Abuse." This *Awake!* contained information specifically written to help assist sexual abuse victims recover from the devastating aftereffects of abuse. Plus, information was provided to try to help families and friends understand why the behavior of many abuse victims was so destructive.

My reaction to the articles was probably like most Jehovah's Witnesses — I believed it to be information which would help mitigate the lasting effects of what we all thought was a heinous crime. Most of us assumed the reason behind these articles was the growing media coverage in the 1980s revealing the dirty little secrets about child sexual molestation in churches and other organizations. After all, the rationale went, many adults who converted to the Witness religion could have been sexually abused, and these were the folks who needed the helpful information found in the *Awake!.*

After this *Awake!* was published, headquarters received thousands of letters and phone calls expressing appreciation to the Governing Body for the helpful series of articles it contained. Interestingly, other than the emotionally charged July 8, 1990 *Awake!* titled, "Animal Research, Right or Wrong," Watchtower received more letters commenting on the October 8, 1991 *Awake!* than any other article in its history.

Watchtower's Child Sexual Abuse Problems

Around the end of 1991, Harry told me the details of what led up to this *Awake!* article being authorized and who wrote it. I learned it was Harry, with the endorsement of Lloyd Barry, who authorized staff writer, Lee Waters, Jr., to do the writing. Lee was known as a compassionate man especially sensitive to the needs and rights of minority groups. Harry said he and Lee read an essay titled, "MOVING FORWARD, Help for Witnesses Handling Issues of Abuse and Victimization in Their Lives," (http://www.silentlambs.org/education/movingforward.htm) which circulated among the Witnesses in the United States around 1989-90. I don't recall how this essay made its way to the Writing Department, but it caused a deep impression. It was written by a Witness, Mary Woodard, who discussed the effects of child sexual abuse upon herself and other Witness women. Mary was contacted through a Florida elder and invited to come to the Writing Department to discuss the subject with Harry and Lee, and her input was the basis for the October 8, 1991 *Awake!* abuse articles.

In 2003, I had a lengthy conversation with Mary, who Harry told me committed suicide back in 1992, about the invitation she accepted to come to the Writing Department. She also showed me private correspondence sent to her by Lee as he prepared the articles.

Not discussed in the *Awake!* article, but of major concern, were accusations of child sexual abuse committed by perpetrators who were Jehovah's Witnesses, reports too numerous to ignore. I learned later it was an exception to the rule for Jehovah's Witness members in our congregations to notify the authorities about molestation accusations. However, no one I knew in the Writing Department expressed dissatisfaction about not reporting abuse, including me, because we were of the mindset that "God's organization" had far better solutions to this problem than any governmental authority. Besides, we knew that going to the authorities to air our dirty laundry would blemish the reputation of Jehovah's Witnesses. In the main, such accusations were handled secretly by judicial committees within the congregation. (When congregation elders learn of an alleged wrongdoing by one of their members, they meet and appoint three or more of their number to form a judicial committee to handle the matter.)

However, if victims' accusations were doubted, and pedophiles were not disciplined, unhappy Witnesses were required to keep their opinions to themselves or else they would be disciplined. Consequently, some

became soured, but remained silent convinced their abuse was an unusual occurrence within the Watchtower organization. “Wait on Jehovah,” dissatisfied members were told, for He would wipe out all their tears in the future earthly paradise.

Inasmuch as I completed my work on the Watchtower’s history book near the end of 1991, I was reassigned to do research for the Art Department, but, within a few months, Jack Barr came to my office to inform me that Harry and other senior writers for *Awake!* had requested my help with research. As 1992 progressed, I continued to learn more from the Writing staff about the serious problems involving sexual molestation of children within the congregations of Jehovah’s Witnesses around the world.

Soon, Lloyd Barry authorized another article written on the subject to appear in the April 8, 1992 *Awake!* It was titled, “I Wept for Joy.” This article featured quotes from the letters the Society had received wherein victims and their friends and families expressed deep appreciation to the Governing Body for the October 8, 1991 *Awake!*

Many Witness readers thought the information in the October 8th *Awake*! was like a breath of fresh air blowing through the organization, although in reality it opened a Pandora’s Box when thousands of survivors of child sexual abuse began to seek the help of mental-health professionals and trusted Witness members and revealed who in the organization had molested them.

What About Professional Therapy?

The *Awake!* articles were meant to help victims cope with the aftereffects of sexual child abuse by offering helpful suggestions, one of which was to seek out mental health practitioners, if necessary, or seek a listening ear from fellow members in the congregation. However, the majority of the Governing Body, especially Ted Jaracz, was dead set against the flock seeking out mental health advisers or therapists, believing their counsel came from Satan’s world. The Governing Body, along with many other high-ranking Watchtower officials, believed that application of Bible counsel as outlined in Watchtower literature could result in psychological stability, even if suffering from the trauma of child sexual abuse. Generally, advice from so-called “mature” Jehovah’s Witnesses was always the same for whatever ailed a Witness: read the Bible, go to Bible meetings, and participate in Jehovah’s Witnesses’ door-to-door ministry. Since Witness child sexual abuse victims were discouraged from seeking outside therapy, they cried out to elders for help, which often became a nightmare scenario for both victims and elders.

If abuse victims felt insensitive attitudes would change towards them in the organization after the October 8, 1991 *Awake!*, they were in for a rude awakening because, in reality, few things changed on the part of many elders. Entrenched attitudes remained basically the same because of the idea that only application of the scriptures can heal lives, not advice from “worldly” books which the October 8th *Awake!* so freely quoted from. (This is the major reason many Witness leaders are still in opposition to the information found in that *Awake!*.)

What About “Repressed Memories” and MPD?

