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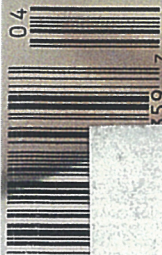
COVER STORY:  
CHINA BEACH'S  
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**EXCLUSIVE!**  
RAY BUCKEY  
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“Until I was arrested, my family and I had some faith, some hope, that this could be resolved fairly quickly. I just didn’t realize people were so . . . *stupid* is not the word. No, *stupid* is a good word.”

# RAY BUCKEY

## An Exclusive Interview

AS TOLD TO MARY A. FISCHER

**J**anuary 18 of this year was an extraordinary day. The beleaguered jury in the marathon McMartin child-molestation case had reached a verdict. More than 200 people jammed the hallway outside courtroom 101, pushing toward the doors, hoping to get inside. Someone in the crowd said the commotion reminded him of the day Robert Kennedy was shot.

As the outcome was announced—not guilty on 52 out of 65 counts—principal defendant Ray Buckey, 31, sat stonelike at the counsel table, a posture he had come to perfect over the years. His 63-year-old mother, Peggy McMartin Buckey, removed her glasses and dabbed at a tear rolling down her cheek. For her, it was over—complete acquittal on all counts.

Her son, of course, was not out of it yet. Though he was acquitted on 40 counts, the jury deadlocked on another 13. Speculation began immediately. Would the district attorney’s office retry Ray Buckey, considering the majority of the jury voted in favor of acquittal on the 13 counts, or would it put this six-year, \$16 million ordeal to rest, despite the vociferous protests of the parents? The answer came January 31. There would be a second round. This time there would be a new judge, Stanley Weisberg, and a new prosecution team. Veteran trial lawyer Joe Martinez and Pam Ferrero were replacing prosecutors Lael Rubin and Roger Gunson.

I first met Ray Buckey in February 1988 at the County Jail

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC MYER





*in downtown Los Angeles. I was on assignment for Life magazine, and this was to be the first print interview with him. He was 29, tall and gangly, and his wrists were shackled to his waist. Most of his teeth were brown stubs from incessant grinding at night. His most startling feature, though, was his skin, which had the pallor of a corpse. He had not been out in the sunlight for four years, not since he was arrested in February 1984. Now six years later, he is tanned, and he speaks with confidence. When asked what he might have done differently, Buckey says that, among other things, he would have worn underwear (the prosecution made a big issue out of his habit of dressing sans briefs), and he might have talked to the media earlier.*

*Here, in an exclusive interview, Buckey talks at length about his life before and after his arrest, about the charges, the children and the new trial.*

People always ask me, "Why you?" I don't know why it happened to me. Why was I born in Manhattan Beach? It's one of those things. I was at the wrong place at the wrong time.

Before I was arrested, I was doing the same things most people

my age do—only a few years later. I was trying to find what I wanted to do in life. I had lived in Manhattan Beach my whole life and pretty much stayed close to home. Manhattan Beach was a great place to grow up. My parents built a house two doors up from the beach. I lived with my family except for a few months when I went to San Diego State. I had made only two trips out of state my whole life. My first apartment was above my parents' garage, which was where I was arrested the first time.

My family's been described as the Ozzie-and-Harriet type. They don't drink, smoke or cuss. Growing up, I didn't know what my father did except that he was great at fixing anything. [Charles Buckey, an engineer at Hughes Aircraft, was the only member of the immediate Buckey family who was not arrested in connection with the alleged crimes.] He worked on the space shuttle at one time. He was a workaholic, even working during his lunch hour and on the weekends, making toys and animals for the preschool.

The beach was literally my backyard. I was always more interested in socializing and being with friends than working or going to school. I've always had one good friend in my life, Steve



## RAY BUCKEY

**“I was at the preschool because it was easy. It was close to home, and I did enjoy the children, but I can’t fool myself. Watching children play all day and doing little art projects with them isn’t hard work.”**

Bartlett, and that’s what I was happy with. I met him 15 years ago when he was my sister Peggy Ann’s boyfriend. We’re still close, though he lives in Idaho now. We’re both Gemini, and we both like to run, lift weights and swim in the ocean. At one time we were heavy-duty into rock climbing [and would go climbing in] Joshua Tree for weekends in a row.

I was neither shy nor outgoing; I am just quiet. I’m better one on one than in a group. I think still waters run deep, in the sense that I don’t feel a need to tell everybody everything. My mother is the outgoing one. Some people have said I’m shy with women, but that’s not really true. I’m just hesitant to ask them out for dates because I fear the rejection.

The D.A. tried to make a big deal out of my not having sex with a woman until I was 23 or 24. I went out with girls, and I did stuff with them all the time because I grew up around girls. I’m a quiet person. Making sexual advances is just not part of my makeup. I didn’t see myself as attractive. My best attribute, though, was my humor, and I was decent at volleyball.

