

Boise Statesman  
7 March 92

## 5 plead Innocent to kidnapping

### Group attempted deprogramming

By Statesman staff

Five people pleaded innocent Friday to charges of kidnapping or aiding and abetting a kidnapping in connection with the abduction of a Boise woman in November.

Police say the woman was kidnapped for religious deprogramming.

Joy and Carmine DeSanctis, of New Jersey, pleaded innocent to charges of second-degree kidnapping.

Mary Alice Chronloger, of Chattanooga, Tenn., Joseph Sainthart of Santa Fe, N.M., and Kenneth Paulini of Livingston, Mont., each pleaded innocent to one charge each of aiding and abetting second-degree kidnapping.

LaVerne Collins, a Boise teacher and member of the Church Universal and Triumphant, told police she was abducted from her Boise home Nov. 20 by people posing as pizza deliverers.

She said she was taken to local hotel rooms and homes.

LaVerne Coelho and Patricia Cox, of central California, pleaded innocent last month to second-degree kidnapping in connection with the case. Coelho is Collins' mother; Cox is her sister.

Coelho and Cox are to stand trial Sept. 14 before 4th District Judge Alan Schwartzman. Trial dates for the others have not been set pending a motion to consolidate the trials.

A second-degree kidnapping is one that is not done for ransom or to rob or rape.

Religious deprogrammers seek to make people abandon their religious beliefs and commitments.

Members of the Church Universal and Triumphant gathered outside the Ada County Courthouse after the arraignments and said religious deprogramming represents a threat to religious liberty.

"The issue goes way beyond this church. It is the right of a person to practice whatever religious faith they want to," said Rev. Timothy J. Connor of the Church Universal and Triumphant.

Ex. III-10-E

MADISON, WI  
WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL

MARCH 25/26, 1992

# Fort woman faces charges

## Fifth person linked to deprogramming abduction

By Kathleen Osteruder  
Rock County correspondent

JANESVILLE — A Fort Atkinson woman is the fifth person arrested in connection with the alleged abduction and cult deprogramming of a Madison woman earlier this month.

Karen J. Reinhardt, 38, was given a court date of April 13 to appear in Rock County Circuit Court on charges of party to the crime of kidnapping and false imprisonment, according to the Rock County Sheriff's Department. She is accused of helping line up the farmhouse used for the attempted deprogramming, authorities said.

Reinhardt helped convince the governor to proclaim a Cult Awareness week in 1988 and a Coercive Awareness Week in 1989, according to a spokesman in the governor's office. She also organ-

ized a Midwest conference on cult awareness and coercive persuasion in 1987, 1988 and 1989, said UW-Whitewater officials Tuesday.

Tom McLehky, dean of continuing education at UW-Whitewater, said the conference, organized under the auspices of his department, started small in 1987 with only 70 participants. In 1988, the conference was held in Milwaukee and in 1989 the conference was held in Madison. The subsequent conferences drew 200 participants, he said.

The conference was not held in 1990 or 1991 because Reinhardt was not associated with the university any more and no one volunteered to direct it instead of Reinhardt, said McLehky. Under his direction, he said, the conference brought in nationally recognized cult and psychology experts.

Four others have been charged in connection with the alleged March 12 kidnapping and deprogramming effort. Steven Slaggs, 44, of Garland, Texas, the father of the 31-year-old woman who was allegedly abducted from the front of her Madison apartment, faces a kidnapping charge in Dane County.

The investigation led police to a farmhouse in rural Rock County and charges of false imprisonment against Tracy Clark, 26, of Wichita, Kan.; William Beer, 23, of Darien; and Randall Hurley, 31, of Poland, Ohio.

Stephanie Slaggs, the woman who was allegedly abducted, is a member of a ultra-conservative, non-denominational Bible study group called "The Way." Organizers of the group dispute the label "cult" and say no brainwashing or mind control is practiced.

# Four face kidnapping charges

WIS. STATE JOURNAL  
3/20/92

By Kathleen Overmeyer  
Staff Writer

**JANESVILLE** — An alleged kidnaper and two accomplices were charged Monday in Rock County Circuit Court with the abduction of a Madison woman and a subsequent restraining order at a rural field nearby.

According to the criminal complaint, the kidnaper, Steve Stagg, 41, of Curlew, Wis., and two accomplices, Joseph B. Doss, 34, of Curlew, Wis., and a third man, whose name is not disclosed, were charged with the abduction of a Madison woman and a subsequent restraining order at a rural field nearby.

Stagg called Madison police on Thursday and was taken to the Madison Police Department. Stagg, 41, of Curlew, Wis., and two accomplices, Joseph B. Doss, 34, of Curlew, Wis., and a third man, whose name is not disclosed, were charged with the abduction of a Madison woman and a subsequent restraining order at a rural field nearby.

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# Kidnap suspects appear in court

Rock County Circuit Court  
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Also Monday in Rock County Circuit Court, Larry Stagg, 38, of Fort Atkinson, was charged with a misdemeanor for allegedly taking up the road in Rock County to prevent the Madison woman from leaving the area.

