

**Information Network on Religious Movements**



**inform**

# **Annual Report**

## **April 2018 – March 2019**

Registered Office

**Inform**

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incorporated in England as a company limited by  
guarantee under the Companies Act (No. 2346855).

## Introduction

Inform has continued to fulfil its charitable objective of collecting, assessing and disseminating reliable information about minority religions, and, as usual, we were able to help a wide range of enquirers and service users. The enquirers included government departments, the police, chaplains, members and former members of religious, spiritual and other ideological movements, their relatives, students, academics, journalists and documentary makers, as well as a variety of members of the public. Inform staff have continued to update the database of religions and the Inform library with publications.

However, due to ongoing financial constraints, we have had to focus on completing funded projects, and searching for new sources of funding. In this period, we have completed work for the Department for Education and Culham St Gabriel's Trust, and we have worked on Professor Barker's BA / Leverhulme Small Grant project, 'Health and Healing in Minority Religions'.

In May 2018, we left the LSE after 30 years and settled into our new home in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College, London. In November 2018, we held our first public seminar in conjunction with the Department, which was well received by the 80 or so attendees. We also launched our new website at this seminar. The website has been designed and funded by M&C Saatchi through an in-kind grant won through the Home Office's 'Building a Stronger Britain Together' programme.

## Some Major Events

The #metoo movement continues to have ramifications in minority religious movements, particularly in Buddhist movements active in the UK. Rigpa International, Shambhala International, the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT), and Triratna (formerly Friends of the Western Buddhist Order) have all been dealing with accusations of abuse against their leaders / teachers – although the founder and leader of Triratna, Sangharakshita (born Dennis Lingwood), died in October 2018. Media articles have focused on these groups and on the 'cult-like' activities of a number of social media influencers, such as Teal Swann and Bentinho Massaro. There has also been coverage of different tantra and yoga teachers, including Bikram Choudhury, founder of Bikram or 'hot' yoga, who has been accused of multiple counts of rape in the USA and has relocated to Mexico. Agama Yoga, a tantric school in Thailand, closed for a period at the end of 2018, whilst the school conducted an 'internal inquiry' of the allegations of rape and sexual abuse against the leader. However, it reopened in January 2019 without publishing the inquiry report.

Sexual abuse claims have been levelled at other religious leaders too. John of God, a spiritual healer based in Brazil, was arrested in December 2018 after numerous women (hundreds, according to media articles) reported sexual abuse during healing sessions. In March 2019, he was in prison awaiting trial.

Jehovah's Witnesses have continued to face problems in Russia where they have been banned as a legal entity since April 2017. Jehovah's Witnesses have reported increasing hostility in Russia, including aggressive police raids in which young and old alike are held for interrogation. In a report published in February 2019, they stated that in the period September 2017-January 2019, there were 23 Witnesses jailed; 27 under house arrest; 41 ordered not to leave their hometown; 121 Witnesses under investigation and 300 home raids or searches. Meanwhile, in the USA, Canada and elsewhere, the Watch Tower Societies continue to face legal claims of historic sex abuse.

In China, the Church of Almighty God continues to undergo severe persecution, alongside Falun Gong, the Uyghurs and other religious minorities. *Bitter Winter*, Massimo Introvigne's daily on-line magazine on religious liberty and human rights in China, describes the Church of Almighty God as one of the most persecuted groups in China and provides up-to-date information on the arrests of members and the 're-education' of their families as well as the increasing number of Buddhist temples and Christian churches that are being demolished by the government.

In the USA, the legal case against members of the self-improvement / human-potential movement, NXIVM has been on-going. Five members have been charged with various crimes, including racketeering and sex trafficking. Founder Keith Raniere's trial is due to start in May 2019.

In July 2018, Shoko Asahara, the founder of Aum Shinrikyo, was executed for his role in planning and executing the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo underground system in 1995. He had been sentenced to death in the mid-2000s. The Tokyo District Court has ordered Aleph, the successor to Aum Shinrikyo, to pay compensation to the victims of the attack. In January 2019, parcels containing potassium cyanide and ransom notes, bearing the names of executed Aum Shinrikyo leaders, were delivered to pharmaceutical and food companies in a number of major cities in Japan. Demands were made for cryptocurrency payments. It has been suggested that the sender was a sympathetic supporter of Aum.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints released a public statement that they should only be known by their full name – and not by the popular monikers the 'Mormon Church', the 'Mormons', LDS or even 'Latter-day Saints'. Instead, the name of Jesus Christ should always be used in the full title. When He is removed from the Church's name, He is removed from member's lives, it is claimed.

