

**Information Network on Religious Movements**



# **Annual Report**

## **April 2013 – March 2014**

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Inform is a registered charity (No. 801729) and is incorporated in England as a company limited by guarantee under the Companies Act (No. 2346855).

## Introduction

Throughout this period Inform continued its work of helping enquirers by providing information that was as reliable and up-to-date as possible about minority religions. Enquirers included the UK government, academics, the media, church networks and chaplains, relatives of members, members and former members, students and other members of the general public, from the UK as well as other countries. Staff also spent considerable time keeping the database and website up to date. We hope to be able to post more information on the site in 2014/2015, including some of the Inform leaflets.

In November 2013 there was a large amount of public and media interest around the discovery of a possible “Maoist cult” in South London. The office came under pressure to provide speakers to appear on radio or television broadcasts at short notice, sometimes for the invitation to be withdrawn at the last minute, as the focus of the media story moved. Inform acted as a referral point to find experts on its network for journalists looking for comment on stories. A number of journalists also contacted the office for quotes or comments, with Inform being named in articles in the *Daily Telegraph*, the *New York Times* and on the BBC, amongst others. Subsequently police officers attached to the enquiry attended the Inform office to improve their understanding of how such groups operate and how individuals might be expected to behave.

In December 2013 the High Court decided to recognise the right of the Church of Scientology to hold wedding ceremonies on its church premises. As part of the judgement the court also produced a new legal description of religion. Inform was contacted by representatives of the Church of England and the Department for Communities and Local Government to provide context around this ruling and the description. There again followed a significant number of media enquiries around the issue.

## Governors and Patrons

During the reporting period two new members joined Inform’s Board of Governors. Dr Graham Harvey is Head of the Department of Religious Studies at the Open University



Dr Graham Harvey

and current President of the British Association for the Study of Religions. The other new governor is Dr George D. Chryssides, Honorary Research Fellow in Contemporary Religion at the University of Birmingham. Dr Damian Thompson left the board in June 2013, Dr Robert Towler and the Reverend Giles Fraser left in February 2014. All three have joined Inform’s Advisory Panel.



Dr George D. Chryssides

Under the chairmanship of Professor Eileen Barker, Inform’s Board of Governors held two meetings during the year. The Management Committee met formally on four occasions under the chairmanship of Professor James Beckford; however, most of its work was conducted on a weekly or, often, daily basis by email, which enabled quick responses to issues arising over the practical running of Inform. Under the guidance of the Treasurer, The Reverend Andrew Maguire, Inform’s annual accounts were presented to Knox Cropper for auditing and, following approval by Inform’s Governors at the Annual General Meeting, were submitted to the Charity Commission and Companies House.

For a full list of Governors and Patrons and the membership of the Management Committee, see Appendix I.

## Staff

In April 2013, interviews were held for the post of Director of Inform. After interviewing a number of candidates, Mr Nick Parke, a former police officer who had worked with Inform in that capacity for a number of years, was appointed. Nick started in the role in early August 2013.

Apart from the addition of a director, the core of Inform's staff remained unchanged: Dr Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist (Deputy Director), Sarah Harvey (Research Officer), Dr Suzanne Newcombe (Research Officer), Silke Steidinger (Assistant Research Officer), Adviya Khan (Assistant Research Officer) and Sibyl Macfarlane (Administration Officer and Assistant Research Officer).



**Sibyl, Sarah and Jane Cooper at the Anniversary Dinner at Dicken's Inn, St Katherine Docks**

Inform has had twelve student placements during the period in question. Laura Dunn, an undergraduate student at King's College London (KCL), worked in the office one day a week from January to April 2013 and then an additional few days in June. Jeff Gary, a Master's student at KCL, worked one day a week from March to August 2013. Stephanie Woodward, another Master's student at KCL, began a brief student placement in May. Gina Plowman, who had just completed her undergraduate degree in history at University College London, worked two days a week in July, as did Heather Tosley, a Master's student at Durham University. Inform also had two student placements who worked for shorter

periods over the summer: Alexandra Dignan, an undergraduate student at the University of Cambridge, and Kelly Mendonca, who had just completed her degree at Durham University; both worked for a number of days over a two-week period. Diana Kwietniewska, a post graduate student from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, in Poland worked in the office two days a week from November until January. Pavol Kosnáč, who completed a Master's degree at Oxford, worked in the office from September 2013 until February 2014. Tara Schwenk, a postgraduate student in LSE's anthropology department, started work in the office one day a week in October and is expecting to carry on to September. Emily Byron, a Master's student at KCL, is working two days a week from February to August. Read Ezell, another Master's student at King's, began a student placement in February and is hoping to work two days a week until May.

Aside from their main tasks, some staff undertook related work outside their Inform hours. Amanda has taught modules on lived religion and an introduction to sociology of religion at King's College, London during the autumn term – the modules are convened by one of Inform's Governors, Dr Marat Shterin. Amanda has also continued to work on her book about children in new religious movements which is to be published by Oxford University Press in 2015.

Suzanne continued in her role as Commissioning Editor for the Indian Traditions section of the journal *Religion Compass*, as well as Reviews Editor for the journal *Religions of South Asia*. She began her appointment as an Associate Lecturer for the Open University in London teaching a third-year undergraduate course entitled “A332: Why is Religion Controversial?” Suzanne is the moderator for the national student online forum in relation to this course. She is also one of the website managers for <http://modernyogaresearch.org/>. She also acted as a peer reviewer for an article submitted to the journal *Qualitative Sociology* and an article submitted to the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*.

Silke is in her final year of psychotherapy training at the Bowlby Centre; she qualifies in July 2014.

Sarah continued to work on her PhD.

