

Battle Tactics of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation

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History Matters Conference April 23-24, 2004

Opening Quote

from David Calof's "Notes From a Practice Under Siege: Harassment, Defamation, and Intimidation in the Name of Science"

On February 20-21, 1993, I gave an invited professional workshop to the Menninger Clinic in Topeka, Kansas. Howard Fishman who was then the continuing Education Director for the institution midway through my lecture noisily interrupted me and angrily demanded that I surrender the podium to him. When I refused, he told me that if I ever wanted to be invited back I would give him the microphone. This heated exchange at the podium was well within earshot of the audience. When I finally did surrender the podium, Fishman launched an angry tirade against me, the trauma community, and the critics of the FMS movement. He went on for several minutes before finally surrendering the podium. The audience sat silently stunned and outraged. Many subsequently filled protests with the Menninger administration over the incident. Fishman left this position within weeks of the incident. (Calof 1998: 175)

This opening quote is an example of one tactic that adherents of the Foundation have used to try and silence people they perceive as their enemies. The narrator of the quote is David Calof, a therapist and former editor of *Treating Abuse Today* writing about one of many abuses he suffered from Foundation adherents over the course of several years. I thought it was a worthy example to open my own presentation with.

Introduction

The False Memory Syndrome Foundation (Foundation) was mobilized by a group of parents and professionals to counter aspects of the so called self-help movement. The Foundation's efforts to change elements of the self-help movement have been labeled, or are often referred to as "backlash" actions by the press, and are an integral part of the Foundation's mission to stop the spread of a social plague they have coined the "False Memory Syndrome" (FMS). The Foundation has enjoyed popular notoriety, ample news

coverage, and widespread acclaim, while also generating significant controversy. My paper presents analysis about the ideology and actions – or “battle tactics” – of the Foundation’s counter-movement against the self-help (and related movements) of the 1990s. The research problem is analyzed from a Social Movement Organization (SMO) and sociology of professions standpoint (Abbott 1982, 1988; Bromley and Cutchin. 1999; Freeman and Johnson, eds. 1999; Foucault 1994; Freidson 1960, 1970; Freidson and Lorber, eds. 1972; Hoffman 1989; Johnston 2002; Klandermans, Staggenborg and Tarrow 2002; Kladermans and Staggenborg eds. 2002; Larson 1961, 1977; Minkoff 2002; Snow and Benford 1992). My analysis is based on the idea that the Foundation generated a counter-movement against the self-help movement by turning memories of childhood sexual abuse into a social problem engineered by so called “repressed memory therapists” (Alpert, Brown, Ceci, Courtois, Loftus, and Ornstein, 1996; Calof 1993; Cheit 1998; Coughlin 1995; CQ. 1996; Crews, Frederick et al. 1995; Cronin 1994, 1995.; de Rivera 1993, 1997; Fried 1994; Freyd and Goldstein 1998; Gardner 1992; Gedney 1995a, 1995b; Gest 1985; Goleman 1992; Goleman 1994; Hovdestad 1995; Freyd, Jennifer. 1996. Freyd, Jennifer. 1993. Kraft 1985; Krebs 1998; Lacayo, Gannon and Taylor 1987; Loftus and Ketcham 1994; Loftus 1998; Loftus 2002; Peck 1993; Sifford 1991, 1992; Snow, David and Danny Tram. 2002; Stanton 1997; Wakefield 1992; Wakefield and Underwager 1992)

