

Media Review

Waco after Twenty-five Years

Media Reconstructions of the Federal Siege of the Branch Davidians

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“Secrets of Waco.” CBS *48 Hours*, Season 31, Episode 35. Written by Nancy Kramer. Directed by Rob Klug. Premier date 29 December 2017.

“Truth and Lies: Waco.” ABC *20/20*. Written by Muriel Pearson. Premier date 1 April 2018.

“The Waco Siege.” The History Channel *Days That Shaped America*. Season 1, Episode 2. Premier date 15 April 2018.

Waco: The Longest Siege. Smithsonian Channel. Premier date 9 April 2018.

“Waco.” HLN *How It Really Happened with Hill Harper*. 2 hours. Premier date 22 April 2018.

Waco: Madman or Messiah? A&E. Two Episodes. Written and directed by Christopher Spencer. RAW TV Limited. 90 minutes. Premier dates 28 and 29 January 2018.

Waco. Paramount Network. Six-episode miniseries. Created by Drew Dowdle and John Erick Dowdle. Premier date 24 January 2018.

The year 2018 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of what has been called one of the worst federal law enforcement disasters in American history: the siege and assault targeting the Branch Davidian sect near

Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions, Volume 22, Issue 3, pages 108–120. ISSN 1092-6690 (print), 1541-8480. (electronic). © 2019 by The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved. Please direct all requests for permission to photocopy or reproduce article content through the University of California Press’s Reprints and Permissions web page, <http://www.ucpress.edu/journals.php?p=reprints>. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1525/nr.2018.22.3.108>.

Waco, Texas in 1993. Throughout 2018, there was a wave of television documentaries and renewed media coverage of the historic conflict. This media review examines six Waco documentaries and a six-part miniseries that premiered on major television networks, all alleging to uncover the “real truth” or “inside story” of events at the Branch Davidians’ Mount Carmel property outside Waco.

Together these programs make bold claims about new discoveries or revelations previously unknown or undisclosed. However, as a scholar who has invested hundreds of hours researching this tragic confrontation over the last quarter century, I find these claims to be largely exaggerated, perhaps for commercial appeal or possibly to attract a new generation of viewers too young to remember this calamity. We now have a substantial body of scholarly research on this conflict that offers considerable clarification on some of the still publicly contested issues and facts highlighted in these programs.¹ As such, this body of scholarship provides a baseline for fact-checking some dubious claims.

In the 2018 documentaries, notably the ones aired on CBS, ABC, the History Channel, the Smithsonian Channel, and to a lesser extent, HLN, there are a number of assertions made by individuals that are not supported by the evidence, yet seem to be taken at face value by the filmmakers. To assess the validity of these assertions would only require that the filmmakers do some digging into the published research. Instead, we see what appears to be a conscious effort to pursue the more salacious elements of the Branch Davidians’ beliefs and practices in a distinctly tabloid-style of journalism. It is not disputed that Koresh took multiple wives, some of them underage, to fulfill what he believed was a messianic mission. While this and other controversial sectarian practices based on extraordinary religious claims are intriguing, they are secondary to the larger set of problems that define the 1993 conflict at Mount Carmel. I will return to this argument shortly, but to finish my point, the focus of several documentaries is distinctively myopic.

The CBS *48 Hours* episode, “Secrets of Waco,” for example, turns to critical ex-members to highlight what one individual called “mind control,” a pseudoscientific concept found in science fiction literature and promoted by anticultists that has been thoroughly debunked by social science research.² The producers make no effort to challenge the assertion of “mind control.” Indeed, that concept is woven into the narrative and left to become a key theme in the framing of the story. The tone of sensationalism here is stark. One of the ex-members who appears on the program, Marc Breault, authored a turgid autobiographical account (*Inside the Cult*, 1993) shortly after the deadly assaults on the Branch Davidian community. In the book, Breault reveals that he actively worked with Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) investigator Davy Aguilera as a self-proclaimed “cult buster” attempting to have