## Enquiries

As usual, Inform received a wide variety of enquiries (either directly to the office or through members of its network) about minority religions, spiritual communities, fringe political movements, and related issues. Some enquiries could be responded to relatively swiftly (sometimes taking less than an hour to answer), whilst others required in-depth analysis, research, and contextualisation (which may entail several days’ or even weeks’ work). Some enquirers were seeking therapy or counselling and in such cases the staff tried to help so far as they could, but Inform policy has always been clear that it does not engage in counselling. However, those seeking therapy or counselling were put in touch with some professionals on our network who could help them find someone with accredited professional training. As ever, all enquiries were treated in the strictest confidence (for Inform’s Confidentiality and Ethical Policy, see <http://inform.ac/node/4>).

In the period April 2013 to March 2014, Inform dealt with 296 enquiries concerning some 96 different groups, including 21 enquiries about groups that we classified as ‘unknown’ – either we had too little information to classify them accurately, or we were awaiting more information. These are now being researched and classified. There were also 19 enquiries about general themes/topics.

*The groups most enquired about were:*

Scientology	16
New Kadampa Tradition	13
Exclusive Brethren	5
Mormons	5
Anthroposophy	4
Unification Church	4
Jehovah’s Witnesses	4

*Enquiries came mainly from:*

Media	49	General public	21
Government bodies	43	Ex-members	19
Academics/writers	35	Current members	11
Relatives and friends	24	Psychiatrists/Counsellors/therapists	6
Church network/chaplains	22		

Enquiries were also received from prospective members (7), legal (3) and inter-faith centres (1). Fourteen enquiries came from people who wished to remain anonymous.

Government enquiries could be further broken down: Department for Education (16), Police (8), Home Office (6), local government (2), other government departments (9), the latter category includes six enquiries from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Of the 49 media enquiries, 10 were from the BBC. Fourteen of the media enquiries related to the “Brixton Maoist slavery cult”.

Enquiries from abroad came from 17 different countries: 7 from the USA; 6 from Australia; 2 each from Canada, Sweden and the Netherlands; and one each from Belgium, Ecuador, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Philippines, Portugal, South Africa and Switzerland.

Of all enquirers, 83 had enquired before on another matter or on the same matter but had got back in touch with new developments. The majority, 211, had not previously contacted Inform.

## Speaking engagements undertaken by Inform staff

The arrival of Inform’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary gave us the opportunity to arrange a number of panels and to give talks about Inform’s work at professional conferences. For example, Jim Beckford organised panels at which Eileen gave a talk during both the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, and the International Society for the Sociology of Religion in Turku, Finland, and Eileen gave further talks featuring Inform’s work at the American Sociological Association in New York and at King’s College, London. Further publicity was posted on the World Religions and Spirituality website: “How to be Informed about Minority Religions: Celebrating Inform on its twenty-fifth anniversary”.

<http://www.has.vcu.edu/wrs/FORUM/Interview%20with%20Eileen%20Barker.pdf>

In February 2014, the University of California held a conference in honour of Eileen’s work and she was invited to present the keynote speech.

As part of its celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Finnish Society for the Study of Religion invited Eileen to give the 2013 Temenos Lecture at the University of Turku. She also gave keynote addresses or opening plenary talks at the CESNUR conference in Falun, Sweden; the religion section of the British Sociological Association annual meeting in London; and a conference about Scientology, sponsored by the European Observatory of Religion and Laïcité and held at the Faculty for Comparative Study of Religion and Humanism in Antwerp. Skype enabled her to give a lecture to staff and students at Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania from the comfort of her own home.



**Eileen giving a lecture on Scientology in Antwerp**

Within the UK, Eileen’s talks at various schools, universities and groups included one on “New Religious Movements and the New Spirituality” to the Alister Hardy Society London Group, and another on “Cults, Sects or New Religious Movements? An Exploration of

Alternative Spiritualities” to the Scientific and Medical Network. She delivered a talk at the European Association of the Study of Religions in Liverpool and sat on a panel on Religion and the News at the BSA Sociology of Religion meeting in Durham. She also took part in a number of television and radio broadcasts and was the subject of a film designed for A-Level courses on religion.

It is now 16 years since we first made contact with America’s largest ‘cult-watching’ group, then known as the American Family Foundation (AFF) and now as the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA). This has resulted in increasing co-operation between Inform and ICSA through the exchange of information, working together on specific cases, speaking at each other’s conferences, and several prominent members of ICSA contributing to volumes in the Ashgate/Inform series. At ICSA’s 2013 annual conference in Trieste, Eileen gave a talk entitled “Changes in ‘the Cult Scene’: 1950-2013”, which included a discussion of some of the ways in which the relationships between different ‘cult-watching groups’ had altered quite dramatically over the period. She was then not the only person to be surprised when ICSA’s Board presented her with a ‘Lifetime Achievement Award’ for her contribution to the field of cultic studies. <http://www.icsahome.com/articles/dialogue-and-cultic-studies-icsa-board-it-4-3>

Amanda and Nick gave several presentations about the work of Inform to various government departments throughout the year. Presentations were given to the Department for Education, the DCLG, the Home Office and other departments both at their offices and the LSE.

Amanda, Suzanne and Adviya gave a talk on the main religious traditions in the UK at the Department for Education in London. Amanda and Adviya also gave the presentation in Sheffield on a later date. The talks were very well received and there are plans in place for them to be repeated to other staff at the Department in 2014.

Amanda took part in a roundtable workshop at LSE Anthropology department entitled: ‘Witchcraft, spirit possession and anthropological expertise in legal contexts’. In June she presented a paper at the International Society for Science and Religion conference in Turku, Finland on a panel celebrating the work of Inform for past 25 years - along with Eileen, Jim Beckford and Ringo Ringvee. She also gave a talk at the University of the Third Age in Bromley, on the work of Inform.

Sarah and Suzanne presented a paper: “Apocalypse as Distraction: Lessons of New Religions on Apocalyptic Risks” at a conference entitled Risk and Rapture: Apocalyptic Imagination in Late Modernity at the University of Chester on 11 September.

Suzanne presented ‘Spaces for Yoga’ at a conference entitled Yoga in Transformation: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on a Global Phenomenon at the University of Vienna from on 23 September.

