

## SEX ALLEGATIONS FORCE ARMSTRONG'S RESIGNATION

Charges of sexual assault against Garner Ted Armstrong have led to the televangelist's resignation as head of the Church of God International. Suerae Robertson, a licensed vocational nurse, said that Armstrong had begun to employ her in spring 1995 for massage therapy and claims that the television preacher made repeated lewd requests, grabbed and bit her, and attempted to force her into satisfying his immoral requests. She filed suit in state court in Tyler, Texas, last Nov. 22 and is seeking unspecified damages from Armstrong and his church.

According to an Associated Press report, the masseuse maintains that during two visits last summer Armstrong "insisted that he receive his therapy in complete nudity" and that she was to "concentrate her therapy on the area of his groin, lower back, inner thighs and buttocks." Robertson also claims that the televangelist informed her that "his execution of the Lord's work was so vital that any transgression would be overlooked by God."

Garner Ted, 64, is the son of Herbert W. Armstrong, the late founder of the Worldwide Church of God. In 1978, the younger Armstrong was excommunicated from the Pasadena-based sect by his father and established his own ministry, the Church of God International, now based in Tyler. His current television broadcast is aired weekly on cable and on approximately 30 other stations.

—MKG

## TILTON FILES FOR DIVORCE FROM SECOND WIFE, THEN RECONCILES

Former televangelist Robert Tilton reconciled with his second wife, Leigh Valentine Tilton, just 16 days after he filed for divorce. Before their brief separation, Tilton and his wife had been married 21 months.

Tilton and his current wife, a former beauty pageant contestant, preach together at Word of Faith Family Church and World Outreach Center in Dallas. Two months before their breakup, the Tiltons, along with her 3-year-old son, had moved into a \$681,000 parsonage in the North Dallas suburb of Addison.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s Tilton and his first wife, Marte, were prominent on both religious and secular airwaves. Their *Success-N-Life* program was seen on about 200 stations and at its peak, took in \$6 million a month in

donations. In 1991, ABC's *PrimeTime Live* aired an exposé of the televangelist and his "ministry" that led to the collapse of the program and Tilton's church, whose membership plummeted from 10,000 to under less than 1,000. Tilton and his first wife were divorced in 1993, after 25 years of marriage.

Responding to the temporary split with Leigh, Tilton told reporters: "We serve a miracle-working God."

—AMG

## FALSE-MEMORY THERAPY CASES REAP JUDGMENTS

"I put my parents through hell," Jane Brennan said of accusations brought forth during a case involving a "memory therapy" session. She was awarded more than \$120,000 while her therapist, Beverly Nussbaumer, was convicted with negligence by a Colorado jury. The award, handed down late last year, was a fraction of the nearly \$1 million settlement requested.

Brennan sought treatment from Nussbaumer for premenstrual syndrome in 1990. The therapy, Brennan said, resulted in the implanting of a false recollection of sexual abuse by her father. The treatment allegedly caused Brennan's physical and mental impairment and affected her ability to work. Brennan said her therapist "presented it to me as fact [not just theory]. This is really damaging especially when you go to someone because you are hurting and vulnerable and the power they have is so great." Nussbaumer's attorney, Gilbert A. Dickinson, argued to the court that Brennan was "better than she was before treatment."

Along with the anguish it has caused to her parents, Brennan said her husband and three small children have suffered. While her father is pleased that the family is back together, Brennan "feel[s] very guilty" as her father's health has been failing with strokes and confusion since the ordeal came about. She stated that, "Some don't realize the harm they [therapists] can do to people. That's why I did this."

Henry Bible, a psychiatrist also named in the lawsuit, was acquitted of the negligence charges brought against him.

In Minnesota, a Ramsey County jury awarded the former patient of a St. Paul psychiatrist a \$2.3 million settlement. Dr. Diane Humenansky was convicted of trying to persuade her patient, Elizabeth J. Carlson, into believing that she had a multiple-personality disorder. According to a report in the

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which is more emotional than analytical.”