Another topic discussed in that Awake! was a strange occurrence commonly known as “repressed memories” and that subject did not sit well with many influential Witnesses. From what Lee said, and corroborated by personal letters from survivors of abuse and from their therapists, many Witness victims reported having memories of events of abuse which happened years before when they were children. The dependability of these “memories” became a center of debate and controversy among mental-health professionals, and, also, within the Watchtower organization. At headquarters, the congregations are supervised by the Service Department. It was men from this department, directed by Governing Body member, Ted Jaracz, who generally spoke in negative terms to elders who asked about the repressed memories anomaly. In fact, I was told Jaracz was a proponent for the Against Repressed Memories

organization. It was not until Harry proved the Against Memories organization had been discredited by investigators that no more was said on the topic.

Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD), now called Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), became a hotly debated subject as well. Although the MPD syndrome is never mentioned in Watchtower publications, nor found in any Society policy letters to bodies of elders, elders around the country were being introduced to this phenomenon by suffering victims of the trauma of child sexual abuse, who were having a difficult time in the congregations, some even being labeled as demonized. How could these sufferers be helped when some in the Service Department viewed MPD/DID and repressed memories as a "fad," and said so to callers. There was so much confusion and disbelief among Watchtower leaders about MPD that Harry asked me to write an article about it. Sorry to say, due to the continuing hullabaloo over the October 8, 1991 *Awake!*, Lloyd Barry did not want to touch the subject of MPD for fear of causing more controversy, so publishing the article was out of the question.

Confusing Advice Coming From Headquarters

From the foregoing, it can be seen a hard-line Service Department was not comforting abuse victims. Generally, Service Department staff told callers to "read the Bible more and look forward to the New World where there won't be any more problems." This was not a solution for such complex problems. Further, the insensitive advice given by some men to "Just get over it!" was not appreciated by victims, nor by more liberal members in the Writing Department. In fact, when victims called and talked to personnel in Writing Correspondence, they were treated compassionately and advised with up-to-date information about their problems. All of this resulted in a maze of contradictions with the victims ending up almost re-victimized, and elders, who called for advice, thoroughly confused.

At the end of December 1991, all congregation elders attended local Kingdom Ministry Schools to receive training and Society policy updates. Soon after, the March 23, 1992 letter to all bodies of elders arrived in United States congregations. It reviewed what had been taught at the schools about the serious problems experienced by victims of child sexual abuse, and, in the letter, professional therapy was not condemned as in the past but the school curriculum generally adhered to the information in the *Awake!*. The compassionate letter reiterated if a Witness pursued treatment from psychiatrists, psychologists, or therapists it was a personal decision albeit some cautions were noted. One thing made plain in the letter was that elders should not study therapy methods and take on a role similar to a therapist, which some elders were actually doing. Also included were some first-rate suggestions as to what to say to help abuse victims. Things were definitely looking up, but not for long.

Within the inner sanctums of congregations and circuits, dirty little secrets continued, and, for some unknown reason, protection of abusers was business as usual. One particularly nasty secret concerned personal instructions sent out in 1992 from one of the Governing Body members, who Harry was certain was Ted Jaracz, to a few very well-known circuit and district overseers to meet with and compel abuse victims to remain silent about their abuse or be disfellowshipped. In Harry Peloyan's office in 1994, I, along with my husband, Joe, thumbed through a file folder full of complaining letters, which came to headquarters from across the country about the situation. Interestingly, the name of one intimidating circuit representative mentioned frequently in those letters became a member of the Governing Body.

"Don't throw the baby out with the bath water," was a statement many of us heard from Harry as he shared the latest bit of aggravating news about the continuing close-mindedness of Service Department heads who were still taking the hard line. He was concerned how we were dealing with the daily saga of sexual abuse information, hoping it would not cause us to leave the organization. He was right to be concerned!

Due to the health problems of my elderly parents, in August of 1992, we decided to terminate our stay at the Watchtower facility in Brooklyn leaving there at the end of the year. However, before I left, I spent time on one more research project. Harry authorized me to put together a package of information alerting and proving to the Governing Body that they had a serious problem with child sexual abuse within the organization. In early January 1993, a few weeks after I left headquarters, a huge packet of documented information gathered by me was provided by Harry Peloyan to each one of the Governing Body members.

Ten and a half years of living with a few thousand people in the "Bethel Family" was quite a novel experience. When we went back to our home in Tennessee, we left behind literally hundreds of friends, as well as our son and daughter-in-law. During the days before our departure, Joe and I received hundreds of notes saying goodbye. I still treasure a small handmade booklet from my colleagues in the Writing Department, full of affectionate expressions of regret that we'd no longer be working together, and wishing us well for the future. If only they'd known then what the future was to hold! In the booklet, Harry expressed his pleasure to have worked with me, and told me how my helpfulness, determination, and compassion would be missed. And Lee said he could not begin to express how much I would be missed. He added that my support, input, and research had been invaluable. Another senior staff writer, Jim Pellechia, thanked me for helping to "shake" things up. All of these observations were specifically pointing at my work behind the scenes to try to persuade our Governing Body to initiate change in organizational procedures in the matter of child sexual abuse. And I'll always remember on the last day of work in the Writing Department when David Iannelli told me goodbye and warmly thanked me for discovering what no one in the organization knew—that William H. Conley, and not Charles Taze Russell was the first president of the Watchtower organization.

I left with no regrets. While I was at the center, the hub, of the Witnesses' world, I gave my all. Although I loved the people, I was in a dilemma. After I left New York, could I keep my "compassion" in check and keep quiet about what I had learned about the hidden child sexual abuse scandal within the Watchtower organization? I knew if I allowed my compassion to "shake" things up outside of Bethel, I could be disfellowshipped. When I left New York, I knew I could not turn off the heartfelt compassion I carried with me for the victims of deceitful "wolves" who were masquerading as "sheep" in the Witness organization, yet what was I to do about it? The next few years were stressful, to say the least.