Branch Davidian leader David Koresh (1959–1993) arrested.³ There are numerous problems with claims made by Breault, who was, among other things, the source for the false assertion by ATF agents that the Branch Davidians were manufacturing illegal drugs.⁴ Breault also gave embellished descriptions of life at Mount Carmel that undoubtedly contributed to the overreaction of the ATF agents' response in the planning of the raid.⁵ I interviewed Breault's former roommate at Mount Carmel, Wally Kennett, who vehemently repudiates several accounts of incidents alleged in Breault's book. I have written about this in some depth elsewhere, but Kennett said that Breault was given to exaggeration and "had a tendency to tell tall tales." Since Breault is legally blind, it seems unlikely that he was able to see what he claims to have seen outside in the dark, such as his allegation that he saw Kennett "level a Ruger mini fourteen [a type of semi-automatic rifle] at the paperboy's head at four o'clock in the morning."⁶

There are other problems with the CBS *48 Hours* segment, "Secrets of Waco." One focus of the program is the interview with the UPS driver who first reported suspicious shipments to the Branch Davidians. Larry Gilbreath recalled how he dropped a package and "grenades" spilled out while making a delivery. Mr. Gilbreath's account is somewhat misleading. The package contained *empty* grenade shells. The Branch Davidians later claimed that the grenade shells were mounted on plaques and sold at gun shows. At a 1995 congressional hearing, Jack Zimmerman, the attorney for sect member Steve Schneider, held up one of the plaques. The government has challenged this account of the purpose of the grenade shells claiming that the group was making live grenades. But given the problems with the preservation of the crime scene and the mishandling of evidence, this assertion remains disputed.⁷

In another part of the CBS *48 Hours* episode, former *Dallas Morning News* reporter Lee Hancock states that the Branch Davidians "murdered" ATF agents in the initial raid on 28 February 1993. This statement has no merit. The jury in the criminal trial of eleven Branch Davidians in San Antonio, Texas in 1994 acquitted the sect members of the charges of murder and conspiracy to murder federal agents. The "murder" claim surfaces in other documentaries as well, boldly declared by federal agents without regard for the actual verdicts in the criminal trial.

Finally, to the dismay of this viewer, no scholars who have conducted extensive research on the Branch Davidian case are interviewed in the CBS *48 Hours* "Secrets of Waco." There are a dozen or more scholars on Waco who are still active in the academy who could have been interviewed. There is no mention of any of these scholars' work or the comprehensive research literature published on the conflict.

Like the CBS *48 Hours* program, the ABC *20/20* episode, "Truth and Lies: Waco," fails to include even a single scholar on Waco. Instead, it prominently features Mary Garafalo, an investigative reporter from the

syndicated news magazine TV program, *A Current Affair*. By my count, Ms. Garafalo appears more than thirty times. It is not clear what qualifies this reporter to receive so much face time.

ABC *20/20* "Truth and Lies" also features a mix of ex-members and survivors—David Bunds, his sister Robyn Bunds, Kiri Jewell, Dana Okimoto, Clive Doyle, David Thibodeau, and Sheila Martin. There is a better balance to the conflicted emotions and feelings disclosed in these interviews. Some of the comments by ex-members David and Robyn Bunds highlight the gray areas where lived experience in the community reveals a more nuanced context. These interviews actually reflect the ambivalence of attitudes found in studies of ex-members.⁸ Nevertheless, the program seems intent on exploiting the more scandalous practices of the group. Consequently, it ignores the larger and more disturbing issues in the tragic events at Mount Carmel. Was the ATF raid even necessary? Did the ATF have other, less dangerous options to serve the arrest warrant on Koresh? Could the standoff have been resolved peacefully by FBI agents? Was the FBI's tank and CS gas assault on 19 April 1993 the best course of action?