In March 2014 Adviya and Sibyl gave a talk on NRMs and Inform to Sixth Formers at St. Mary’s School, Ascot. Later in the same month they gave a talk on NRMs and Inform to Sixth Formers at St. Marylebone School, London.

Suzanne gave talks about Inform and new religious movements to the Upper Sixth Form girls at two different schools: St Mary’s School, Ascot and St Bonaventure’s School in London. She gave a talk on ‘Yoga and the 1960s’ at the Royal Festival Hall as part of the

1960s weekend at The Rest is Noise Festival. Suzanne also appeared on BBC Radio 4's 'Beyond Belief' programme on 10 February discussing 'Yoga'.

## Inform's visitors

### *Visitors to the office included:*

Students, government officials and representatives of the media using our resources; current and former members adding to our resources; and experts from other institutions seeking to share our resources, findings, or exploring other ways to work together.

### *Visitors from both government and other official bodies in the UK and overseas included:*

- Several meetings with a team from the Department of Education to discuss religious/spiritual groups and proposed Free Schools.
- A team of representatives from the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism at the Home Office.
- Numerous meetings with various representatives of different Metropolitan Police departments, as well as a meeting with police officers working on a specific case.
- Several meetings with teams from the DCLG.
- Two representatives of the Chinese police.

### *Visits from researchers and academics included:*

- Representatives from the cult watching groups Info-Secte and the Centre Intercantonal d'Information sur les Croyances (Swiss CIC).
- Two representatives from International Cultic Studies Association, USA
- Professor Linda Woodhead.
- A French PhD student.
- Dr Jasjit Singh from the University of Leeds.
- Martin Walker from the University of the Third Age.
- Dr Holly Folk from Western Washington University.
- An MSc student researching witchcraft and spirit possession.
- Professor Adam Dinham from Faiths and Civil Society Unit at Goldsmiths, University of London.
- A PhD student from Nottingham University studying the Falun Gong.

### *Visits from representatives of, or former members of, minority religions included:*

- Former members of the New Kadampa Tradition
- Both current and former members of the Unification Church
- Both current and former members of ISKCON
- Both current and former members of the Church of Scientology

### *Other notable visitors included:*

- The Assistant General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.
- A representative of the All Faiths Network.
- Various people from the legal profession.
- A representative of the Department of Religious Affairs of the government of Estonia.
- Malcolm Brown from the Church of England Mission of Public Affairs.
- Senior managers from the London School of Economics.



**Sarah, Nick, Adviya and Malcolm Brown in the Inform office**

Following the May Seminar, Eileen organised some field visits for participants associated with overseas 'cult-watching groups'. She took Pat Ryan and Joe Kelly from ICSA (USA), Brigitte Knobel and Julie Montandon from the Centre Intercantonal d'Information sur les Croyances (CIC, Geneva), and Mike Kropveld from Infosecte (Canada) to the ISKCON Temple and farm at Bhaktivedanta Manor; Jesus Fellowship centres in and around Northampton; and the Panacea Society Museum in Bedford. Then, before the January Conference, she took Professors Gordon Melton (Baylor University) and Timothy Miller (University of Kansas) on similar visits.



**Gauri das; his wife, Madhavi dasi; Julie Montandon; Mike Kropveld; Brigitte Knobel; Peter Barker; Joe Kelly, Eileen; and Pat Ryan at Bhaktivedanta Manor**

### *Mail-outs*

At the start of the new academic year, as in previous years, we distributed information about Inform and our *Searching?* poster to chaplains and Student Union welfare officers in higher education institutions throughout Britain. The *Searching?* poster (which can be downloaded from our website <http://www.inform.ac/node/11>) alerts students to potential problems and dangers related to new religious, spiritual and related groups and movements, encouraging the students to make informed decisions, and telling them where they might turn for information and help.

## **Information resources**

Throughout the year we added to and updated Inform's database. By the end of March 2014, our electronic database held information on 4,634 movements, groups and organisations; 182 new groups were added to the database during the period covered by



this report, and countless others were updated by Inform staff and students during their placement with Inform.

Our library has also increased and our Endnote bibliographic database now has a total of 19,679 entries, 8,391 of which are entries of publications located at Inform, including 3,447 books, 259 edited books and 3,997 journal articles. 5,066 entries refer to publications among those located at Eileen's house, including 3110 books, 445 edited books and 2,098 journal articles. (There are thousands more books and articles that have not yet been entered in Endnote.)

## Research

Staff continued their research with the aim of remaining up-to-date with developments in the field. On-going lecture series which Inform staff attended include the Westminster Faith Debates organised by the Religion and Society Research Programme; the LSE Forum on Religion; and events organised by the think tank Theos.

Eileen, having exchanged her role of Inform's Honorary Director for that of one of its Honorary Research Fellows (Professor Jean La Fontaine being the other one), found herself with a bit more time for research and writing. Among the many groups that she visited and/or with whose members and/or former members she conducted interviews were: Ananda Marga; the Brahma Kumaris; the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons); Falun Gong; Hizmet (the Gülen movement); Jehovah's Witnesses; Jesus People USA; the Local Church of Witness Lee; the Pyramid of Merken; the Open Brethren; various Pagan groups; the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church (Exclusive Brethren); Sikh Dharma; Soka Gakkai International; Tenrikyo; and Tzu Chi.

Eileen also met with a number of visiting colleagues from various countries around the world. One of the more interesting occasions was a four-day visit by two Professors from the Chinese People's Public Security University in Beijing, Eileen having spent a couple of weeks teaching and conducting research while based there on three previous occasions. The Police Professors, specialists in the sociology of religion, were particularly interested to see the work of Inform at first hand, but they also attended a lecture that Eileen happened to be giving at SOAS and visited a number of religious and historical sites around London.

In February 2014, following the University of California conference, Eileen took advantage of being on the West Coast to spend two weeks visiting and interviewing new religions in Los Angeles. At Berg's Kabbalah Centre, she attended a class on 'The Light' and then helped clean a warehouse the Centre was converting into a bakery where the 'students' were to bake their own matza from Kabbalah water and flour that they themselves grow. Still in LA, Eileen attended a lecture on *A Course in Miracles* by Marianne Williamson, and visited a number of Scientology buildings where she talked with staff members whom she had interviewed on a number of previous occasions.