I was infatuated with several girls when I went to high school, but I didn’t start dating until college. Even then I never made the first move. A girl had to give me an indication that she was interested in me or wanted to kiss me before I’d kiss her. I won’t put myself on the line emotionally.

This notion of what makes a man is all mixed up in our society. What do you have to do—go out and have a prostitute when you’re 18, and then you’re a man? Or [do you have to] attack girls by the third date? It’s the morals I was brought up with. Sex is something very special, and you don’t do it with somebody you meet for the first time or when there’s no emotion.

The first woman I made love with—Barbara—I met at a health convention in Reno, where we worked in a booth that sold crystals and pyramids. We went to dinner and decided to see Lake Tahoe. Things progressed to where she was the aggressor and I was the infatuated. She was older—31—and had a gregarious personality. It was late, and we decided to rent a room at the Fantasy Inn. It had a heart-shaped Jacuzzi next to a round waterbed with mirrors on the ceiling and pumped-in adult movies. I saw her as beautiful, and the experience was very special.

Life was good back then, and it was easy. That’s what I looked for in those days—things that were easy. My biggest weakness is that I am lazy. I admit that.

Growing up, I thought my family was typical. Everybody I knew was the same way. My father worked, my mother was basically a housewife. They cared about our education. They cared if we were happy. They were giving, supportive and went to church. My parents encouraged me more than [they did] Peggy Ann because I was lazier, but they never made me feel I was in her shadow. They understood that people are different.

We always had pets when we were growing up. We had almost

every animal you can probably imagine that was legal. A turtle, a monkey once, birds, parrots, hamsters, dogs. I loved animals. I used to keep the hamster and monkey in my bedroom. My mother seemed to get the pets that no one wanted—like the Pekingese that didn’t have sockets in his hind legs, so he dragged them. My mom had a parrot in the living room, and she had her own dog; my sister had her own cat, and I had my dog Shoo Shoo. Of course, my mother fed them.

In hindsight, I see that my family may not be so typical after all. We’re lucky to have each individual in our family strong enough to put up with all this hardship. Hardship such as this breaks families apart, and they can’t handle it.

I remember high school as a place where I played water polo and swam. I ran around with my sister and her friends. We were clean-cut athletic types. We partied but weren’t into drugs or alcohol. I’ve always hated alcohol. I like the loss of inhibition, but I hate the taste. I should probably never drink.

Once in my early twenties, I got stopped for drunk driving and spent the night in jail and paid a big fine. I went to court and pleaded guilty, because I was. Later, a friend and I got picked up for smoking marijuana in a car with a dead battery that we parked right behind the Hermosa Beach police station. Wasn’t too bright. I would have pleaded guilty on that, too, because we were, but it never went to trial.

*After Buckey graduated from Mira Costa High School in 1976, his parents told him to get a job or go to college. He continued to live at home and took a variety of jobs until 1978, when he enrolled at Northrop University to study airplane maintenance. He dropped out after three months.*

College had been imprinted in my mind as the place you go and get a career. I was looking for my place in life. I was looking for something I could enjoy the rest of my life. I didn’t ever want to get stuck doing something I despised. I’d had several jobs to earn pocket money for college. I worked at Harry’s Market in Manhattan Beach as an all-around stock boy. Next, I worked at a local drugstore, stocking and doing deliveries. I even collected old newspapers for a while and took them to be weighed.

By the time I went to work at the preschool in January 1981, I had gone through several majors at a number of colleges but always dropped out. I tried nutrition, physical therapy and airplane mechanics and realized I wouldn’t be able to handle the education—put it that way. I avoided homework and went out with friends instead. I didn’t have the fortitude for school.

Around this time, I volunteered as a nursing assistant in a hospital and did volunteer work in nursing homes on the weekends. I couldn’t handle it. It was too depressing. Maybe I was overemotional or maybe I’m not cold-blooded enough to block all that stuff out. I couldn’t stand to see people suffer.



## RAY BUCKEY

**“I had a hard time sleeping; a light was kept on in my cell 24 hours a day. The stress was so bad that I ground my teeth at night and finally wore them down.”**

I tried school once more and went to San Diego State when I was 22. I was living away from my family for the first time and not doing that great. I dropped out of my classes, as I had a habit of doing, and I didn't have any friends. I was homesick. I was driving up and visiting my grandmother and mother at the preschool and seeing my father and sister in the evening.

For the first time in my life, I looked at the preschool and saw why my family was so involved with it and why they enjoyed it so much. It was a very happy, uplifting atmosphere to be in. Plus, it looked easy. I talked about the possibility of my working there, and they were overjoyed with the chance of my coming into the family business and making it a third-generation business. So I moved back to the South Bay and got started at the preschool.

The appeal for me had to do with the basic concept of children, that they're very positive, and most are very happy. It is almost contagious, their happiness and zest for life. It was a positive atmosphere, as opposed to the nursing home.

I was still searching, though. In the back of my mind, I said, I enjoy this, but I don't want to do this for the rest of my life. One of the biggest reasons I was there was because it was easy. It was close to home, and I did enjoy the children, but I can't fool myself. Watching children play all day and doing little art projects with them isn't hard work.

