

Kirn Jot's story of sexual abuse by Yogi Bhajan

told by Michael Turner

Michael Turner left 3HO in 1976. On January 13, 2023, he posted a message on the *Beyond the Cage* private Facebook group. He agreed I would share it here.

... I'm feeling a bit like Rip Van Winkle, scrolling through and seeing all the things that have happened over the past 45 years. Sad to hear of the passage of my friend Craig McMillian with whom I shared many of the tribulations of ashram life in LA and San Rafael. He stood up for himself much better than I did. For some reason I accepted the groups' hostility to education, which waylaid my nascent medical career for nearly a decade.

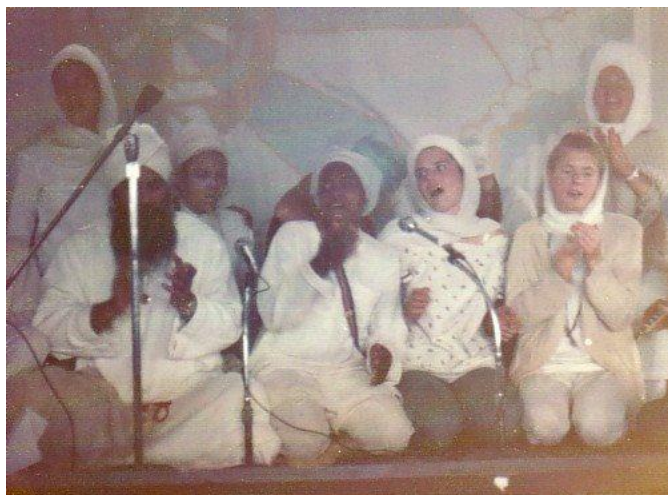
I think of my time in 3HO as the lost years. It seems like my 3HO story has already been covered in the many biographies here, so I won't bore you with how I met Bhajan, when I first tied a turban, how I submitted to an arranged marriage etc. But I would like to mention my friend Kirn Jot, as she seems to be missing from these postings. (I hope I've remembered her Sikh name correctly and have forgotten her given name.) I was living at Hargobind Sadan in 1973 when she was brought there by Baba Bert's wife Robin. She was only 15 and was escaping some sort of abusive situation. She was a ballet prodigy, highly intelligent, and the personification of enthusiasm and innocence. A sprite. She shared a room with my girlfriend at the time and we watched out for her.

I eventually moved to Arcata to attend grad school at HSU, and to teach yoga. We actually developed a small yoga community there and Baba Bert came up to teach an intensive, bringing Kirn Jot along as his secretary. (He was a total Bhajan wanna-be.) She'd been completely transformed into a model 3HO shakti, wearing the full absurd regalia. But still a delightful person and we shared some lovely time.

Time passed and I never saw her again until after 3HO when I ran into her at a restaurant in Topanga Canyon. This was around 1980. She had changed, the sunny disposition had been replaced by something darker. Over dinner she forthrightly told me the whole sordid story of Bhajan's sexual abuse, beginning with a brutal attack when she accompanied him as a "secretary" to the Detroit ashram. I had already known Bhajan as a swindler and a thief, but in 1976 nobody really knew about his even more sinister side. I was shocked of course and would have liked to have heard more but she was clear that she wanted to remove herself as much as possible from 3HO associations.

I never saw her again and learned later that she had died of cancer at a young age. I found her picture here in this group, that's her, far right, kneeling, with her hair partially covered.

A bitter example of a young life ruined by an evil man.



On July 9, 2023, as the candidate board members for the Siri Singh Sahib Corporation were presenting themselves for the elections and their statements were posted on the private Facebook Beyond the Cage page, Michael Turner posted this:

I'm so angry about what I'm reading here I'm going to share the sordid details of Kirin Jot's rape by Yogi Bhajan. She's been dead for thirty years now and her story should not be lost.

She was about 17 when Bhajan engaged her to Bhai Sahib Dyal Singh, the young prodigy who was the first to really embrace Sikhism. He died shortly after in a car accident and Bhajan took her into his household, an act that we all understood as parental. She became one of coterie of secretaries but, she said, not one of his wives.

So she was surprised that she was the only one asked to accompany him on a visit to the Detroit ashram. The first evening he asked her to give him a massage. She was surprised to find that he was naked under a sheet. She gave him a massage, trying to keep things clinical until Bhajan told her, and I quote "now touch the part you fear the most." He then overpowered her and raped her. She was an innocent teenager.

There. Maybe these assholes who run 3HO are incapable of hearing her very specific testimony, but this is the "legacy" they contort themselves to "protect".

I'll never stop being angry about shit like this.

On July 9, 2023, Michael Turner agreed to share his story on this page of www.abuse-in-kundalini-yoga.com. He told me that he knew both, Craig and Leslie, but didn't know about their relationship.

Els Coenen, July 10, 2023