

Dr. Dannielle Blumenthal

I write about the things that matter to me. All opinions are my own.

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When Rape Is A Rite Of Passage



“The abuses suffered by Menahem are so widespread the men who lived through them speak about their childhood traumas with a horrifyingly nonchalant, matter-of-fact attitude—as if the rapes against minors had turned into a revoltingly diffused but seldom spoken rite of passage.”

The fish rots from the head.

There is a new movie out called “M,” which hasn’t hit Amazon yet so I have to rely on a [movie review](#) for the details. But the story of this young man, who grows up to confront the men who raped him as a young child, highlights something extremely important about child sex trafficking in the ultra-religious community: *It is the rule and not the exception.*

Ultra-religious clergy who engage in child sex trafficking may do so by engaging in any or all of the following behaviors:

- Setting themselves up as representatives of God, and inserting themselves into religious ritual as authority figures to the child and the parent.
- Engaging in child sexual abuse directly, and/or trafficking children to other members of the clergy, either directly (by literally taking children to them) or

indirectly (by giving known pedophiles jobs around children and maintaining silence to protect their reputations).

- Setting themselves up as go-to figures for victims, then minimizing or denying the crime when victims come to them.
- Perpetuating the crime by threatening or marginalizing victims and their families, as well as failing to notify or adequately cooperate with law enforcement.
- Pretending that child sexual abuse is an isolated crime, and has “nothing to do with our religion,” when in fact they have perverted religious practice so as to ensure close proximity between child and adult, e.g. men sleeping in close quarters in yeshiva environments.

The behaviors of the ultra-religious child sex predator/trafficker are particularly odious and crazy-making for the child because they the child’s natural spirituality by assaulting them using the accoutrements of religion. In the case of “M,” the rapes took place inside synagogue, and now he cannot go there anymore.

The crazy-making actions of the pedophile go so far as to include assaulting the child regularly even as he or she claims to be protecting the child from a dangerous, even predatory world.

Members of ultra-religious sects who sodomize young boys for whom rape becomes “a rite of passage” are the lowest scum of the earth, yet they help themselves freely to the fruits of religious reverence by those who are more secular in nature. Typically they live off the hardworking community in some way, taking advantage of state welfare benefits and dodging the military service that is required of everybody else.

The suffering of Menahem Lang, the “M” of whom the documentary speaks, is the suffering of innumerable other children and adults who must carry with them this “rite of passage” for a lifetime. How many cases of suicide, drug addiction, mental illness and prostitution can be ascribed to surviving child sex trafficking in an ultra-religious community, Jewish or [Catholic](#) or Muslim or otherwise?

For the Jewish people, this is nothing less than another Holocaust, *and it is a Holocaust wrapped in a Torah scroll.*

The Jewish New Year is coming. But we have turned our own communities into Sodom and Gomorrah.

How can we look at ourselves in the mirror?

Menahem Lang, the star of this documentary, drives around the Bnei Brak section of Israel with the filmmaker, as he “grapples with the memory of the countless rapes he suffered as a kid by the hands of Orthodox Jews living therein.”

Such rapes cannot be an accident. And their coverup cannot be accidental either. Lang himself has tried repeatedly to bring forward “the revoltingly tight-lipped attitude toward the abuses committed—and never denounced—inside his community,” not to be welcomed but instead “stirring a hornet’s nest among fellow Orthodox Jews.”

This man is unable to go to synagogue. How will he pray on the High Holidays? What do those prayers even mean? He says to the filmmaker: “You can go into the synagogue, but I can’t. That’s where I got raped: I’m too ashamed to get in.” Undoubtedly, reading this, some people will clap their hands to their mouths in horror. Some will say, “You see, here’s another case of pedophile rabbis.” Some will equivocate and push away the real issue: “We Jews are no different than the Catholics.”

But who among us will take a good, long look at what it means that “rape is a rite of passage” in Bnei Brak? Who will ask the question as to [why and how men are allowed to systematically sodomize little boys](#) and not get locked up in jail for life, if not suffer capital punishment, as I think they absolutely should? Where is the State of Israel, if sodomy is a “rite of passage” among its so-called ultra-Orthodox community? Why is Israel considered [“a haven for pedophiles”](#) by some activists? Is it because the people who wear seemingly religious clothing enjoy some special cloak of protection? Are they treated superstitiously, like an amulet one might wear around one’s neck, as a kind of accessory to the soldiers who train to defend the state against terrorists? Child sex trafficking is a crime and a plague against the newly born of our planet. We are literally cannibalizing our kids. It’s happening among the religious, it’s happening among the secular, it’s in every religion and no religion whatsoever.

You can’t blame child sex trafficking on just the Satanists anymore.

It’s an outbreak and it is our shared duty as human beings to contain it, punish the offenders, and end it once and for all.

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