



# State Intervention Against The Baptist Church of Windsor

---

*International Journal of Cultic Studies*, Vol. 6, 2015, 83-99.

**State Intervention Against The Baptist Church of Windsor: From Law-Abiding Citizens to Perpetrators of Severe Child Physical Abuse**

**Dianne Casoni,<sup>i</sup> Adriana Pacheco,<sup>ii</sup> Mike Kropveld<sup>iii</sup>**

**<sup>i</sup>, <sup>ii</sup>École de criminologie, Université de Montréal, <sup>iii</sup>Info-Cult/Info-Secte**



## **Abstract**

Based on a case study, this article presents the evolution of the Baptist church of Windsor toward an authoritarian and cult-type functioning wherein, isolated from their social environment, members resorted to severe child physical abuse. An exhaustive analysis of documents, testimonies of former members, and interviews with key participants point to the leader as having played an important role in the group's evolution. The group's trajectory from its origin to its dissolution is presented and described with an emphasis on the role played by the leader and on the group's struggles with the law and with social-control agencies. Finally, issues raised concerning the process of victimization of the children and the choice of intervention by social-control agencies are discussed.

## **Introduction**

In this article, we analyze the complex relation between the Baptist Church of Windsor (BCW), which is a religious group based in Canada, and the law, which led to peaceful and successful state intervention. We reconstruct and analyze the trajectory of the BCW and show how it evolved from an expanding, youthful, and dynamic church-like group seeking social integration

to a cult-like group whose members seemingly followed the leader blindly into social isolation and a quest for purity and perfection. This twofold quest led members into extreme behaviors that involved the physical abuse of their children. In a previous publication in *Criminologie* (Pacheco & Casoni, 2008), we presented the group's trajectory and analyzed the history of the BCW as relates to its changing doctrine. The present paper focuses more precisely on the group's leadership and its struggles with both the law and social-control agencies—in this case, with Child Protection Services and the Office for the Regulation of Child-care Facilities (OSGE).[1]

To give the reader a better understanding of the group's evolving relationship to the law, we present briefly the BCW's trajectory by focusing on its leader, Pastor X.[2] Both our research and a decision by a criminal court of law identified him as the person most responsible for the physical abuse of the group's children. After this short description of the group, we present a theoretical framework that includes some major contributions from the literature about the role leaders in religious groups of a cultic nature typically play.

This framework will be useful to better understand the BCW's trajectory and the influence Pastor X had on his disciples. Then we describe the methodology for this research, followed by the presentation of the trajectory of the BCW, with an emphasis on the role of its leader. We then describe the interventions by all of the social-control agencies involved, and the BCW's responses to these interventions. The discussion that follows raises many issues, especially about the process of victimization of the children and the choice of intervention by social-control agencies.

## **Charismatic Leadership**

There is little doubt that leaders play an important role in the formation and development of groups in general, and of cultic and new religion-type groups in particular (Weber, 1906). However, it would be beyond the scope of this article to review this literature as a whole. Rather, in keeping with the aim of this piece, we present a brief review of key theoretical perspectives on charismatic leadership in cultic environments, with the intention of further clarifying the trajectories of Pastor X and of the BCW.

## **Godly Qualities**

Weber (1906) defined charismatic leaders as individuals who possess certain qualities that set them apart from others, qualities that followers see as exceptional in the sense of being superhuman, supernatural, or even godly. Charismatic leaders also are characterized by the intensity of the relationship that develops between their followers and themselves, and by the high degree of trust and faith they experience toward themselves. Followers develop these high degrees of trust and faith even in circumstances wherein they rarely or never have personal contact with the leaders they venerate (Weber, 1906). The idea of supernatural or superhuman qualities is often present in the biographies, sometimes even in the autobiographies, of charismatic leaders; and these qualities are communicated amongst followers as myths that

appear to be valued as evidence of the leaders' superhuman exceptionality. But extraordinary qualities are not sufficient for charismatic leadership to emerge, according to many authors who put emphasis on a number of interactive and dynamic processes within the group (Casoni, 1997; Casoni & Brunet, 2005; Chouvier, 1999; Chouvier & Morhain, 2008; Dawson, 2002, 2010; Friedland, 1964; Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Howell & Shamir, 2005; Roy, 1998; Wallis, 1982).

## Shared Ideals

Apart from doctrinal matters, the main link between a follower and a leader consists of the ideals they share (Casoni, 2001, 2005; Casoni & Brunet, 2005; Lord & Brown, 2004; Zablocki, 1980). These ideals form the basis not only of their faith, but also and more importantly of their bond (Casoni, 1997, 2000; Weber, 1909). The sharing of ideals is such an important process that it has been seen as paramount in the establishment of charismatic leadership (Casoni & Brunet, 2005; Chouvier & Morhain, 2008; Drummond, 1983; Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Kernberg, 2003a, 2003b; Lord & Brown, 2004; Roy, 1998). An idealization process is at the basis of both the construction of charismatic leadership and the project that binds the group to its leader. As Drummond (1983) has discussed, the followers' devotion to their leader acts like a mirror that reflects to him his wish of being seen as someone exceptional. The ensuing illusion is all the more intense when the leader successfully obtains ever more acts of loyalty and devotion from his followers through their commitment to the projects he requires them to accomplish. They, as a reward, bask in the reflection of their leader's superiority and greatness (Bertrand, 1999; Casoni, 1997; Casoni & Brunet, 2005; Durif-Varembont, 2004; Lane & Kent, 2008). Lane and Kent (2008) have pointed out that some leaders present elements of megalomania, giving their projects an exaggerated and even unrealizable aspect, which influences their view of their followers and of the outside world.

## Worldviews

The projects leaders launch their followers into are closely related to the worldview leaders hold. This worldview, in turn, will determine their interactions with social-control agencies and with the law. In the case of the BCW, three different worldviews seem to have influenced their interactions throughout their trajectory, both within the group and with the outside world. Each worldview notably impacted the way they treated their children and considered social-control agencies.

The first worldview relevant to the BCW's history can be described as a philosophy of separation, according to which groups seek to enforce orthodoxy by requiring their members to differentiate themselves from nonbelievers in every symbolic way possible, be it through speech, dress, attitude, code of conduct, or the like (Casoni, 2000). In such groups, members most often live and work amongst the general population, and leadership is usually shared by a small elite that acts as an internal social-control agency that exercises power more often by way of subtle persuasion than by authoritarian control

The second worldview the BCW adopted can be described as consistent with a philosophy of purity (Casoni, 2000). This worldview goes a step further in differentiating believers from nonbelievers by requiring their physical separation. According to this perspective, members seek to rid themselves of everything that might be deemed impure that links them to society. Hence, contact with nonbelievers is kept to a minimum for fear of contamination. In such groups, leaders are venerated as the purest and wisest of all, and their moral prestige is extremely high. They most often lead their group in a solitary fashion, as the incarnation of the law, the truth, and the sole judge of purity.