Moving on to the San Francisco Bay Area, Eileen visited the home of Dr Mose Durst, who had been in charge of the Unification Church in the 1970s and '80s, when its reputation as a 'brainwashing cult' was at its height, and whom she had first met when she attended one of the residential workshops that she described in *The Making of A Moonie: Brainwashing or Choice?* Part of her interview was filmed by the daughter of two of the movement's more prominent American leaders, who had herself rejected the movement but was now

making a film about it. The next day Eileen spent 5 hours with an elderly woman who, no longer a Unificationist, had been one of Sun Myung Moon's first disciples in Korea in the early 1950s.

Eileen then flew to Seattle where she stayed for a few days with another former second-generation Unificationist whom she had known for almost forty years as one of the first 'Blessed Children'. During that time, she interviewed several more former members, both first- and second-generation, and met up with a former member of 'The Smith Family' whom she had originally met at an ICSA conference.

Another opportunity to research minority religions in the United States arose when Loyola University, New Orleans, invited her to give a public lecture. She was able to visit some black churches and interview a fascinating Jewish Voodoo priestess before conducting further research on the East Coast. In Washington DC she talked to some second-generation Scientologists who had joined the movement's 'Sea Org'; spent an evening with Krishna devotees; and talked to followers of some of the different factions that have divided the Unification Church since Moon's death – and to one of the lawyers involved in some of the many legal cases being fought out between members of the 'Holy Family'. In Baltimore, she attended a service and talked to members of the Black Tabernacle Hebrew Church, and spent some time with a follower and chronicler of Father Yod's Source Family.

*Amanda attended:*

- The launch event of The Witchcraft and Human Rights Information Network (WHRIN), founded by Gary Foxcroft.
- The 'Bilderberg Fringe Festival' where she listened to speeches by both David Icke and Alex Jones, among others.
- A seminar at UCL on religion and legal issues, along with Eileen.
- A protest by the group Abort67, and spoke with some of the protesters.
- A talk by Andrew Chesnut on Santa Muerte Cult, presented at Treadwells.
- The opening talk and reception of J. Beckford's series of talks at KCL: FD Maurice lectures 2014 - Religion & Sociology: a marriage made in heaven or hell?
- Amanda and Nick had a meeting with Professor Linda Woodhead, Director of the Religion and Society research programme, to discuss future collaboration.
- Amanda and Nick attended an event at Archbishop's House on religion in Europe and human rights.
- Amanda and Nick attended a talk on the media's portrayal of satanic ritual abuse allegations at Goldsmiths College.
- Amanda and Nick attended an interview with a Wiccan priest at Treadwell's.
- Amanda and Nick attended an All Faiths Network event at the House of Lords.
- Amanda and Nick attended the public launch of Public Spirit at the QEII Conference Centre.

*Nick attended:*

- Roundtables at Church House and the Demos offices as part of the Global Uncertainties programme.
- A presentation at RUSI on the bombing campaign against mosques in the West Midlands.
- One of J. Beckford's series of talks at KCL: FD Maurice lectures 2014 - Religion & Sociology: a marriage made in heaven or hell?
- The Westminster Faith debate: "How should moderates deal with hardliners?"

- A symposium organised by the Public Policy Exchange on the subject of Safeguarding Against Violent Extremism in Universities and Colleges.
- Nick and Adviya took a group of people on student placement at Inform on a visit to the Church of Scientology centre at East Grinstead.
- Nick took two representatives from the Chinese police to the ISKCON Temple in London's Soho.

*Sarah attended:*

- A talk on Sikh groups by Jasjit Singh in the Faiths and Civil Society Unit at Goldsmiths.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> ESSWE (European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism) conference in Gothenburg, Sweden. The theme of the conference was 'Western Esotericism and Health' and there were four full days of talks.
- The SocRel Study Day, 'Making Sense of the Census' in June.
- A lecture by Courtney Bender organised by the Forum on Religion at LSE in association with the Religious Studies Department at the University of Kent.

*Sibyl attended:*

- The Westminster Faith Debate considering the question "Is it right for religions to treat men and women differently?"
- A seminar entitled "A Question of Religion: Young People & Identity in Contemporary Multi-Faith Britain" at Brunel University.
- A joint lecture by The Kabbalah Centre and the Brahma Kumaris entitled "Peace, Prosperity and Miracles".
- A Religious Archives Group day-long workshop in Bath.
- The Non-religion and Secularity Research Network's 2013 Annual Lecture "The Sociology of Irreligion: Past and Present", a conversation between Professor Emeritus Colin Campbell (York) and Dr Lois Lee (UCL), at Conway Hall.
- A day-long Vampire Symposium, entitled *Seriously Staked*, organised jointly by the Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit (APRU) and Association for the Scientific Study of Anomalous Phenomena (ASSAP) and held at Goldsmiths College.

*Silke attended:*

- An event on vampires held by the Central London Humanist Group, entitled "Things that go bump in the night".
- A conference on spirit possession held by BME Mental Health.

*Adviya attended:*

- A Gülen book launch event at the Dialogue Society.
- The launch of a journal by the Dialogue Society at the House of Lords.
- A Royal Society lecture 'The Appeal of Islamic Fundamentalism' and another at the British Academy, 'What is Islamic Fundamentalism?'
- A lecture on 'Islam and the West' at Queen Mary's University.
- A lecture on 'What is the New Far Right?' at King's College, London.
- A Faith and Fashion event at the London College of Fashion and an Ethnic Relations conference at the University of East London.
- She also accompanied Eileen who was giving a presentation to sociology students at a college in Basingstoke.

