Occult music may lead teens to dabble in Satanism

By Sean McNamara

Freelance writer

ROCHESTER — New York's Cardinal John J. O'Connor recently told Catholic News Service that he never foresaw the controversy he would generate by charging March 4 that some rock music helps the evil's work.

In the week following the remarks, he cardinal received Satanism, the cardinal received in a shorter period . . . than on anything that I've done or said."

dinal O'Connor The response Cardrew is indicative of the attention now being focused on rock music and its lyrics. Long before the cardinal made. his remarks, the Parents Music Resource Center, an Va.-based organization, Arlington, issue onto the public thrust the agenda. Founded by Tipper Gore, wife of U.S. Sen. Albert Gore, **PMRC** has asked Congress to warning labels on all albums require taining explicit lyrics bout conuality, drugs, Ficide sexoccult.

The campaign f war on records stems no from the case of a New Jersey teenager who killed his mother and then himself, according to Jennifer Norwood, executive director of the PMRC. After the murdersuicide occurred, Norwood said, the boy's father told her that he had been unaware of his son's involvement in the occult and heavy-metal music.

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"There is an abnormally high correlation between teens who listen to music about the occult and involvement in it," Norwood said, noting that such involvement can lead to violence.

Parents need the record labels, she contended, so that they can see the warning signs in their children's behayfor. "It's

so parents can be a little bit more aware, \" Norwood said. "I think awareness wil help."

Webster Police Officer Kan Bage agreed. "For a kid water is desperate and despondent and listens to (music wi

Engle, who frequently gives presenta-tions on Satanism for pasents and teetis, believes rock music drugs and Salanisms are intertwined. In his work parents, he spends one high yeach on drugs

music and the occult.

Parents attend his aks because they are concerned about what their kids are listening to," said Engles who teaches parents to identify drug use and involvement with the occult among their children.

Yet some experts believe concerns about the effects of rock in roll on teenagers are simply products of generational isunderstanding.

"Each generation looks to different reas for the source of sin," observed Kollar, a professor of religious at St. John Fisher College They wook to how one is thinking and acting different — to one group of people who have a different perspective. Therefore, it would be natural for Cardinal O'Connor) to find Satan in the music.'

On the other hand, some teens may be attracted to Satanism simply for the effect it will have of their parents.

"If you are a teen looking to have an adolescent rebellion, Satanism is one way of contradicting mom and dad's value system "explained Father Gary Bagley, youth director for the Diocese of Buffalo.

"Going against (parents') moral code is Satanic themes), it has a very powerful another way not only to deny the religious message," he said. basically theism turned inside le priest observed.

Tens typically become involved in the constitute because reven within the teenage roup it gives you a certain kind of ress, Father Bagley said.

ly these teens are loners, rebelling against their parents, but also against heir peers, Father Bagley said. They reject conformity — such as popular hair and clothing styles, and musical page erences — shifting to the "fringe" occult, where they can become express and exercise a kind of self-determination they find lacking in their lives, the priest said

The attractiveness of Satanism as weapon of teenage rebellion has not pour unnofficed by record producers, who use n to sell more albums, Father Bagley observ-

"The people who do popular music know there are certain hooks you can hang marketing techniques on," he remarked. "Popular music is publicity. The people who are trying to sell records are looking for publicity, so as a result, they will use the occult to be a kind of attention-getter."

The pursuit of publicity and attention,

however, violates one of the basic tenants of Satanism — secrecy. "Real Satanists don't look for publicity," the priest noted.

Engle concurred, noting that the publicity that attends such groups disproves their supposed nature. Observing that most teens involved in the occult are "at the dabbling level," the officer explained that true Satanic cults obscure themselves in a veil of secrecy.

Real Satanists do not overtly recruit members, and are so cautious that they leave behind no evidence of their rites,

Engle said.

Meveringless, Nick Costello, who also estures in oughout Monroe County on the ed a semism and rock music, said he as seen evidence of teenage involvement in the flual accrifice of animals.

Are the spinic cults and that type of the same and hester? You bet there is," cost list aid explaining that some Satanic croups drink cas' blood and mutilate other animals. Other groups force members to energy in ritual sex, Costello added.

addition to occult-oriented music, Costello said, fantasy role-playing games lead teens into Satanic involvement. The games, in which players assume the identities of fantasy characters and act out complex plots, "give a sense of extensive power," Costello said. "You are what you want to and you do what you want to do. It's like having two people in one body."

Like record producers creating occult-Continued on page 14

Our Lady of Lourdes, Brighton

Do you consider song lyrics when buying music?

Tim Miller, 16:

I choose by lyrics. A lot of the music I listen to is kind of social protest oriented. They see what is wrong with the world and comment on it. Yes, I do like the lyrics. Negative lyrics



don't bother me. I appreciate that it's just their way of speaking. It just doesn't change my views on anything. It makes you think about things.

Kathleen Sullivan, 16:

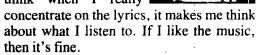
With the music I listen to on the radio, I have no choice on what they are going to play. But if I buy a record or tape, I buy it after I listen to the lyrics. People like U2 and



Tracy Chapman really have something to say with their lyrics. Some of the groups who are really negative, I just laugh at. I blow them off as if they were a joke.

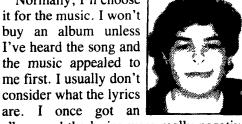
Meaghan Driscoll, 14:

I think I pay attention to the lyrics, but I listen to a certain type of music, so when I buy it, I don't have to worry about it being negative. I listen to U2 and I think when I really



Frank Saláta, 16:

Normally, I'll choose it for the music. I won't buy an album unless I've heard the song and the music appealed to me first. I usually don't consider what the lyrics



album and the lyrics were really negative. It changed a lot of what I think of that

Darren Francis, 16:

I choose music by lyrics. I listen to mostly heavy metal. There are groups that are Satanic and I have listened to them, but the lyrics don't bother me. My faith is strong enough



to realize that this is just some people's point of view. Other bands like Stryper (a Christian rock group) come off as being fake. They try to be heavy metal and they aren't. My favorite bands aren't Satanic; they're Whitesnake and Guns 'n' Roses.



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