After we'd been back in Tennessee some months, a letter dated February 3, 1993 was received by all bodies of elders in the United States addressing child sexual abuse once again. It was apparent the work I had done had reaped results as the letter actually discussed information I had included in the package for the Governing Body. There were suggestions given to help individuals who reported memories of abuse long after the event. This seemed to mean the attitude of the Governing Body was softening towards the reality of repressed memories. Further, the letter repeated that a Witness seeking professional help, and reporting abuse to the authorities, was not to be spoken of disparagingly by elders. And that wasn't all. In the October 8, 1993 *Awake!,* another well-written child sexual abuse article was published which supported "…seeking competent professional help—to heal such severe childhood wounds."

I continued to do research for the Writing Department from my home. Among other things, I studied the child sexual abuse problem in other religions and amongst society at large. In this way, I thought I could be of some use to those at Watchtower headquarters who wanted the Governing Body's child sexual abuse policies changed.

However, as gratifying as it was to see some results from my work, much to my horror, after being home a few months, I learned that within the local congregations in our area there had been an unusually high number of molestation accusations and confessions in the recent past and none of them were brought to the attention of the authorities. As disturbing as this was to think about, it was chilling to know these child sexual abuse cases were being dealt with by men who I knew had little or no idea how to handle the complexities of sexual abuse accusations.

Slow Reaction

In my home congregation there was an elder who confessed to molesting the daughter of a Witness. Removed as an elder because of the commotion made when the non-Witness father of the child notified the police, within a few years the molester was maneuvering to have oversight privileges in the congregation once again. He had convinced the elders he was repentant, although there was evidence he was using the house-to-house ministry program to meet and study the Bible with single women with children, and then to molest some of those children. I sent a general letter about the situation to the Watchtower Society, and also a beseeching letter on July 21, 1993 to Governing Body member, Lloyd Barry, now deceased. In my letter, I related my concerns about molesters engaging in the door-to-door ministry based upon how the pedophile in our local congregation used this activity to find children, and how I thought a molester's participation in this activity should be restricted.

In addition, another situation was of great concern. Within the congregations, the names of pedophiles—including those who expressed repentance—were never made public, and many were eventually put back into positions of authority after a number of years had passed. Consequently, they were in a position to molest more children, which many of them did. Lloyd Barry never acknowledged my letter although I talked to him briefly when I visited Watchtower headquarters in 1994.

Instead of the long-hoped for change of policy in the matter of molesters participating in the ministry, and their return to a position of authority in the congregation if they were repentant, nothing happened. However, I understood that a decision in these matters would be difficult and would have ramifications. The scope and complexities of the entire child sexual abuse situation within the organization were enormous. Be that as it may, all I knew was that children were continuing to be molested by Witness molesters and I wanted the situation to change.

I was happy that seeking professional help for the painful effects of child sexual abuse was no longer viewed with disdain in 1992 and '93, but by December 1994, there was a swing back to the more rigid viewpoint as taught during the 1994 series of Kingdom Ministry Schools. Additionally, at the schools elders were told that accusations made against a Witness due to repressed memories were inadmissible for judicial action. They were reminded if there were not two eyewitnesses to molestation, and the accusation is denied, judicial action leading to sanctions or disfellowshipping could not proceed.

During 1993-97, I remember how concerned I was about the confidentiality rule. I expressed myself openly to friends in the Writing Department about the confessed, seemingly repentant molester in my home congregation who was holding children on his lap or babies in his arms; yet, the elders did nothing, not even warn parents. Because of my expressed concerns, the August 1, 1995 letter to all bodies of elders admonished the elders to caution a former child sexual abuser about the "…dangers of hugging or holding children on his lap and that he should never be in the presence of a child without another adult being present."

I knew Harry and the others were still in the middle hoping to make a difference. Finally, in 1997, the Watchtower Society announced in the January 1, 1997, *Watchtower* magazine article, "Abhor What Is Wicked," that "…a man known to have been a child molester does not qualify for a responsible position in the congregation." The announcement also said the organization would not protect a child molester from facing sanctions from the State. Soon after, Harry and I talked on the phone and he was extremely gratified that five years of toiling resulted in a new policy which also prohibited a repentant molester from qualifying to serve in a position of responsibility in the congregation. However happy I was initially with the new policies, I was troubled when I read the following words: "If he [molester] seems to be repentant, he will be encouraged to make spiritual progress [and] share in the field service [Jehovah's Witnesses' door-to-door ministry] …" which was exactly the opposite of my request.

The Loophole and "Two-Witness Rule"

At first glance it seemed the Governing Body was moving forward by stipulating that any man who was known as a molester could not hold any position of authority in the organization. Finally, there was recognition that if a man had molested in the past, there was a good chance he would molest again. Hence, it appeared if such a man held a position of authority in the congregation, he would now be removed. Witnesses responded enthusiastically to the new policy statement, believing that by not permitting a known molester to hold a responsible position in the congregation, their Governing Body was right on top of the molestation scandals that had been plaguing churches across the country.