In the third worldview held by the BCW, which is an exacerbation of the philosophies of separation and of purity, the outer world appears dangerous to members, who project all goodness unto the endogroup. This worldview resembles what Chouvier and Morhain (2008) have described as a “cultic position” (p. 27). Designated as a philosophy of survival, the followers’ mindset is such that they believe they must protect themselves from outside enemies, unto whom all that is bad, malicious, or impure has been projected (Casoni, 2000). Such groups most often seek isolated geographical settings wherein the leader exercises power in a plenipotentiary manner, taking on the role of an earthly god. Total submission to the leader’s authority is demanded and high standards of behavior are required of children, whose immaturity is often interpreted as maliciousness. Their inability to conform to these expectations is seen as a sign of evilness, for which corporal punishment and various repressive sanctions are used. Some children are scapegoated and become the object of harsh treatment that ranges from physical and psychological abuse to rituals that might take the form of exorcism aimed at ridding them of evil forces (Casoni, 2000).

## Methodology

This research follows guidelines for single case studies. Using principles of qualitative methodology, we gathered data from a variety of sources, notably through documentary analysis and interviews with key actors. Info-Cult, an information center on new religious movements and cultic groups, archived the data. The documentary corpus was made up of about a hundred documents, including 60 legal transcripts from tribunals of various levels of the justice system—i.e., criminal, penal, and civil chambers of the Superior Court and Youth Court, and the Office of the Prothonotary. Additionally, we included all the related newspaper articles published in the province of Quebec between April 19, 1985, and March 15, 1990, and two television documentaries produced by Radio-Canada (April 12, 1985, and October 28, 1986) in the data we analyzed. The testimonies of several former BCW members were also part of the material we analyzed. We conducted interviews with five key actors, including the police inspector who led the investigation, a pastor close to the BCW’s minister, a former member of the church, and a civil servant from the City of Windsor. Given the multiple sources of information studied, we were able to triangulate the data. More precise information on the modalities of the analyses and on methods used to limit bias is available in the Pacheco and

Casoni document (2008).

One of us also made a trip to to the region to better contextualize the environment in which the events took place. Finally, the Child Protection Agency consulted the third author before that service approached members of the group; his knowledge of the group and of the interventions that occurred were helpful in validating the results of this research.

## **Trajectory of the Baptist Church of Windsor**

The BCW was founded in 1978 in the southeastern part of Quebec. A few years after he had been participating in and following the principles of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Lennoxville, Pastor X began his only training as a minister, a 1-year program in a close-by city. Described as a nice and devoted man with a warm personality, he converted many followers to the Evangelical Baptist Church of Lennoxville, which encouraged the congregation to support him in his project to establish a church in Windsor. To this end, the Evangelical Baptist Church of Lennoxville acquired two buildings in Windsor in order to lend them to Pastor X to use as a temple and a rectory. The official opening of the Evangelical BCW, as an independent corporation, occurred on July 6, 1978. Despite its coming into existence with the aid of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Lennoxville, the new church formed no formal ties to any religious group or association. The Evangelical BCW's success was rapid and, within 2 years, the church boasted 70 adult members, of whom 40 had been newly converted. Its only officer was Pastor X, who was assisted by four board members.

## **The First Years**

In terms of doctrine, Pastor X subscribed to a conservative Protestantism in which man is seen, by divine right, to be the head of the household and, as such, his wife and children owe him absolute obedience. Pastor X encouraged couples to have children and to raise them in keeping with conservative biblical principles. In his sermons, he instructed his congregation to use corporal punishment to discipline their children and often referred to the necessity of spanking children, whether with the hand or an instrument. There were no rules, however, during the first years of the congregation, and each family was free to decide which behaviors were deemed punishable and to what extent corporal punishment would be used.

## **The Split**

Despite the Evangelical BCW's success with recruitment, several disputes arose in 1980 between the pastor and certain church members. According to sources, Pastor X revealed himself to be quite rigid as to his interpretation of the Bible, not allowing any discussion of his word, nor of his decision to interpret the Bible as literally as possible, notably about the corporal punishment of children. A split finally arose in the late 1980s when the Pastor insisted on personally training young men to become pastors. Close to half the congregation left, including most of those who originally were from the Evangelical Baptist Church of Lennoxville. Several Baptist congregations

in the region chose to sever their links to the Evangelical BCW as a result of the split. Pastor X was seen as being much too rigid and intransigent in his biblical interpretations. The Evangelical BCW thus became alienated spiritually and socially from other churches in the region. The influence of Pastor X on his congregation henceforth was absolute, and all those who had known him as a fellow member of the Evangelical Baptist Church of Lennoxville were now either gone or had been subdued.

The split with the Evangelical Baptist Church of Lennoxville left the management of the BCW in the hands of Pastor X, his brother, an assistant pastor, and four board members. Maybe because of the loss of so many members of his church and of the rift with other Baptist communities in the region, Pastor X engaged his congregation in an active campaign of proselytizing, which energized the BCW, bringing them from a mere 40 members to some 120 to 150 followers in the course of 2 years. Having so many new members, however, made it necessary for the pastor to transform unofficial rules into much more explicit ones, a process that rendered regulations and practices much more rigid within the BCW. Many behaviors and attitudes that had previously been merely discouraged by the pastor became clearly prohibited; and new behaviors, such as watching television, buying decorative or superfluous objects, and eating sweets, for example were added to the list of prohibitions. This change had a huge impact on everyday life, not only by changing peoples' habits, but also and most importantly by making members more available for affairs of the church. Although the pastor did not yet prohibit members from having contact with people outside the church, the practice was looked upon with disapproval except when the contact was for purposes of proselytizing.

As the congregation grew and the number of rules multiplied, mechanisms of surveillance were put in place. The pastor, aided by a small circle of lieutenants, namely his brother and the board members, kept a close watch on the conduct and attitude of the congregation. The pastor encouraged an atmosphere of distrust and of denunciation of breaches amongst members. He diligently followed up on information and acted upon it, reacting with rage to those who deviated from his norms, menacing them with expulsion or eternal damnation. Pastor X progressively became fearful of moral contamination through contact with outsiders, whom he scornfully described as "pagans" or "swine." He forbade BCW members from having any contact whatsoever with the outside world, except for proselytizing activities. The social isolation of the church grew, members were nearly always amongst themselves, and, apart from their work, they were involved only in church activities. Although each family still resided in the larger community, the pastor forbade all contact with nonchurch members, including neighbors, friends, and family. At that point in their lives, Pastor X played a decisive role in the way church members led their lives, worked, parented, and educated their children. No aspect of their existence escaped the vigilant scrutiny of their pastor, who seemed to exercise much control over them.

During this period, the pastor's fundamentalism became stricter. Rules of conduct became harsher, making them all the more difficult to respect, especially for the children who, as a

result, were treated with more severity and received much more frequent corporal punishments, according to our analysis of the data. Amongst the new rules, the pastor decreed that spanking had to be administered with an object. Showing slides to illustrate the correct way of administering corporal punishment, he advised that five lashes to the bared buttocks with a wooden stick should henceforth constitute the basic punishment for any deviant behavior or attitude.