The movement that was once known as the Unification Church (or the Moonies), having now split into three organisations, has been embroiled in fierce legal battles, involving millions of US dollars, the most intense dispute being one in which the Family Federation for the Unification of World Peace International, run by Sun Myung Moon's widow is suing the Moons eldest surviving son, Hyun Jin Moon (Preston), who runs the Family Peace Association, over ownership of much of the movement's business enterprises. Meanwhile, the youngest son, Hung Jin Moon (Sean), running the Sanctuary Church in Pennsylvania, has hit the headlines through his strong advocating of the use of firearms, including special ceremonies in which the members, wearing crowns of bullets, have their guns blessed.

## Inform's Governors

No new governors were appointed in this period; however, there were a number of changes to the Board. In September 2018, Professor James Beckford resigned from the Board of Governors in order to enjoy his retirement. Dr George Chryssides replaced him as Chair of the Management Committee.

The Board met twice in this period, once under the Chairmanship of Professor Eileen Barker (as Acting Chair as Dr Shterin was unavailable) and once under the Chairmanship of Dr Marat Shterin. Inform's Treasurer, the Reverend Andrew Maguire, presented Inform's annual accounts, which had been audited by Knox Cropper, at the Annual General Meeting in September 2018 and, following approval by the Governors, these were submitted to the Charity Commission and to Companies House.

The Management Committee met in person or by Skype on four occasions under the chairmanship of Dr Chryssides; 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.

## Staff

Dr Shanon Shah's contract as an Inform Research Officer ended in May 2018, and in August 2018 he began a one-year contract as a Lecturer at King's College, London. The remainder of the team remains the same: Sarah Harvey, Senior Research Officer, worked three days a week and has been responsible for contributing to and managing projects, responding to enquiries and ensuring the database of information is as up-to-date as possible. In November 2018, Sarah successfully defended her thesis, 'The Birth I Want: Negotiating the Ideal and the Practical in Natural Birth' at her viva at the University of Kent. In March 2019, she submitted her minor corrections. Her graduation ceremony will be held in November 2019.

Silke Steidinger continued in her post as a part-time Assistant Research Officer, and Dr Suzanne Newcombe, whilst working half-time as a lecturer at the Open University, continued, for the other half of her time, to work out of the Inform office as a Research Fellow on her European Research Council funded project, AYURYOG. During this period, she prepared a monograph for publication *Yoga in Britain: Stretching Spirituality and Educating for Fitness* with Equinox (published June 2019). As part of AYURYOG work, she has been preparing an edited book (together with Karen O'Brien-Kop (SOAS)) under contract the *Routledge Handbook of Yoga and Meditation*. She was also invaluable in helping staff with projects and enquiries whenever she had time.

Warwick Hawkins continued as the Office Manager and worked closely with Andrew Maguire on managing Inform's finances. Eileen Barker continued to act as Honorary Director.

## Student Placements

Inform had four student placements in this period.

- 1) Oliver Smith, completing a Master's at LSE, worked one day a week from October 2018
- 2) Mandeep Sidhu, completing a Master's at King's, also worked one day a week from October 2018
- 3) Joseph Banks, completing a Master's at King's, has worked some Monday mornings since February 2019
- 4) Anna Nedey, an undergraduate at King's, has worked Monday afternoons since February 2019.

The volunteers are a great help in keeping the database up to date and assisting at seminars. They also have the opportunity to attend numerous events and to take notes for the Inform files.

## Enquiries

Between April 2018 and March 2019, 141 enquiries were received about 48 different groups. These do not include either enquiries about groups we classified as 'unknown' (four, which have since been, or are in the process of being, researched, classified and filed), or any of the 68 enquiries concerning 10 different general themes. Whilst this is a slightly lower number of enquiries than last year, the number of different groups asked about is much higher. There were no major events which created high numbers of enquiries about a single movement as in previous years. Instead we received fewer enquiries about a wider range of movements.

It should be noted that the number of enquiries received about a particular group is merely a statistic relating to which groups are generating the most enquiries; it does not indicate either negative or positive evaluations.

### The groups most enquired about between April 2018 and March 2019:

New Kadampa Tradition	7
Findhorn Foundation	4
Triratna	4
Church of Scientology	3
Jehovah's Witnesses	3
Unification Church	3
Diamond Way Buddhism	2
Friends of Andrew Cohen	2
International Churches of Christ	2
School of Economic Science	2
Universal Medicine	2

## Enquirers

Inform responded to a wide range of enquirers, with students making the highest number of enquiries, followed by the media. This is a change from last year when former members were responsible for the highest number of enquiries. This period has also seen a rise in enquiries from the general public.