The above statements contradict Paul’s exhortations to learn and follow sound doctrine. As a result, one is faced with confusion and disorder riding the emotional waves of the aberrant teachings of the Vineyard movement.

Indeed, Wimber and his associates, with their emotional guidance system, have created a “monster” that they now find hard to control. Wimber’s own life-threatening battle with cancer is a forceful illustration to the deficiency of his “power evangelism.” One should not place trust in subjective and supernatural encounters. Such encounters are so often of the flesh or the devil. The Word of God is our final authority and the foundation for our walk with Him. Caution is a prerequisite when dealing with those who claim to represent Christ.

—AMG

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## News Updates

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Jan. 25, 1996 *Metro/State* newspaper, the psychiatrist’s therapy with Carlson sought “to recover repressed memories of participation in Satanic rituals and of sexual abuse by their families.”

Among those testifying for Carlson were doctors, nurses, former patients and family members. The doctors felt that Humenansky should not be practicing medicine due to her method of treatment, which, they felt, did not meet accepted professional standards. Within her therapy, the psychiatrist suggested to patients that they had repressed memories of killing babies while involved with a cult.

At least eight other malpractice suits involving induced “memories” from other patients are pending against Humenansky.

—AMG

## VERDICT AGAINST CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS UPHELD

The United States Supreme Court in January upheld a \$1.5 million award against four Christian Scientists. The judgment stemmed from a lawsuit against the church members whose treatment of an 11-year-old diabetic boy consisted of prayer with no conventional medical care. The child, Ian Lundmann, died in May 1989 from complications of the diabetes, including intense vomiting and prolonged urination.

The wrongful-death lawsuit first was filed in 1991 by the boy’s father, Douglass G. Lundmann. The four members of the Boston-based church named in the suit included Kathleen and William McKown, the boy’s mother and her husband, and Mario Tosto and Quinna Lamb, Christian

Science officials. The boy’s father also sought a \$9 million judgment against the church, but a Minnesota state appeals court had earlier thrown out the award. While upholding compensatory award, the federal justices refused to reinstate the larger judgment for punitive damages against the church.

The church members charged that as a consequence of the settlement they are being punished and forced to monetarily pay for religious thought and for practicing their religion. James Kaster, Lundmann’s attorney, noted that the verdict says the clear understanding “that exclusive reliance on prayer treatment instead of medical care for a seriously ill child can give rise to ... liability.”

In April 1990, the McKowns and Tosto had manslaughter charges against them dropped by a Minnesota court. The judge concluded that “no criminal proceedings would be brought regardless of result as long as they practiced their religion in good faith” and claimed that the state prosecutors had misread the law in bringing the charges. (See further, *The Quarterly Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp. 3, 14.)

—MKG

## HOWARD-BROWNE PROMOTES A LENDING LIBRARY

A 16-page full-color insert in the January 1996 issue of *Charisma* magazine promotes the ministry of “Dr.” Rodney M. Howard-Browne. The full-page supplement promotes the “laughing evangelist’s” books and tapes, his upcoming winter and summer Campmeetings, and his “School of the Spirit,” a five-week session of “intensive training.”

Under product listings, he promotes his “Video Lending Library,” the inspiration for which, he says, came from God.

“Early in 1995 the Lord spoke to me and instructed me to put together the Revival Ministries International ‘Video Lending Library,’” Howard-Browne says in the ad. The “Library” is a set of 50 videotapes from his various Campmeetings and revivals “that have not been released to the public at large.”

Howard-Browne has set a goal to place 100 libraries in every country of the world. How effective will his tapes be in non-English speaking countries? Howard-Browne says he has received “many first-hand reports of the Revival breaking out among groups of people who were watching an English version of the videos who did not understand a single word that was being spoken.” As a result, he says, “The anointing knows no language barriers.”

Howard-Browne is soliciting financial help for his project. A \$350 gift will put a copy of his tapes in a foreign country of the donor’s choice, or Howard-Browne’s if the donor has no preference. Stateside, The Video Lending Library is available for \$1,000.00 per set, the advertisement states.

—MKG