## **BCW School and Day-Care Facility**

In 1981, the pastor decided to remove the children from their regular schools, which he described as being integral parts of the corrupting influence of the outside world. He then instituted both a mandatory school and a day-care facility in accordance with his views. He explained to BCW members that these new institutions were necessary to protect the children from contaminating influences. Pastor X decreed that all the BCW children, even the newborns, should attend either the day-care facility or the school. He appointed the teachers and the day-care staff from amongst members of the congregation. The institutionalization of a school and of a day-care facility appears as a turning point in the trajectories of the pastor and of the BCW—first, because it imposed a definite break from the social environment and second, because it created a coercive environment wherein both the children and the parents were entirely subjected to his views on corporal punishment.

Behaviors and attitudes typical of children, which would have been deemed normal in other environments, became the object of much scrutiny by the pastor and his lieutenants. Moreover, the breaches observed in the context of these two new institutions offered him much sought-for “evidence” of the presence of evil in the soul of the group’s children. Corporal punishment became the means recommended to free a child’s soul of the presence of Satan, who was deemed responsible for negativity, disobedience, or defiance in children. Normal developmental phases and basic psychological principles were ignored or overruled when it came to church leaders and parishoners understanding what caused a child to act as a child. Indeed, behaviors such as crying; experiencing difficulty mastering toilet training; showing autonomy—“I can do it myself!”; or acting according to normal developmental phases, such as a 2-year-old child saying, “No!,” were deemed punishable offenses. Corporal punishment was administered more and more frequently, since the constant surveillance of the children led to misinterpretation of their behaviors and attitudes as willful defiance and disobedience.

The pastor was clear in his wish to make the children into models of perfection; however, this expectation stripped them of many of their childlike features. He repeated, in a great many of his sermons, his view concerning the perfect child—that is, one who had renounced his perverse nature. He pressed the congregation to pursue that very aim in their dealings with all of the BCW’s children, being explicit about the need to use corporal punishment. Thus any failure on the part of a child, be it academic, attitudinal, or behavioral, was perceived as a sign of impurity and of perversity. This meant that Satan had a hold over the child’s soul, which justified

punishing the child more severely. For instance, school children could not ask to go to the toilet during school hours, make mistakes in their schoolwork, or fail to keep up in class without those behaviors being seen as signs of perversity punishable by their father spanking them at home that night.

Still, Pastor X, fearing fathers might not be giving the required numbers of lashes or hitting hard enough, instituted a new rule that obliged fathers to administer the prescribed punishment to their child in front of the child's classmates at school. If a father could not be present, the pastor meted out the corporal punishment prescribed. This punishment consisted of spanking the naked buttocks of the child with a special wooden rod for a specified number of lashes determined by both the offense and the attitude of the child, who was expected to accept the punishment and express gratitude to the one administering it. If a child failed to adopt the correct attitude, or if he put his hands on his buttocks to protect himself, the number of strikes would be augmented.

Such means of discipline were also extended to preschool children who attended the day-care facility. All children more than 1 year old were subjected to corporal punishment for any behavior or attitude that could be considered a sign of rebellion or of disobedience according to the fundamentalist doctrine the pastor preached. Behaviors that were to be expected developmentally in toddlers, such as the incapacity to control sphincters or the inability to sleep on command during nap time, were interpreted as rebellious attitudes attributed to the work of Satan in the child's vulnerable and undisciplined soul. The pastor justified the use of corporal punishment with the rod with toddlers as the only means not only to rid them of the demon, but also to teach them self-control so they eventually would be able to ward Satan off themselves.

By 1983, Pastor X's involvement in the daily lives of the members of his congregation was considerable; not only did all of the members' children attend the BCW's day-care center or school or both, but members also had their cars fixed at his service station and their insurance premiums negotiated through him. They furthermore received weekly rations of food the pastor specially selected for their family. Because a great many members of the congregation worked for the pastor's enterprises, and they were also considerably engaged in church matters and rituals, their relationship with their pastor was based on his frequent and often intense presence. It is in this context that the project Pastor X initiated of building a self-sufficient estate exclusively for members of the BCW was developed. It seemed to him the logical next step in their evolution. The project was financed in great part by loans, mortgages, and donations made by church members to the leader personally. He bought the land for this project in 1983, then plans were made, and church members cleared the land.

## **God's Emissary**

At that point in time in the trajectory of the BCW, Pastor X described himself as God's emissary and declared himself infallible. He demanded absolute submission from his members and

and declared himself inflexible. He demanded absolute submission from his members and exhorted his congregation to “enter into the joy of thy master by being faithful slaves” (interview, A., former member). He required more and more work from church members, and more money from them, claiming that, according to the Bible, what was theirs was his. His attitude became difficult to predict, and he took pleasure in ridiculing members who he thought were not as generous as he expected. Leaving the church did not seem to be an option for those who had handed over all of their assets to the pastor who, in turn, had invested the money toward the BCW estate. Notwithstanding, many did leave—some because they felt drained and exploited by the minister, others because of the treatment inflicted on the children. It is noteworthy that only men claimed the latter reason for leaving the BCW, which is comprehensible since they were the ones administering the beatings. Some men left their wives and children behind, their spouse not being convinced that she should leave the church.

The pastor’s discourse on corporal punishment became more extreme during this period. An emphasis was put on the need to correct children from their earliest age to loosen Satan’s grip on them. The minister thought that, as children aged, it became more and more difficult to correct their nature and drive evilness out of them. He therefore ordered that punishment be extended to include children less than 1 year of age. Infants in arms at the day-care center were spanked with a smaller wooden rod if they did not sleep during nap time, did not finish drinking their bottle, or even if they cried. The five-lash rule was abandoned, leaving the number of lashes to the discretion of the one administering the punishment. As before, the children’s attitude during the spanking counted in the number of lashes received; so if a child tried to protect her buttocks with her hands, for example, she was hit until she adopted an attitude of submission.

Another BCW development in 1983 was the introduction of public corrections. Fathers henceforth had to administer spankings during religious services. If a father was absent, the pastor replaced him. Although the number of lashes was usually decreed when the punishment was announced to the child, more lashes would be added for various reasons, most often for lack of the proper attitude during the administration of the punishment itself. The number of lashes during these public corrections was generally higher than at school, sometimes as many as 50. With such high numbers, it was not uncommon for children to present burn marks and lesions, and sometimes they remained permanently scarred. Testimonies of church members present Pastor X as a man who, at that point of the trajectory of the group, had become convinced of his godlike qualities.

Despite these excesses, the BCW members accepted Pastor X’s doctrinal conviction that punishment was necessary to ensure their children’s salvation. Although some later admitted to being shocked by the severity of the punishments administered, they added that it did not change their belief that administering corporal punishment was proof of their love for their children and of their obedience to the will of God. Some followers, including one who was a police officer, said they were aware that those outside the group might see the type of punishment used in their church as excessive; but they added that the degree of use did not

punishment used in their church as excessive, but they added that the degree of use did not shake their belief in the soundness of its practice.

## 1985—Formal Investigation

Very few members feared being brought before a court of law because of the way they treated children, arguing that they had so little contact with people outside their church that they did not think about such things. Despite the group's isolation and the followers' trust in their leader, rumors did begin to circulate in the nearby town about the treatment inflicted on children in the BCW. A number of former members, although they did not disclose the exact nature of the physical punishment administered to children, possibly for fear of being held responsible for their own actions during the time they belonged to the church, nevertheless helped bring the issue to light. The rumors they initiated came to the attention of the police in 1984. A formal investigation was opened in January 1985 when a woman, while still a member of the BCW—and at the insistence of her husband who had already left the church—lodged a complaint against the pastor for the assault of her 5-month-old baby who had been beaten at the day-care center. Alarmed by the punitive practices described by the complainant, the municipal police reported the case to the Child Protection Services of the region (DPJE[3]), with the request that they investigate a potential situation of generalized child abuse at the BCW.