The greatest number of enquiries between April 2018 and March 2019 were from:

Students	30
Media	22
Former members	17
General public	17
Academics/ writers	14
Relatives and friends	7
Government bodies	6
Cult watching groups	5
Chaplains	4
Current members	4
Prospective members	4

Enquiries were also received from lawyers (2), education institutions (1) and organisations categorised as 'other' (3). As always, we received some enquiries from anonymous sources unwilling to identify themselves (4).

Thirty-one international enquiries were received from: the USA (6), Germany (4), Canada (3), Switzerland (3), Belgium (2), France (2), the Netherlands (2), Turkey (2) and one each from Australia, Austria, Denmark, Iran, Singapore, South Korea and Ukraine.

Forty-seven enquirers had contacted Inform previously. Ninety-four were new enquirers. The majority of enquiries were received via email (77); 27 were via telephone; 30 went to Professor Barker first. The remainder were via visit (5) and letter (1).

## Speaking and other Engagements

### Inform Governors

#### Eileen Barker:

- "Tyrant or Protector? Why might it make sense for the Chinese People's Republic to restrict religious freedoms?" Charles Sturt University, Canberra, 4 April 2018.
- "Contemporary Creations and Re-cognitions of Sacred Sites." Keynote lecture, International Conference on Sacred Spaces, Australian National University, Canberra. 6 April 2018.
- "Whatever happened to the Cults?" Australian National University, Canberra. 9 April 2018.

- “Cults, Extremists, Terrorists? A sociological perspective on new religious movements” Dialogue Centre, London. 2 May 2018.
- “Old and New: Here, There and Everywhere” Keynote Lecture: CESNUR Annual Conference, Taiwan. 21 June 2018.
- “DisUnification Churches? An Enquiry into Post-Charismatic Factions”, International Cultic Studies Association, Philadelphia. 6 July 2018.
- “Religious and National Identity in Trans-National New Religious Movements” International Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Toronto. 18 July 2018.
- “Is it a Cult or is it a Real Religion?”, British Association for the Study of Religion, Belfast. 5 September 2018.
- Course of six lectures at The Chinese People's Public Security University, Beijing. 6-14 October 2018.



Eileen speaking to police cadets. The Chinese People's Public Security University, Beijing, October 2018.

- “Why are fringe religions a subject of interest for a sociologist?” Sogang University, Seoul. 17 October 2018.
- “The Unification Church”, Sogang University, Seoul, S. Korea. 18 October 2018.
- “Paradise? How on Earth?” Daesoon University, S. Korea. 21 October 2019.
- “Religious Attitudes to the Body, Health and Healing” Inform Autumn Seminar. 24 November 2018.

Eileen also wrote an expert witness statement and appeared in court for an asylum case.

The following religious organisations were among those visited, some on multiple occasions:

- Brahma Kumaris (London, UK)
- Cao Dai (Viet Nam)
- Children of God/The Family International (Canada; UK)
- Church of Almighty God (Canada; USA; Korea; UK)



- Church of Christ Scientist (UK)
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (UK)
- Church of Scientology (Washington DC; New York; East Grinstead, UK)
- Daesoon Jinrihoe (S. Korea)
- Falun Gong (UK)
- Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (Seoul; London; New York; Vienna; Hong Kong)
- Father Divine's Estate and Museum (Pennsylvania)
- Family Peace Association (Washington DC)
- ISKCON (Washington DC)
- Jesus Christians (UK)
- Hizmet (London, UK)
- Jehovah's Witnesses (Warwick, New York; Seoul; London)
- Jesus Fellowship (Northampton, UK)
- London Church of Jesus (London, UK)
- New Kadampa Tradition (Geneva)
- Rigpa (UK)
- Sanctuary Church (Seoul; Pennsylvania)
- True Buddha School (Taiwan)
- Twelve Tribes (Devon, UK)
- Watchman Nee/ Witness Lee centre (Taiwan)
- Weixin Shengjiao (Taiwan)
- Yoido Full Gospel Church (Seoul).



Eileen, Pat Ryan and Joe Kelly (from ICSA), and Hyung Jin (Preston) Moon, founder and leader of the Sanctuary Church.



Eileen also visited numerous temples and other places of worship and interviewed priests, monks, nuns and others in Australia; Austria; Belgium; Canada; China; South Korea; Hong Kong; Sweden; Switzerland; Taiwan; UK; and USA.



Eileen and a Jehovah's Witness at the Bethel in Bishkek, Kyrgyztan.

She was an external examiner for PhD theses:

Sanja Nilsson 2019. *Performing Perfectly: Presentations of Childhood in Knutby Filadelfia Before and After the Dissolution of the Congregation* University dissertation from Göteborg, Sweden

Jessica Jennings 2019. *Reiki in London: The Vibrant Individual* University College, London,

She gave various radio and television broadcasts and videoed interviews by Robert Schechter (in Philadelphia); Rachel Bernstein (California); James Ratee (LSE).