I started at the preschool by passing out papers, juice and crackers. I picked up toys and swept the yard. Anybody could have done it. I was just basically trying to learn from others how to be a good teacher. You gotta love children. You have to understand that they do things wrong but don't mean to.

I was playing volleyball in the evenings. I wasn't really dating then. I was much more comfortable playing volleyball with girls than having the stigma of asking them out and having the problems of formal dating. It's easier to get to know someone in a relaxed, unpressured atmosphere like sports.

*Buckey began teaching at his family's preschool as a part-time teacher's aide in January 1981; later that year, he began working full-time. The two-year-old boy who would eventually accuse Buckey of molesting him started attending the preschool in June 1983. According to testimony, Judy Johnson, the boy's mother, dropped off her son for the first time without officially enrolling him and then drove off. When she returned later to pick him up, she was told she had handled things improperly.*

I remember the child being dropped off one morning. He walked around school not saying anything, and he carried a big paper bag, with a look on his face that said, "This is nothing new to me." The school was full up, yet my mother took pity on him and let him in. I never had the boy in my class, and I really don't remember the couple of times he stayed in the afternoon when I was there. I understand now that his brother had been operated

on for a brain tumor, and the mother was separated from her husband, so it didn't surprise me that my family was willing to help. We were the only school that had a blind child.

I had patience working with the kids. It's discipline that I had to learn. I went into the situation as many parents do, wanting the kids to like me. I thought if I disciplined them, they wouldn't like me. But I began to see that discipline and love can be the same thing.

I learned it to a degree, but I was never as strict as the other teachers. I would not let a child hurt himself or another child or any of the pets. And I didn't bench them if they ran, although I was supposed to. I thought the best thing for them was to learn through experience, that if they fell while they

ran they'd learn not to do it again. I didn't want to stop them from running, because then maybe they'd grow up to be fat kids who didn't like exercise. But those were the rules. I realize they had to have some rules; that's how they grow up to find security.

One of the things that's so ridiculous about this case is the idea that you can have such a strong hold over so many children when you're only with them for such a short time. These are not touchy-feely charges we're talking about. They're hard-core rape and sodomy, and neither a child nor an adult could hide the fear and trauma that you'd associate with these charges.

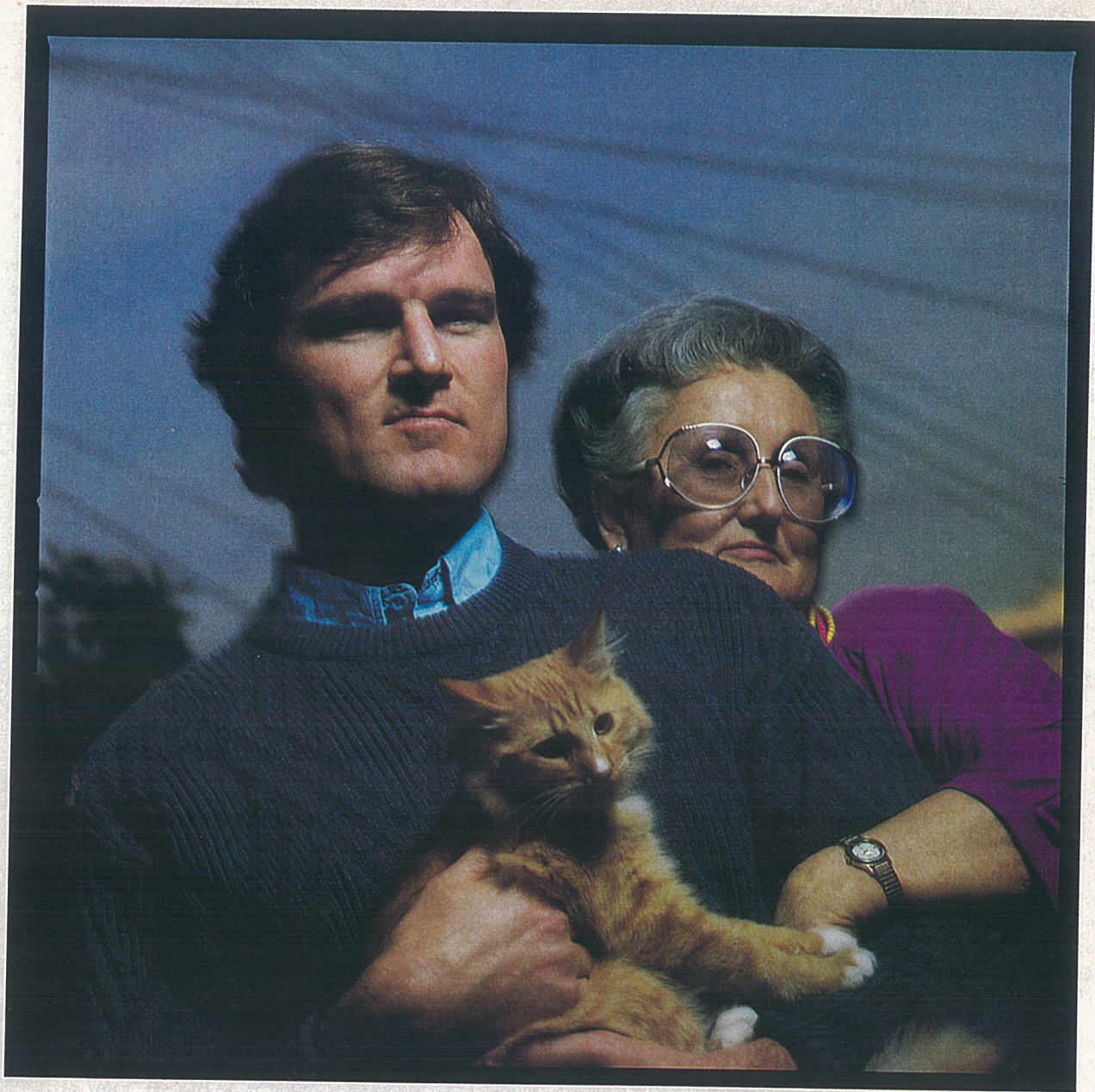
After I was at the preschool for a while, I saw that the parents and children liked me. I used to stand at the front gate to greet the parents. They said how happy they were to have an adult male influence, because [their children] didn't get enough at home. I got my own class and was working from 9 to 4. It wasn't big money—maybe \$1,000 a month—but to me that was a lot. I had it made all around. I was living in the apartment over my parents' garage, and the rent was really cheap. I was right next to the ocean. I started with a class of four-year-olds, but they proved too unruly for me. Children that age are showing more independence, so I had a harder time with discipline. I shifted to a class of three-year-olds.