Meanwhile, the investigation led by Windsor police ran up against a wall of silence on the part of both members and former members of the BCW. In these first phases of the DPJE's investigation, members wanted to protect their way of life, proclaiming that they were answerable only to God, whatever their actions. The former members, for their part, feared incriminating themselves if they revealed how badly children were treated while they were still members of the church. After 2 months of investigation, the police reported a dozen more cases to the DPJE in addition to the one already filed by the mother of the 5-month-old baby. On the basis of the information in hand, the director of the DPJE took the view that the alleged child physical abuse in the BCW was occurring in a cultic environment. He therefore planned the investigation of those complaints of child physical abuse in a broadranging and comprehensive manner, rather than assigning cases to individual social workers as if they were unrelated to each other. He also sought the collaboration of the Eastern Township Centre for Social Services (CSSE[4]) in order to form a specialized team of social workers, psychologists, and lawyers to ensure optimal handling of the various aspects of the investigations at hand. He additionally consulted with known experts of the field, including the third author, with a view toward better understanding this particular group and also group functioning and leadership. A plan was then put in place and, as of the third week of March 1985, social workers began to contact parents of the BCW to assess both their children's situations and the allegations of physical abuse that had been made.

Pastor X, who had not been called in for questioning by the police or by the DPJE, did not show any signs of worry. He repeatedly told his followers that the police and the DPJE could not prove anything, and that the investigation would soon be over. He told parents to nonetheless

respond to social workers' requests for interviews; otherwise, they would risk seeing their children taken away. He ordered BCW members to lie about the use of corporal punishment, and he suspended its practice temporarily so that marks could not be found on children's bodies. He furthermore forbade followers from speaking to reporters, and instructed them to cease all remaining contact with people outside the church, including former members, who were deemed to be "spies" and "deserters." He claimed that any action against the church was an action against him and part of a plot masterminded by former members who were corrupted by Satan and determined to destroy the congregation. He described social workers and other social-control agents, along with the press, as pawns used by Satan through former members of the church.

Social workers assigned to families of the BCW had been instructed to be very discreet in their investigations: They were to attempt to see whether the children's needs were met and whether they were subjected to punishments that were likely to compromise their safety or their development, according to the province's Youth Protection Act, also known as Law 24. To avoid putting children at risk of being punished for revealing the types of treatment inflicted on them, the social workers were advised not to confront parents with any information they gained from children during their interviews with them. They made this position clear to the children so as to slowly gain their trust during the assessment process. The DPJE's plan was to gain sufficient first-hand information about the alleged physical-abuse situation so that any measure implemented, whether to bring specific cases to court, to work in collaboration with parents, or to refer cases for criminal prosecution, would be convincingly justified. Whatever the measures ultimately chosen, Social Services in collaboration with local and provincial police were conscious of the heightened risks associated with an intervention in the context of a closed religious group.

## Media Coverage

The final impetus for Social Services to carry out the interventions planned may have come from a news report, which aired on a national French-language television program<sup>[5]</sup> on April 12, 1985. The television broadcast was based largely on testimonies from former BCW members who described church followers as being under the control of Pastor X. His doctrinal justifications for the use of corporal punishment were presented, and members were described as having no choice but to do what the pastor decided. Two little girls, aged 5 and 7, and two teenagers were interviewed about the punishments they had received. The report garnered the attention of the provincial press, and many newspaper articles were published about the affair. The regional director of DPJE, who had been interviewed for the news report, later told the press that about twenty cases would be presented to Youth Court, stating that "We are investigating cases of excessive violence. Beating a child for half an hour on account of a minor slip-up is not reasonable!" (Dallaire, 1985).

Issues relating to the school, which was operating without a permit, qualified teachers, or

approved curriculum, were reported to the province's educational board. As well, the Office Regulating Day-Care Facilities (OSGE[6]) was notified concerning the irregular situation of the group's day-care facility. Inspectors from the OSGE attempted to visit the day-care center, but were denied access. The center ceased its operations several days later, at which point the OSGE closed its file.

If the pastor had appeared calm in the face of the police and of the DPJE investigations, he was less so in the wake of the television and newspaper coverage. He ordered that the church door remain locked at all times, even during services, so that reporters could not film his sermons. Furthermore, he left the region, returning to the church only to lead services during which he would insult his followers and call them police informants. Although he had ordered the suspension of corporal punishment at the beginning of the investigations, he himself corrected a few children very severely during this time. For example, a 6-year-old boy was beaten three times during religious services in the course of the same week.

At the beginning of the investigation by Child Protection Services, BCW members repeated the accepted church discourse concerning corporal punishment. However, as the meetings with social workers progressed and as the evaluation of their children proceeded, a few distinctive voices were heard amongst the members. It seems that, as the DPJE's general investigation progressed, the fear of losing custody of their children became real for some parents, leading them to express different views than those decreed by Pastor X. Thus, a certain distancing from the pastor's teachings began to take place on the part of some of the BCW members. A few of them went as far as to leave the church to show their disapproval of the child-raising practices they themselves had used until recently. Other members expressed difficulty in dealing with the representation of themselves reflected by the media—that is, as individuals cut off from society and blindly following their leader in a subservient manner. Such confrontations, once the individuals were away from the influence of the group and of the leader, led many to question their affiliation with the BCW. For other members, seeing themselves through the eyes of others, as they were portrayed through the media coverage of their group, brought them to the realization that they had been under the control of their pastor for a long time.

## **Institutional Responses**

By December 1985, the DPJE reported 84 cases of physical abuse. These mainly involved situations of corporal punishment that were considered sufficiently severe to compromise the children's safety in accordance with Section

38 (e) of the Youth Protection Act. The children were also deemed to be exposed to extreme isolation, which compromised their development, and hence justified that they be put under the protection of the law. Social workers were mandated to work with their parents with the aim of avoiding legal action, which would have meant deferring their file to Youth Court. In such cases, both child and parent are allowed legal representation, as is the social worker; the judge rules according to the evidence brought before him in accordance with the Youth Protection Act. An

according to the evidence brought before them in accordance with the Youth Protection Act. An alternative course consists of parents agreeing to respect measures aimed at redressing the situation that compromises the child's safety or development. In the case of the BCW children, this meant that parents had to agree to abandon the use of corporal punishment and to adopt measures that favored the social integration of their children. Such agreements are formalized in what are called voluntary measures, which are followed up by a designated social worker acting as a delegate to the director of youth protection services (DPJ). The general aim of the voluntary measures that were agreed upon by most of the BCW parents was to help them modify their disciplinary approaches, learn better parenting skills, and succeed in reintegrating their children into mainline society. In the case of some of the children, psychological services were also recommended because the children presented important problems with adaptation, developmental difficulties, or both that were deemed unlikely to be corrected through the social and family measures being taken.