Then it emerged that there was a loophole in the new policy statement. This simple but conclusive statement that "a man known to have been a child molester does not qualify for a responsible position in the congregation" was misleading and dangerous. Why? The key word known was the way molesters would stay in positions of authority. This was made clear in a follow-up letter, which was sent to all bodies of elders dated March 14, 1997, answering the question, "Who Is A 'Known Child Molester'?" Notice this statement: "An individual 'known' to be a former [italics mine] child molester has reference to the perception of that one in the community and in the Christian congregation." According to this policy statement, if the congregation or the community knew a man was a former molester, he would not qualify for a position of responsibility, or remain in such a position after the new policy announcement. However, the main way a man would become known as a molester in the community was if the matter was reported to the police, something rarely done by the Witnesses. And the Society's confidentiality rule made it impossible for the congregation to know who was a molester, when a victim was pressured by the judicial committee to remain silent. Consequently, the accused remained in a leadership position because the elders would allege he was not known to be a molester.

Of course, few ordinary Witnesses were aware of the meaning of the word "known" as applied above—and many congregation elders missed the full implication of the January 1, 1997 *Watchtower* and the Society's March 14, 1997 letter—but how would congregations have reacted if they knew that child molesters had been appointed by the Society in the past with full knowledge of their guilt? The March 14, 1997 letter to all bodies of elders contained an instruction that inadvertently admitted just such a thing: "[T]he body of elders should give the Society a report on anyone serving or who formerly served in a Society-appointed position in your congregation who is known to have been guilty of child molestation in the past." [Highlighting and italics mine] This corroborates that the Society had knowingly appointed molesters to positions of authority.

Additionally, this illuminating letter went on to say: "Others may have been guilty of child molestation before they were baptized. The bodies of elders should not query individuals." [Italics mine] At a time when secular and religious organizations were doing background checks on employees and volunteers who were in frequent contact with children, the Governing Body did not even want elders to query individual prospects for positions of authority about their pasts? It is, at a minimum, irresponsible, maybe even criminal negligence, and, if seriously looked at by investigating authorities, might well be much worse.

As an example of the Watchtower's official stance, note what their spokesman, J. R. Brown told German media in June 2002, "If an individual was found guilty of child molestation, he cannot under any circumstances [italics mine] serve as an elder." Yet, notice what is found in a Watchtower letter to all bodies of elders in the United Kingdom, June 1, 2001, where there is an exception to that rule:

"[I]f the branch office has decided that he [former child abuser] can be appointed or continue serving in a position of trust because the sin occurred many years ago and because he has lived an exemplary life since then, his name should not appear on the List, nor is it necessary to pass on information about the brother's past sin if he moves to another congregation unless contrary instructions have been given by the branch." (The list is created by the congregation and is titled, "Child Protection-Psalm 127:3." List contains data

about confessed molesters; those found guilty by congregation on the basis of two or more credible witnesses, and those convicted by a court.)

Further the letter goes on to say, “There are, however, many other situations that are connected with the abuse of a child. For example, there may be just one eyewitness, and the brother denies the allegation. (Deuteronomy 19:15; John 8:17) Or, he may be under active investigation by the secular authorities for alleged child abuse though the matter has not yet been established. In these and similar cases no entry will be made on the Child Protection List.”

When I first became aware of child sexual abuse in the Watchtower organization, I didn’t know the Bible teaching requiring two-witnesses * to prove sin was applied to molestation. It was only after 1997 when I discovered how the requirement of two witnesses to molestation protected pedophiles that I understood how this policy was such a danger to children. As can be seen from the June 1, 2001 letter above, if abuse victims can not back up their charge of molestation through another witness, and the accused denies the allegation, the accusation goes nowhere, not even on the Child Protection List. Then the confidentiality rule goes into effect. Victims are told not to speak of the accusation or else be disfellowshipped themselves. This was and still is the way molesters are kept hidden and children are open game. It is the application of the “two-witness” policy and the confidentiality edict which are still major tenets needing reform.

Finally Disillusioned

I belonged to an organization whose members appear to be no different from society at large. Yet, underneath the surface they really are very different in their approach to life because Jehovah’s Witnesses are a self-proclaimed theocracy meaning they believe God is guiding their organization. And it is the leaders of the Witness theocracy who make the rules for the flock about all aspects of life including rules to protect the members from threatening influences. Regardless of good intentions, Witness leaders have become like Pharisees in that they provide instructions for just about every social condition. In the matter of complex situations related to child sexual abuse—the two-witness rule; the January 1, 1997 *Watchtower* magazine’s new stated policy with its loophole; applicable advice in the elder textbook, *Pay Attention To Yourselves And To All The Flock*; the March 14, 1997 letter to all bodies of elders; all other pertinent letters, and related Kingdom Ministry School instructions—are all problematic. These directives were supposedly written with the intention of protecting the congregation, yet ended up protecting the pedophile. I only hope it was not done intentionally for this purpose.

From 1992 on I was so worried about the Watchtower Society's problematic procedures in the matter of child sexual abuse that I missed seeing the obvious—Witness leaders were treating accusations of child sexual abuse no differently than from the sin of fornication or drunkenness. I came to realize elders should not have been investigating child sexual abuse allegations, but all abuse cases should be referred to the authorities because child sexual abuse is a crime—a form of rape–a point the Society still does not seem to fully comprehend. Police handle crime, elders deal with sin! If elders need procedural directions for disfellowshipping someone for child abuse, it should be made clear that the instructions are only for that. Elders are not magistrates. If two witnesses are required to determine guilt to disfellowship the accused, so be it, but only so long as the authorities are notified of the accusation by those involved.