All the children in my class would sit on the rug and were encouraged to bring something to share. Then we'd do finger painting, gluing or cutting. At that age they're not going to paint you a picture that you're going to recognize, I'll tell you that. Then we'd go outside and have juice and crackers in the yard. Back inside, I'd read them a story, clean up the room, and by that time, it was noon—time to go home.

The kids knew I was lenient, which is why I think I was popular. Betty Raidor [a former McMartin defendant] was the strictest teacher and, in the children's minds, the meanest. But she was very good. She believed in discipline, and I didn't have that.

*On August 12, 1983, Judy Johnson called Detective Jane Hoag at the Manhattan Beach Police Department to report that her two-and-a-half-year-old son's anus was red and that he had told*





*her he'd been touched by a teacher at the McMartin Pre-School. After a doctor at UCLA Medical Center examined the boy and determined he had been sodomized, Hoag arrested Buckey for the first time on September 7, 1983. He was released on bail later that day. The very next day, Manhattan Beach police sent a letter to more than 200 McMartin parents, implicating Buckey by name in "possible acts of sodomy and oral copulation" with their children. The letter was the spark that ignited rumor and hysteria in the South Bay.*

We first heard about the allegations from one of the mothers who had received a phone call from the Manhattan Beach police. She called my mother to find out what was going on. My mother was shocked. She had no idea what was going on and brought me into the office and asked me if something I did could have been misinterpreted. She was extremely upset. I was in shock and disbelief that the police would tell the parents these things. I knew the standing of the family in the community. I was confident this would pass.

It was the beginning of the summer break, and everything was getting cleaned and repainted at the school. I remember walking