Although the OSGE had closed its file in 1985 in the belief that the BCW's day-care facility had ceased its operation, the facility was in fact still open. Upon learning this, OSGE inspectors were faced with the responsibility of taking action, considering the disciplinary practices the center favored and the lack of training of its personnel. The OSGE proceeded to close the day care center officially in January 1986 under Section 3 of the Child Day Care Act. In light of the previous refusal of the child-care facility to cooperate, and in anticipation of difficulties in closing the center, the OSGE had asked assistance from the Windsor municipal police and from the provincial police, known as the Sûreté du Québec. The DPJE also sent social workers to take care of the infants and toddlers in case some parents might not be reached. However, the operation went smoothly as parents picked up their children without protesting the OSGE intervention, and the day-care staff left the building without protest.

As noted, many BCW members were greatly affected by the perception of themselves reflected through the negatively tinted media coverage (Bouchard, 2001; Leblanc, 2001). This impact resulted in a number of departures from the church, and many more left the group following the DPJE's intervention. The second intervention of the OSGE at the church's day-care facility also seems to have had a determining effect on many of the remaining members who left after this last intervention. The presence of a police contingent accompanying the inspectors, since it constituted a show of force at a point of the trajectory of the BCW when few members were left, and at a time when their pastor had all but abandoned them, seems to have constituted a major blow to the church. By the time of that latter intervention, the BCW leader had indeed distanced himself from his church, having moved to a farm in another region, from where he sought to manage his congregation. His move was perceived as an abandonment by the followers who were still loyal to him and who felt strongly that they needed their pastor more than ever in these times of turmoil. Whereas it can be argued that the interventions of the social agents described in the preceding pages considerably reduced the pastor's authority over his followers, it can conversely be suggested that his moving from Windsor and leaving his followers to their own devices had the effect of facilitating the social agents' interventions, if only by loosening his

hold over the followers. Pastor X, having left Windsor for good, put the Church property, which was in his name, up for sale. Members left the BCW all throughout 1986 and, by the end of that year, only a few followers were left.

## Aftermath

After having examined the evidence gathered by the police and by the DPJE, the province's Attorney General granted immunity from criminal prosecution to all the members of the BCW. Criminal charges of assault concerning six BCW children[Z] were, however, issued against Pastor X, who additionally faced a number of civil suits contesting his ownership of church property. In March 1990, he was sentenced to 90 days in prison for the assault charges and 2 years' probation, during which he was prohibited from occupying any position in a religious congregation. The civil charges were resolved in various fashions, with the pastor reimbursing former members at the end. In a case concerning one teen who was a victim of physical and sexual abuse, and whose parents had not accepted the voluntary measures proposed, Judge André Fauteux established a precedent in regard to provisions of religious freedom contained in the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms as it relates to the Youth Protection Act. He concluded that the provisions contained in the Youth Protection Act prevail, notwithstanding sections 1 and 2 of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, as this excerpt from his ruling shows:

Freedom of religion is not absolute. It does not authorize anyone to refuse a child's right to protection, life, human decency, mental and emotional development, and safety. Neither does freedom of religion authorize anyone to violate the rules of law that ensure the free exercise of basic rights to each child. (Recueils de jurisprudence du Québec, 1986, p. 2712)[8]

The precedent Judge Fauteux established by this ruling sends an important message to religious groups who follow extreme perspectives in the way they practice their religion. It clearly states that religious practices that violate the law are not beyond the reach of the law. This precedent also proved useful for Child Protection Services, which henceforward had legal guidelines to better identify punishments that violate the rights of a child. Although Pastor X had been confident that Child Protection Services held no power to regulate the practices that went on in his church because these practices were religiously motivated, the rule of law prevailed.

By the time the pastor received his sentence in 1990, the BCW had already terminated its activities, and he had left the region and sought anonymity. As for the followers, most of them had left the church by December 1986 and had reintegrated with society, sending their children to regular schools or day-care centers; they also had resumed communication with friends, family, and neighbors. However, the parents of seven families did not accept the option to collaborate with the voluntary measures the DPJE's social workers had proposed to them. Their files were thus referred to the Youth Court, which ordered various measures to ensure that their children's safety and development were safeguarded. These parents were probably amongst those who remained the most loyal to the BCW's teachings. Despite their attachment

amongst those who remained the most loyal to the BCW's teachings. Despite their attachment to these teachings, their church no longer held activities or services as of 1986.

## Discussion

The review of the literature presented in the first part of this article is useful in helping us better understand the peaceful "denouement," to use Bromley's (2002) term, of the severe child-abuse situation that occurred in the BCW. Here we will attempt to analyze the behavior and attitude of the church's leader and to examine the trajectory the BCW took, with the intention of identifying the dimensions that were instrumental in its final stages, and in its dissolution. This analysis will lead to the concluding remarks, in which we will present an overview of the main observations.

During the first phases of the police and DPJE investigations, the leader was confident that social-control agencies held no power to regulate the practices in his church since those practices were religiously motivated. At that point in time, he acted as a plenipotentiary leader and was in a position to order his followers to do and say what he deemed best. Their loyalty to him had been tested in previous times, and those who had stayed with him were devoted followers who believed his word was the truth and the only truth, as many authors have noted of leaders who claim to be emissaries of God (Casoni, 2000; Dawson, 2010; Kernberg, 2003a, 2003b; Lane & Kent, 2008; Michel, 1999).

In this belief, both Pastor X and most of his followers, were wrong. We will argue that the combined and complementary interventions by the police, child-protection services, and child day-care authorities were successful in assuring the safety of the BCW's children because of their particular strategy of intervention. Their combined actions not only stopped the abuse of the children, but also played a determining role in the peaceful implosion of the BCW and in the successful criminal prosecution of its leader. Their strategy, it appears, which consisted mainly of appealing directly to the parents as capable individuals responsible for the safety and development of their children rather than address them as mere followers who had no say in the development of their children, had been well thought through.

Despite the importance of leaders in groups such as the BCW, at that particular period of the church's trajectory, the DPJE elected to ignore the leader in its investigation of allegations of physical abuse, first of one, then of many more children. Although this approach may appear paradoxical at first glance, given the all-encompassing role a plenipotentiary leader usually plays in such closed groups, such a strategy might consist of the only route social-control agencies, such as child-protection agencies, should engage in to assure the safety of the children involved. Documents show that, after the reception of an anonymous allegation of abusive behavior against a BCW child, Pastor X was quickly cognizant of the investigation under way by the DPJE. According to law, DPJE agents must communicate at a certain point in their investigation with those who hold parental responsibility for the child allegedly abused or neglected. They are also required by law to evaluate the child's situation and family context in a

relatively short period.

Once the DPJE became aware that several BCW children were allegedly abused, its decision to direct the intervention toward the parents rather than to defer to the leader undermined the usual channels of communication leaders of such groups expect. Controlling the channels of communication within the group and between the group and the outside world are paramount to the exercise of a leader's power over his followers (Casoni, 1997, 2001; Dawson, 2002, 2010; Lifton, 1989; Weber, 1906). For instance, by forbidding communication with outside sources or with family, leaders gain greater control over followers and solidify their hold over them (Dawson, 2010; Lifton, 1989; Roy, 1998).