Eileen also attended a meeting of representatives of 'cult-watching groups' who had been getting together annually for the past 11 years to discuss challenges faced in our work and to visit local religions. This year we met in Geneva and discussed the problems concerned with confidentiality. We also visited a Non-denominational Church; a Buddhist Centre and an Islamic Centre.



Brigitte Knobel (CIC, Geneva); Mike Kropveld (Infosecte, Canada); Kerstine Vanderput (CIAOSN, Belgium); Eileen Barker (Inform)

#### **George Chryssides:**

- “‘Writing without Spelling’: How Jehovah’s Witnesses Spread their Teachings in Taiwan”. CESNUR Annual Conference, Weixin College, Nantou County, Taiwan, 17-23 June 2018.
- “Charismatisation” – Roundtable discussion: On the Shoulders of Giants: Eileen Barker, the Study of New Religions and Religious Leadership – A Session Honouring Eileen Barker on Her Significant Birthday. CESNUR Annual Conference, Weixin College, Nantou County, Taiwan, 17-23 June 2018.
- “Unchanging Truth? – Not in the Study of Religion”. Keynote lecture: International Academic Forum (IAFOR), Brighton, 2-4 July 2018.



George speaking at the International Academic Forum, Brighton, July 2018.

- “Insiders or outsiders?: A case study of Christian Japanese weddings.” British Association for the Study of Religions; Queen’s University Belfast, 3-5 September 2018.
- “Beyond Armageddon”. The 2nd World SangSaeng Forum International Conference, Daejin University, South Korea, 22-24 October 2018.
- “Are Religious Values Paramount?” Keynote lecture, International Academic Forum (IAFOR), Asian Conference on Ethics, Religion, and Philosophy; Tokyo, Japan, 21-13 March 2019.



George Chryssides at Weixin College, Taiwan, June 2018.

In 2018, George Chryssides was elected as President of the International Society for the Study of New Religions and as Chair of the Ethics Working Party of the British Association for the Study of Religions.

#### **Kim Knott:**

- With the CREST team on ‘Actors and Ideologies in Social Context’, Kim co-presented research on the theme of ‘Understanding Who and Why’ at BASS18, the first international conference of the Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats, in July 2018.



- With Ben Lee, she held a workshop for security practitioners on 'Reciprocal Radicalisation' in London in May 2018.  
<https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/reciprocal-radicalisation/>



- In October 2018, Kim Knott joined a panel on 'Uncovering Fundamentalism' at the Cambridge Festival of Ideas, on the subject of 'Extremes'. She also participated in a discussion on 'Fundamentalism and Extremism' at the Woolf Institute, Cambridge. For the podcast, see <https://woolfpods.wordpress.com/category/encounter/>.
- She was part of the evaluation committee, held in Utrecht in October 2018, for the NWO-funded research programme, 'Religion in Society', and participated in a panel discussion on the future of publicly-funded research on religion and its societal impact.

#### **Marat Shterin:**

- University of Lancaster Invited Lecture 'Conceptualising Religion in Political Conflicts: the case of the Russian-Ukrainian Crisis', Lancaster, May 23, 2018.
- Seminar for Russian Lawyers and Academic Expert Witnesses 'Academic Expertise in Litigation Involving Minority Religions in Britain and the U.S.', St. Petersburg, Russia, 17-18 June, 2018.
- Associates of King's College London lecture (for 2,000 students and staff) 'When Millenarian Dreams and Utopias Go Violent', November 26, 2018.
- Lecture 'Religion and the Fall of Communism: Implications for Public Policy', Foreign Office (part of the seminars series for the FCO Academy for Diplomacy); FCO 28 January 2019.
- ERSC funded UK - Japan workshop 'Religion and Minority: lived religion, migration and marginalities in secular societies', Manchester, March 11-12. Marat gave a paper, 'Academic Expertise in Anti-Extremism Litigation Involving Minority Religions in Russia'.

## Inform Staff

### Sarah Harvey:

- “Illness as Impurity: practices for cleansing and purifying the body”, Inform seminar on Health and Healing in Minority Religions, 24 November 2018.



Sarah speaking at the Inform Seminar, 24 November 2018.

- Sarah also gave a talk to second-year undergraduates in Theology and Religious Studies, King's College London, about the work of Inform, in December 2018. Following this, we had an increase in requests for work experience placements.

