

Information Network on Religious Movements



Annual Report

January 2012 – March 2013

Registered Office
Inform
Houghton St
London WC2A 2AE

Telephone
+ 44 (0) 20 7955 7654

Email
inform@lse.ac.uk
Website
www.inform.ac

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

The Governors recently agreed that Inform's financial year should in future run from the beginning of April to the end of March. As we are in the process of switching, this annual report will cover January 2012 – March 2013.

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. Work also continued to keep the database and website up to date. We hope to be able to post more information on the site in 2013, including some of the Inform leaflets.

There were a few notable events which kept the staff occupied, and which led to an increase in enquiries as compared to previous years. In the UK, these included the London 2012 Olympics and celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Further afield, one such event was the death of Reverend Moon, founder of the Unification Church, in Korea in September 2012. Professor Eileen Barker in particular was in high demand as a guest on numerous radio and TV shows and wrote a number of short pieces for several papers. The ramifications of Moon's death for the Unification Church are still being worked out, with various family members vying for power and the movement's assets, and this is a subject about which Inform continues to receive enquiries.

The 'Mayan' / 'New Age' prophecies around the date of 21 December 2012, as well as other end-of-the-world and/or ascension prophecies, also generated a number of enquiries from media, government bodies and interested or concerned relatives and the general public. These prophecies also contributed to a renewed interest in religious and secular prophecies more generally, and Inform addressed the topic of prophecy in its Spring Seminar.

The Exclusive Brethren were the focus of a number of media articles and two Early Day Motions in the House of Commons when one of their Trusts was turned down for registration with the Charity Commission. A tribunal has been arranged for 2013. This incident led to some debate as to the nature of the 'public benefit' of religious charities, and Inform's Honorary Director, Professor Eileen Barker, wrote a 14,000-word 'Witness Statement' at the request of the Charity Commissioners. Later in the year, a whistle-blower at one of the Brethren schools leaked some controversial information to a tabloid paper about the 'confining' or 'shutting-up' of a number of school children for using Facebook. This was denied by the Brethren. The issue of education more generally was another focus for Inform in 2012, as we received several enquiries about different religious/spiritual groups that had applied to establish Free Schools under the government's new Free School programme.

Towards the end of 2012, Inform learnt that it had been successful in securing some further funding from the government, and as a result, advertised a salaried Director's position in early 2013.

Governors and Patrons

Philip Knights, who was the nominee of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese to Inform's Board of Governors, resigned because of other responsibilities. Jim McManus was then appointed as the new Catholic nominee to Inform's Board in September.



Dr Hamish Cameron

In 2012 two new members joined Inform's Board of Governors. Dr Hamish Cameron, a former Consultant Child Psychiatrist at St George's Hospital, London and Cassel Hospital, Surrey, has long been a member of Inform's network and an active participant and volunteer at Inform seminars. The other new Governor is Professor Conor Gearty, Professor of Human Rights Law in the law department at the London School of Economics and Political



Professor Conor Gearty

Science. He has published widely on terrorism, civil liberties and human rights. Professor Gearty is also a barrister and was a founder member of Matrix chambers from where he continues to practise.

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 Commissioners and Companies House.

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

Staff

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) and Sibyl Macfarlane (Administration Officer and Assistant Research Officer).

In April 2012, interviews were held for a new Assistant Research Officer. After interviewing a number of candidates, it was decided to appoint two people: Ms Adviya Khan was offered a position for two days a week and Dr Matthew Francis for one day a week. This worked well in the office as Adviya took over research on Islamic groups and issues and Mat on political groups, especially the 'far right'. Mat also created a database of images associated with political groups, including tattoos and badges.



Visiting Krishna devotees with Eileen Barker, Adviya Khan and Laura Dunn

Also in April, two students from King's College, London began student placements, helping the staff with research and the on-going task of keeping the database up-to-date. Joseph Walsh and Catharine Buckell worked one day a week from April until August. Catharine then took up a second placement in the office from October until December. In January 2013 two more people, Gladys San Juan and Laura Dunn, began their placements in the Inform office. Gladys stayed

with us for two months, while Laura continued well into the summer.

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 – the modules are convened by one of Inform's Governors, Dr Marat Shterin. Throughout three academic terms she took Wednesdays off from her work at Inform. She has also continued to work on her book about children in new religious movements which is to be published by Oxford University Press, and refereed an article for an academic journal. Suzanne became 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 concluded her consulting contract as Associate Lecturer for the new Open University course 'Why is Religion Controversial?' (which will start in September 2013) as well as her contract as Associate Lecturer for the OU course 'Religion Today, Tradition Modernity and Change'. Sarah has continued to work part-time on her PhD at the University of Kent on the subject of natural approaches to pregnancy and birth. She spent 2012 collecting data, observing different antenatal courses and interviewing women about their pregnancy and birth experiences. Silke is in her third year of psychotherapy training at the Bowlby Centre.

In 2012 it was necessary for Inform to purchase new computers for the office as the LSE upgraded all of its software to Windows 7, and our computers were no longer compatible with the new software. This meant that we could sort out some small problems with our specialist database as well as making some changes to the enquiry database, adding fields to improve the tracking of response times to enquiries. This allows us to track both response times and time spent on enquiries.