Giving Definition to the Self-help movement

Foundation adherents waged a counter-movement against the American self-help movement of the 1980s and 1990s. When I say the American self-help movement I am referring to a composite of grass-roots movements that began as child welfare advocacy efforts and developed into a movement of people opposed to child sex abuse in particular and human abuse in general. By the mid 1990s the self-help social movement was an amalgam of different social-movements, including, but not limited to: the abuse survivor “recovery” or anti-sexual abuse advocacy movement; new therapeutic methods and non-PhD credentialed analysts; a wide range of support networks, such as AA groups for survivors of various kinds of abuse; and a growing number of professionals and non-professionals concerned about medical, social and legal issues of child abuse, recovered memory, and trauma issues, cult ritual abuse, human experimentation, alien abduction, and satanic cults. (Al-Kurdi 1995, 1998; Allard 1995; Alpert et.al 1996; Backus and Stannard 1994; Baker 1998; Bass and Davis 1988; Beckett 1996; Bloom 1995a, 1995b; Bodman 1994; Brick 1996; Cameron, 1956; Carleson 1993; CIABASE; Constantine 1994, 1995; DeMause 2002; Dowbenko 1999; Goodman 1995; Hacking 1995; Hall and Kondora 1997; Hart 1994; Hassan 1988; Hechler 1988; Herman 1992, 1994; Langone 1993; Lawerence 1994a; Loftus and Ketcham 1994; Lorena 1998; Marks 1979; Masson 1986, 1992; Matzek 1994; McHugh 1993; Monday 1993; Moss-Sherman 1998; Mullen 1995, 1997a, 1997b, 1998; Noblitt 1993; Ofshe and Watters 1994; Packard 2000; Peck 1993; Pezdek 1996; Pope 1995; Reid 1995; Rose 1993; Ross 1989, 1994, 1995, 1997, 2000; Russell 1993; Ryder 1994; Sakheim and Devine; Sherman 1993; Singer 1995; Smit n.d.; Smith 1993; Stratford 1993; Summit 1983; Suzanne 1993; Tally et al. 1994; Vargo 1987; Vanessa 1993; Victor 1993; Weiner 1996; Witkin 1993/1994)

In the 1960s women's consciousness raising groups and the feminist interest in taking control of their health-care and birth control issues paved the way for the social self-help movement, which engaged people in talking to one another about their personal problems in informal support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous. Among the feminists that influenced these developments in the self-help movement were Ellen Bass and Laura Davis, who authored the still controversial book *The Courage to Heal* (1988). Many self-identified feminists went back to school and took Master degrees in counseling or received credentials as Marriage, Family, Therapists (MFT's) or Marriage, Family, Child Counselors (MFCC's). These non-PhD therapists were an inexpensive and less intimidating option for people who wanted to talk to a mental health care provider without having to be diagnosed by a psychiatrist. These therapists were in competition for clients with more established mental health care professionals such as psychiatrists or PhD psychologists, particularly because insurance benefits permitted workers to use MFT's and MFCC's on their health care plans.

There was also a record increase in reports of child abuse (Finkelhor 1990; Rycraft 1990; Zellman and Antler 1990) and reports of a "new" social phenomenon labeled variously, ritual abuse, satanic ritual abuse, Masonic ritual abuse, religious ritual abuse, cult ritual abuse, and other names (DeCamp 1993; Hassan 1988; Langone 1993; Lorena and Levy et al 1998; Monday 1993; Nathan and Snedecker 1995; Noblitt 1993; Ofshe 1992; Raschke 1990; Rose 1993; Ross 1989; Ross 1994; Ross 1995; Ross 1997; Russell 1993; Ryder 1992; Sakheim and Devine 1992; Singer 1995; SMART 1993-2003; Smith, M. 1993; Summit 1994; Summit 2002; Victor 1993; Wright 1993a; Wright 1993b). Being able to talk freely about childhood abuse with affordable therapists who would and could not prescribe medication or commit clients to mental institutions was a new, even radical, development in the history of the helping professions. By the late 1990s the "revolutionary" social phenomena of discussing and remembering childhood sex abuse in therapeutic, as well as non-therapeutic settings, had become, perhaps for the first time, socially acceptable in America, Canada, and Europe.

Important developments were also unfolding in the legal system, the medical system and in popular culture. For example, changes in the statute of limitations for rape and increases in the numbers of successful lawsuits by survivors of incest cases made it easier for incest victims to sue (Hechler 1988: 227-228). There was a shift in public perception away from the idea that "children don't know truth from fiction," towards the idea "children don't lie about trauma and abuse." (Bell 1988; Sumitt 2000) Meanwhile mandated reporters at child protection services had huge case loads; services which seemed designed to fail in actually protecting children from abusive situations (Bell 1990; Finkelhor 1990; Kamerman and Kahn 1990; Rycraft 1990; Zellman and Antler 1990).