Instead of examining these questions, the ABC *20/20* program presents Byron Sage, a retired FBI agent who was a negotiator during the Mount Carmel siege, and who appears incapable of admitting to the numerous miscalculations and errors made by the FBI. He places all of the blame for the tragedy on Koresh and the Branch Davidians. Sage's account is doctrinaire and disingenuous, as is made clear by the counter-narrative of his colleague Gary Noesner, who was negotiation coordinator at Waco for the first half of the siege, and after the tragic fire on 19 April was made Chief of the FBI's Crisis Negotiation Unit. Though Noesner is seen only briefly in "Truth and Lies," he explicitly contradicts Sage. Noesner is a more prominent figure in a few of the other documentaries discussed here and in the Paramount Network's *Waco* miniseries. Noesner delineates the communication problems with Jeffrey Jamar, the Special Agent in Charge from San Antonio, who was the on-site commander and more inclined to listen to the head of the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team (HRT). With support from FBI officials in the command center in the FBI's Hoover Building in Washington, D.C.,⁹ Jamar facilitated the HRT's rush to implement show-of-force operations, while ignoring the advice of negotiators who pleaded for patience and a peaceful end to the standoff.

Information has leaked out slowly over the years about the problems with communication that existed within the FBI during the siege. Noesner's recent public comments, as well as his book, *Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator* (2010), have confirmed suspicions that some scholars had all along that the negotiations were deliberately sabotaged by the HRT's tactical actions against the Branch Davidians. Indeed, I attempted to make this argument nearly twenty

years ago. I was able to obtain some training materials outlining protocols used by FBI negotiators on how to conduct hostage-barricade incidents. My analysis of these protocols uncovered sixteen violations made by FBI agents during the Mount Carmel siege.¹⁰ It was evident to me back then that the FBI's focus on militarized tactical solutions undermined good-faith negotiations with the Branch Davidians, which contributed to a premature termination of the standoff by the FBI's tank and CS gas assault that resulted in the unnecessary deaths of seventy-six men, women, and children in the fire.

The format of the History Channel *Days That Shaped America* episode, "The Waco Siege," departs from the others in that it essentially tells the story of two retired ATF agents, Bill Buford and Eric Evans. It dramatically depicts how the ATF raid on the Branch Davidians altered their personal lives. (Needless to say, no Waco scholars are interviewed and the filmmakers appear to be unaware of the research literature.) A human interest piece, "The Waco Siege" allows the two former agents to construct their accounts as victims. Viewers can appreciate the sacrifices both of these men made as law enforcement agents. But Buford, who sustained serious and life-long injuries in the raid and ensuing shootout, does not take any responsibility for critical failures in the planning of the raid. This is a problem—or a deliberate oversight—since the documentary neglects to mention that Buford helped develop plans for the raid.¹¹ Here is what the Congressional Committee on Government Reform and Oversight and the Committee on the Judiciary concluded in their joint report with regard to the ATF raid:

The ATF's raid plan for February 28 was significantly flawed. The plan was poorly conceived, utilized a high risk tactical approach when other tactics could have been successfully used, was drafted and commanded by ATF agents who were less qualified than other available agents, and used agents who were not significantly trained for the operation.¹²

The film's producers seem to miss the cruel irony of Buford's victimization. The entire raid was unnecessary, and hence, his injuries are in no small part a result of his own actions in the planning of the disastrous raid. This point is made forcefully in another section of the congressional report, which notes that the warrant for Koresh's arrest could have been served while he was away from the Mount Carmel property, thus avoiding the dangerous high-risk raid altogether.

David Koresh could have been arrested outside the Davidian compound. The ATF chose not to arrest Koresh outside the Davidian residence and instead were determined to use a dynamic entry approach. In making this decision ATF agents exercised extremely poor judgment, made erroneous assumptions, and ignored the foreseeable perils of their course of action.¹³

Ken Vincent, a retired member of the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team, is also interviewed in the History Channel's documentary. He states that there is "no playbook" for this kind of incident. I find this dissembling statement to be revisionist history. The FBI established its hostage negotiation training program at the FBI Academy on the Marine Corps Base Quantico in 1973, following the tragic deaths of Israeli hostages at the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich. The Special Operations and Research Unit (SOARU) of the academy focused on coordinating efforts by behavioral scientists and law enforcement personnel to develop a rigorous curriculum and training in crisis negotiations.¹⁴ Crisis negotiation training combines the principles and applications of criminal justice, sociology, psychology, communications, and other disciplines into a single conceptual framework. The problem at Waco was not that the FBI did not have a reliable set of guidelines and protocols in place, a playbook if you will; the problem was that they tossed the playbook aside and ignored their own guidelines.¹⁵