Aside from Sibyl, who was busy with the preparation and running of the event, all of the Inform staff gave talks at the Anniversary Conference, focusing on the work of Inform

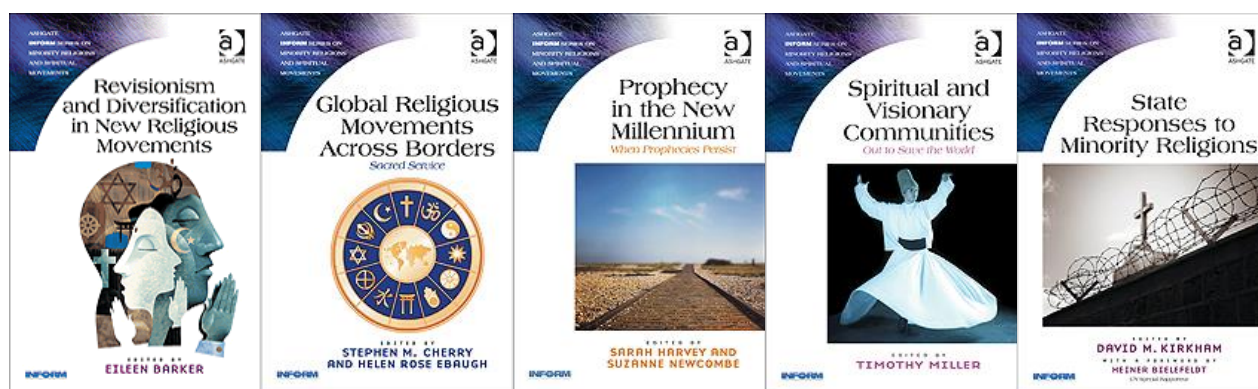
(Nick, Amanda and Suzanne); Ayahusaca in the UK (Sarah); the status of black, female Muslim converts (Adviya); yoga in Britain (Suzanne); comparing the sociologist and psychotherapist experience (Silke); and fraud in religion (Amanda).

## New Leaflets

During the period covered by this report staff members updated a number of leaflets, including: Opus Dei, the School of Economic Science and Sathya Sai Baba. Staff have been working on leaflets about traditional religions, which provide a background contextualisation for enquirers seeking information about NRMs that have developed out of them.

Work has commenced on leaflets on the subjects of Witchcraft, Yoga, meditation, the Brahma Kumaris, Scientology, and the Gülen Movement, among others.

## Ashgate / Inform series in 2013 - 14



The official launch of the Ashgate / Inform series was held during the Anniversary Conference. The published volumes were: *Global Religious Movements Across Borders* (edited by Stephen M. Cherry and Helen Rose Ebaugh); *Spiritual and Visionary Communities* (edited by Timothy Miller); *Prophecy in the New Millennium* (edited by Sarah Harvey and Suzanne Newcombe); *State Responses to Minority Religions* (edited by David M. Kirkham) and *Revisionism and Diversification in New Religious Movements* (edited by Eileen Barker).

Other volumes underway in the series include *Minority Religions and the Law* edited by Professor James T. Richardson and Professor François Bellanger; and *African New Religions in the West* edited by Dr Afe Adogame. Amanda's book on New Religions and Fraud is with the publishers. Sarah is assisting Dr Hamish Cameron compiling an edition on new religious movements and counselling. Plans are underway for some of the papers given at the Anniversary Conference to be compiled into a book for the series.

## Publications by Inform staff and governors during 2013-2014

### Eileen Barker

*Revisionism and Diversification in New Religious Movements* (editor), Farnham: Ashgate, 2013: 1-14.

- "Revision and Diversification in New Religious Movements: An Introduction" in Eileen Barker (Editor) *Revisionism and Diversification in New Religious Movements*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2013: 1-14.
- "Ageing in New Religions: The Varieties of Later Experiences" (translated into Japanese) in *Gendai Shukyo (Religions in the Contemporary World)*, January 2014. [Originally published in "Ageing in New Religions: The Varieties of Later Experiences" in *Altern in den Religionen*, edited by Karl Baier and Franz Winter. Vienna: LIT Verlag. 2013: 227-60; and in "Ageing in New Religions: The Varieties of Later Experiences" *Diskus* Volume 12 (2011): 1-23 <http://www.basr.ac.uk/diskus/diskus12/Barker.pdf>
- "Uscire dalla Torre d'Avorio: un impegno sociologico nella 'guerra alle sette'". 2014 [Italian translation of "Stepping out of the Ivory Tower: A Sociological Engagement in 'The Cult Wars'" *Methodological Innovations Online* (2011) 6(1) 18-39
- "But is it a Genuine Religion?" in Carole Cusack, Danielle Kirby (eds) *Sects, Cults and New Religions*, Volume III, London: Routledge, Chapter 39, 2014. [Originally published in A. L. Griel and T. Robbins (eds.), *Between Sacred and Secular: Research and Theory on Quasi-Religion* (JAI Press, 1994), pp. 97–111.]
- "Confessions of a Curious Sociologist of Religion" in Titus Hjelm and Phil Zuckerman *Studying Religion and Society: Sociological Self-Portraits*, London: Routledge. 2013: 39-54.
- "The Objective Study of the Subjective or the Subjective Study of the Objective? Notes on the Social Scientific Study of Religious Experience and the Social Construction of Reality," *Studies in Chinese Religions*, 2013: 2:1-35.
- "How to be Informed about Minority Religions: Celebrating Inform on its Twenty-fifth Anniversary. An interview with Dr Eileen Barker." *The World Religions & Spirituality Project. WRSP Interviewers: Dr Catherine Wessinger and Dr David G. Bromley.* Richmond VA: Virginia Commonwealth University.
- "But Who's Going to Win? National and Minority Religions in Post-Communist Society." Pp. 11-32 in *On Religion in the Balkans*, edited by Dragoljub B. Đorđević. Niš and Sofia: Yugoslav Society for the Study of Religion and "Ivan Hadjynski" Institute for Social Values and Structures, 2013. [First published in *New Religious Phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe*, Irena Borowik and Grzegorz Babiński (eds) Kraców: Nomos, 1997: 25-62.)
- "Ageing in New Religions: The Varieties of Later Experiences" in *Altern in den Religionen*, edited by Karl Baier and Franz Winter. Vienna: LIT Verlag. 2013: 227-60.
- "Berg, David" in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception Online*, Hans-Josef Klauck, Bernard McGinn, Choon-Leong Seow, Hermann Spieckermann, Barry Dov Walfish, Eric Ziolkowski (editors), Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter. Online edition 2013: 905.
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## Inform Seminar and Conference

Inform held a seminar in May 2013 on *New Religious Movements and Counselling* attended by some 95 people (See Appendix II for the programme). It is intended that the papers presented will be published as a book in the Ashgate-Inform series (see earlier section).