### Suzanne Newcombe:

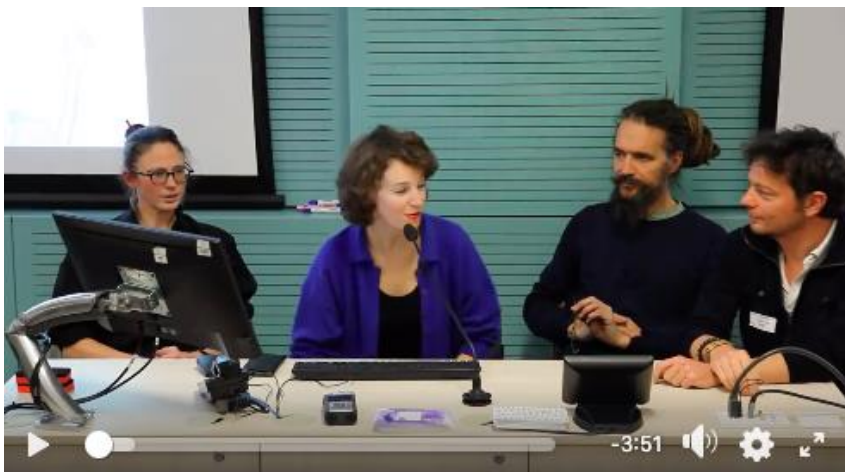
- “Images of Indian Gods and Objects of Immortality”. British Museum in London's [Study Day: Understanding Religion Through Objects](#). 7 April 2018.
- “Ayuryog” at the opening of the SOAS Centre of Yoga Studies, SOAS. 8 May 2018.
- “1923 Usman Report on Indigenous Medicine”, at the All Party Parliamentary Group - Indian Traditional Sciences in partnership with High Commission of India and The Nehru Centre's event Celebrating UN International Yoga Day 2018 and NHS @ 70. 18 June 2018.
- Talk to St Marylebone A-Level Sociology Students. 19 June 2018.
- “What is Yoga?”, participated in a public discussion on this topic at Triyoga, Soho, London. 23 September 2018.
- Chaired “The Doctor from India” Film Screening and Discussion at SOAS, University of London. 26 October 2018.
- “The status of indigenous medicine in India from the colonial period to the present”, at a workshop run as part of the “Law Knowledges and the making of modern Health Care”, University of Kent. 8 November 2018.

- “The Body in Contemporary Yoga and Ayurveda”, Inform Seminar, Health and Healing in Minority Religions, in conjunction with the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King’s College, London. 24 November 2018.



Suzanne speaking at the Inform Seminar, 24 November 2018.

- “Immortality and miracle cures: The stretching of language in yoga and Ayurveda”, University of Kent's research seminar for Religious Studies. 28 November 2018.
- “AyurYog and Haṭha Yoga Project ERCcOMICS Event”, SOAS, University of London, [Centre for Yoga Studies](#). The ERCcOMICS for [AyurYog](#) and the [Haṭha Yoga Project](#) conducted a joint reading/launch at SOAS with Jim Mallinson and Suzanne Newcombe. 10 December 2018.



Suzanne Newcombe, Alice Milani, James Mallinson and Massimo Colella at the ERCcOMICS live reading at SOAS in December 2018.

- “Yoga and Health in Modern India”, guest lecture for students on SOAS's MA in Traditions of Yoga and Meditation. 20 March 2019.



- “Disciplines and Dialogues”, workshop for authors of the *Routledge Handbook of Yoga and Meditation* at SOAS. 28-29 March 2019.
- Chaired a public discussion on “Alchemy in Daoism and Haṭha Yoga”, between Professor Louis Komjathy (University of San Diego) and Dr James Mallinson (SOAS) at SOAS. 29 March 2019. <https://youtu.be/6mRjcgPRwkc>

Suzanne and co-editor, Karen O’Brien-Kop (SOAS), held a very successful author’s workshop at SOAS on 28-29 March 2019, for their edited book *Routledge Handbook of Yoga and Meditation*.



*Routledge Handbook of Yoga and Meditation* workshop participants outside SOAS 29 March 2019.

Suzanne continued her work as editor of the fully open-access *Journal of Yoga Studies*, as book review editor for *Religions of South Asia*, and as an educational advisor to CenSAMM. She also agreed to curate a space on the World Religions and Spiritualities Project website on Yoga together with her co-editor with the Routledge volume Karen O’Brien-Kop. <https://wrldrels.org/2019/02/09/yoga-in-world-religions-and-spiritualities/>.

## Inform’s Visitors

Inform has welcomed many visitors to its office, ranging from academics, writers, researchers for media institutions and think tanks, to members and former members of religious movements, and more; some were academics and students using our resources and expertise to work on their own projects; and others were concerned with networking and funding. Eileen and Sarah met with numerous people from the police and other government bodies in this regard.

Visitors included academics from UCL, SOAS and Imperial College; the King's College Chaplain; the directors of CenSAMM and the Religion Media Centre; representatives from the Metropolitan Police and Prevent; the Department for Education; and the Church of England; and members of minority religions, including the Church of Scientology and Jehovah's Witnesses.