The Smithsonian Channel documentary, *Waco: The Longest Siege*, is disappointing for some of the same reasons mentioned above. It is a morality tale peppered with heavy doses of cult shaming by the narrator, federal agents, ex-members Marc Breault and his wife Elizabeth Baranyai, and others, though, as usual, the voices of scholars are missing. To compound this problem, the documentary includes a number of factual errors or misleading statements. At one point in the film, the narrator notes that Koresh married his wife Rachel when she was fourteen and states that the legal age of marriage in Texas was seventeen, implying that there was something nefarious about the marriage. In the state of Texas, however, a woman could be married as young as fourteen with parental consent up until 2006. Rachel's parents, Perry and Mary Belle Jones, gave their consent to the marriage. At another point in the documentary, the narrator refers to a video made by the Branch Davidians during the siege and says Koresh tried "to exploit it with a calculated PR offensive." I have watched this two-hour video (available in bits and pieces on YouTube under the title *Inside Mount Carmel*) a dozen times over the years. No objective observer would draw this conclusion from the raw footage. The video camera was sent into the residence by FBI negotiators (who sent in a videotape of themselves) to build rapport with the Branch Davidians. The video made inside the residence would have also been used by FBI agents to garner intelligence about the barricaded sect members. The Branch Davidians were told to talk about themselves on tape. The FBI refused to release to the news media the three videotapes the Branch Davidians sent out during the siege for fear that it would humanize the group members, which would have counteracted the sustained efforts to demonize them in press briefings.¹⁶ The videos on the three videotapes were later compiled into a single videotape and provided to the Branch Davidians'

defense attorneys in the 1994 criminal trial. Only then did the videotape begin to get public distribution.

The documentary from HLN (formerly CNN Headline News), a two-hour episode titled “Waco” in *How It Really Happened with Hill Harper*, slightly edges toward a better balance of events surrounding the federal siege and two assaults on the Branch Davidians. We see a greater proportion of interviews with Branch Davidian survivors and sympathetic family members as well as insightful commentary by Waco scholars J. Phillip Arnold and Catherine Wessinger. Texas journalist and former Nieman Fellow in Journalism, Dick Reavis, was also interviewed. Reavis authored *The Ashes of Waco* (1995), and provides a critical perspective on the ATF investigation leading up to the raid. Retired FBI agent Gary Noesner, who was the negotiation coordinator at Waco until he was removed by the onsite commander Jeffrey Jamar, explains to viewers how the aggressive actions of the HRT against the Branch Davidians undermined negotiations.¹⁷ Koresh’s attorney, Dick DeGuerin, describes how Koresh told him on 14 April 1993 that he would leave the residence after he had written down his interpretation of the Seven Seals in the book of Revelation. DeGuerin reports that he was told by the FBI that “we have all the time it takes.” On 19 April, however, the HRT launched its deadly tank and CS gas assault on the barricaded sect members.

While not hegemonic, the law enforcement narrative is still a part of HLN’s *How It Really Happened* documentary. Interviews with former ATF agents Bill Buford, Roland Ballesteros, and Chuck Hustmyre are included. Hustmyre repeats the malicious claim that the Branch Davidians “murdered” ATF agents, while retired FBI Special Agent in Charge Jeffrey Jamar falsely asserts that the bureau had “absolute evidence that Koresh never even started [writing] the Seven Seals.” In fact, Koresh had finished his commentary on the First Seal and was working on the Second Seal when the tank and CS gas assault was launched by the HRT. The document containing the First Seal commentary was brought out of the fire by Branch Davidian survivor Ruth Riddle on a computer disk.¹⁸

