

Satanwatch by Kathleen Klenetsky

AMA ties rock to Satanism and drugs

However timidly, the American Medical Association has drawn attention to the link between rock and dangerous behavior.

For the first time, a non-religious "mainstream" organization has drawn a direct link between rock music and experimentation with sex, drugs, and Satanism.

The prestigious American Medical Association's Group on Science and Technology has issued a report, "Adolescents and Their Music," which counsels physicians who treat teenagers to be aware of the connection between rock music, especially of the heavy metal variety, and aberrant, anti-social behavior.

The study was published in the Sept. 22-29 edition of the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.

"One aspect of the adolescent environment that has been a source of concern since its appearance in the 1950s has been the role of rock music, specifically its lyrics," says the report. "This concern has been enhanced by the visual imagery of rock music videos," whose "violent and sexual content . . . are disturbing to many." Heavy metal music "features a loud pulsating rhythm and abounds with lyrics that glorify hatred, abuse, sexual deviancy, and occasionally Satanism."

Although the report is extremely conservative—it concludes by claiming that no substantive evidence exists which actually proves that rock has a deleterious effect on adolescent behavior, it nevertheless performs a useful function by citing numerous studies which have implied a causal relationship between adolescent fascination with rock music, and participa-

tion in drug use and other destructive behavior.

Asserting that "as an important agent of adolescent socialization . . . the negative message of rock music should not be dismissed," the study warns that for teenagers heavily immersed in the heavy metal subculture, there is "evidence, although anecdotal, [which] suggests that these adolescents may be at risk for drug abuse or even participation in satanic activities."

The study cites several murders which "have been correlated with a fascination for heavy metal music," including the case of the "Night Stalker," serial murderer Richard Ramirez, who left Satanic slogans and symbols at the sites of his crimes, and "was said to be obsessed with the heavy metal band AC/DC."

It also makes reference to numerous studies which link heavy metal and other kinds of rock music to drug abuse and premarital sex.

One such study, of chemically dependent adolescents, found that 60% named heavy metal as their first choice of music, leading the author to suggest that such music is associated with and may promote destructive behavior in susceptible teenagers.

Another, on the effect of music television (MTV), discovered that 7th and 10th graders, after watching more than one hour of selected music videos, "were more likely to approve of premarital sex compared with a control group of adolescents." One behavioral study "found that violent music videos desensitized viewers to vio-

lence immediately after viewing."

But perhaps the most frightening finding reported by the *JAMA* report, is that, between the 7th and the 12th grades, the average teenager listens to an astonishing 10,500 hours of rock music.

The study contains two major flaws. First, it fails to recognize that, in the case of rock music, the medium is indeed the message. There is no "good" rock. The music itself is anti-human, and therefore must incite anti-human behavior.

Although explicitly Satanic or perverted lyrics and visual images undoubtedly exacerbate the negative effects of rock, it is the nature of the "music" which is objectionable. Attempting to substitute the words "God" and "love" for "Satan" and "kill" in a typical heavy-metal piece, may produce even more devastating effects upon the human psyche, because it subliminally equates the idea of goodness with what, by virtue of its mindless chaos, is essentially evil.

Not only do the *JAMA* study's authors neglect to make a value judgment against rock, period, but they also fail to propose the kind of cultural renaissance, based on promoting great classical music, which is the obvious antidote to the banality and depravity which characterizes popular culture in general.

The study's second major drawback is its treatment of rock as a sociological phenomenon, rather than a deliberate conspiracy against the human mind.

Despite these problems, the AMA has done an important service by drawing attention, albeit timidly, to the dangers inherent in rock, and by providing useful ammunition to those who are trying to expose the rock movement as cultural warfare against Western civilization.