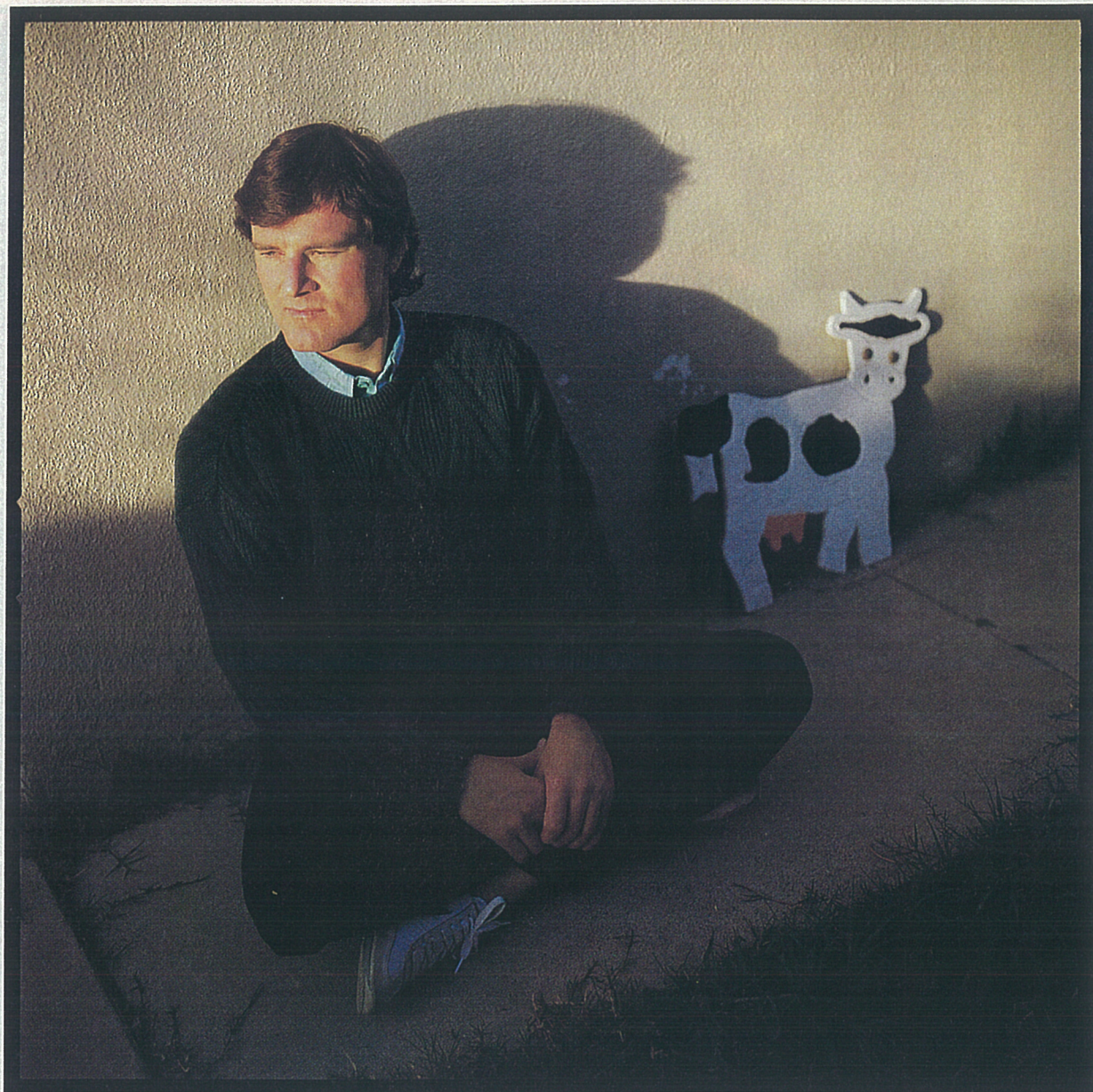
up to the school and seeing two people in suits and my dad standing near them. It was pretty obvious who they were from all the feedback we were getting about the police investigation. One of them said, "Are you Ray Buckey?" and I said yes. "You're under arrest," he said. I gave my father my wallet. Then they put me in handcuffs and took me to jail.

I just shut down mentally. There are situations in life when you don't believe things are going to happen, and when they do, you just shut down. You just bury all emotions for the moment, and maybe sometime later you spill them, but at the time it's just, boom, and you just go through the motions.

Up until the time I was arrested, my family and I had some faith, some hope, that this could be resolved fairly quickly. I just didn't realize people were so . . . stupid is not the word. No, stupid is a good word. I knew things were serious when I was arrested that day. It was scary. I had a little more faith in the people who were pushing this and figured they would use intelligence, common sense and sanity.

*On November 1, Kee MacFarlane and other social workers at*





*Children's Institute International began videotaping interviews with the McMartin preschoolers. Of the 400 children seen, MacFarlane concluded 369 had been molested.*

At the time we didn't know CII was going off into wonderland. We were just dealing with [Manhattan Beach detective] Jane Hoag, someone who was female in a predominantly male role, hard as rock and cold as ice. We probably shook her cage a little too hard when my family tried to sue the department for sending out that letter.

She went after me with a vengeance, and I'm not sure why. Other than that, I heard one story about her once where some guy was on the beach, and he wasn't wearing underwear. Some girl looked up his trunks and made a comment to him. Hoag arrested him for indecent exposure. Another time, some kids were at a party and knocked the couch over. Someone fell over it, hit their head, and Hoag supposedly wrote it up as assault with a deadly weapon. Who knows?

*After accusing Buckley, Judy Johnson went on to accuse several other men of molesting her son—including an AWOL marine*

*and her husband. She began to show increasing signs of mental instability and was ultimately hospitalized. The diagnosis: acute paranoid schizophrenia. She died of an alcohol-related liver disease when she was 44, four months before she was to testify at the trial.*

Not only did the parents not like Hoag because of the way she questioned their children, but Johnson accused a lot of people of molesting her son. Not just me. It's almost like Hoag didn't even think about what she was writing down in her reports. She didn't step back from her computerized motion and say, "Wait a minute, this doesn't jive. This can't be real."

We didn't learn a lot of things about Johnson until the trial, until it was too late, and then we couldn't even put her on the stand. She had died. And the jury never heard about her. That's why I was nervous about how the verdicts would come out.