## Resources

Throughout the year we updated and added to Inform's resources. By the end of March 2019, our electronic database held information on 5,077 organisations; 28 new groups were added to the database during the period covered by this report, and details of countless others were updated by Inform staff and students during their placement with Inform.

Our library had also increased and, by the end of March 2019, our Endnote bibliographic database had a total of 1950 books and 4777 journal articles held at Inform. In addition, Professor Barker has 2096 books and 2384 journal articles located at her house.

We are anxious to find somewhere, preferably in London, where we might store our books and archival material.



Silke moving boxes in our new storage room at King's College, London.

## Funded Projects

In May 2018, we completed projects for both the Department for Education and Culham St Gabriel's Trust. For the DfE, we produced three information booklets for the Department's internal use: one focusing on the qualifications and credentials of faith leaders; one on inviting external speakers to schools; and one providing introductory profiles of 30 different religious movements with an interest in education. We continue to liaise with the Department about the final part of this project; two-thirds of the agreed amount of money has been spent producing these booklets and the Department needs to clarify the final piece of work. This has been delayed due to staff leaving the Department and the preoccupation with Brexit.

For Culham St Gabriel's Trust, we wrote five essays for the RE Online website, a resource for RE teachers. Professor Barker wrote a short essay on why the study of NRMs is important for RE, entitled 'Beyond the Big Six' - <https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/beyond-the-big-six/>.

Inform staff wrote in-depth profiles of four religious movements:

- 1) Jehovah's Witnesses - <https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/jehovahs-witnesses/>
- 2) Soka Gakkai - <https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/soka-gakkai/>
- 3) The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - <https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/the-church-of-jesus-christ-of-latter-day-saints/>
- 4) Rastafari - <https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/rastafari/>

We are hoping that we will be able to work further with Culham St Gabriel's Trust in the future.

During this period, Sarah has been working with Professor Barker on her BA/Leverhulme Small Research Grant funded project entitled 'Varieties of Models of Health and Healing in Minority Religions'. The November 2018 seminar was held on this topic and Sarah and Eileen have been editing a volume for the Routledge-Inform Series. This grant will end in October 2019, when we will produce a project report.

We had regular communications with CenSAMM about the possibility of a further research project, writing more online profiles of millennial movements. This was delayed whilst CenSAMM advertised for a new Director – a position filled in Summer 2018 by two people. Under the new Directorship, the focus will be on creating an online Dictionary of Millennial Movements and Inform will contribute to this project. It is a much smaller project than in 2017, however, and details are still to be finalised.

Professor Barker and the Inform staff have been busy completing application forms for further sources of funding.

## **Publications by Inform Staff and Governors**

### **Routledge Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements**

With Eileen Barker as the series editor, work has continued on the 'Routledge Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements' <https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Inform-Series-on-Minority-Religions-and-Spiritual-Movements/book-series/AINFORM>. One volume was published in the series in this period; *Minority Religions in Europe and the Middle East: Mapping and Monitoring* edited by George Chryssides. Three others are in production: *Minority Religions and Uncertainty* edited by Kim Knott and Matthew Francis; *Radical Changes in Minority Religions* edited by Eileen Barker and Beth Singler; and *Health and Healing in Minority Religions* edited by Eileen Barker and Sarah Harvey.

## Publications by Inform Governors

### Eileen Barker:

- 2019. "Paradise? How on Earth?" *Journal of Korean Academy of New Religions* 40/4:178-188.
- 2019. "The Curse of Cults and the Scourge of Sects: Or a Come-Outing of New Religious Movements." Pp. 157-88 in *Come Out from among Them, and Be Ye Separate, saith the Lord: Separatism and the Believers' Church Tradition*, edited by William H. Brackney and with Evan L. Colford. Pickwick: Eugene Oregon.
- 2019. "So What's New about Violence? A Reflection on New Religions and Physical Force" in Franz Winter (ed.) *Religion and Violence*.
- 2019. "The Unification Church." in *Encyclopedia of Latin American Religions*, edited by Henri Gooren: Springer 5pp.
- 2018. "New Religious Movements as Resources in a Changing World." Pp. 159-76 in *Religious Imaginations: How Narratives of Faith are Shaping Today's World*, edited by James Walters. London: Ginko.
- 2018. "Reflections on the Trajectory of My Work." *Religion and Society* 9 (2018): 16-23.
- 2018. "The Unification Church." *Alternative Spirituality and Religion Review* 9(1):91-105.
- 2018. "The Unification Church: A Kaleidoscopic Introduction." *Acta Comparanda VI (Special Issue on The Life and Legacy of Sun Myung Moon and the Unification Movements in Scholarly Perspective)*: 19-55.  
<https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/sr/article/view/17176/16960>
- 2018. "Beyond the Big Six: Why study beyond the big six religions." *RE: Online Culham St Gabriel's*.  
<https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/beyond-the-big-six/>