Many significant court cases in the 1990s contributed to the controversy surrounding what the press coined "The Repressed Memory Debates" some of the most famous cases being the McMartin Preschool Trial, the Holly Ramona case and the Franklin case. (Belluck 1997; Cohn and De Paulo 1997; De Camp 2001; Dowbenko 1999; Koocher, Gerald P. 1998; Kraft 1985; Lacayo, Gannon and Taylor 1987; Leo 1997; Leo and Ofshe 1998; Loftus 1998; Maher 2000b; Manshel 1990.; McKee 1994; MacMartin Preschool Trail 1990; McEvoy 1995/1996; Packard 2000; McHugh 1993;

Ney 1995; Ofshe, Richard. 1992. Ofshe and Watters 1994; Packard 2000; Pierson-Sachs 1997; Renaud 1998; Salter 1998; Shields 1993; Sherman 1993 Summit 1983, 1994, 2002; Talley, and Stroup and Ninnefeld 1994; Vargo 1987; VOCAL 1985; Wells, Gary L. and Elizabeth Loftus, eds. 1984; Weinstein 1990; Weinberg & Green 1997).

The Founding of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation as a Counter-movement To the Self-help Movement

Although the developments just described helped inspire Peter and Pamela Freyd to form the Foundation, the founding of the Foundation was initially intimately tied to the Freyd's family-story, which involves Pamela and Peter's "outing" of daughter Jennifer over her therapy sessions and recalled memory of childhood sexual and emotional abuse (Doe, Jane. [Pamela Freyd] 1991; Fried 1994; Freyd, J. 1993; Shannon 1998; Sifford 1991; Stannard and Backus 1994) Peter and Pamela Freyd became convinced that their daughter had become a victim in an epidemic of what they called "False Memory Syndrome." Following this family crisis, Pamela and Peter Freyd established the Foundation as a non-profit organization in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, that supports and advocates for family members who are self-claimed victims of a "social plague" the group has coined the "false memory syndrome." "False memory syndrome" translates roughly to: an acquired syndrome that consists of an "adult-child" having a persistent and false idea about childhood sexual abuse which has likely been "implanted" in the "adult-child's" mind by her therapist (Freyd 1992; Sifford 1992; Wakefield 1992; Wakefield and Underwager 1992). The FMS Foundation aims its efforts particularly at "adult-children" who seek counsel with therapists because the Foundation believes the therapist and/or client will sue the parents for alleged sexual abuse (although what usually occurs is that the therapist is sued). The FMS Foundation had to explain and define the "False Memory Syndrome" so John Kihlstrom authored an often quoted definition of the "False Memory Syndrome" presented in the August 30, 1993 *FMS Foundation Newsletter*:

When a memory is distorted, or confabulated, the result can be what has been called the False Memory Syndrome—a condition in which a person's identity and interpersonal relationships are centered around a memory of traumatic experience which is objectively false but in which the person strongly believes. Note that the syndrome is not characterized by false memories as such. We all have memories that are inaccurate. Rather, the syndrome may be diagnosed when the memory is so deeply ingrained that it orients the individual's entire personality and lifestyle, in turn disrupting all sorts of other adaptive behaviors. The analogy to personality disorder is intentional. False Memory Syndrome is especially destructive because the person assiduously avoids confrontation with any evidence that might challenge the memory. Thus it takes on a life of its own, encapsulated, and resistant to correction. The person may become so focused on the memory that he or she may be effectively distracted from coping with the real problems in his or her life. (FMS FOUNDATION 1993)

The Foundation emerged as a primary agent in a professional counter-movement to the child welfare, anti-abuse, and women's and children's rights movements to assist fathers (ideologically and legally) from being sued for, or wrongfully accused of, child sex abuse. And to help parents sue therapists for damages pertaining to claims of false and implanted memories. To achieve its goals the Foundation successfully mobilized human and financial resources from the mostly middle-class parent members of the FMS Foundation. In 1998 Pamela Freyd was listed in *Who's Wealthy in America, 1998* (Morad and Fundukian) with a notation indicating that she is a contributor to health care organizations (444). With financial support assured FMS Foundation adherents utilized the following political tactics to further their campaign.