In 1998, I officially left the organization, although I had been fading for about a year. I tried to put my anxiety aside and went to the local community college to take some tests, whereupon I received a scholarship, and this gift gave me the strength to go on without my Jehovah’s Witnesses’ friends from all over the world. (I knew for a certainty they would shun me when they realized I was no longer one of them.) Going to college was how I discovered there was life outside of the Watchtower. At the time my husband and I were married thirty-nine years. We never kept secrets from one another. Trust and respect was the backbone of our very successful marriage. Therefore, my husband, Joe, accepted my exit from our

religion because he was aware that in good conscience, I was having a very difficult time associating myself with the Witness organization knowing what I did about the Watchtower Society's child sexual abuse policies which I considered evil. As a woman, I had to remain silent about this evil or be disfellowshipped. My anger and frustration knowing I was helpless to protect children from molestation was a burden I could no longer bear.

My immediate Witness family and close friends did not forsake me then. In the beginning, they were dismayed I left the organization, but respectful of my right to do so. In fact, two of them eventually left the organization. In 1997, my son, who was in Bethel for 16 years, and his wife left headquarters because they desired to have children. In 1999, our grandson, Luke, was born and they, along with the baby, continued to come to our home or we went to theirs because I was not disfellowshipped. My husband was still an elder and the other elders did not have any idea why I left the religion, and, it seemed, they were reluctant to ask either of us any questions. In any case, I did not say anything negative to anyone about the Witness organization, so I was not perceived as a threat.

Bill Bowen and 'Silentlambs'

Towards the end of 2000, a friend of mine, a former circuit representative of the Watchtower, saw on a Jehovah's Witness related discussion group website, a post written by an elder where he asked if any other elders encountered a situation such as he had when he discovered the presiding overseer in his congregation had admitted to molestation some years previously. Because the congregation and the community had no knowledge of the crime, although two of the elders knew, the man remained in his position. The poster expressed his concern for the children in the congregation including his own.

Initially, my friend corresponded with the elder and then I did. What I told him about child sexual abuse within the organization was quite a revelation. Soon, we were both convinced we had to do something to make the world aware that the Watchtower organization, through its irresponsible and criminally negligent policies, was guilty internationally of covering up the CRIME of child sexual abuse, and to convince the Governing Body to change those policies. But how to accomplish this? Soon the elder, Bill Bowen, decided to resign his position and go public about the abuse issue. This took place on January 1, 2001. The media coverage in Bill's home state of Kentucky, regarding his resignation as an elder over the child sexual abuse issue, was tremendous. In addition, Bill and I came up with an idea for an Internet website which Bill created that we named Silentlambs.org. Here, Jehovah's Witnesses, who were victims of child sexual molestation by Witness perpetrators, could post their stories. Within weeks there were 1,000 stories. After five years, there are over 6,000.

I did not reveal myself publicly when Bill did, but within weeks, Bill and I were on a plane going to New York City to be interviewed by NBC producers as they were interested in doing a documentary about Watchtower's child sexual abuse problems for their national television program, Dateline. After the producers did extensive research, which established our claims were true, we were scheduled for filming of interviews for TV. Around that same time, one of the producers discussed our accusations with Watchtower officials which they categorically denied. The program was scheduled to go on TV in November of 2001, but due to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center buildings in New York City on September 11th, the broadcast was put on hold.

Disfellowshipped

After calling NBC time and again to find out when the program would air, the Watchtower organization was told at the end of April 2002 the program would be shown on May 28, 2002. Immediately, Watchtower officials notified the local elders to schedule judicial hearings for us. In early May, I proved to the elders I was not guilty of the charges brought against me. Within days the local elders scheduled another judicial hearing with new charges concocted. I declined to attend the meeting because it seemed

futile—if I disproved those charges, it was obvious they would just come up with different charges. In any event, I was subsequently disfellowshipped on May 19, 2002 for causing divisions.

Some of the other Witness whistleblowers who appeared on the program were also disfellowshipped around the same time. Disfellowshipped members are construed as being unrepentant sinners and not to be believed, so it was a cunning move for the Watchtower. It was obvious to me I was disfellowshipped shortly before Dateline was broadcast so Witness viewers would not believe what I said.

Then something took place which really surprised me. The Watchtower Society sent a letter, dated May 24, 2002, to all the United States congregations instructing that it was to be read to the members the week before Dateline was to air. After hearing the letter read, and believing it was filled with half-truths about the issues, my husband, Joe, handed in his keys to the Kingdom Hall and resigned his position as elder. He was asked to submit a letter of resignation, which he did a few days later. Joe gave each elder a copy and sent a copy to Governing Body members, Dan Sydlik and Jack Barr. He also sent a copy to a friend, Robert Johnson, in the Service Department. In a phone conversation with Bob a week later, Joe was told that he needed to get his wife under control, and that she misunderstood the Society's policies. When Joe asked questions about those policies, Bob replied that the information was confidential. He was extremely upset Joe called him and the conversation ended unpleasantly.

Joe subsequently was disfellowshipped in July 2002 for causing divisions. By defending me and expressing his personal views about the child sexual abuse situation, which certainly were not the same as Watchtower's views, Joe was no longer a company man. Like Bill Bowen and me, Joe became critical of the process elders are instructed to go through when child abuse is reported to them. He believes Witness elders should not investigate accusations of child sexual abuse because it is a crime that should be reported by elders to the authorities no matter which state they live in, and even if not required by law in that state for clergy to do so.

Before Dateline aired, reporters approached Watchtower inquiring if it was true we were requested to attend judicial hearings because of our forthcoming appearance on the program? Watchtower spokesperson, J. R. Brown, denied this allegation and reporters quoted him as saying the judicial hearings were local matters to be convened because we were sinners, not because we were going to appear on Dateline. Brown even stated that Watchtower leaders were not aware of who was going to appear on the program, which I knew was untrue. When reporters asked what scripture the religion used to disfellowship members, Watchtower spokespersons quoted 1 Corinthians 5:11, 12 which commands a church to remove a wicked man from its midst who was greedy, a fornicator, an idolater, a reviler, a drunkard, or an extortioner. Since I had not been in the congregation's midst since 1998, nor did I commit any of these gross sins, in November of 2002, I filed a defamation lawsuit against the Watchtower which is slowly winding through the judiciary system. Since all this happened, Bill Bowen and I have been interviewed many times by the press as we continue to try to make the public aware of Watchtower's policies which protect pedophiles.