### George Chryssides:

#### Books:

- 2019. *Historical Dictionary of Jehovah's Witnesses*. 2nd edition. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield. ISBN 978-1-5381-1951-8.
- 2019. *Minority Religions in Europe and the Middle East: Mapping and Monitoring*. London: Routledge. Editor.
- with Dan Cohn-Sherbok and Usama Hasan 2019. *People of the Book: An Interfaith Dialogue about How Jews, Christians and Muslims Understand Their Sacred Scriptures*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica King. ISBN 978-1-78592-104-9.

#### Book chapters:

- 2019. 'Religious Minorities: Setting the scenes'; in Chryssides, George D. (ed.) *Minority Religions in Europe and the Middle East: Mapping and Monitoring*. London: Routledge: 1-8.
- 2019. 'Jehovah's Witnesses and the Middle East'; in Chryssides, George D. (ed.) *Minority Religions in Europe and the Middle East: Mapping and Monitoring*. London: Routledge: 78-96.
- 2019. 'Key data on religions by country'; in Chryssides, George D. (ed.) *Minority Religions in Europe and the Middle East: Mapping and Monitoring*. London: Routledge: 227-250.

#### Journal articles:

- 2018. 'Suicide, Sucidology, and Heaven's Gate.' *Journal of Religion and Violence* 6(2): 191-205. ISSN 0738-098X. doi: 10.5840/jrv20188153.

#### Other publications:

- 2018. *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter. Entries on: Lectionary II.D; Letter, Letters V.E; Leviticus, Book of IV.B; Lie, Lying IV.D; Liturgical Books II.E; Logos IV.D.; Lord's Day II.F; Lord's Day Observance Society; Lord's Prayer III.D; Lord's Supper II.G Vol.16: 11-12; 230-231; 387-388; 514; 856-857; 1022-1023; 1117-1118; 1119-1120; 1133-1134; 1174-1175.

#### Kim Knott:

- 2018. 'Applying the Study of Religion in the Security Domain: Knowledge, Skills and Collaboration', *Journal of Religious and Political Practice*, 4:3, 332-351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20566093.2018.1525901>
- 2018. 'Musing on a Muse: An Image Encounter', *Journal of the British Association for the Study of Religions*, 19, 18-35. <http://jbasr.com/ojs/index.php/jbasr/issue/view/2>
- Knott, K., Lee, B. & S. Copeland. 2018. *Reciprocal Radicalisation: Summary and Discussion*. CREST Briefing. <https://www.radicalisationresearch.org/debate/2018>; <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/reciprocal-radicalisation/>
- 2018. *Muslims and Islam in the UK: A Research Synthesis*. Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats. 87pp. <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/british-muslims-full-report/>
- With Ben Lee 2018. *Ideological Transmission III: Political and Religious Organisations*, 60pp, Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats. <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/political-religious-organisations/>



- With S.V. Marsden and J. Lewis 2019. *Countering Violent Extremism II: A Guide to Good Practice*. Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats. <https://crestresearch.ac.uk/resources/countering-violent-extremism-two/>

#### **Marat Shterin:**

- 2019. With Dmitry Dubrovsky, 'Academic Expertise in Anti-Extremism Litigation in Russia', *Soviet and Post-Soviet Review*, 46/2 pp. 211-236.

#### **Inform Staff**

##### **Sarah Harvey:**

- 2018. "Jehovah's Witnesses". *RE: Online* Culham St Gabriel's. <https://www.reonline.org.uk/subject-knowledge/jehovahs-witnesses/>

##### **Suzanne Newcombe:**

- 2018. with Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist "'Trust Me, You Can't Trust Them": Stigmatised Knowledge in Cults and Conspiracies,' in Asbjørn Dyrendal, David Robertson and Egil Asprem (eds.) *Brill Handbook of Conspiracy Theory and Contemporary Religion*. Brill: 152-179.
- 2018. 'Spaces of Yoga – Towards a Non-Essentialist Understanding of Yoga' in *Yoga in Transformation: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, Karl Baier, Phillip A. Maas and Karen Preisendanz (eds.) 'Wiener Forum für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft' ('Viennese Forum for Theology and the Study of Religions,' Göttingen: V&R University Press, pp. 551-573. <https://www.vandenhoeck-ruprecht-verlage.com/themen-entdecken/theologie/religionswissenschaft/16133/yoga-in-transformation>
- 2018. 'Yoga and Āyurveda' *Sahapedia*. <https://www.sahapedia.org/yoga-and-ayurveda>

## **Inform Seminars**

We held one seminar in this period: Health and Healing in Minority Religions, 24 November 2018 (see Appendix II for the programme). This was the first Inform seminar held in conjunction with the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College, London. Inform was very grateful for the funding and support received from the Department in order to host this seminar. The seminar was well attended with around 80 participants, being the usual mix of academics, students, members, former members, relatives, and professionals with an interest in the topic. All agreed that the venue in Bush House was outstanding.





