

# THE SATANIC TEMPLE CANNOT HELP YOU GET AN ABORTION



**(AND IT DOES NOT  
DESERVE YOUR SUPPORT)**

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**" As someone who has actually covered The Satanic Temple's efforts with regard to abortion access, I stopped when it became clear that it was actually harmful. The Satanic Temple is not going to save you."**

—Imani Gandy, Senior Editor Law & Policy for Re:Wire News Group

## NOT THAT SORT OF SATANIC CHURCH

By now, most people have heard *something* about "The Satanic Temple," and many believe they have a good idea about what it is already.

These people are wrong.

So, **before getting into what TST is, let's establish what it is not.**

- The Temple and its members do *not* worship or believe in a literal, supernatural devil.
- Likewise, TST members do *not* conduct animal sacrifices, ritualistically abuse children, etc.
- The Satanic Temple is not the same thing the "Church of Satan," another

atheistic organization founded by Howard "Anton LaVey" Levey in San Francisco in 1966.

- TST's foundational text is not *The Satanic Bible*, which LaVey published in 1969.
- The Temple is not a leftist or even progressive organization.
- The Temple does not have a history of legal victories taking advantage of "religious freedom loopholes".
- The Satanic Temple is not a federally recognized religion; however, one of its half-dozen corporations did get IRS approval as a tax-exempt church.

## WHAT THE HELL IS "THE SATANIC TEMPLE"?

So, if that's what The Satanic Temple is *not*, well, what is TST really?

As of 2022, TST is a collection of at least six corporations, four for-profit and two non-profit, with only one of those being a tax-exempt church. The Temple and its two owners,

Cevin Soling and Doug Misicko, describe that church in contradictory

ways depending on the venue and most expedient excuse at that moment.

But in March 2012 when the web domains TheSatanicTemple.com and .org, were registered, TST was just a twinkle in the eye of Cevin "Malcolm Jarry" Soling as he imagined a prank documentary about "the nicest Satanic

Cult in the world". Along with friend and collaborator David "Nicholas Crowe" Guinan, Soling used his own company Spectacle Films, Inc. to begin producing this "nice Satanists" movie with the first stunt a public prayer event in

Tallahassee, Fla.

January 2013.

Soling had brought his friend Doug

Misicko (a.k.a. "Doug Mesner"), a self-identified Satanist, in on the project to be an expert and add verisimilitude.

Originally intended to be a role shared by Guinan, Soling, and Misicko, Misicko would eventually step into the "Lucien Greaves" role full time after the first actor—and stunt— flopped.



# "The Satanic Temple is *not* the last hope for abortion access."

—Yellowhammer Fund, a Family and Reproductive Justice org serving Alabama and the Deep South

Throughout 2013, The Satanic Temple muddled through a number of different stunts and contrary postures from "Adopt-a-Highway" to Misicko "teabagging" the grave of the Westboro Baptist Church leader Fred Phelps' mother, which got coverage from *Vice*, *HuffPo*, and others as a "Pink Mass".

Finally, at the end of the year, Guinan, Misicko, and Soling landed on the stunt that would bring them to lasting national prominence: the promise that they would bring a legal challenge to the state of Oklahoma and install their own Baphomet statue opposite a public monument to the 10 Commandments.

Tens of thousands of dollars in donations followed; the fact that TST never actually sued anyone and the ACLU won the case without any help from the Temple mattered not at all.

The Satanic Temple also made sure that this *specific* statue design was officially TST's intellectual property and a registered trademark they could sue over.

