some months, and three other
were taken into care. Another family
lived on the same ho-
big estate on 7 September.
During interviews with soc-
workers, a child spoke of a
bedroom. One of the ghosts
was called "Bob." The boy was described be-
ing placed in a coffin which made
him feel "strangely sick.

The judge added, "Another boy
said he had been visited by a ghost. His
father mother said that was probably a
reference to pasta creatures in the
soup they were eating." The
judge said that the failure of
Rochdale's social services de-
artment in obtaining an expert
psychological overview of the case
discussed was "a very serious error
of judgement."
He said, "There is no real rea-
son why an expert should not have
looked at the material, and every
one should.

The next few months, both of
the Rochdale children. They
were in difficult circum-
stances, financially and so-
cially at the Rochdale.

Rose Brown said yesterday
there was no evidence
she had been involved
in abuse, and there was no
sexual abuse in all but
of the last century invented
the category "juvenile" and the insti-
tution of the juvenile court to provide
subjects for an emerging professional
ization of the social - to save
children from themselves, in effect.
The juvenile court was a special
 tribunal created... to determine
the legal status of children and ad-
olscents. Underlying the juvenile court
movement was the concept of par-
ents of juvenile justice.

Differentiation is a problem of
least fortunate juvenile citizens. The
administration of juvenile justice
differed in many important respects
from the criminal-court processes. A
child was not accused of a crime but
offered assistance and guidance; inter-
vention in their lives was not supposed
to carry the stigma of criminal guilt.
Judicial records were not generally
available to the press or public, and
the juvenile-court hearings were conducted
in relative privacy. Juvenile-court
proceedings were typically informal
and inquisitorial. Specific criminal safe-
guards of due process were not
applicable... the critical philosophical
position of the reform movement was
that formal, legal distinction should
be made between the delinquent and the
dependent or neglected."
The Child Savers by Anthony Platt
In other words, this system served to
protect not the young people themselves
(who continued to be subject to
punishments by those who took over the
management of their "deficiencies") but
the operations of the protectors.
Platt's 1969 book tells the story that
today's social services would like to
forget; it would hardly find a publisher
today. That ordinary moral criteria
or conventional moral criteria
that child protection is invoked is still affirmed by
the Rochdale Council Chief Executive at the
height of the recent scandal: "It must
be stressed that social workers are not
police. The standards of proof required
for a criminal prosecution and
for social services to take action are
quite different." One of the sure signs
that a man is guilty of child abuse,
social workers say, is that he wears
white socks in court. And one of the
Satanic Indicators is "a preoccupation
with faeces, urine and passing gas."
Compared with these expertise like this,
how could a jury of lay people be trusted
to reach the right verdict?
In the 20th century children have been
made to represent a new kind of
egression: no longer do they have
to be symbolized by innocence and an
idealized nature to be saved from moral
contamination; now they stand for
the value of an investment - a stake in
the possibility of a future which will
inherently superior. The present.
The risks to which they are exposed are
conceived using an insurance mentality,
according to which any kind of sexual
experience at an inappropriate stage
must irreversibly disturb the entire life.
The child today shoulders the symbolic
burden of having to represent a better
future: they will somehow redeem
today's sins and vicariously fulfill
their parents' own ambitions. Whoever
harms a child threatens our hopes of
survival, and any unplanned and unautho-
rised influence by adults on children is
harmful. In this society, which
believes in the Earth forthwith
transmitting to its children except its
capital, the greatest fear is that
children might unwittingly absorb and
thus perpetuate some of the worst things
of the past. When every human society in history has
sought to ensure (cultural repro-
duction), this society strives to
exterminate. G.K. Chesterton described the
slogan Save the Children as "an evil
cry" ("What's Wrong With The World,
1910) because it condemned them
to childhood whilst the self-styled child
savers were the worst possible model of
adults.
In this way, the child today signifies
everything society is unsure about:
avove all, responsibility for the
future, even the very possibility of
one. But children can only represent a
future if the past itself is to shape
the future that child's present is the
future's past) - and this is perpetually
negated by a society locked in the
prison of a continuous present. Let
there be no doubt that is this deepest
secret of the rituals which consecrate
childhood and which explain the symbo-
lic role of "satanic child abuse" as the
ultimate desecration. To imagine that
Satanism threatens children can only be
described as a desperate projection by people with
no understanding of childhood fantasy
or of the reality of sex itself.
It does not take a psychoanalyst to
recognise an unconscious play within
the psychobabble of the social services
themselves. (Why do they pretend their
own discourse to be the exception?)
The anxiety to protect
which generates the ever-growing list
of hitherto unsuspected dangers
is perhaps rooted in the insecure social
identity of social work. More
generally, of the evocation of its
own concept of the "society." What is for,
this discipline whose existence
depends on demonstrating that "human society"
cannot exist left to its own
devices without properly-financed career
structures and proper training. (Who
trains those who train?) The inability
to show that social workers have ever
done any good for anyone forces them
into the politics of panic (along with
ecological catastrophists and medical
hucksters), with their alarmist rhetoric
about the invisible hell lurking behind
outwardly normal appearances. Gross
poverty no longer captures the imagin-
ation of the carers whose travelling
expenses long ago soaked up the funds
that would have housed the
poor; the money made out of "poverty"
hased up or been exported. Newer,
less materialist social problems have
had to be manufactured which can evade
this reductionist explanation completely.
The target of the attack, from the
Christian point of view at least, is
occultism. Or perhaps it might be better
described as the pretext? Under various
names (paganism, the New Age, or simply

vices, crimes, or committed by various
or organised psi-psycho-Occultists and
institutions (Moonsongs, TM, Scientology, etc.) to
the
and

other hand, some self-styled "deviant"
currents who base themselves in
a specific tradition of the magical
revival inaugurated by the Golden Dawn
in the 1880s, of which Aleister Crowley
is the best known historical figure.
That whole milieu is too vast to be
summed up in any simple formula, and is
really due for a more considered
analysis than it has ever had.
Conclusion
What is the most likely outcome of this
whole SARAM? What at first sight seemed
to be an incipient moral panic may, in
the end, subside into observation and
official inquiries into yet another
social work fiasco. Only the most
incorrigible zealots for whom the very
thought of being wrong is inconceivable
would be prepared to uphold the