Advocacy

Foundation advocates in many forums, such as its *FMS Foundation Newsletter* (at its newly named website, *Memory and Reality*); through its' conferences; through the work of its' Advisory Board members who hold influential positions in teaching institutions and professional organizations; and through the work of supporters who have influential positions in society as authors, reporters, politicians, lawyers, expert witnesses, and retractors or recanters. Information about these actors can be found in the *FMS Foundation Newsletter* at www.fmsfonline, which is the official mouth piece of the FMSF. The newsletter's format formula consists of: the editors message; followed by articles from prestigious supporters about lawsuits that have been won against therapists; followed by op-ed pieces and news updates about legislation and lawsuits; book and media reviews mixed in with sidebars and quotes; ending with long letters from family members describing the pain of having "lost" their "adult-children" to so-called false memory syndrome or conversely the joy at having their "lost" (usually daughters) return to the family (often for no very apparent reason). Often these daughters contribute retractor stories which are in the closing part of the Newsletter (de Rivera 1997; Freyd, P 1992). The formula is repetitious, often uses loaded language, graphic language, graphic detail and biased coverage and counter views are quoted usually in a sarcastic way, if at all. *Newsletter* text can be mind numbing, or mesmerizing to read at length. An example of typical Foundation writing style can be found in the Foundation's early promo book titled *Confabulations* (1994) by Eleanor Goldstein. This book could be the Foundation's answer to the *Courage Heal Book* (1988). The following passage from *Confabulations* exemplifies FMS Foundation's attitude and ideology towards "adult-children":

"Another Lost Daughter" "The Pictures in my mind are so real that if they weren't true then I must be crazy, and I know I'm not crazy." -- a daughter

Once having these visions firmly established in her mind – so real that the colors, smells, sensations are real—how could she ever forgive the perpetrators? How could she ever talk to them again? How could she allow them near her children?

The itching was getting to be unbearable. It woke her at night; she didn't get more than 3 or 4 hours of sleep at a time. Between nursing her two-year-old and being miserable with the vaginal discomfort, she was becoming a total wreck.

Her chiropractor massaged her spine with the promise of relief—it didn't help.

Her midwife who had delivered both of her babies suggested an acupuncturist. The acupuncture brought relief—only temporarily. The dietary changes suggested by her nutritionist at the health food store had no effect—the increase in vitamins didn't improve the situation.

With all the other New Age resources depleted, her chiropractor suggested therapy.

She told her mother about the vaginal itch who then consulted with a gynecologist. He said the itching would go away when the prolonged nursing ended. (She nursed each of her two children for more than two years) She was angered by this: "My mother thinks I'm stupid and I don't know anything!" she exclaimed.

The therapist diagnosed her malady within two visits. The vaginal itch and pain could only be attributed to sexual abuse as a child. Soon she would be on a regime of four times a week therapy with a Reichian therapist who could help recall memories related to body pain. Each time she felt a new pain when she went to see him. A therapist employed by the state mental health department was on the schedule, her group based on the Twelve-step program met once a week and used the *Courage to Heal Workbook*, and a feminist cult therapist was also scheduled once a week.

The cult therapist showed her a ritual knife. It looked familiar. That was the beginning of the recollections of Satanic abuse. With the aid of the cult therapist the memories quickly came back from her repressed memory. (Goldstein 1994:181-182)

This passage from *Confabulations* (1994) captures major elements of the Foundation's formula explanation for "adult-children" having so-called false memories of childhood sexual abuse implanted in their heads by state financed and cult therapists. The text of this passage is fairly typical language for a lot of pro-Foundation literature and really shows the love, respect, sincerity and compassion that concerned parents feel for their adult daughters, doesn't it? (Coughlin 1995; Crews et al. 1995; Freyd, P. and Goldstein. 1998; Goldstein 1994; Loftus and Ketcham 1994; Loftus 1998; Loftus 2002; Ofshe and Watters 1994; Wassil-Grimm 1995).

Litigation, lobbying and lawsuits:

Foundation adherents engage in many legal forums to promote their campaign against so-called False Memory Syndrome. For example in 1995 FMSF adherents lobbied for passage of "Truth and Responsibility in Mental Health Practices Act" in New Hampshire (HB236), Illinois (HB 0966) and Missouri (HB 669) (Simon 1995; Quirk and DePrince 1995). This legislation was presented as a way to make therapy more safe and professional, yet therapist organizations were quick to see that the legislative requirements would impair reimbursement from insurance companies and undermine a victim's ability to sue perpetrators or "redefine mental health expert witness consultations

and testimony as a ‘psychological service’; in other words mental health expert witnesses would no longer be protected by the litigation privilege and could therefore be sued for their opinions” (Simmon 1995:13) In her analysis of this legislation Simmon neatly shows how Foundation supporters network as an effective political interest group:

The distinction between the FMSF and the TRMP Acts’s parent organization, the NACPMHP (National Association for Consumer Protection in Mental Health Practices) is somewhat blurred. Three Members of the FMSF’s scientific advisory board also sit on the scientific Advisory board of the NACPMHP. Robert M. Kosciely, formerly of the FMSF’s Legal Task force Clearinghouse, is a state chair for the NACPMHP in Ohio, and numerous other state chairs for the NACPMHP are also contact people for state meetings of the FMSF. The NACPMHP shares the address of the Illinois FMS Society. (Simmon 1995:14)

Lawsuits are a primary tactic for Foundation adherents to achieve long term goals in incremental and precedent setting ways. Significant space is devoted to reporting on the status of lawsuits in every issue of the Foundation’s newsletters. For example an extensive listing of “Settlements and Awards Exceeding \$1 Million in Recovered Memory Malpractice Cases” is listed in the *FMS Foundation Newsletter 2003 Vol 13 No. 2*. There are dozens and dozens of cases that have been won by Foundation adherents against therapists based on arguments that the therapist implanted memories of abuse in the client’s minds or mis-diagnosed clients. The pattern in these lawsuits look something like this: a client presents to a therapist with standard symptoms, undergoes treatment, gets worse and then sues the therapist for malpractice with the professional help of the Foundation. Ultimately the therapist is faulted for not being professional enough or being incompetent, while the client often retracts their accounts of abuse (often becoming a poster-child in the FMS Foundation community for having recanted). The end result of these cases is an overall picture of: therapists as incompetent and targets for lawsuits: mental health clients as weak and suggestible, and insurance companies being “taken to the cleaners” by avid, savvy, competent, heroic Foundation backed lawyers who are saving families.

Threats, harassment, pickets and taping

Threats and threatening gestures are a tactic of Foundation adherents. A signed letter from Pamela Freyd to John Backus (September 24, 1994) reads:

Dear Dr. Backus: Your article “Your Memories Are Not False” . . . is inaccurate and argumentative. . . I am Pamela Freyd: I am executive Director of FMSF; I am a member of the families that joined FMSF: and my husband and I have been libeled by your irresponsible piece . . . Allegations of fact on your part that are unsupported by fact and which are untrue are actionable. By malicious, which is clear, accusations of felony or other unconscionable conduct, you are subject to both actual and exemplary damages for the false publication.

The burden of proof is upon you . . . We have been irreparably harmed. This letter is written upon advice of counsel and the legal conditions are their counsel. You are advised that action against you is being prepared and will be filed. (Freyd, P. 1994)

Although Pamela Freyd's letter is a clear, blunt threat of legal action, Foundation adherents also veil their threats in arguments that ultimately "blame the victim." For example, Richard Ofshe is a prime spokesman for the FMS Foundation and critic of so-called repressed memory therapy and therapists. He is in great demand as an expert witness in lawsuits and as a lecturer for University of California. In interviews and presentations, as well as in the classroom, Ofshe condemns "repressed memory" therapists without actually naming any. He is generous with his threatening and disparaging remarks about so-called repressed memory therapists. Although Ofshe makes it his business to help sue therapists he carefully hides his own aggressive actions with explanations that the therapists themselves are to blame for being targets of lawsuits by Foundation (SWAT team-like) professionals. Without actually saying that there should not be Master's level trained therapists practicing, Ofshe talks around the issue, at least in published interviews. For example in a February 17th, 1995 *Express* interview Ofshe tells reporter Hagar that he's never been in therapy, that he rejoices in the decline of theoretically based psychological practices, and the rise in psychopharmacology and "solution-based therapies." (14) Hagar:

As for the practitioners of recovered memory, Ofshe thinks their time is running out. Thanks to his work and a few others', the tide of public opinion is turning. . . . In the meantime though, the damage caused by recovered memory therapy – in terms of broken lives and millions of lost health care dollars—goes on. Ofshe wishes the profession of psychology would do better about policing itself, but he holds out little hope for this. For now the battle has moved to the courts. (1995: 15)

Without actually naming a single repressed memory therapist or identifying what "it" is that being "stopped" Ofshe closes his interview with a threatening statement: "That's the only thing that will stop it. The only reason it will stop is because it will be too dangerous, in terms of liability, to continue." (Hagar 1995:15) In a similar fashion Ofshe ends his interview with *California Monthly* with a threatening gesture that does not identify whom he is speaking about, saying that therapists are bringing a "decline" of their own industry upon themselves – again blaming the victim, or projecting. Ofshe tells reporter Matzek:

Now, the bad part of the mental health industry—the quackery part, the flimflam part—is in decline. More and more reputable practitioners are getting outraged because a minority of therapists and clinicians are hurting their reputations. The recovered memory therapists are out there on a limb. They are cutting themselves off, and they are going to come crashing down.(1994:24)

Harassment is a Foundation tactic. Foundation picketers have shut down the therapy offices of David Calof and made bogus phone calls to Dr. Anna C. Salter and Lloyd DeMause, editor of *The Journal of Psychohistory* (Calof 1998: 161-188; Salter 1998: 115-125; de Mause 1994a, 1994b). David Calof was editor of *Treating Abuse Today* and had published a lengthy interview with Pamela Freyd about the Foundation. Calof's offices were picketed by volunteer members of the Foundation in the same fashion that Operation Rescue pickets abortion clinics, that is, with large vulgar signs and pictures with malicious and derogatory slogans. Calof's office had to be relocated more than once and give up publishing *Treating Abuse Today*. Foundation adherents never condemned or stopped these pickets nor expressed any sympathy or remorse for the hardship caused by the picketers; instead they applauded them. Calof's experiences are carefully documented in an article in a 1998 issue of *Ethics & Behavior* which also features articles by Jennifer Freyd, Anna Salter, Jennifer Hout and Ross Cheit. All these authors were subject to ridicule, harassment, lawsuits and defamation by the Foundation adherents and the details of their experiences are documented clearly in the articles of this now rather famous journal issue.

Foundation adherents advocate that people tape therapy sessions and hire investigators to pose as clients in order to gather information on so-called repressed memory therapists. For example Loftus and Ketchum write in their 1994 book, *The Myth of Repressed Memory*:

Mike and Dawn Patterson of Cedar Rapids, Iowa report: "I hired a private investigator [Falcon International, Inc.] to pretend she was a patient with problems similar to my daughters [Megan]. She was wired, and I have audiotapes of her therapy sessions." (176-200)

and,

"A CNN reporter posing as a patient and wired with a hidden video camera walked into the office of an Ohio psychotherapist and described her symptoms." (201) (According to one source CNN does not release the tape and the therapist claims tape was edited)

Perception management through media and pitfalls of confounding mimicry

In her dissertation "A Textural Analysis of the Construction of the False Memory Syndrome: Representations in Popular Magazines 1990-1995" (1997) Lori L. Kondora studied how popular magazine articles in a range of categories over a six year period helped to shift public sympathy from the child victim of abuse to the newly constructed victim: those accused of sexual molesting children. Kondora's research tracks how phrases such as "False Memory Syndrome" and "repressed memory therapy" became household phrases thanks in part to dozens of popular magazine articles. Her dissertation research concludes:

The data showed that the so-called false memory syndrome and its companion,

recovered memory therapy, became institutionalized over three year period following their “discovery”. The False Memory Syndrome Foundation was created in 1992, and popular magazines reported about its emergence descriptively at first, but then by the end of the period under study, the “syndrome” had become a part of official language and required no background. So much a part of the culture had false memory become that satirical articles were published and the concept was used in other contexts, i.e. the Whitewater scandal. (Kondora 1997: 335)

Kondora’s research is re-enforced by a study by Katherine Beckett titled, “Culture and the Politics of Signification: The Case of Child Sexual Abuse” (1996) of popular magazine articles from some of the same sources that Kondora used. According to Beckett the two researchers were unaware of each others work (K. Beckett personal communication April 13, 2004).

The Foundation cause was embraced by the media from its inception. In April 1992 the *FMS Foundation Newsletter* reported that “sympathetic” television reporters had contacted the Foundation. Television news and talk shows requested interviews with Foundation adherents (FMSF 1992 April 18:4). In the “Foundation Activities” section of the *FMS Foundation Newsletter* Vol 1, No. 10 of November 5, 1992 Pamela Freyd wrote to the membership, “It is your courage in appearing on television that is spreading the word of the FMS phenomenon. Whenever you appear, the phones ring and callers thank you for letting them know about the Foundation.” Like Ofshe, Freyd is careful to leave herself out of any responsibility for fallout from the media coverage as she encourages the members to speak on TV and take responsibility and credit for “spreading the word of the FMS phenomenon.” FMS Foundation adherents are skilled at tactics of deferment of possible liability, or in psychological terms, projection.