## **Representation of Children**

The leader's interpretation of doctrine was also instrumental in the progressive change in the group's parenting style. In a subtle way, the leader brought about a fundamental change in the followers' representation of their children who were no longer seen as innocent, but rather as impure and under the hold of evil forces (Pacheco, 2005). This control exerted a strong impact on the manner with which children were treated in the group. However, these changes could not have taken place if, simultaneously, the leader had not succeed in severing, to some extent, the links members had to persons and institutions outside of the BCW and, notably, amongst these former links, their attachment to the rule of law.

## **Rule of Law vs. Rule of God**

Former attachments are usually presented to members by their leader as being detrimental to their spiritual development, as if these attachments were huge loads bearing down on them and holding them back (Kent, 2001; Lifton, 1989; Roy, 1998). The same type of reasoning is used vis-à-vis the rule of law and the laws of the land, which are portrayed as corrupt in nature and unworthy of God (Casoni & Brunet, 2005; Kent, 2001; Lifton, 1989; Michel, 1999). Pastor X presented links to family and friends, and trust in civil institutions, whether police, child-protection services, or the justicial system, as enslavements that endangered members. In so doing, he created an impression of moral crisis that he used to strengthen his hold over his followers and to convince them to accept following him into greater isolation from the outside world (Bromley, 2002; Casoni, 2000; Casoni & Brunet, 2005; Dawson, 2002, 2010; Wright, 2002).

## **Changes in Worldview**

Through this process, the group progressively moved from an initial position characterized by a philosophy of separation, in which showing their distinctiveness through outward signs of belonging to the BCW no longer felt sufficient to mark their superiority from devalued nonmembers, to a position closer to that of a philosophy of purity. Notably, by encouraging in church members a fear of contamination by impure others, Pastor X was able to bring his followers one step further in their move away from society (Casoni, 2000; Chouvier & Morhain,

2008; Kernberg, 2003a, 2003b). The progression of the BCW from a group adopting a philosophy of separation to one governed by a philosophy of purity appears fully coherent with Pastor X's particular view of fundamentalist doctrine. His radical approach to doctrine is what had set him apart from his fellow fundamentalist peers quite soon after his consecration as a minister. However, it is also, in part, what endeared him to his followers, who trusted his every word. The nature of the bond between them consisted of shared ideals (Bertrand, 1999; Casoni & Brunet, 2005; Dawson, 2010; Weber, 1909). The strength of their bond was all the more solid since his disciples' devotion acted as a reflection of his wish to be recognized as exceptional (Drummond, 1983). Up to that point in the trajectory of the BCW, the bond between the leader and the members of the church was such that Pastor X was able to bring his followers to adopt a new worldview, henceforth focused on the attainment of purity.

Because purity became the main focus of the doctrine Pastor X preached to his followers, he was deemed the sole judge of purity. Consequently, it naturally fell on his shoulders to determine which attitudes, behaviors, foods, clothes, rites, and so on would be judged pure, and which of these should be rejected as impure. Purity, according to the pastor's literal interpretation of the Bible, was a quality associated with closeness to God, and impurity was linked to the presence of Satan. All aspects of daily life henceforth were interpreted in terms of purity, and the leader's importance, as sole judge of what was to be deemed pure or impure, grew tremendously. Since there were no alternate or subordinate authorities in the group, as is usual in such groups, members sought the leader's opinion on all matters, revering him as an incarnation of the law (Casoni, 2000; Dawson, 2010; Michel, 1999). The more such a group grows isolated, the more its leader becomes the law unto himself.

Many changes to the group's doctrine were made during this period of transitioning toward a philosophy of purity. Focusing on the differences between members of the BCW and nonmembers, the leader used his new quest for an ideal of purity as a way to establish a stronger hold over them, as Dawson (2010) described of charismatic authority in leaders. By being sensitive to the emotional tone of the group and by showing empathy in key moments, Pastor X was able to strengthen his authority over the group in these times of change (Dawson, 2002, 2010).

Crises can be provoked and exploited by charismatic leaders to establish their authority over their followers, and such seems to have been the case for Pastor X as he intensified his demands on his followers. A greater radicalization of the use of corporal punishment ensued since children could not meet the new standards set for them (Casoni, 2000; Dawson, 2010). At this point in the BCW trajectory, Pastor X requested ever more acts of loyalty and devotion from his followers as he insisted that they submit to his will concerning where to work, what to eat, how to look and behave. From being a warm and charismatic leader, he became a domineering and tyrannical figure who insisted on total submission. Such changes in character have often been noted in charismatic leaders, and in those who adopt a plenipotentiary organization of power (Casoni, 1997, 2000; Chouvier & Morhain, 2008; Dawson, 2010).

## Process of Idealization

As the fear of contamination from impurity attributed to the outside world became established within the group, impurity was associated progressively with perversity as the group evolved toward greater social isolation. The leader's project of establishing an autarkic community became justified as a way to protect members from the evil that, without their realizing it, their view of the world was unfailingly creating. At this point in their trajectory, high standards of purity were expected of all members, including children, in whose case purity was measured in terms of attitude and behavior, regardless of their developmental capacity to meet these standards. Such an outlook is characteristic of groups that adopt a philosophy of purity in that the ideals of purity that guide them become so important that they appear to obscure reality in many of its aspects, notably when it comes to the capacities of children.

In such occurrences, the process of idealization takes such a hold over followers that it hinders their ability to discern the capabilities that belong to humans from those that belong to demigods; more straightforwardly put, they lose touch with what is realizable and what is out of human reach. The developmentally normal immaturity of the BCW children was severely punished in such a context. Children's consistent failures to meet the ideals of purity set for them by the pastor were interpreted not as human failings in the face of a godlike ideal, but rather as signifying the presence of evil, the dreaded face of impurity. Thus, children's incapacity to conform to the group's ideals was seen as proof of their malicious nature and that which justified not only their corporal punishment, but the greater frequency, intensity, and constant lowering of the age at which a child should be thus punished.

## Interplay of Elements

We consider the interplay of the seven following elements to have led to the physical abuse of the BCW children and to the scapegoating of those amongst them who were less able to meet the standards set by the leader. These elements are (a) the presence of an active process of idealization (b) in the context of a group governed by both philosophies of purity and of survival, (c) wherein the parents were completely compliant (d) to their charismatic leader, (e) who exercised plenipotentiary power (f) and advocated the use of corporal punishment toward children (g) as justified by his fundamentalist doctrine. These elements combined their effects and influenced each other, producing results that no individual member of the group could have predicted at the beginning of their spiritual journey with the BCW.

The leader's discourse concerning himself as an earthly god and his insistence on punishing repeatedly and severely the BCW children for attitudes and behaviors that were developmentally normal, combined with his demands for ever more money to build the private estate that would house and protect all BCW members, were signs that the process of idealization he shared with the members of his church had become extremely radicalized. These signs show that Pastor X's worldview had changed, and he was henceforth adopting viewpoints

much more consistent with a philosophy of survival than a philosophy of purity. The systematic projection of evil onto the outside world and its complementary construction of the exogroup as an enemy of the endogroup also point in that direction.