3/20/92  
WIS. STATE JOURNAL

# Four face kidnapping charges

WIS. STATE JOURNAL  
3/20/92

By Kathleen Covender  
Staff Writer

JANESVILLE — An alleged cult propagator and two others were charged Monday in Rock County Circuit Court with the abduction of a Madison woman and a subsequent computerizing effort at a rural Rock County farmhouse.

According to the criminal complaint, a fourth person, Steve Stagg, 44, of Garfield, Texas, is scheduled to appear in Dane County Circuit Court today in the case.

Stagg called Madison police on Thursday and told them he was abducting his daughter, Stephanie, 21, and taking her to be computerized, the complaint states. Stagg called police again that day to confirm he had abducted his daughter in Dane County in a cult abduction.

An investigation, which Madison authorities refused to detail Monday, led police to a Rock County farmhouse Sunday night.

Arrested at the farmhouse were Stagg, Tracy L. Clarke, 30, of Wichita, Kan., described in the complaint as a childhood friend of the Madison woman, Randall M. Barney, 34, of Poland, Ohio, whom authorities identified in court as a cult propagator and the owner of the farmhouse, William

Barney, 33, of Darwin.

Barney was charged with false imprisonment and a cash bond of \$1,000 was set. His preliminary hearing is scheduled for March 27. Clarke and Barney were charged with being party to false imprisonment and released on signature bonds. The preliminary hearing is set for April 13.

The complaint states Stagg hired Barney for \$1,500 to abduct his daughter. Clarke agreed to accompany Stagg to provide comfort to her friend, and she was told Stephanie probably would not come "voluntarily" with her father.

Authorities used a friend of the father from Fort Atkinson contacted Barney and rented the farmhouse for \$500.

Stephanie Stagg told authorities after they raided the farmhouse that she had been taken against her will.

Madison Police Dept. Lt. Jerry Hines said the woman is a member of the religious organization The Way.

"I am not going to celebrate The Way as a cult; that smacks of negativism," Hines said.

Rock County District Attorney Perry Felt said Stagg is to be charged in Dane County because that is where the alleged abduction occurred.

3/12/92  
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# Four charged in alleged abduction plot

## Rock County complaint says Madison woman taken for 'deprogramming'

By KATHLEEN OSTRANDER  
Sentinel Correspondent

Janesville — Four people allegedly part of a plot to "deprogram" a 21-year-old Madison woman were charged Monday in Rock County Circuit Court in connection with her alleged abduction and later "deprogramming" in a rural farmhouse.

The woman's father, a 44-year-old man from Garland, Texas, was among those arrested late Sunday at the farmhouse on Rock County Highway M, near the Walworth County line.

Also arrested were Tracy L. Clarke, 20, of Wichita, Kan., identified in the complaint as a childhood friend of the Madison woman; Randall M. Burkey, 34, of Poland, Ohio, whom authorities identified in court as the "deprogrammer"; and William Bear,

31, of Darien, who owns the farmhouse.

Burkey has a previous conviction on a similar incident in 1986 involving deprogramming in Washington state, Rock County Dist. Atty. Perry L. Folts said.

Madison police refused to release additional details of the investigation.

According to the Rock County criminal complaint:

The woman's father, who is scheduled to appear Tuesday in Dane County Circuit Court, called Madison police March 12 and told them that he was abducting her and taking her to be "deprogrammed."

The father called police back later that day, confirmed he had abducted the woman and called the action a "cult interdiction."

An investigation led police to the farmhouse, where the woman told them she had been taken against her will, and that Burkey had shown her videos that were supposed to help in deprogramming. The woman said she was never left alone and could not leave.

The complaint says the father filed Burkey for \$1,510 to "deprogram" the woman.

Clarke agreed to accompany the father and provide comfort to the woman. Clarke was told during the trip to Wisconsin that the woman probably would not come voluntarily with her father.

Authorities said a friend of the father's from Fort Atkinson contacted Bear and rented the farmhouse for \$300.

Folts said the father is scheduled to be charged in Dane Coun-

ty because that is where the abduction allegedly occurred.

Burkey was charged with false imprisonment. Bail was set at \$1,000. A preliminary hearing was scheduled for March 27.

Clarke and Bear were charged with being party to the crime of false imprisonment and released on their own recognizance. A preliminary hearing was set for April 12.

Madison Police Lt. Jerry Hinze said the woman is a member of a religious group called The Way International.

The Way has been described in news reports as an ultra-conservative, non-denominational Bible study group, and scattered reports of attempts to "deprogram" some of its members date to the 1970s.

The Ohio-based group, founded

by self-help theorist Victor Wierwille, once claimed to 50,000 to 100,000 members; percent of a former member had 10 indoctrination hours done in Dane County alone.

Hinze said the investigation to the alleged abduction is ongoing, as authorities try to find out exactly where the abduction may have occurred, are looking for live to this people," he said.

"I am not going to call The Way a cult — that all of negativity," Hinze said.

But Frank Medina, head of Madiana Education Services, a clinic based in Beirut, said he had contact with The Way, that it has used coercion to force removal of women, often does not allow recruit leave voluntarily.

# The Idaho Statesman

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