There was no autumn seminar, as it was replaced by Inform's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference, *Minority Religions: Contemplating the Past and Anticipating the Future*, which took place over the weekend of 31<sup>st</sup> January to 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2014. The event was attended by 187 people, with 65 of the attendees also going to the Conference dinner. The conference was widely considered to have been a success, with Inform receiving much favourable feedback (see Appendix III for the programme).

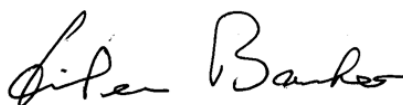
## The Future

The Autumn Seminar (6<sup>th</sup> December 2014) will be on the subject of *New Religious Movements and Schooling*. It is hoped that the seminar papers will form the basis of an edited collection on the topic of schooling, as part of the Ashgate-Inform Series.

The Spring Seminar (Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2015) will be entitled: '*Violence, paralysis and innovation: how do minority religions cope with uncertainty?*' and will be jointly organised and run by Inform and the Ideology, decision-making and uncertainty project, based at Lancaster University (Ideology and uncertainty | <http://wp.lancs.ac.uk/ideology-and-uncertainty/>). This will be followed by a closed seminar on the following day (8<sup>th</sup> February). It is hoped that the presentations from these seminars will contribute to a book, edited by Professor Kim Knott and Dr Matthew Francis and published as part of the Ashgate / Inform Series.

Work will continue on Inform's database, publications, and website, which will enable more of Inform's material to become publicly available. Inform plans to write further leaflets in 2014 and to have the leaflets available through our website. Inform also plans to continue to disseminate information through various media and talks; we already have a number of invitations for later in 2014.

Inform will, of course, maintain its commitment to its principal objective of helping enquirers by providing information that is as reliable and up-to-date as possible, and it welcomes receiving enquiries, information and suggestions from all sources.



Eileen Barker  
Chair of Inform's Board of Government

## Appendix I

### **Patrons**

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*Observer from the Church of England: Anne Richards, DPhil*

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## Appendix II

### 50<sup>th</sup> Inform Seminar

#### New Religious Movements & Counselling

**Saturday, 18 May 2013, 9.30am - 4.45pm**

**New Academic Building, London School of Economics**

*Inform Seminars are intended to help participants to understand, or at least recognise, different perspectives. The presence of speakers on an Inform programme does not mean that Inform endorses their position.*

- 9.30am - 10.00am:        **Registration**
- 10.00am - 10.15am:     **Welcome and Introduction, Professor Eileen Barker**
- 10.15am - 10.45am:     **Dr Hamish Cameron** (Child Psychiatrist)  
*Counselling and Minority Religions*
- 10.45am - 11.15am:     **Lizzy Calcioli** (Scientology Auditor)  
*Auditing as “Spiritual Counselling”*
- 11.15am - 11.45am:     **Coffee**
- 11.45am – 12.15pm:     **Simon Cooper** (Unificationist)  
*Working out Family Conflict*
- 12.15 - 12.45pm:       **Pat Ryan & Joe Kelly** (Thought Reform Counsellors)  
*Restoring Family Connections*
- 12.45pm – 1.30pm:      Small Group Discussions
- 1.30pm - 2.15pm:       **Lunch**
- 2.15pm - 2.45pm:       **Karl Williams** (Consultant Counselling Psychologist)  
*Clinical approaches to NRMs: discourse, power and pathology*
- 2.45pm - 3.15pm:       **Maitreyabandhu** (Teacher at the London Buddhist Centre & Author)  
*Mindfulness-Based Approaches and Buddhism*
- 3.15pm - 3.45pm:       **Tea**
- 3.45pm – 4.15pm:       **Dr Linda Dubrow-Marshall** (Clinical and Counselling Psychologist; co-founder of RETIRN)  
*The Psychological Aetiology and Sequelae of Involvement with New Religious Movements: Counselling Issues for Members, Former Members, and Families*
- 4.15pm - 4.45pm:       General Panel Discussion

## Appendix III

### Programme for Inform Anniversary Conference 'Minority Religions: Contemplating the Past and Anticipating the Future' Friday 31 January – Sunday 2 February 2014

Plenary Panel Session	Speakers
<b>Plenary Panel A: a Word from our “Stakeholders”</b> Friday 31 January 17.30 – 19.30 <i>Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)</i>  Chair: Professor Eileen Barker	The Right Reverend Graham James, Lord Bishop of Norwich
	Dr Damian Thompson, Editor of Telegraph Blogs and a Director of the Catholic Herald
	Warwick Hawkins, Head of Faith Communities Engagement, Integration Division, Department for Communities and Local Government
	Nick Parke, former police officer
	Philip Katz QC, Barrister
	Professor Conor Gearty, Professor of Human Rights Law, LSE
<b>Plenary Panel B: Members or Former Members of New Religious Movements</b> Saturday 1 February 9.30 – 11.15 <i>Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)</i>  Chair: Professor James Beckford	Richard Barlow, former member of the Unification Church
	Abi Freeman, formerly a spokesperson and member of The Family International (TFI)
	Gauri das, executive secretary of ISKCON
	Terrill Park, Scientology Freezone
<b>Plenary Panel C: a Word from the “Cultwatchers”</b> Sunday 2 February 14.15 – 16.15 <i>Sheikh Zayed Theatre (NAB LG.08)</i>  Chair: Nick Parke	Dr Michael Langone of the International Cultic Studies Association (via video link)
	Professor Gordon Melton of the Institute for the Study of American Religion
	Professor Eileen Barker of Inform
	Mike Kropveld of Info-Secte
	Professor James T. Richardson of University of Nevada, Reno (via video link)
	Dr Massimo Introvigne of CESNUR