Despite its sensationalistic title, the A&E documentary *Waco: Madman or Messiah?* produced by RAW TV in London also presents a fairer treatment of the Mount Carmel conflict than that of the CBS, ABC, History Channel, or Smithsonian Channel programs. The coverage is less one-sided and less dismissive of the Branch Davidian community. The interviews with survivors Kathy Jones and her daughter Heather, and with survivor Kathy Schroeder and her youngest daughter, humanize the Branch Davidians. Their comments and insights give viewers a more empathetic look into the families and shared bonds of the community. I was taken aback by the interview with David Koresh’s aunt, Sharon Kidd, who describes the abuse

Vernon Howell experienced as an adolescent at the hands of his stepfather. Vernon was kicked out of the house and went to live with his aunt in his early teens. After he became involved with the Branch Davidians, Sharon was informed by Vernon that one day the government would kill him. She told the interviewer, "I've never forgotten that." Survivors Graeme Craddock and Kathy Jones both said that Koresh prophesied a government raid and said they would "kill us." The federal siege and two assaults, carried out in such spectacular fashion, certainly adds to the mystique surrounding Koresh.

A&E's *Waco: Madman or Messiah?* also includes interviews with scholars James D. Tabor and J. Phillip Arnold, who were key players in the unfolding drama of how Koresh might interpret the federal agents' actions at Mount Carmel in light of biblical prophecies. Communicating with Koresh via a radio broadcast on 1 April 1993, it appears that Tabor and Arnold persuaded him that the passage in the book of Revelation regarding the Fifth Seal could be interpreted differently so as not to point to an evitable "final battle," in the short term, in which Koresh and other Branch Davidians would be killed. We learn in *Waco: Madman or Messiah?* that during the siege Arnold approached FBI agent Bob Ricks, who was the FBI's spokesperson during press briefings, and offered to help interpret Koresh's theology for the agents, but was rebuffed. Undaunted, Tabor and Arnold then used a local radio broadcast to communicate their message to Koresh. On 14 April, the day after Passover, the FBI agents in Waco received a letter from Koresh that conveyed his intent to come out after completing his interpretation of the Seven Seals. These interviews with Tabor and Arnold in *Waco: Madman or Messiah?* give viewers critical pieces of information about the standoff—namely, that it could have ended differently had FBI agents shown more patience and been willing to work with knowledgeable third-party intermediaries in the negotiations.

The A&E documentary is not entirely sympathetic to the Branch Davidians. Marc Breault is interviewed to alert viewers to the dangers of cult leaders like Koresh—" [Koresh] had to make the apocalypse happen." Byron Sage appears again to repeat his version of events. He observes that "none of the Davidian survivors brought out a child with them." This reprehensible statement ignores the fact that after six hours of exposure to CS gas, many of the men, women, and children had already suffocated or were in a comatose state.¹⁹ Furthermore the people were scattered throughout different locations in the building. During the 19 April 1993 assault, a Combat Engineering Vehicle driven by a member of the FBI's HRT drove into the residence and gassed the women (including two who were pregnant) and small children sheltering in a concrete room from 11:31 A.M. to 11:55 A.M. The fire started at 12:07 P.M.²⁰ and quickly consumed the building.

In *Waco: Madman or Messiah?* retired ATF agent Robert Rodriguez tells the viewing audience that the Branch Davidians “were there to die.” One of the most revealing interviews was conducted with retired HRT operator Jim McGee, who admits that “I wanted to do an assault. I wanted [Koresh] to pay for killing those four ATF agents. . . . I fired about 93 gas rounds [ferret rounds]” into the building. Branch Davidian survivor Clive Doyle reports that, after the ATF shootout ended with the deaths of four ATF agents and many wounded, he anticipated this response from federal agents. He said, “The feeling I had was, oh no, they are going to want revenge.”