After I was released [the first time] things just got worse. It started to build to where my family got threatening letters and calls. We didn't know what was going on. We knew Hoag was involved and calling parents and scaring a lot of people. And that letter, you can't get more damning than that. People were be-



## RAY BUCKEY

**“There’s really no evidence to back up the charges other than that some people don’t like the way I look. I can’t do anything about it if they think my eyes are too squinty.”**

coming very upset and somewhere, early on, some were going off the deep end. My father asked if I’d done anything to harm a child, and I said no—because I hadn’t. I didn’t go back to the preschool. We still had faith in the community.

During that time I was re-finish-ing the inside of my parents’ house. I was trying to keep busy. I moved back into my parents’ house because of the threats, and my grandmother moved over to the apartment. We were worried about security, because my mother was attacked by someone with scissors around this time. Those were scary situations. I couldn’t believe these people were buying into these claims—that they could be so inept not to know their own children.

Real friends stood by us.

They couldn’t believe what was going on. Eventually it became so insane that they didn’t want to speak out on our behalf because they were afraid for themselves. If you stood for us, you might be accused of something. We lost a cousin whose children went to the preschool and then went through the CII process. She got sucked into the whole parent uproar of this case and believed something happened. She stopped speaking to us.

We realized Jane Hoag wasn’t going to back off, so we got a lawyer. She may do a lot of damage to our family reputation, to the preschool and me, but I still had some part of me that said there cannot be that many stupid people, who would not stop this before it went too far. But no one did.

***On February 4, 1984, KABC-TV reporter Wayne Satz broke the McMartin story. He talked of many allegations of rape and sodomy and rituals involving animal sacrifice.***

I remember sitting in my parents’ living room crying as I watched the news. I wondered, “How can this still be going on?” I was frustrated and frightened. The allegations of slaughtering animals, of cutting off rabbits’ ears, were so ridiculous my investigator and I dug up the remains of our school’s pet turtles and rabbits to show that none had been mutilated. Still, no one listened. I was watching the whole community go insane. I was engulfed in fear. My family and I were helpless to change things. Totally helpless. We were in a state of shock that this thing had become as big as it did. It was growing like a cancer.

***In March 1984 Buckey, his sister, mother and grandmother and preschool owner Virginia McMartin, plus fellow McMartin teachers Mary Ann Jackson, Babette Spitler and Betty Raidor, were arrested and indicted on more than 100 counts of child molestation. Most of the defendants were released on bail within days or a few months. Peggy Ann, Ray’s sister, spent two and a half months in jail, while Buckey and his mother were denied bail. Peggy McMartin Buckey spent two years in jail, her son five years before he was released on bail.***

Before I was arrested the second time, my lawyer, Danny

Davis, told me I’d been arrested just because that’s the procedure. No big problem, but I might have to spend a day or so in jail, and then I’d get out.

Little did I know what was really in store. The police took us to the Manhattan Beach police station first. I remember my mother passing out there. And then Hoag took her picture, and we were taken to County Jail.

At the time, I was still under the naive assumption that everything would clear up. I still had some kind of childish faith that my mother’s familiarity with people in the community and their respect for her would clear this all up.

I remember the first day in jail. I was put in a single cell with a solid metal door, and every deputy who walked by opened it up, made some kind of

comment and then slammed it back shut, to where I was scared out of my wits. They’d yell at me, “Child molester, you should be hung.” Those were the typical comments.

I was moved around to different cells. For a while I was in 7000, which is the area for high-publicity cases and law-enforcement officers. Richard Ramirez was there. So was the guy [Marvin Pancoast] who was convicted of killing Vicki Morgan with a baseball bat, and also Joe Hunt [Billionaire Boys Club leader convicted of first-degree murder]. I saw him. No big deal. I saw a lot of guilty people going through difficult times. But the reality of jail is that being innocent doesn’t make things any easier.

Then I was moved into a cell by myself. There’s about a nine-inch glass hole in the metal door, where anyone can look in on you. My cell was maybe 10 by 12 feet. It had a metal-frame bed, a toilet and a sink. That’s all. They left me there until I got out on bail five years later.

I wasn’t allowed to go to the roof like everybody else for exercise, because I was going to court. Danny, my attorney, got permission and bought two stationary bikes, one to stay in my room and the other to go up in 7000. On Fridays, when I didn’t go to court, I used to ride it for up to eight hours. It was the only pain I had any control over. I started before lunch and I rode until after dinner. The reason I know exactly how long it was is because once in a blue moon I got a TV in there, and I’d watch it until *Love Connection* ended, which was around 7:30.

I had a hard time sleeping. A light was kept on in my cell 24 hours a day so guards could see what I was doing at all times. The stress was so bad that I ground my teeth at night and finally wore them down. I’m having all new caps put on now.

I was lucky enough to get a court order for a shower every day because I was going to court. Otherwise it’s every other day. So if you’re a clean person, jail’s not a neat place to be.