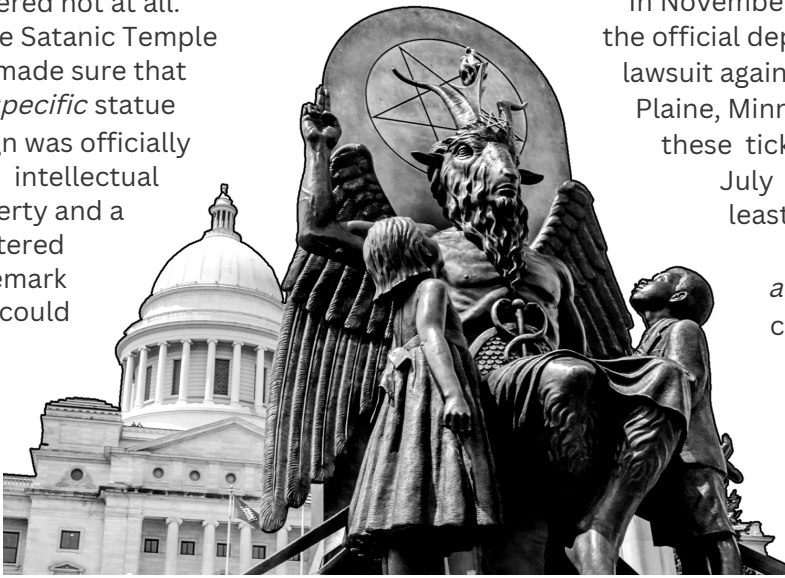
The Satanic Temple made sure their statue got them into lots of headlines and proceeded to fundraise off of the idea they could counter Christian monuments with the threat of their own statue arriving to guarantee religious plurality was preserved; tens of thousands of dollars poured in.

In reality, as the prank doc drifted into a project with no end date, David Guinan eventually left it, and Cevin Soling and Doug Misicko embarked together on creating first a for-profit corporation (United Federation of Churches, LLC d/b/a The Satanic Temple) then a 501c3 nonprofit (Reason Alliance Ltd.).

Soling would then create another for-profit he solely owned (64 Bridge LLC d/b/a "Salem Art Gallery") to house the statue and charge \$8-\$12 tickets to come take pictures with it.

In November 2020, as part of the official depositions for a lawsuit against the city of Belle Plaine, Minn., TST revealed that these ticket sales had since July 2017 brought in at least \$182,000.

And that came *after* Misicko got caught lying about an invoice that revealed just how much fundraiser money Misicko had paid himself for a different stunt.



## In short, The Satanic Temple is:

- ineffective at fulfilling its promises
- opaque in its finances
- structured to be internally authoritarian with unaccountable leaders; and
- its two owners have troubling interests that show up in TST's work repeatedly

### THE SATANIC TEMPLE HAS REPEATEDLY FAILED ITS PROMISES

The Temple's theory of change, as co-owner Cevin Soling defined it in 2012, is that TST can invoke the religious liberty protections the letter of the law describes in order to—by some force of magic unspecified—bind the powerful to the promises they have no incentive or obligation to fulfill.

To date, **the Temple has lost all of its abortion-related challenges.**

This includes state and federal cases, and it includes TST's other owner Doug Misicko belittling their first client, "Mary Doe" while their two

cases involving her failed. One of these cases was lost because TST didn't bother to file it till *after* Mary Doe had already had her abortion, which meant she had no legal standing to make her claim at all.

This is typical.

Although they also lose if it ever gets to the merits, TST's lawyers miss deadlines, make basic errors in their citations, and they stubbornly repeat already rejected arguments then brag about behaving as onerous as possible as litigants.

The Temple rarely fights the battles it claims to, but when it does, it does so badly and loses.

### THE SATANIC TEMPLE HAS OPAQUE FINANCES

Yes, The Satanic Temple *is* a prank-documentary film project originally intended for Spectacle Films, Inc.

But it's *also* a limited liability corporation called "United Federation of Churches, LLC d/b/a 'The Satanic Temple' " that sells merchandise for profit — which includes T-shirts but also its membership cards, currently \$35.

*And* The Satanic Temple is a 501c3 nonprofit called "Reason Alliance, Ltd.", also owned by Misicko and

Soling but sometimes listing itself as "Reason Alliance / TST" and sending nonprofit donations back to their for-profit UFC LLC — or paying Misicko for ostensible but unspecified work.

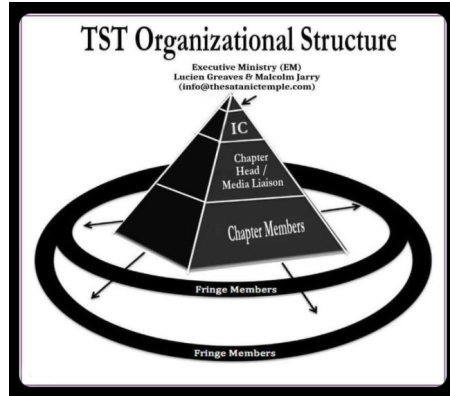
TST is *also* a tax-exempt church registered as "The Satanic Temple", then as "The Satanic Temple, Inc.", which discloses no finances publicly but collects hundreds of thousands in donations.