Back in the August 8, 1993 *Awake!*, our son's beautiful letter extolled our parental virtues; yet, not even ten years later, he completely changed his mind and decided to totally shun us after we were disfellowshipped for speaking out about the hidden child sexual abuse problem within the organization. He told the press I did a "noble" thing trying to protect the Witnesses' children; however, he did not believe I did the right thing by going public. (Apparently, I broke the eleventh commandment, the most important one to Jehovah's Witnesses: "You must never bring bad publicity on the organization.")

Soon after Dateline aired on May 28, 2002, my son and his wife traveled to New York to personally ask Watchtower officials for their side of the story. He was told I misunderstood the Society's policies and by my actions, caused thousands of people to leave the organization, leave the Bible and leave God. Hence, those "walk away" Jehovah's Witnesses were going to die at Armageddon and I would be responsible for

their deaths. He chose to believe what he was told and he has never spoken to me again. It has been over three years since we have seen our son, daughter-in-law and their small child, our only grandchild. If we send any mail to them, including gifts to our grandchild, they are returned unopened.

A Different Commitment

When I look back over my life from the time I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses at the age of 14, it simply amazes me where that first step led. My only desire then was to help people understand the mysteries of life as taught by Jehovah's Witnesses. Now I'm delighted to no longer be under the illusion that the mysteries of life can be explained, or that Jehovah's Witnesses are a benevolent religion.

Although my once dear friend, Harry Peloyan, labeled me "a Judas" for publicizing the child sexual abuse problems within the Witness organization, it is now my commitment to spend the rest of my life sharing my "Insider" eyewitness experiences. Hopefully, my words will help people understand the hidden secrets of this religious organization, a religion which has been very adroitly managed by its Governing Body since 1881. In this way I am making known the truth, and, the truth as I experienced it might prevent another sincere person from making the same unfortunate choice as I did which led me to be an eyewitness to deceit.

Update

January 27, 2009

Since my story, Discoveries of Barbara Anderson, was published in 2006, I have continued to expose the secrets hidden within this religious organization that bring harm to children.

Carefully concealed by the Watch Tower Society is the fact that they have been settling child sexual abuse lawsuits out-of-court for many years, although quietly, secretly, one at a time. However, since 2003, attorneys for dozens of plaintiffs publicly filed twenty or more child sexual abuse lawsuits against the group, mostly in California. During that time, I was actively aiding attorneys to understand policies and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses in the matter of child sexual abuse. I was disappointed that, to my knowledge, none of these lawsuits made it to open court. Quite a number of lawsuits were dropped by plaintiffs' attorneys, but in early-winter of 2007, seven California cases, one Oregon case, and another in Texas, were settled out-of-court by the leaders of Jehovah's Witnesses for millions of dollars.

Nevertheless, that was not the end of the story. In March of that year, I began to purchase filed court records, as many as 5,000 pages of material relating to these lawsuits. I then wrote a commentary of nearly 100-pages explaining the issues that led to Jehovah's Witnesses Defendants unprecedented, out-of-court multi-million dollar settlement. The goal of the project was to shine a bright light on the secret policies and procedures utilized by Jehovah's Witness leaders to manage victims' accusations of sexual abuse by Witness molesters.

I'm happy to say what I set out to do was accomplished. All of the court documents and the commentary can be found on a CD which I named *Secrets of Pedophilia in an American Religion*, *Jehovah's Witnesses in Crisis.* The CD was offered for sale in August 2007 through a print-on-demand publishing company, Lulu.

The commentary includes specific, extraordinary copies of court documents indicting Jehovah's Witnesses leaders as responsible for making it possible for multitudes of Witness kids to be molested. One such document is a letter to the Watch Tower Society from one of its special representatives, District Overseer, Donald Amy. In that letter Don Amy discusses a child molester in a California congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

That letter, along with other damning material, was seen by millions of people, November 21, 2007, on *NBC Nightly News* with Brian Williams, when the secret out-of-court settlement made by Jehovah's Witnesses with victims of molestation in Frebruary 2007 was revealed.

When I was purchasing the court documents during the spring of 2007, I was stunned to see that one courthouse inadvertently included court-sealed settlement papers pertaining to one victim who financially settled with the Witnesses for $781,250. It was these papers that caught the attention of the producers of *NBC Nightly News*.

It was in September 2007 that I was interviewed in Nashville, Tennessee for the *NBC Nightly News* program. Then in late October, I was invited to Washington, DC to NBC's Washington headquartersto be interviewed by Lisa Myers of NBC News Investigative Unit. In addition, Ms. Myers and Producer, Richard Greenberg, wrote a lengthy article titled, New evidence in Jehovah's Witness allegations. That article appeard on MSNBC's website on November 21, 2007 (http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21917798). That same day, a reporter from MSMV TV, Nashville's NBC channel, came to my home for an interview. Links to all of these interviews, plus other media coverage, appear on my website, www.watchtowerdocuments.com

On January 17, 2008, I released the commentary found on the "Secrets" CD for general distribution by putting it on my website where it can be read or downloaded to a personal computer without charge. This was done because the expense involved to make the CD possible, in excess of $5,000, not including any charge for time spent to produce the CD, was reimbursed by revenue received from two donations, plus, profit from the sale of the CD.