Probably the hardest times for me were when I was transported into the real world and saw nighttime—and the lights on Melrose Avenue—for the first time. I went to a location outside of jail to view and transcribe the CII tapes as part of evidence. Those trips would bring back memories, bring up the thought,



## RAY BUCKEY

**“My family’s been described as the Ozzie-and-Harriet type; they don’t drink, smoke or cuss. But in hindsight I see that my family might not have been so typical after all.”**

“God, I wish I could see the ocean one more time before I die.” All the little things that free people take for granted: to be able to get up when you want, to put on clothes, have more than one pair of shoes at a time, one set of clothes, two pairs of underwear. Just being able to open your door and walk down the street or sit in the front seat of a car.

Think of it as being in a wheelchair—everything you’d lose. You could never run down to the beach. Literally all of life is taken away, except where you can escape to in your mind.

I had to adapt, so I withdrew into books. I think I’ve read every Stephen King book. I read a lot of fantasy science-fiction—all of Tom Clancy’s books and James Clavell’s *Shogun*.

In jail you have no friends. They’re acquaintances. They’re people you trust a little more than average, but they aren’t friends. Everybody knows that.

What made me have the most anger and hatred was knowing my mother and sister were in jail, having to deal with these cruel people. I knew I had the strength to block them out, but it hurt to see them ridicule my mother and sister. I’d see my mother every day because they’d transport us to court together, and she’d tell me what was going on.

At the beginning my father would visit my sister at Sybil Brand [Institute for Women], and then he’d have to go to the back of the line to visit my mother. Then he’d come back and stand in line at County to visit me. It was an all-day thing. He did that seven days a week for a long time. He took a leave from work. He used to bring me things to read, but then [security] got real tight so he couldn’t. So if he wanted me to read something about the case, he’d hold it up against the glass partition.

My father’s like me. He has opinions, but he doesn’t need to get up on a soapbox to prove his point. We know the truth. We know what’s right and what’s wrong.

I became much closer to my father and mother during this case, and they to me. I saw in my father’s silence a strength that I tried to adopt. That’s what helped me through. We’ve realized that the people you can count on are your family.

***After Buckey served nearly five years in jail, Judge William Pounders set his bail at \$3 million, an amount the defense could not meet. Several months later, Pounders reduced the bail to \$1.5 million, which was satisfied by \$3 million in equity from the homes of more than 20 supporters. He was released from jail on February 15, 1989.***

When I got out, it was a nightmare. The throng of people, the cameras. I had been in the situation for so long that I had forgotten what it was like to be out. And even when I got out, I wasn’t really free. I had 24-hour security.

Deep down, there was an overriding awareness that I wasn’t out of this thing until the trial was over. I didn’t just breathe a big sigh of relief that all of a sudden I was out and it was great. It

wasn’t great. I stayed with some very nice people on the weekends, along with my bodyguard, but I still didn’t have freedom. All a weekend meant was that I didn’t have to go to court.

When I got out, I saw how bad the traffic had gotten, but more than seeing how the world had changed in five years, I saw how it had been all along. I had grown up and lost the rose-colored glasses. I learned about people. I saw that not everybody is honest. Not everybody is going to admit when they’re wrong. I got a very jaded view of people while in jail. It changed me. It matured me, but that’s a hell of a way to go about it. And I still don’t have freedom—not with this other case pending.

***At press time, the second trial was down to 8 counts, involving three girls, from the original 13 on which the jury deadlocked.***

Of the 11 child witnesses in the first trial, I only had one in my class. We called four of the kids “the fraudulent four” because I wasn’t even at the preschool when they attended. We called another group “the healthy five” because there’s nothing wrong with them, and I never even had them one on one.

There was only one child who was ever in my class. And I only saw [Judy Johnson’s son] a couple of times when he stayed in the afternoon. The D.A. was trying to make it look like I was there, sneaking around on the grounds. That’s pretty absurd, because if they’d look at my history, they’d see I went to all these colleges and then, lo and behold, in 1981 I come to the preschool. Why would I go through these years and years of sneaking into the preschool when I could have just gone right there from high school and told my family I wanted to work there?

One kid [Brian] is the one going on television saying, “I know it happened, and so does God.” I never even met Brian until the preliminary hearing. He has no remorse for what he’s saying. He enjoys the attention. He seems very calm and collected. I think he might grow up to be a lawyer. The more that adults suggested things to him [at CII], the more stories he came up with. That showed his unreliability as a witness.

The jurors admitted there was no evidence to put him at the preschool [when I was there]. The D.A. didn’t care; they put him on the stand anyway. It was a joke.

As far as the second trial goes, the three witnesses they have are very weak. They are the strongest witnesses because they’re little girls. But there’s no strength to them. They have some of the most absurd stories to tell. The D.A. will play them for emotion. All three have great CII tapes—great in that they’re good for the defense. There aren’t even any medical slides on one of the kids. All they’ve got is [Dr. Astrid Heger] saying she doesn’t want to hear any more “no’s” out of this child. The unbiased Dr. Heger. These doctors determine sexual abuse by consensus, not science. They’re writing about this without any studies to back them up, without any informed background other than to say they’ve seen a lot of kids and know what looks wrong.