Parallel Sessions	Speaker(s)	Title of Paper
<b>1A Mapping Minorities</b> Saturday 1 February 11.40 – 13.25 <i>Alumni Theatre (LG.09)</i>  Chair: Professor Norman Bonney	Milda Ališauskienė	Religious minorities in Lithuania: contemplating the present
	Brigitte Knobel and Camille Gonzales	Mapping of religious minorities in Geneva
	Ringo Ringvee	What do the censuses tell about minority religions? Some reflections
	Christiane Königsted	Changes in the field of new religions in the mirror of secular law - the example of the French legal practices
<b>1B The Academic Study of NRMs Over Time</b> Saturday 1 February 11.40 – 13.25 <i>Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)</i>  Chair: Eugene V. Gallagher	George D. Chryssides and Stephen E. Gregg	'The Silent Majority'? beyond insider / outsider categories and understanding 'apostate testimony' in the future study of new religions
	Timothy Miller	Are the cult wars over, and if so, who won?
	Afe Adogame	What are new religious movements good for? African Christianities and the building of social and religious capital in Europe
<b>1C Cult Reputations</b> Saturday 1 February 11.40 – 13.25 <i>Thai Theatre (LG.03)</i>  Chair: TBC	Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist	In good faith?
	Sarah Harvey	Ayahuasca in limbo, the UK situation
	Megan Goodwin	'The Wall Between Us': American Sexual Exceptionalism and Minority Religions
	Christian Greer	Beneath the Underground: The Dissemination of The Church of The SubGenius Through the Marginal Press
<b>2A The Next Generation</b> Saturday 1 February 14.15 – 16.00  <i>Thai Theatre (LG.03)</i>  Chair: Dr Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist	Liselotte Frisk	Different religion – different childhood: a comparison between the Osho Movement and Jehovah's Witnesses
	Dawn-Marie Gibson	Negotiating the generational and gender barrier in Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam
	Sanja Nilsson	Schooling Krishna's Swedish grandchildren
	Jonny Scaramanga	Accelerated Christian Education: enforcing orthodoxy through loaded language

<b>2B Insider Perspectives I</b> Saturday 1 February 14.15 – 16.00 <i>NAB 1.04</i>  Chair: Dr George D. Chryssides	Vasudev Das	Sex and leadership crisis: Vaisnava Vedantic approach
	Robin Harragin and Tony Lobl	Christian Scientists - pioneers or has-beens? A review of research on how Christian Science migrated across the Atlantic at the end of the nineteenth century with views on its future
	Claire Borowik	From radical communalism to virtual community: The Family International
	Kishan Manocha	Religion, social change and responding to persecution – the case of the Baha'i community in Iran
<b>2C Therapeutic Considerations</b> Saturday 1 February 14.15 – 16.00 <i>NAB 2.04</i>  Chair: Dr Hamish Cameron	Linda Dubrow-Marshall, Rod Dubrow-Marshall and Steve K.D. Eichel	Evolving to enhance efficacy: the RETIRN model of intervening in cult-related cases
	Gillie Jenkinson	The Love of God community - reflections on membership of and recovery from an abusive bible-based NRM or cult
	Silke Steidinger	Enlightened or insane? The dilemmas and unique insights of having a sociologist hat and a psychotherapist hat
<b>2D Spiritual Spaces</b> Saturday 1 February 14.15 – 16.00 <i>Alumni Theatre (LG.09)</i>  Chair: Dr Titus Hjelm	Wendy Dossett	Secularisation and the past, present and future of alcoholics anonymous
	Erin Johnston	Anticipating the future: the growth of practice-oriented spiritualities
	Suzanne Newcombe	The democratization of yoga in Britain
	Emily Falconer	Queer religious youth: informal spaces of spirituality
<b>2E The End of Time?</b> Saturday 1 February 14.15 – 16.00 <i>Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)</i>  Chair: Benjamin E. Zeller	David V. Barrett	Coping strategies for failed prophecies
	Eugene V. Gallagher	A guaranteed future for new religions
	Roland Littlewood	The end of a religion
	Piera Talin	Building New Age sustainability in Santo Daime Ecovillage

<b>3A Legal Considerations</b> Saturday 1 February 16.30 – 18.15 <i>Thai Theatre (LG.03)</i>  Chair: Professor Tim Miller	Stephanie Berry	Freedom of religion and the protection of religious minorities: has the European Court of Human Rights lost its way?
	Sadia Mir	Protecting Human and Minority rights in the era of global governance – examining the methods and acknowledging the challenges, for a way forward
	H. David Baer	Hungary's new system of church recognition: rule of law or rule by decree?
	Anthony T. Fiscella	Communication breakdown: MOVE, the U.S. Court System, and critical religion theory
<b>3B Minority Religions and New Media</b> Saturday 1 February 16.30 – 18.15 <i>NAB 1.04</i>  Chair: Dr Damian Thompson	François-Xavier Bauduin	Reengineering the basis of the community in a new religious movement: how the internet and the concept of network has given to the Raelian movement a new breath
	James D. Holt	Mormons and the media. A historical analysis of a media history and the contextual framework for “I’m a Mormon”
	Erica Baffelli	Japanese ‘new religions’ and the media: dynamic and changes since the 1980s
	Beth Singler	No leader, no followers: the internet and the end of charisma?
<b>3C Minority Religions and Conflict in the UK</b> Saturday 1 February 16.30 – 18.15 <i>NAB 2.04</i>  Chair: Adviya Khan	Matthew Francis	Non-negotiable beliefs: making a useful distinction between the ‘sacred’ and ‘religion’
	Jeff Gary	In sharp relief: the study of new religious movements and radicalization in the UK
	Hardeep Singh	Mistaken identity: facing the negative rebound of Islamism in a post 9/11 age
	Douglas J. Davies	Mormonism in Britain - testimony and doubt

