

*Violence and Apocalyptic New Religions*

Andrew Ames - RELG 316

# The Ant Hill Kids of Roch “Moïse” Thériault



# Plan

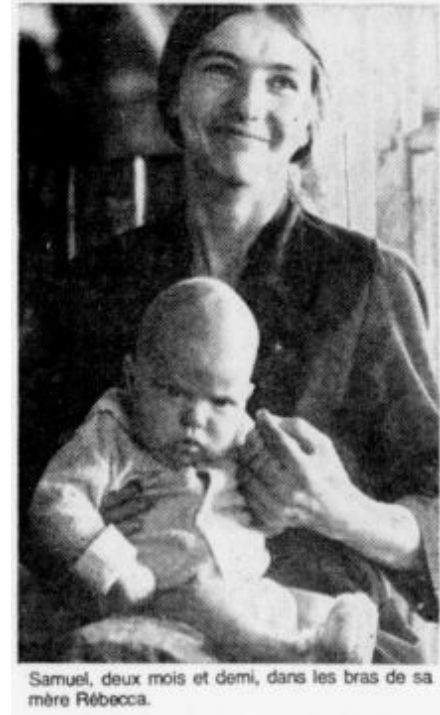
- Brief History
- Doctrine
- Causes of Violence
- Q&A

*CW: VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ABUSE, CHILD ABUSE*



# Brief History - 70s

- 1977 - Early group forms in Thetford Mines, QC, from a 7th Day Adventist study group
- 77-78 - “Healthy Living Clinic” in Sainte-Marie-de-Beauce
- 78-81 - “Holy Moses Mountain Family” in Gaspésie
- 1981 - 2 year old Samuel Giguère dies
  - Gaspésie commune raided, Thériault arrested and imprisoned along with three other members



Samuel, deux mois et demi, dans les bras de sa mère Rébecca.

# Brief History - 80s

- 1984 - Thériault released from prison, moves the group to Burnt River, ON - the “Ant Hill Kids”
- 1985 - Children seized by Ontario Children’s Aid Society
- 88 - 89 - Increased violence by Thériault leads to mass desertion
- 1989 December - Thériault arrested and sentenced to 12 years in prison



# Doctrine

- Old Testament, Revelations
- Polygamy
- Medieval court
  - Thériault as king and father
- Miraculous healing
  - Main source of extreme violence
- Views on sex
  - Sexual assault and grooming



# Violence

- Extreme hierarchy and power imbalance
  - Fight to keep/improve status
- Communal confession + repentance
- Heavy physical labor, no access to medical facilities
  - Alienation from society
- Thériault as a “healer”

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**le journal de québec**

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**TRISTES L'ENDEMAINS DE L'HÉCATOMBE** Page 4

**«JE L'AI AMPUTÉE POUR LUI SAUVER LA VIE»**  
— Thériault

**MOÏSE ÉCOPE 12 ANS**

**PAGE 3**

**BARRE**  
LA POLICE EST GRATIS 1 AN D'ASSURANCE GRATIS

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à partir de **\$8 395**

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# Research Methods

- Primarily archival
  - Books by ex-members, members, journalists, and a personal account from Thériault
  - News reports from InfoSecte
- Interview with ex-member
- A single academic source



# Children

- Strictly hierarchical, based on the status of each wife
  - Purity informed the Monarchic structure
  - Children inherited the status of their parents
- Treatment of children varied vastly
  - Example: death of Samuel Giguère and the homecoming of Thériault's sons
- Disparities - education, food, shelter, social integration
- Violence and sexual predation