Social-control agencies, such as the DPJE, were thence portrayed as mortal enemies of the BCW. It is a tribute to the clinical ability of the social workers who contacted the individual BCW families that the social workers were able—but for a few families—to build a sufficiently trusting relationship over the course of a year for families to accept voluntary measures that included a parenting project that was at odds with the one their pastor had established for them. This accomplishment is quite remarkable since it must be noted that, when groups follow a philosophy of survival, they most often venerate their leaders as infallible earthly gods, a belief that Pastor X was certainly attempting to establish in his group.

The DPJE's strategy of working directly with the parents of each family unit with a view toward building durable working alliances between parents and social workers, without contact with the leader, appears to have been successful in bringing an end to the physical abuse and the social isolation of the BCW children. Although the dissolution of the church was not intended, it must be noted that by fostering parental responsibility, the Youth Protection Services appear to have contributed to the peaceful breaking-away process most members of the BCW experienced. The fact that the efforts the pastor habitually exerted to maintain and reinforce group cohesion and loyalty toward himself and the church were temporarily suspended by the active investigations also seems to have helped the DPJE fulfill its mission of assuring the protection of the BCW's children. Indeed, the usual group dynamics were disrupted by the investigation, which contributed to the social workers establishing a new context wherein church members were individually solicited to take responsibility for their own actions.

### **Members Confronted With Alternatives**

Thenceforth, BCW members were faced with a choice: (a) Remain loyal to group practices, to the church, and to the pastor, which would have entailed grave consequences, including the likely probability of their children being put in foster care and, for some, of facing individual criminal charges for assault; or (b) follow the view on child rearing put forth by DPJE social workers who met with them. This latter path, however, implied a repudiation of their leader's preachings, according to which the recourse to corporal punishment was an absolute necessity to rear Christian children. Members assuredly experienced a conflict of loyalty as they battled between loyalty to their leader and loyalty to their children.

This situation certainly constituted a difficult conundrum for members; however, the situation also allowed them freedom to think. Henceforth, they could consult with whomever they wanted; they were presented with alternatives; and they benefitted from the assistance of a social worker whose dual function, as a supportive figure and as the representative of an authority figure, the DPJE, seems to have been well adapted to the needs of many members.

Indeed, because the alternatives were coming from an authority figure, it might have been

indeed, because the alternatives were coming from an authority figure, it might have been tempting for some members of the BCW to simply adopt the DPJE's discourse on child rearing as a new truth that replaced previous certainties. For others, the realization that their way of treating their children contravened the law seems to have acted as an eye-opener, especially once they understood that they were ultimately responsible not only for their children's safety, but also for their development.

The process of juxtaposing the DPJE's arguments against corporal punishment with the leader's justifications for it resonated with the inner doubts many BCW members had never permitted themselves to voice; whereas for the few former members who more or less equated corporal punishment with abuse, the DPJE's presence validated their views. As supportive figures, the social workers were indeed helpful to those parents who had silenced their doubts and their disagreement. The social workers provided information about the normal development of children and presented the parents with other ways to discipline them. They also assisted parents in developing better parenting skills, teaching them how to encourage and support the development of their children in general. These dual roles were exercised in the safety of each family's home, so that breaking away from the group, for those parents who chose that route, was accomplished through a progressive disengagement rather than by a dramatic split. Public acts of breaking away also did occur, since some parents felt the need to show both their fellow followers and the social-control agents that they had changed their values and henceforth had abandoned corporal punishment in all its forms.

## Concluding Remarks

Few studies have focussed on cases in which social-control agencies have successfully defused critical social situations in minority or closed religious groups. Studies, like the one reported here, show that there is much to be learned by examining such interventions. In the present case, the strategy aimed at gradually weakening the hold the leader exercised on his followers succeeded in allowing social-control agents to develop working alliances with most of the members of the group. Allowing social-control agents to take the time needed to develop such relationships with those who were the parents of the abused children was an essential component of the success of this intervention. Not only does it take time to build relationships, but it also requires agents to adopt a nonconfrontational stance, which was key in the success of this intervention. Efforts to make sure all relevant social-control agencies cooperated throughout the intervention likely succeeded because they shared a common understanding of the situation they were facing and of the risks involved. Such a level of coherence seems to have been achieved notably because the different agencies involved worked with an outside consultant who specialized in cultic studies. Such an expert was useful not only in helping social-control agencies develop a strategy likely to succeed, but most importantly because the knowledge thus acquired helped them avoid actions susceptible to leading to dramatic and potentially tragic confrontations throughout the intervention process.

More research is needed to better understand the complex dimensions that might contribute to

helping social-control agents help children living in abusive families in closed religious contexts. Many challenges face such research endeavours; methodological, ethical and access issues confront all researchers in the field. Nonetheless, each parcel of knowledge gained is useful in face of the complexity of the questions raised by child abuse occurring in such isolated social situations.

## References

- Bertrand, M. (1999). La fascination sectaire. In P. Denis & J. Schaeffer, (Eds.), *Sectes. Débats de psychanalyse* (pp. 93–100). Paris, France: Presses universitaires de France.
- Bromley, D. G. (2002). Dramatic Denouements. In D. G. Broomley & G. Melton (Eds.), *Cults, religion & violence* (pp. 11–41). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Bouchard, A. (2001). Les médias carburent au scandale, comme les raéliens carburent au... In J. Duhaime & G.-R. St-Arnaud (Eds.), *La peur des sectes* (pp. 49–62). Québec, Canada : Fides.
- Canada. (1987). Code criminel annoté et lois connexes. Cowansville, Quebec, Canada : Les Éditions Yvon Blais, Inc.
- Casoni, D. (1997). Les sectes : de la promesse du paradis à l'expérience de l'enfer. Collection criminologie. Zurich, Suisse: Schweizerische Arbeitsgruppe für Kriminologie.
- Casoni, D. (2000). The relation of group philosophies to different types of dangerous conduct in cultic groups. *Cultic Studies Journal*, 17, 143–167.
- Casoni, D. (2001). Lorsque l'idéal gouverne. Étude des mécanismes psychologiques associés à un certain type de dérive sectaire. In J. Duhaime (Ed.), *Les sectes, un danger ?* (pp. 83–95). Montréal, Canada : Fides.
- Casoni, D. (2005). Fondamentalisme religieux et violence sectaire : quel processus mène au recours à la violence ? In S. Lefebvre (Ed.), *La place du religieux dans la sphère publique* (pp. 254–273). Montréal Canada : Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- Casoni, D., & Brunet, L. (2005). Processus groupal d'idéalisation et violence sectaire. *Déviance et Société*, 29(1), 75–88.
- Chouvier, B. (1999). Les avatars de l'idéal : une approche psychanalytique du sectaire. In F. Champion & M. Cohen (Eds.), *Sectes et démocratie* (pp. 83–95). Paris, France : Le Seuil.
- Chouvier, B., & Morhain, Y. (2008). Position sectaire, croyance et emprise groupale. *Revue de psychothérapie psychanalytique de groupe*. No 49 (25–38).
- Dallaire, G. (1985, April 20). Au sein de la communauté baptiste de Windsor. Le Tribunal de la jeunesse pourrait se pencher sur des cas des sévices. Sherbrooke, La Tribune.