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 helped to 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 January 2012 to March 2013, Inform dealt with 531 enquiries, which was significantly more than the period January 2011 – March 2012, when we received 450 enquiries. There were a number of events that contributed to the rise in enquiries, including the Mayan/New Age prophecies of 'the end of the world' (or at least a significant spiritual shift) set for 21 December 2012; the death of Reverend Moon, founder of the Unification Church in September 2012; the Buddhist group, Diamond Way, purchasing the Beaufoy Building in Lambeth; the Dalai Lama giving a talk at the LSE; the Charity Commission turning down an application by the Exclusive Brethren to register one of its Trusts as a charity; a number of religious or spiritual groups applying to establish Free Schools; the potential visit to the UK of the controversial Canadian Evangelist, Todd Bentley (who was refused a visa in August 2012); and the conviction of a woman and her boyfriend for the murder of 15-year-old Kristy Bamu – the woman was Kristy's sister and she and her boyfriend had accused Kristy of 'witchcraft'.

Between January 2012 and March 2013, Inform received enquiries about 101 different groups and 15 general themes/topics. There were also 15 enquiries about groups that we classified as 'unknown' – either we had too little information to classify them accurately, or we were awaiting more information. The number of enquiries was up significantly as compared to the previous period, and the enquiries for 2012 alone, 454, were up from those we received in the years 2011 (342) and 2010 (341).

The groups most enquired about were:

Unification Church	42
New Kadampa Tradition	36
Diamond Way Buddhism	20
Exclusive Brethren	23
Scientology	17
Anthroposophy/ Steiner Schools	10
Rigpa	9
Transcendental Meditation	7
Brahma Kumaris	6
Jehovah's Witnesses	6
Believer's Loveworld	6

Enquiries came mainly from:

Media	84
Government bodies	76
Academics/writers	55
Ex-members	53
General public	47
Church network/chaplains	45
Relatives and friends	36
Current members	31

Students	28
Psychiatrists/Counsellors/therapists	13
Education institutions	13
Advice agencies	10

Enquiries were also received from prospective members (8), think tanks/NGOs (4), legal (2) and inter-faith centres (2). Fifteen enquiries came from people who wished to remain anonymous.

Government enquiries could be further broken down: Metropolitan Police (18), local police (4), Home Office (18), Department for Education (14), local government (4), other government departments (15). Of the 84 media enquiries, 26 were from the BBC.

Enquiries from abroad came from 24 different countries: 21 from the USA; 5 each from France and Germany; 4 from Australia; 3 from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, India and Spain; 2 from China, Japan, South Korea and Sweden; and one each from Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Morocco, Poland, Romania, Russia and South Africa.

Of all enquirers, 185 had enquired before on another matter or on the same matter but had got back in touch with new developments. The majority, 347, had not previously contacted Inform.

Speaking engagements undertaken by Inform staff

Eileen gave a number of keynote talks and lectures at universities and conferences in Britain and overseas. These included a series of lectures and seminars on 'The Varieties of Religious Experience and New Religions' as the William James Guest Professor at the University of Bayreuth; a workshop on 'Alternative Responses to Minority Religions' at the University of Haifa, where she also chaired a public debate on 'The Involvement of the State in the Contemporary Spirituality Field'.



Eileen lecturing at Bayreuth University

In Romania she gave a talk to The International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA), of which she is the Honorary Life President, and a lecture at the University of Bucharest. Two lectures at the University of Kaunas were on the methods of the social sciences and practical problems of their application, and on the concept of 'brainwashing'. A talk to Human Rights lawyers in Washington DC dealt with minority religions, and one in Montreal considered the methodological challenges of conducting research into both contemporary new religions and their opponents. At Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, she lectured to about 100 students preparing to be imams about contemporary religion in the

West, and at the Chouaïb Doukkali University, El Jadida, Morocco she gave the opening lecture at the annual CESNUR conference on 'Globalization, Localization and Glocalization'. She also presented papers at meetings of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (in Phoenix, Arizona) and the American Academy of Religion (Chicago); and gave a public lecture at the University of Kansas entitled 'How Can They Believe That? The Never-ending Challenge for a Sociologist of Religion'. In February 2013 she attended a conference in Leipzig called 'Challenging Consensus: New Perspectives on Religious Non-conformism', then flew on to lecture on 'The New

Christian Movements in Europe: Challenges or Opportunities?’ to a joint gathering of Consilium Conferentiarum Episcoporum Europae (CCEE) and the Conference of European Churches (CEC).

Eileen also contributed to various radio and television programmes including the Today Programme, Beyond Belief, the World Service and several local and overseas media. Skype lectures were given to the University of Qom, Iran, and Moscow State University, and talks to A-Level students both at their schools and at the LSE.