*Panel Discussion at the Health and Healing Seminar November 2018*

The new Inform website, built and paid for by M&C Saatchi under an in-kind grant received from the Home Office's 'Building a Stronger Britain Together' programme, was officially launched at this seminar. A representative from M&C Saatchi gave a short presentation on the website. It was generally well received with some mixed views about the new Inform logo.

## The Future

Plans are already underway to hold a summer seminar on the topic of 'How Minority Religions React to the Law', on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019, and it is hoped that the seminars will become regular events again now that we are settled into our new home at King's.

Inform's future is dependent on acquiring new funding, but despite the challenges of its financial situation, Inform remains committed to achieving its charitable objective of helping enquirers through its provision of reliable information about minority religions for the wide range of enquiries we receive each year. We shall continue to gather material to add to our unique collection of resources and to further a greater understanding of minority religions through our publications and events.

## Appendix I

### **Patrons**

The Right Reverend Graham James, Lord Bishop of Norwich (Church of England)  
The Reverend Dr Hugh Osgood, The Moderator of the Free Churches' Group  
Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia (Greek Orthodox Church)  
Bishop Paul Hendricks, Nominee of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese  
Professor Lord Desai of St Clement Danes  
Baroness Sally Greengross of Notting Hill

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George D. Chryssides, DPhil (Vice-Chair); *Honorary Research Fellow in Contemporary Religion, University of Birmingham*  
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Professor Kim Knott, PhD (Chair), *Professor of Religious and Secular Studies, Lancaster University*  
The Reverend Andrew Maguire, MA, BD (Treasurer), *Nominee of the Free Churches' Group; Superintendent Minister of the West Norfolk Methodist Circuit*  
Marat Shterin, PhD *Department of Religious Studies, King's College London*  
Reverend Alan Walker, MA, MTh, LLM, *Parish Priest*

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

### **Management Committee**

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Professor James Beckford, PhD, FBA (until September 2018)  
George D. Chryssides, DPhil  
Professor Kim Knott, PhD  
The Reverend Andrew Maguire, MA, BD

### **Staff**

Professor Eileen Barker, PhD (Acting Honorary Director)  
Sarah Harvey, PhD (Senior Research Officer)  
Warwick Hawkins, MBE (Office Manager)  
Suzanne Newcombe, PhD (Research Fellow)  
Silke Steidinger, MSc (Research Officer)

Honorary Research Fellow: Professor Jean La Fontaine, PhD  
Honorary Research Fellow: Dr Bernard Doherty, PhD

## Appendix II

### Health and Healing in Minority Religions

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Bush House, King's College, London

- 10.00-10.10      Welcome
- 10.10-10.35      Eileen Barker, FAcSS, FBA, OBE, Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the London School of Economics - *Religious Attitudes to the Body, Health and Healing*
- 10.35-11.00      Tony Brace, The European Association of Jehovah's Witnesses - *Jehovah's Witnesses and Blood Transfusion: Faith or Fanaticism?*
- 11.00-11.25      Carole M. Cusack, University of Sydney - *G. I. Gurdjieff on Health and Healing: Diet, Fasting and Spiritual Exercises*
- 11.25-11.55      *Coffee*
- 11.55-12.20      Sarah Harvey, Senior Research Officer, Inform - *Illness as Impurity: practices for cleansing and purifying the body*
- 12.20-12.45      Chris French, Head of the Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit in the Psychology Department at Goldsmiths - *The psychology of belief in and use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)*
- 12.45-13.10      Robin Harragin Hussey, District Manager of Christian Science Committee on Publication for UK and Ireland - *Holiness and Healing in Christian Scientists' Practice Today*
- 13.10-14.10      *Lunch*
- 14.10-14.35      Suzanne Newcombe, Research Fellow at Inform, Lecturer in Religious Studies at the Open University - *The Body in Contemporary Yoga and Ayurveda*
- 14.35-15.00      Simon Dein, consultant psychiatrist in Essex UK, honorary clinical professor at Durham University – *The End of Suffering: Mysticism, Messianism and Medicine in Lubavitch*
- 15.00-15.30      *Tea*
- 15.30-15.40      Website launch
- 15.40-16.40      Panel