- Dawson, L. L. (2002). Crises of charismatic legitimacy and violent behavior in new religious movements. In D. G. Broomley & G. Melton (Eds.), *Cults, religion & violence* (pp. 80–101). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Dawson, L. L. (2010). Charismatic leadership in millennial movements. In C. Wessinger (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of millennialism* (forthcoming; using author's original document). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Drummond, L. (1983). Jonestown: A study in ethnographic discourse. *Semeiotica*, 46, 2–4, 167–209.
- Durif-Varembont, J.-P. (2004). La fonction paternelle dans l'archaïque. *Évolution psychiatrique*, 69(2), 279–281.
- Friedland, W. H. (1964). For a sociological concept of charisma. *Social Forces* 43(1), 18–26.
- Gardner, W. L., & Avolio, B. J. (1998). The charismatic relationship: A dramaturgical perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 23, 32–58.
- Gardner, W. L., Avolio, B. J., Luthans, F., May, D. R., & Walumbwa, F. (2005). Can you see the real me? A self-based model of authentic leader and follower development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 343–372.
- Howell, J. M., & Shamir, B. (2005). The role of followers in the charismatic leadership process: Relationships and their consequences. *Academy of Management Review*, 30, 96–112.
- Kent, S. (2001). Brainwashing programs in The Family/Children of God and Scientology. In B. Zablocki & T. Robbins (Eds.), *Misunderstanding cults: Searching for objectivity in a controversial field* (pp. 349–378). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Kernberg, O. F. (2003a). Sanctioned social violence: A psychoanalytic view. Part I. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 3, 683–698.
- Kernberg, O. F. (2003b). Sanctioned social violence: A psychoanalytic view. Part II. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 4, 953–968.
- Lane, J. M., & Kent, S. A. (2008). Politiques de rage et narcissisme malin. *Criminologie*, 41(2), 117–155.
- Leblanc, B. H. (2001). Les représentations des « sectes » dans les médias écrits en France. In J. Duhaime & G.-R. St-Arnaud (Eds.), *La peur des sectes* (37–48), Québec, Canada: Fides.
- Lifton, R. J. (1989). *Thought reform and the psychology of totalism*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Lord, R. G., & Brown, D. J. (2004). *Leadership processes and follower self-identity*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Michel, J. (1999). L'attitude sectaire et la négation du droit. In P. Denis & J. Schaeffer, (Eds.). *Sectes. Débats de psychanalyse* (pp. 71–92). Paris, France: Presses universitaires de France.

Pacheco, A. (2005). *Christianisme et châtement corporel des enfants. Étude sur l'évolution du discours chrétien de justification du châtement corporel des enfants au cours de l'histoire*. (Unpublished PhD comprehensive essay.) Montreal, Quebec, Canada: Université de Montreal.

Pacheco, A., & Casoni, D. (2008). Fonctionnement sectaire et violence envers les enfants : le cas de l'Église baptiste de Windsor. *Criminologie*, 41(2), 53–92.

Québec. (1979). *Loi sur la protection de la jeunesse*. LQR-P-34.1. Québec : Éditeur officiel du Québec.

Recueils de jurisprudence du Québec (1986). *Protection de la jeunesse –224 (TJ)*. Québec, Canada : RJQ : 2711–2720.

Roy, J.-Y. (1998). *Le syndrome du Berger : essai sur les dogmatismes contemporains*. Québec, Canada : Les éditions du Boréal.

Wallis, R. (1982). The Social construction of charisma. *Social Compass*, 29(1), 25–39.

Weber, M. (1906). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, Translated by Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells, 2002. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Wright, S. A. (2002). Public agency involvement in government-religious movement confrontations. In D. G. Broomley & G. Melton (Eds.), *Cults, religion & violence* (102–122). Cambridge, MA : Cambridge University Press.

Zablocki, B. D. (1980). *Alienation and charisma*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

## **About the Authors**

Dianne Casoni, PhD, is a Full Professor, School of Criminology, University of Montreal and an Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Université du Québec à Montréal. She is a psychologist, psychoanalyst, and member of the Canadian Psychoanalytical Society and the International Psychoanalytic Association. Dr. Casoni is the author of more than eighty articles and book chapters on psychology and the law, sexual abuse of children, treatment of victims, wife assault, and the psychodynamic understanding of cults. She has coauthored a book on the psychoanalytical understanding of the criminal mind and edited a book on terrorism, both in French.

Adriana Pacheco, PhD, originally from Mexico, immigrated to Canada in 1993. She received her

PhD in Criminology from the University of Montreal in 2010. Her principal field of research interest is crimes committed with religious motivations, particularly violence toward children.

Michael Kropveld is founder and Executive Director of Info-Cult/Info-Secte, based in Montreal, Canada, and sits on the board of the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA). Since 1980 he has assisted thousands of former members and members of cults, new religious movements, and other groups, and their families. He has served as an expert witness on cult-related criminal and civil cases, and is consulted regularly by mental-health professionals and law-enforcement agencies. Since the mid 1990s he has collaborated on the organizing of the ICSA annual international conferences on cultic phenomena. He has been an invited speaker worldwide, and has appeared on many radio and television programs locally, nationally, and internationally. Among other publications, he coauthored, in 2006 *The Cult Phenomenon: How Groups Function/Le phénomène des sectes: L'étude du fonctionnement des groups* (both versions are downloadable for free at <http://www.infocult.org>). He was awarded the 125 Commemorative Medal in 1992 by the Government of Canada in recognition of significant contribution to compatriots, community, and to Canada. And in 2007 he received the Herbert L. Rosedale Award from ICSA in recognition of leadership in the effort to preserve and protect individual freedom.

International Journal of Cultic Studies ■ Vol. 6, 2015

[1] In French, Office des services de garde à l'enfance.

[2] Pastor X is a pseudonym.

[3] DPJE refers to the Direction de la Protection de la Jeunesse de l'Estrie, which can be translated in full as Office of Youth Protection of the Eastern Townships.

[4] Known as the Centre des services sociaux de l'Estrie (CSSE), the function of this organization is to coordinate all types of social services dispensed in a given administrative region.

[5] Le Point, a French-language news program aired on Radio-Canada.

[6] In French, Office des services de garde à l'enfance.

[7] The arrest warrant for Pastor X, issued on October 8, 1987, contained eight charges under Section 245 of the Criminal Code, RSC 1985, c C-14, (Canada, 1987, p. 224). At the time, this section dealt with assault leaving bodily injury. Convictions were punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

[8] Original judgment rendered in French: "La liberté de religion n'est pas absolue. Elle n'autorise personne à refuser à l'enfant le libre exercice de son droit à la protection, à la vie, au respect de sa personne, à son développement mental et affectif et à sa sécurité. La liberté de religion n'autorise non plus personne à enfreindre les règles de droit qui assurent à l'enfant le

libre exercice de ses propres droits fondamentaux.” (Recueils de jurisprudence du Québec, 1986, p. 2712)

[Contact Us \(mail@icsamail.com\)](mailto:mail@icsamail.com)    [Copyright](#)    [Why ICOSA does not maintain a list of "bad groups"](#)    [Calendar](#)