<b>3E Minority Religions and the State I</b> Saturday 1 February 16.30 – 18.15 <i>Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)</i>  Chair: Dr Marat Shterin	Norman Bonney	The attitude of the UK state towards minority religions
	J. Eugene Clay	Religious liberty in Russia after 1997
	Stephen Suleyman Schwartz	The Bektashi-Alevi Continuum from the Balkans to Iran: Sufi Minorities and Politics
	Titus Hjelm	Paradoxes of religious legitimacy and authenticity in an age of expediency
<b>4A Inform: Anticipating the Future</b> Sunday 2 February 9.30 – 11.15 <i>Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)</i>  Chair: Pedr Beckley	Sarah Harvey, Suzanne Newcombe and Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist	New cults, changing contexts – how we make sense of it all
	Eileen Barker	The changing scene: What might happen and what might be less likely to happen?
	Nick Parke	Inform: Anticipating the future – the Director's cut
<b>4B New Religious Movements and their Public Image</b> Sunday 2 February 9.30 – 11.15 <i>NAB 1.04</i>  Chair: Dr Steven Sutcliffe	András Máté-Tóth and Gábor Dániel Nagy	Empirical research among the membership of Scientology in Germany, Hungary and Switzerland
	Ruth Bradby	Worldwide but barely a minority: A Course in Miracles
	Eugenia Roussou	Spiritual movements in times of crisis: an anthropological account of esotericism in Portugal and Greece.
	B Scherer	A Neo-orthodox Buddhist Movement in Transition: the late-charismatic status quo and the post-charismatic perspectives of the Diamond Way

<b>4C Insider Perspectives II</b> Sunday 2 February 9.30 – 11.15 <i>Thai Theatre (LG.03)</i>  Chair: Hardeep Singh	Eric Roux	Scientology: from controversy to global expansion and recognition
	Han Gang-Hyen and Kim Young Suk	The Role and Future of a Korean new religious movement: The Victory Altar and the development of neo-humans
	Shruti Kulkarni	Religion and social justice: learning from the past, looking to the future. A Vedic perspective
	Moojan Momen	Change and development in the Baha'i Faith
<b>4D Minority Religions and the State II</b> Sunday 2 February 9.30 – 11.15 <i>NAB 2.04</i>  Chair: Ringo Ringvee	Sylvie Toscer-Angot	The evolution of the status of Islam in Germany: what implications for the future?
	Claude Proeschel	Religious minorities in democratic Spain: rekindle with the past and part of the future
	Susan J. Palmer	New religious responses to police raids and state "persecution": collective memories, theological innovation and social reorganization
	Guillaume Roucoux	Four generations of scholars researching <i>les dites "sectes"</i> in France
<b>4E New Religious Movements Over Time</b> Sunday 2 February 9.30 – 11.15 <i>Alumni Theatre (LG.09)</i>  Chair: Professor Rod Dubrow-Marshall	Anne Mette Fisker-Nielson	From Japanese Buddhist sect to global citizenship: Soka Gakkai past and future
	John-Paul King	Coming In From The Cold: the use of faith-based social care and action as a means of building social, symbolic capital and community integration for a once marginalised Christian NRM.
	Pavol Kosnáč	Pop culture-based religions: Can it actually work?
	Donald Westbrook	Invitation to future research on the Church of Scientology

<b>5A New Religious Movements: Surveying the Literature</b> Sunday 2 February 11.40 – 13.25 <i>Wolfson Theatre (LG.01)</i>  Chair: Professor Abby Day	George D. Chryssides	From deviance to devotion: the evolution of NRM studies
	Benjamin E. Zeller	Writing and researching on new religious movements: A view from the American Academy
	Margaret Z. Wilkins	Classical comments: treacherous new rites: writing on NRMS in the ancient world
	Steven J. Sutcliffe	Scholarship on seekership: explaining traffic in and out of (new) religions
<b>5B Paganism: Past and Future</b> Sunday 2 February 11.40 – 13.25 <i>NAB 1.04</i>  Chair: Sarah Harvey	Vivianne Crowley	The changing face of contemporary Paganism in Britain
	Melissa Harrington	Paganism – from occult anomaly to Britain’s largest New Religious Movement in 50 years; contemplating the past, and anticipating the future
	Adam Anczyk	Neopaganism in Poland from the 1990s till the Present
	Shai Feraro	Is there a future for Neopaganism in the Holy Land? Past and present in the shaping of a community-building discourse among Israeli Pagans, 1998-2013
<b>5C Negotiating Religious Identity</b> Sunday 2 February 11.40 – 13.25 <i>Alumni Theatre (LG.09)</i>  Chair: Professor Liselotte Frisk	Alessandro Amicarelli	Islam in America: The Moorish Science Temple of America
	Paulina Niechcial	Sacred homeland, glorious ancestors and old-time language. Ethnic elements in the identity of the Zoroastrian religious minority in modern Tehran
	Jessica Finnigan	You Can't Smash the Internet: Historical Analysis of the LDS's Efforts to Shape Technology, and how the Internet has Changed the Rules of the Game
	Adviya Khan	Black, female, Muslim and a Hip-Hop artist- a case study of conversion



<b>5D Anti-Cult Reactions</b> Sunday 2 February 11.40 – 13.25 <i>NAB 2.04</i>  Chair: Mike Kropveld	Dinka Marinović Jerolimov, Ankica Marinović and Branko Ančić	Is there emergence of anti-cult movement in Croatia?
	Adam Klin-Oron and Rachel Werczberger	Cult, anti-cult and academia in Israel: ruminations on the past, reflections on the future
	Essi Mäkelä	Religion and law meets new religiosity
	Sebastian Năstuță	Anticipating the future evolution of Jehovah's Witness in Europe