The work involved to bring the "Secrets" project to fruition was freely done by me and others out of love for those who have been victimized by Jehovah's Witnesses leaders. Now it is possible for anyone who wants to see the facts related to my accusations that these men, who claim God is leading only them, have been responsible for covering-up criminal acts for decades, can do so.

After seeing how well received the Commentary was, in December 2008, I decided to make available, free of charge, all 5,000 pages of court documents that are found on the CD. They can be accessed through my website, www.watchtowerdocuments.com for downloading.

Not Many Changes

At this point in time, I wish I could say that Watch Tower Society leaders have publicly stated that they have changed their child sexual abuse policies, but to my knowledge that's not so. What I do know for a fact, from recent conversations with concerned Witnesses, is that members of Witness congregations are still not informed if there is an accused, confessed or convicted pedophile attending their meetings who they call, "brother."

Recently, it has come to my attention that there were three convicted pedophiles in one US congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. How would you react if you were in that congregation and somehow found out that the elders knew about the situation but were forbidden by their leaders to warn you? Most likely you would be upset. Well, that's exactly what happened in that congregation. Parents were angry and at the same time afraid. It is the Witnesses "confidentiality" policy which protects so-called repentant pedophiles in this way, and at the expense of the children of Jehovah's Witnesses.

I still hear about arrests of Witness molesters after their victims go to the authorities. The situation has not changed—if a Witness is accused of molestation, it is not reported to the authorities by the elders in a state where clergy are not mandated to do so. In addition, if there are not two witnesses to the molestation and the accused denies the charge, then nothing is done.

Physical Abuse

Many former Witnesses send me e-mails through my website webmaster, sharing their stories about the physical child abuse they endured as children at the hands of their Witness parents. One such experience is as follows:

My mother, who was considered by her fellow-believers to be a lovely, charming and very faithful Sister in the faith since 1948, viciously abused me physically all my childhood until I was able to defend myself at age 11. She turned my father, not a JW, into a miserable nervous wreck with her verbal attacks, control and manipulation despite his frequent, defensive comments such as "Where does it say that in the Bible?" and most poignantly, "What would your fellow-believers say about that?"

Whenever a certain pathological angry mood overcame my mother, she found an excuse to beat me, and I mean thrash the living daylights out of me until she was exhausted and out of breath, her face deep red and contorted with a sick rage and hatred so that each time I thought she was going to kill me. I struggled to get away, pleading for her to stop, told her she was killing me, but she kept on, out of control, dragging me along the floor, kicking and flailing wildly with her arms until my whole body was red and throbbing for hours afterwards.

But as an only child, quite isolated from others, I thought this was normal, as children in such situations usually do. Worse, I believed what I was told about the "truth" and that JWs can only do good and right things, so I was still blinded well into my adult years as to my mother's true nature.

Along with bouts of severe depression, anxiety, suicidal and self-harm urges, I also realized I had a problem with alcoholism, but managed to get on top of it early enough. This, and others, as I'm sure you are aware, are all symptoms of psychological trauma, in particular from physical child abuse, not just sexual abuse.

If the above experience was the only incident I've heard of since I exited Jehovah's Witnesses organization, I would not publish it, but it's not, and that's why this subject can not be ignored. There are just too many adults connected with this group testifying to how physically abused they were as children.

Update, August 22, 2010

For those who think otherwise, I would like to set the record straight: When I was in Bethel's Writing Department, I was Karl Adam's **personal** researcher when he was **assembling** and then writing the material for the chapters of the WT Society's history book that eventually was named, *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom,* published in 1993. **I did not do the research for the entire book.**

Each week Karl would give me a list of miscellaneous questions to answer. Incidentally, I spent many, many months researching for Chapter 30 in the book. Also, the results of one question can be found in the chart on page 44. That question took six months to answer. Early on it appeared to me that I was given the questions that took months to find the answers to, whereas, the easier questions Karl took care of. One time, three of us in the department took many weeks to compile yearly literature placements from 1879-1819, figures we located in the Watch Tower Reprints.

I've written on the following before, but let me reiterate: There were other men assigned to assist Karl. David Iannelli was assigned to actually write the first few chapters that were full of scriptures and he didn't need a researcher for his presentation, although I submitted some research material to David that eventually made it to the first chapter, second paragraph of the first page.

Another Bethelite who submitted research material was Richard Abrahamson, now deceased, who was first one assigned to do the history book, but as overseer of the Art Dept., he could never find the time for the book so Karl was given the assignment. Richard gave Karl massive amounts of material he had collected

about the organization over the years which he had thrown in a big pile on the floor of his office. Also, Richard asked a friend of his outside of Bethel, a circuit overseer, to provide material about the worldwide expansion of the organization. This is basically how it was done. FYI, there were cabinets full of research material about the old organization and that made it easy for Karl to find testimonies, etc. or ask one of the girls to pull material out of the source cabinet for him.

Watch Tower's 2010 convention release

My take on the WT's new history DVD, *Jehovah's Witnesses Faith In Action, Part 1: Out Of Darkness*: For what it's worth, many of the people who appear in the DVD have been deceased for quite a while so they had to have been interviewed many years ago. In fact, many of those not now deceased that appear in the DVD, look like they did when I last saw them in the mid-1990s.This would suggest that this DVD has been in the works for many years. When I saw the video recently, I wondered what the impetus was that pushed the decision-makers to get this DVD out this year when they appeared to be in no rush before.

Recently, someone who had attended one of the 2010 District Conventions told me it was announced that the new Watch Tower history DVD will replace the *Proclaimers* book. As of this writing, the book could still be ordered at the Kingdom Hall. I suppose that orders will be filled until Watch Tower runs out of *Proclaimers* and I'm curious whether it will be printed again in the future.

