

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-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

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

queersatanic.com/the-satanic-temple-cannot-help-you-get-an-abortion-and-it-does-not-deserve-your-support/

THE SATANIC TEMPLE CANNOT HELP YOU GET AN ABORTION



(AND IT DOES NOT
DESERVE YOUR SUPPORT)

queersatanic.com/zines

" 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

NO, 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 or ritualistically abuse children.
- The Satanic Temple is not the same thing the "Church of Satan,"

the atheistic organization founded by Howard "Anton LaVey" Levey in San Francisco in 1966, nor is TST's foundational text *The Satanic Bible*, which LaVey published in 1969.

- TST is not a leftist or even progressive organization.
- TST 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 TST really?

As of 2022, TST is a collection of about six corporations, four for-profit and two non-profit, with only one of those being a 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". Using his company Spectacle Films, Inc., along with friend and collaborator David "Nicholas Crowe" Guinan of Polemic Media, Soling began producing his "nice Satanists" movie with the first stunt a public prayer event in Tallahassee, Fla., January 2013.

Soling had brought in on the project Doug Misicko (a.k.a. "Doug Mesner"), another friend, to be an expert on Satanism for verisimilitude. Misicko would eventually step into the "Lucien Greaves" role full time after the first actor—and stunt—fopped.

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 a pyramid.



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

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 that book promotion, Misicko also interviewed white nationalist guests like "White Aryan Resistance" founder Tom Metzger, and Misicko boosted his own eugenicist website, arguing for forcible sterilization based on IQ. Misicko kept his website that he'd promoted, Dysgenics.com, live and updated until 2018.

Misicko had also brought in the profascist book's publisher, Shane Bugbee, in 2013 to try to fix the initial failed launch of The Satanic Temple by adding Satanic legitimacy.

Thanks to leaks and Bugbee's own sworn depositions after his falling out with TST, we know that Misicko wanted to write a sequel "more evil than the first" to *Might Is Right* as late as 2013.

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.

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

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

This includes state and federal challenges, and it includes TST's owner Doug Misicko publicly attacking their first client, "Mary Doe" while their two cases involving her failed.

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

The Temple's theory of change, as defined by owner Cevin Soling in

2012, is 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.

Even if this were not so, 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.

TST 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 for-profit corporation called "United Federation of Churches, LLC dba 'The Satanic Temple'" that sells merchandise.

And The Satanic Temple is 501(c)(3) 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 supposed but unspecified work.

And TST is *also* a tax-exempt church registered as "The Satanic Temple", then as "The Satanic Temple, Inc." which discloses no finances publicly.

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

—Yellowhammer Fund, family and Reproductive Justice organization serving Alabama and the Deep South

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

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 specific statue design was intellectual property of TST.

And The Satanic Temple made sure their statue got them into lots of headlines.

TST proceeded to fundraise off of the idea they could counter Christian monuments with the threat of their own statue arriving in the name of religious plurality; 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

tickets to come view and take pictures with it. When asked in federal court how much this had netted TST from July 2017 to November 2020, Misicko gave an answer of *exactly* \$182,000.

This only is a red flag because we have no idea how much money TST makes.