The Paramount Network docudrama, *Waco*, created by brothers Drew Dowdle and John Erick Dowdle, is an intriguing effort to mine the internal relationships and dynamics of both the Branch Davidians and the FBI agents on site in Waco. The six-part miniseries is based on two books—an autobiography written by Branch Davidian survivor David Thibodeau with Leon Whiteson, *A Place Called Waco: A Survivor's Story* (1999), and Gary Noesner's book, *Stalling for Time*—in addition to other research. The six episodes give us a more nuanced portrait of Koresh and the Branch Davidians, largely through the eyes of David Thibodeau. Key members Judy and Steve Schneider, Michele Jones, Rachel Howell Koresh, Thibodeau and others are fleshed out, humanized, and given sympathetic personality and character treatments. It is a major triumph that the (fictionalized) lives of the people living at Mount Carmel are not simply dismissed as disembodied cultists. The portrayal of Koresh by the actor Taylor Kitsch is remarkable, providing insight into his charismatic appeal and inspirational leadership, despite the controversial doctrines he espoused. The gut-wrenching struggles of members to accept these doctrines are on full display. There are visceral tensions in the group; the Branch Davidians are not simply programmed, brainwashed robots.

The dramatization of Gary Noesner's role as the FBI negotiation coordinator on the scene will be a revelation to some. In the episodes of the miniseries, Noesner complains to supervisors early on about the increasing militarization of the FBI through significant funding allotted to the HRT. By the time of the Ruby Ridge, Idaho standoff with the Randy Weaver family, six months before Waco, Noesner is already wrestling with the strained relations between negotiators and the HRT commander. The increased frustration and acrimony is played out to its fullest during the 51-day siege at Mount Carmel. Noesner led the negotiation team for the first half of the standoff, but was “rotated out” by superiors because he loudly protested tactical pressure on the Branch Davidians as being counterproductive to the negotiations. In a video on the Paramount Network *Waco* website, which features interviews with the figures dramatized in the miniseries, the real Gary Noesner states:

As I learned, there was a great deal of pressure from the tactical side to have me replaced because I was clearly an impediment to their sense that ratcheting up their tactical maneuvers would be a way to resolve this. . . . We did eventually get thirty-five people out. But after that some very provocative actions were taken by the tactical team and Koresh went ballistic. He said, "That's it; no one else is coming out."²¹

Taken as a whole, the quality of the programs in 2018 on the Branch Davidian case is very uneven. The CBS, ABC, History Channel, and Smithsonian Channel documentaries are awash in tabloid-style journalism and rely entirely too much on a selective law enforcement narrative. This narrative serves as a gate-keeping function to preserve the impression that the actions of ATF and FBI agents taken against the Branch Davidians were necessary and unavoidable. Nothing could be further from the truth. The HLN and A&E documentaries make a concerted effort to give a more balanced treatment. They do not ignore the criticism and controversy surrounding David Koresh and the Branch Davidians, but neither do these programs descend into obsessive scandalizing. In contrast, the Dowdle brothers' dramatic interpretation of the events in their six-part miniseries aired on the Paramount Network is grounded in the firsthand views of primary actors. This provides alternative viewpoints that challenge the conventional wisdom on "Waco." It is somewhat ironic that a fictional representation of events comes closer to the truth than documentaries, which are supposed to be fact-based.

My strongest criticism of the Waco programs is reserved for the misguided focus of the first four documentaries discussed here. Koresh certainly could have been charged with sexual assault of minors. Some observers express outrage at the sexual practices of Koresh taking multiple women as wives (though that does not involve any criminal acts). But the defining story of Waco should be *how* law enforcement authorities responded to actual criminal violations. While the documentaries spend an inordinate amount of time on the salacious sexual aspects of the community, the ATF raid was predicated on firearms violations. The ATF has no jurisdiction in matters of child sexual abuse. This was a raid conducted to find guns. Yet very little time was allotted in these documentaries to analyze the firearms charges, the sources of evidence to launch a massive paramilitary raid, or the options available to the ATF agents for less dangerous and less lethal enforcement actions.