Early Foundation conferences were well covered by the press with 34 reporters attending the first conference in Valley Forge (1993 FMSF Newsletter May 3:1). Another conference co-sponsored by the John Hopkins Continuing Education Program in 1994 drew thirty reporters. Reporters were eager to write articles on a “hot” sex-related topic that cast the accused perpetrator as a victim of a faulty justice system, vindictive mothers, and ultimately as victims of their own children. In April 1993, *The San Francisco Examiner* devoted an entire week (April 4-9, 1993) of front page coverage to case studies of “False Memory Syndrome” victims and interviews with Foundation Advisory Board members. The series drew much controversy because the reporter for the series, Stephanie Salter took on the job partly because her partner had been accused of incest by his daughter. Letters to the editor of the *Examiner* were irate because it appeared the coverage was biased because of this fact. One letter to the Editor stated: “Because of her very close ties to someone accused of incest, she seems to us to be not at all detached. She would have a very big stake in proving to herself that repressed memories are false.”(*Examiner* April 9, 1993, A-23).

Another, perhaps unintentional, trap or possible tactic, that appears in the course of the so-called False Memory debates, is the mimicking of similar names and titles which can confound the most careful researcher, let alone the general public. Note that the reporter’s last name in the *Examiner’s* series is Salter which is the same last name as

Dr. Anna C. Salter and author of the newly published book *Predators Pedophiles, Rapists and other Sex Offenders* (2003) the Harvard trained doctor mentioned above who suffered four lawsuits and character defamation for years from Foundation founder Ralph Underwager (Salter, Anna, 1998: 115-124). Underwager himself resigned from the FMS Foundation after he conducted an interview with a journal devoted to pedophilia (1994 Lawrence: 3-5).

Name overlapping or mimicking also appears in court case coverage. For example, I was reading about the Kelly Michaels (the attendant at the Wee Care day-care center) case, while also reading old issues of the child advocacy newsletter *Believe the Children*. I found that Dr. Susan Kelly's name appeared several times in the *Believe the Children Newsletter* because (as a professor of nursing doing research on abused children) she was calling for volunteers to participate in her survey. Kelly Michaels, however, was at the same time going to court for over 100 counts of child molestation (of which she was acquitted) (Manshel 1990). The Kelly Michaels trial(s) were on-going at the same time that Dr. Susan Kelly was conducting a volunteer national survey of child abuse at Boston University (1989 *Believe the Children* Vol. 9: 4). The Kelly Michaels trials had ample press coverage and I've often wondered if the press coverage of Kelly's trials had a discouraging effect on possible volunteers for Dr. Kelly's volunteer study of child abuse victims. Similarly a researcher who worked with Dr. Susan Kelly whose name is Dr. Ann Burgess (1987 *Believe the Children* Vol. 6: 2) has a last name that is similar to the last name of a woman who won a 10.6 million dollar malpractice law suit against Dr. Benett Braun and Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in 1997. The *New York Times* gave front page coverage to this case (Belluck 1997). From research perspective names that are similar are problematic when doing computer searches and can be confounding or misleading to a poorly informed public.

Censorship is also a tactic that FMS Foundation adherents use to silence voices they don't agree with. Katy Butler, published a critical review of Ofshe's and Watter's book, *Making Monsters* (1994) in the *Los Angeles Times*. Later the newspaper's book review editor received a vague threat of a lawsuit from Ofshe's representative (K. Butler personal communication with Lynn Crook January 28, 2000). Later Butler was asked to write a story for *Newsweek* examining the uncritical acceptance of Foundation claims and to provide documented cases of recovered memory and traumatic amnesia. Upon learning of this assignment Foundation Advisory Board members Richard Ofshe and Fredrick Crews, as well as Peter and Pamela Freyd, wrote strongly worded letters of complaint to *Newsweek* which effectively cancelled Butler's assignment (Stanton 1997). Although these censorship activities were reported in Mike Stanton's article "U-Turn on Memory Lane" (1997) Nevertheless, *Newsweek* editors confirmed that the FMS Foundation letters helped kill Butler's article. Butler said at a national conference of investigative reporters and editors in Rhode Island in 1996: "I've worked hard very hard to tell both sides of the story. What's interesting to me about all of this that telling both sides has started to seem like a risky act." (Stanton 1997: 49).

These tactics are used to effect:

- 1) the public perception of therapy clients and therapists;

- 2) the education and licensing of therapists and the practice of therapy;
- 3) the financial commitments that insurance companies will, or will not, make for mental health care policies;
- 4) evidence and expert witness requirements for child sex abuse civil lawsuits
- 5) the re-unification of families.