All of the decisions and all of the *revenue* for these corporations and more are controlled by just two men.

## THE SATANIC TEMPLE IS AUTHORITARIAN WITH UNACCOUNTABLE LEADERS

The corporate structure of The Satanic Temple—all of them—ends up being critically important to how TST functions.

Two men sit at the top of a hierarchy and can disregard the preferences of *everyone* beneath them in the organization which, regardless of what terms are currently used to describe it, remains quite clearly pyramid-shaped.



Reports of numerous abuses at the local and national level have persisted for years, and likely there would be even more if not for non-disparagement agreements (NDAs) and legal threats against internal and external critics who have spoken out.

This is not healthy for any sort of group, much less one constantly holding itself out as "bonafide religion". But it gets much worse.

## THE SATANIC TEMPLE'S TWO OWNERS HAVE TROUBLING INTERESTS

*"Like, I think it's okay to hate Jews if you hate them because they're Jewish, and they wear a stupid fucking frisbee on their head and walk around [thinking] they're God's chosen people."*

—Doug "Lucien Greaves" Misicko

In 2018, the antisemitic rant of TST owner Doug "Lucien Greaves" Misicko resurfaced from back when he called himself "Doug Mesner".

Under *that* fake name, Misicko had illustrated and promoted the release of a new edition of the 19th century profascist work *Might Is Right* by Arthur "Ragnar Redbeard" Desmond.

As part of the book's promotion, Misicko interviewed white nationalist guests like "White Aryan Resistance" founder Tom Metzger, and Misicko boosted his own eugenicist views, arguing for forcible sterilization based on IQ. Misicko's site, Dysgenics.com,

was repeatedly advertised throughout the 24-hour stream, and Misicko kept that site live and updated until 2018.

In mid-2013, Misicko had brought in his longtime friend Shane Bugbee—the same proto-fascist book's publisher but also a well-known LaVeyan Satanist with alt media connections—so Bugbee could fix the initial failed TST launch and add more Satanic credibility.

Thanks to Bugbee's own sworn testimony and email leaks after his falling out with TST, we know that in 2013, Misicko *still* wanted to write a sequel to *Might Is Right* to form the foundational text of the Temple.

Meanwhile, the other owner, Cevin Soling, is a failed "cargo cult" messiah who has spent more than a decade attacking (integrated) public schools alongside the likes of white nationalist homeschooler Stefan Molyneux and Laura Ingraham.

# Magical thinking will not save us

The Satanic Temple is so attractive to so many because the desperate belief exists that there is "one weird trick" to defeat the assault on bodily autonomy by Christian nationalists and other reactionaries.

There isn't.

Our opponents are not the foe to be outfoxed by clever wordplay. Our enemies will not be vanquished by pointing out their "hypocrisy" with superior "logic."

The forced-birth movement spent decades voting, sure, but they also

created a movement that did not depend on any particular election or politician or organization or legal case to be their savior.

Those who have desired to steal abortion access away from tens of millions did it with their money, with their time, with their attention, and their dedication, and they did it day after day, year after year, decade after decade.

We must fight them with work, boring, exhausting work. Not with magic, and certainly not with grifts.

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## Don't Count on the Satanic Temple for a Legal Abortion

"The organization claims religious exemption for its members as they pursue abortion care. The reality is much more complicated."



[jezebel.com/satanic-temple](http://jezebel.com/satanic-temple)

[-abortion-rights-religious-exemption-real-1849073332](http://-abortion-rights-religious-exemption-real-1849073332)

**The Satanic Temple Sought to Upend Missouri Abortion Law. Their Plans Went to Hell**

[riverfronttimes.com/news/the-satanic-temple-sued-missouri-to-push-for-abortion-rights-then-everything-went-to-hell-31557301](http://riverfronttimes.com/news/the-satanic-temple-sued-missouri-to-push-for-abortion-rights-then-everything-went-to-hell-31557301)

**The Satanic Temple cannot help you get an abortion, and it does not deserve your support**

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