If the Society's object is to replace *Proclaimers* with the new DVD, one of the reasons **could be** that I'm connected with *Proclaimers* in the minds of many Jehovah's Witnesses. Since I'm disfellowshipped, and for quite some time been a key informant exposing the organization, the Watch Tower Society's policy is to not make available any longer any literature that has a connection with people who have been disfellowshipped. That policy even extends to literature where key photos appear of people later disfellowshipped.

Big changes

However, I believe a more important point to be made is: Since all of the Society's buildings in Brooklyn Heights are up for sale, with many already sold, and the global activity of Jehovah's Witnesses not being directed from Brooklyn, NY too much longer because the administration is being moved to Upstate NY, and various branches are being closed all over the world, many of the photos of WT buildings from pages 352 to 401 are redundant.

So many things have changed since *Proclaimers* was published seventeen years ago. What with the down-sizing of Bethels and the decrease in membership in the western world, as the "disciple-making" continues to shrink, much of the self-important information found in *Proclaimers* is superfluous and preposterous. No longer does the preaching work of JWs require "publishing operations of gigantic proportions" and what publishing operations they now use are not pictured in the book anyway.

It might be a good idea to tell (if possible) any Witness, who might be determined to read *Proclaimers,* that it's out-of-date so why waste the time! As an example, on page 164, there's a discussion about the parable of the "separating of the sheep and goats (Matt. 25:30, 31). *Proclaimers* was published in 1993, and, in 1995, the Watch Tower's teaching of who did the separating of the sheep and goats changed. The same goes for any discussion in the book in regards to Matt. 24: 34 about who this "generation" presently is thought to be that was spoken of in that scripture.

Barbara

* The “two-witness” rule is still in effect in the congregations of Jehovah’s Witnesses. In the United States, if there is an accusation of molestation reported to a body of elders, one elder is appointed by the rest of the body to call the Legal Department of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society located in New York. This has been a Watchtower requirement since 1989. A representative of the Legal Department will ask the elder for the name of the state he lives in. If the elder is located in a clergy reporting state, which means a state where elders (or clergy) are mandated or required to report an accusation of molestation to the authorities, the elder is given that information. If the molestation occurred in a clergy reporting state, elders are required by the Legal Department to first encourage the parents or child sexual abuse victim to report the crime to the authorities, but if they fail to do so, then the elders are required to report. Before the TV documentary news program, Dateline, exposed the child sexual abuse problem within the Witnesses’ organization on May 28, 2002, elders who lived in clergy reporting states usually did not report child sexual abuse if parents or the abuse victim did not.

If molestation occurs in a clergy non-reporting state, it means clergy are not mandated to report. Hence, elders are instructed to tell caregivers or child sexual abuse victims that they live in a state where clergy are not mandated to report. The elders are told to remain neutral and to leave it up to the caregiver or the abuse victim to report the accusation to the authorities. Watchtower instructions are very specific that the elders are not to encourage nor discourage Witness members from reporting the abuse. If caregivers or abuse victims do not choose to go to the police about the molestation, then nothing further is done unless an elder reports the abuse secretly. Of course, as the abuser is often also the victim’s father, leaving decisions of whether or not to report such abuse to the parents is a travesty.

Before Dateline aired, Witness parents did not report molestation because they did not “want to bring reproach upon Jehovah’s organization.” This attitude was the norm rather than the exception. For instance, Bill Bowen tape recorded a Witness attorney at headquarters telling him that the state Bill lived in was a non-reporting state. He told Bill to remain neutral and not encourage nor discourage the accuser from going to the authorities. In addition, the Watchtower Society’s representative recommended that Bill leave the situation in Jehovah’s hands and He would take care of it.

Living in a non-reporting state protects a confessed and ostensibly repentant Witness pedophile from exposure if a Witness caregiver or victim does not choose to go to the authorities. And the confidentiality rule guarantees that the accusation about molestation is not disclosed to the congregation. Too many times, professed repentant pedophiles become repeat offenders in the same congregation where they were protected by the confidentiality rule.

No matter if the parents choose not to, or choose to report the crime of molestation to the authorities, the elders will continue to use the “two-witness” rule to decide whether to disfellowship the accused person. If the accused denies the accusation and there are not two witnesses to the molestation (two witnesses consist of the victim plus one eyewitness), then the accused person is not disfellowshipped. Disfellowshipping only happens if the “two-witness” rule is satisfactorily met. However, if “true repentance” is shown, the molester will not be disfellowshipped. In any event, the victim and parents are not permitted to warn other families about the molestation.

However, since Dateline was broadcast, Witness parents are more apt to report molestation to the authorities. If the parents do report the abuse to the authorities and the accused is arrested and found guilty, he/she still may not be disfellowshipped from the congregation if the victim can not present to the elders an eyewitness to the molestation. Recently, one molester was released from prison after spending over five years there, and he has never been disfellowshipped because the victim could not satisfy the two-witness rule. During the molester’s incarceration and after, members treated this person as an innocent man. In this situation they would not have assisted the police investigation as it would have conflicted with the finding of the elder’s committee regarding the innocence of the accused.

In the United States, molestation is viewed as a crime. Parents should bypass elders completely and go directly to the authorities because under United States Federal law everyone is required to report molestation, whether state law requires it or not. But it appears that the Watchtower Society does not agree. Notice what was stated in the August 1, 2005 *Watchtower* magazine on page 14: “In our time, rape is also a major crime with severe penalties. The victim has every right to report the matter to the police. In this way the proper authorities can punish the offender. And if the victim is a minor, the parents may want to initiate these actions."

It is clear from this Watchtower directive that reporting is optional even when a crime has been committed.