

DEAR SENATE ENQUIRY

For the purpose of confidentiality, I shall call myself Evelyn

I was sent to the Salvation Army home in Fullerton , Adelaide, SA. in 1957 I was told that I would continue my education whilst there, and that did not happen. I was not pregnant. Since then The Salvos have claimed that they did not run so called- Bad Girls Homes- but that is not true, as a percentage of the girls were in trouble in one way or another. It was a terrible time for me. It was incredibly tough, the Captains in charge were very stern, and at least twice a day would tell us that we were pitiful creatures who had to learn to obey God. The Major in charge was sadistic, and found many ways to hurt ones feelings or invent punishment, the favorite punishment was a big dose of Epsom salts, the result was a whole day of stomach gripes and endless trips to the Toilet, we had to ask permission to go each time and sometimes they would makes us wait until it was too late, and then we were given extra duties as further punishment. It was disgusting. I will never forgive them for that. The day started at 6am and work started at 7.30 in the wash house or the ironing rooms, what slave labor that was. one of the worst things was to see how the treatment affected the younger girls. there were two girls in particular that I remember, one was only 6yrs and her sister was 11. sometimes the young girls were specially picked to go and have extra religious instruction, they would be taken somewhere by one of the captains. in this instance when the little girl was bought back she went straight to the sick bay, her sister was told that she had caught the measles and would be kept separate. after two days her sister sneaked into the sick bay to see her. and what she saw made her decide to run away. she dressed her sister and tried to sneak out , but was caught. Afterward she told me, she was locked in a small windowless room for 2 weeks. what she told me was that her sister was dopey ( drugged ) that she had bruises on her chest ( love bites ) and blood in her knickers. I didn't know what that meant at the time , but of course I realize that she had been molested, and there was no evidence of the measles. both of these girls were kept locked up or away from the rest of us for 2-3 weeks and both were dramatically changed during this episode. There are many things that I could talk about, but !! For a long time the mere mention of the word God would make me vomit. I would like to see an independent psychiatric evaluation into organized religion, as I now believe it to be very mentally damaging We were taken ,( walked ) to church on sundays, where the preaching was about love , yet if we didn't sing and join in the service we were given two doses of Epsom salts when we got back.

We were all repeatedly told we were evil and that we had to pray hard for forgiveness. ( emotional cruelty )

one day I fell down the stairs and hurt my back, I could not sleep and was in a lot of pain, I did not receive any medical attention nor even an appro.

The Major claimed that this was God punishing me because I didn't polish the hall properly. and if I prayed hard enough I would be alright. X-rays taken later in my life revealed sacral bone damage. that will do for now Evelyn