## RAY BUCKEY

**“I know society well enough to know that in a few years no one will remember my name. They might remember McMartin, but my name’s not McMartin.”**

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The *science* isn't there.

One of the most ridiculous theories to come out of this case is that you can rape a three-year-old, and they're going to be able to walk out of the school and just have a little red dot, or just some redness.

After talking to some of the jurors, I think the counts on which they were hung had more to do with the notion, "Where there's smoke there's fire. Ray's right in the middle of it, so he must have done something." There's no real evidence to back up the charges other than that some people don't like the way I look. But I can't do anything about it if they think my eyes are too squinty.

I think some jurors realized the heat that might come back on them if they didn't acquit me completely, because of the way the media had me guilty before trial. They did the right thing as a whole and acquitted on the majority of counts, but now they didn't want to get the backlash of the child advocates.

Sitting there in the courtroom, I was very fearful because of what information didn't get into the case. I was sweating. Once the bailiff read the counts that the jury deadlocked on, I knew the rest were acquittals.

Going through the system for six years, I learned to stifle my emotions. I buried my tears that day. I was biting my lip, fighting back tears of relief.

After the verdicts, I had no desire to go out. Laying low is what I'm still doing. It's no fun to walk down the street and see your face plastered on the front page of the newspaper. After the jury came back, some people came to congratulate me, but there's always that one person. They watch Oprah Winfrey and Geraldo and form their opinions and start spouting off. I don't need that. I dealt with that for five years. I live with a friend now and basically stay inside. I might go out when it's dusk to ride my bike, run or work out. I'm tired of having to deal with people. Right now I'm basically in limbo. I'm preparing for the next trial, going through and condensing testimony.

Sure, I have anger. Anger for the parents who are building something that's not there. Why did they send their kids to the preschool every day if it was World War III and the kids supposedly hated it? It doesn't make sense. How can they sit there and truthfully say their kid hated preschool when they sent them back every day, even to visit after they graduated?

This could have happened to anyone. They could have gotten Nixon or Bush the way they set this up and worked it.

Who's to blame? I point the finger at the people who propelled the case—the carpetbaggers—the politicians, the overzealous police officers, the D.A.s and their questionable ethics.

Probably the people I hate most are the ones I saw last, which would be the prosecutors, because I had to deal with them for five years and watch them lie and cheat and try to destroy my life. I had to watch them get away with it. Most people are without conscience. I came to see that.

I'm sure angry at [prosecutor Lael] Rubin. I know she's not a stupid person, and I could tell when she was lying. She may not know her own gestures and facial movements when she lies, but everybody I knew could tell. She didn't care that she was ruining my life. She doesn't care about my life any more than I care about hers. It's more of a job for her. She wasn't looking for the truth. The truth never had a chance in this case.

[District Attorney] Ira Reiner is going to keep this case going so he can stand up on his soapbox and say, "I'm a tough prosecutor. Look at me; I went after these people." He's not looking for a scapegoat. He's looking for a sacrificial lamb. He's going to sacrifice these parents and their kids to go through another traumatic trial

for no better than a hung jury so he can say, "I'm a tough guy."

People should be mad at Reiner, not the Buckeys. The D.A. can't be foolish enough to think they can get 12 people to convict on these counts. He said we were taking [pornographic] photos. Yet they can't find a single picture from a decade-long process? Churches, airplane rides, drinking blood, black robes, kids molested on the Angels' stadium field? The more things they could throw into the pot, was the thinking. There are stories you'd almost laugh at, if it weren't so scary that people like Hoag were writing this stuff down and taking it as fact.

My only explanation for all this is, why did the Salem witch-hunts happen when they did? Every few decades our society seems to have to go through an intense awakening on a certain subject, and we usually have a scapegoat we burn in the process. This time it's been labeled the child movement. We've brought more awareness back to the child in the family, which is great. But I sure as hell didn't want to be the scapegoat for this.

I've been in this so long that all I want is for it to end. They've taken everything from my family. Our homes, the school, our savings, our reputation. All they can do is put me in jail for a few more years, but they can't do anything more than that. I guess I haven't lost all hope, because I didn't commit suicide.

I have to wait until this is over before I can start to pick up the pieces. I'm always thinking about my future, but I have to wait to put my dreams into action. For one, I want to get out of this crazy metropolis, which seems to breed ill will toward the brotherhood of man. I may move out of Los Angeles.

I want a home, and I'd like to go into woodworking, cabinet-making. I just want a simple life. Whether I'll marry and have children is something I don't think about. All I want is for this to be over. I know society well enough to know that given a few years, no one will even remember my name. They might remember the name McMartin, but my name's not McMartin. In time, people won't even recognize me.

I never had much of a reputation to lose in the first place. The only reputation I had was as the lax teacher all the kids liked. And so did the parents at one time.