Qualifier Note: Sometimes the FMS Foundation's tactics are not successful

Sometimes the FMS Foundation fails to win its cases in court, and does encounter strong resistance and blowback, which is sometimes minimized by the press and FMS Foundation adherents (Brown 1998; Cheshire 1997; Cheit 1998; FMS Foundation Board Member Defends Admitted Pedophile 1995/1996; Freyd 1993; Herman 1992; Houlton 1998; K.?Syndicat des Elves 1994; Koocher 1998; Lawrence 1994b, 1994c; Quirk 1995; Querk and Bloom 1995; Salter 1998; Weinberg & Green LLC. 1997)

Conclusion

In 1994 the editor of the *Journal of Psychohistory* Lloyd DeMause wrote to many professional subscribers to inform them that he feared a lawsuit by the FMS Foundation for publishing a special issue of his journal on cult abuse. Dr. Jean Goodwin a psychiatrist at University of Texas Medical Branch responded with a letter that conveys the overall feeling among the mental health community in the early 1990s. Goodwin:

From a Psychohistorical viewpoint it is fascinating to watch this organization systematically limit freedom of speech in this area. Their suits of publishers have driven many books out of print. Board members have prevented publication of many articles. As far as I know you are the first journal editor they have targeted. The slander suit stopped the audio-tapping of many presentations in this area. The licensing attacks and the malpractice suits threaten freedom of speech in the psychotherapy consulting room, which is where it is supposed to be most free. Silence still is the priority for the perpetrator (Goodwin 1994)

Goodwin's letter captures the effect that Foundations' tactics had on the therapy community in the early 1990s. Today the overall effect of the Foundation's court cases and tactics is more muted. One newly graduated MFT told me that as far as she knows the Foundation has had no impact on the practices of MFTs at all. A social worker who teaches a certification class on mandated reporting includes the Foundation topic in her lectures, saying that the Foundation "made us clean up our act." I've also heard a seasoned MFT who teaches a class titled, "Counseling as a Career Option" lament that practicing psychotherapy is becoming a profession only for the rich (both as practitioners and clients). Perhaps this is due to recent constrictions and costs associated with lawsuits, training programs, licensing and insurance policies? It appears that the Foundations' efforts to drive non-cognitive therapy beyond the grasp of un-wealthy clients are having some success.

Kondora's and Beckett's studies indicate that the Foundation has been successful in many of its efforts to manage public perception of child abuse victims, therapists and the people accused of child abuse. Kondora and Beckett show that not only has public perception of victimized children become skeptical, but in fact, the press often goes beyond the Victorian custom of neutrality on all fronts of the issue, to out-right sympathy for accused molesters. What began in the 1960s and 1970s as a child welfare movement has arrived today as an accused sex-offender welfare movement (Goldsmith 2003); and right in time for an era when people are having more babies, less birth control and have easier ways to create home based child pornography than ever before. The Foundation has won many expensive malpractice lawsuits that have made news headlines. Such cases have probably put a chill into more than one therapy session, which is what they are intended to do.

The Foundation's efforts in and out of the court room have provided reasons for health insurance companies to reduce insurance payments for mental health care and have tied those payments generally to mental health diagnoses. Training programs for clinical therapists have become more like the clinical training programs of the cold-war years, more science oriented, more stringent, more bio-logically and drug oriented, and less theory and talked based. Many of the support groups, networks, newsletters, journals, and even significant names in the child welfare movement of the 1980's and 1990's have faded, vanished or been displaced by on-line and other services of the FMS Foundation.

I think the FMS Foundation's success can also be measured by the fact that an organization that was also founded in 1992, the Innocence Project, shares the support of professionals like Dr. Loftus and FRONTLINE producer Ofra Bikel, with the FMS Foundation (Scheck, Neufeld, Dwyer 2001: 57, 98, 384). The Innocence Project mimics the FMS Foundation tactics as discussed above. I think the tactics and strategy the FMS Foundation uses is a formula approach to make people feel unsafe about debating issues about a common sense of truth or morality, or even a personal sense of truth. I think such tactics help set the stage for people to need authority figures such as parents, scientists, doctors and politicians to dictate to them what is truth, justice and trustworthy. Weber might have called such a network of authority figures a "status society" (1978: 305-6) History shows us that sometimes people allow others to dictate them - as if they were "adult-children."

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