While many safer options were available to the ATF, I will note just one. None of the programs mention the fact that months before the raid, ATF investigator Davy Aguilera was offered a chance to visit Mount Carmel and inspect the firearms. During a compliance inspection of a gun dealer who sold firearms to Koresh, agent Aguilera was given

a personal invitation by Koresh himself to inspect his weapons. Inexplicably, Aguilera refused the invitation. The congressional report later condemned the ATF for this decision, stating “The agent’s decline of the Koresh offer was a serious mistake.”²² This is a spectacular understatement given the deadly outcome of the raid and subsequent siege and final assault conducted by the FBI. The failure of these documentaries to drill down further and invest the necessary time and effort to uncover the various government miscalculations and misfeasance at Waco is itself another chapter in this historic tragedy. The ATF ignored a number of alternatives, and seemed intent on launching a dangerous, high-risk raid.²³ The 1993 Treasury Department report emphatically made this point when it described the ATF planning of the raid as “steps taken along what seemed at the time to be a preordained road.”²⁴

It is essential that scholars subject this new round of mass media coverage of the Waco case to careful analysis to preserve the accuracy of the historical record. The passion and fervor of various adversarial parties with regard to the events at the Branch Davidians’ Mount Carmel make for an easily distorted image and public misunderstanding. We cannot abandon this cautionary tale of government overreach to the revisionism of culpable state actors or the foibles of drive-by journalism.

ENDNOTES

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⁵ Wright, “Explaining Militarization at Waco,” 87–91.

⁶ Wright, “Explaining Militarization at Waco,” 89.

⁷ Stuart A. Wright, "Field Notes from Waco: *Isabel Andrade et al. v. U.S.*," *Nova Religio* 4, no. 22 (April 2001): 351–56.

⁸ Stuart A. Wright, "Post-Involvement Attitudes of Voluntary Defectors from Controversial New Religious Movements," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 23, no. 2 (1984): 172–82; Stuart A. Wright, "Leaving New Religious Movements: Issues, Theory and Research," in *Falling from the Faith: The Causes and Consequences of Religious Apostasy*, ed. David G. Bromley (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1988), 143–65; Stuart A. Wright, "Reconceptualizing Cult Coercion and Withdrawal: A Comparative Analysis of Divorce and Apostasy," *Social Forces* 70, no. 1 (1991): 125–45.

⁹ Wessinger, "The FBI's 'Cult War' against the Branch Davidians."

¹⁰ Wright, "Anatomy of a Government Massacre," 39–68.

¹¹ Ian Simpson, "Ex-ATF Agents Recall Storm of Gunfire in Deadly 1993 Waco Raid," Reuters, 8 February 2013, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-waco-atf-idUSBRE9170JC20130208>.

¹² *Investigation into the Activities of Federal Law Enforcement*, 3.

¹³ *Investigation into the Activities of Federal Law Enforcement*, 3.

¹⁴ SOARU is now called the Crisis Management Unit and is part of the Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG). Thomas Strentz, *Psychological Aspects of Crisis Negotiation*, 3d ed. (New York: Routledge, 2018), 27.

¹⁵ Wright, "Anatomy of a Government Massacre," 39–68.

¹⁶ Wright, "Anatomy of a Government Massacre," 47–48.

¹⁷ See also Gary Noesner, *Stalling for Time: My Life as an FBI Hostage Negotiator* (New York: Random House, 2010), 100, 110, 112, 117, 119–20, 123, 124, 125–27.

¹⁸ Koresh's incomplete Seven Seals commentary is published as an appendix in Tabor and Gallagher, *Why Waco?* 191–203.

¹⁹ Wright, "Revisiting the Branch Davidian Mass Suicide Debate," 8–11.

²⁰ Wessinger, "Deaths in the Fire at the Branch Davidians' Mount Carmel," 40–42.

²¹ "Revelations of Waco: How Not to Negotiate with Believers," Paramount Network, 21 February 2018, <http://www.paramountnetwork.com/video-clips/vaigm/waco-revelations-of-waco-how-not-to-negotiate-with-believers>.

²² *Investigation into the Activities of Federal Law Enforcement*, 10.

²³ *Investigation into the Activities of Federal Law Enforcement*, 14–15.

²⁴ U.S. Department of Treasury, *Report of the Department of Treasury on the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Investigation of Vernon Wayne Howell, Also Known as David Koresh* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), 174.