Eileen and Amanda gave several presentations about the work of Inform to various government departments throughout the year. Presentations were given to the DCLG, the Home Office and other departments at both Eland House and the LSE. Eileen and Amanda also met with Dame Suzi Leather and a team from the Charity Commission. Eileen and Amanda participated in a conference at Dalarna University in Falun, Sweden, organised by Dr Liselotte Frisk at the end of October 2012. Dr Frisk had secured funding for a research project looking at children raised in new religions in Sweden, and this event was the launch of the three-year project. Eileen and Sarah both gave papers at the 2012 British Sociological Association’s Sociology of Religion conference held at the University of Chester in March.

Amanda’s speaking engagements included: a talk at the ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) annual conference about beliefs and practices around witchcraft and spirit possession, and an analysis of cases where such beliefs and practices have affected children. After this event she was invited to meet with the Director of CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre). Amanda also presented at the Church of England Chaplain’s conference in Derby; and gave a talk at the launch event of the LSE Forum on Religion, the organisation of which, in 2012, moved from the European Institute to the Department of Anthropology and came under the new ‘Programme for the Study of Religion and Non-Religion’.

In February, Sarah and Suzanne gave a talk about ‘2012 prophecies’ at a media event called ‘The Event’, which was held in the basement of The Albany pub on Great Portland Street. This was an informal occasion and included a range of speakers and performances including songs and comedy. In early January, Suzanne had participated in a BBC Radio 4 show about the end of the world, 2012 prophecies, and apocalyptic predictions. In March, Suzanne gave a talk entitled ‘Contemporary Hatha Yoga in the West’ at ‘What is Modern Yoga: A Study Day for Hindus and Christians’ organised by the Centre for Christianity and Interreligious Dialogue and Hindu-Christian Forum at Heythrop College.

A few schools asked Inform to give presentations, as they have done in previous years. In March 2012, Suzanne and Sibyl gave a talk about Inform and new religious movements to the Upper Sixth Form girls at St Mary’s School in Ascot, Berkshire, and Suzanne returned to give a talk in February 2013; in April 2012, Suzanne and Sibyl gave a talk about esoteric religious groups and symbols at St Bonaventure’s School in London, and Suzanne returned to give a talk in March 2013; in July, Suzanne and Adviya gave a talk about Inform at St Marylebone Church of England School, London; and in November Suzanne gave another talk at St Marylebone’s. Amanda also attended a careers’ fair at St Marylebone’s, advising sixth form students about studies and careers in sociology.

Professor Jean La Fontaine, Inform’s Honorary Research Fellow, gave a talk on ‘Children of the Devil’ at the University of London Inter-Collegiate Luncheon Club, to which Eileen had been elected as President for the year 2012/13.

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.



Amanda van Eck, Eileen Barker, Dr.Koji Osawa and Mr. Kasatoshi (Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs) with interpreter

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

- Dame Suzi Leather from the Charity Commission.
- A representative from the Thomas Coram Research Unit who was compiling a literature review for the Department of Education on 'faith based child abuse'.¹
- 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 Prevent Team of the Home Office.
- Numerous meetings with various representatives of different Metropolitan Police departments, as well as a meeting with a police officer working on a specific case.
- Several meetings with teams from the DCLG.
- A representative from the French Embassy.
- Two representatives from the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs.

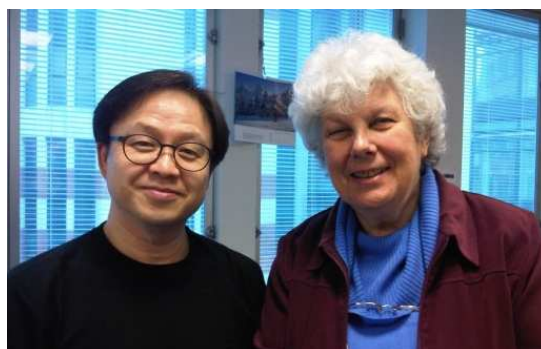
Visits from researchers and academics included:

- Professor Ji-il Tark from Busan Presbyterian Church in South Korea.
- Piotr T. Nowakowski, from The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland.
- Dr Lesley McLean from the University of New England, Australia.
- Professor Boaz Huss from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel.
- Amos N Guiora, a Professor of Law from the University of Utah.
- An academic and her PhD student from MF Norwegian School of Theology.
- A student from Aarhus University, Denmark.
- Elizabeth Hunter, Director of the think tank Theos.
- The Revd Dr James Heard, who had written his PhD on the Alpha Course.
- Raffaella Di Marzio, the director of the Sectes, Religion, Spirituality Counseling Center in Rome, Italy.

¹ Details can be found at <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/CWRC-00115-2012>.



Professors James Tong and Gordon Melton at a pre-Seminar dinner



Professor Ji-il Tark, from South Korea's Busan Presbyterian University, with Professor Barker

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

- Members of Santo Daime in the UK
- Members of Universal Medicine
- Trustees of Diamond Way Buddhism
- A 'Baba Ramdev' yoga teacher
- Former members of the New Kadampa Tradition
- Both current and former members of the Unification Church
- A Krishna devotee whom Eileen had met in Israel
- Members of the Gülen movement
- A Second-Generation Adult (SGA) who had left The Family International and wanted to write a thesis on growing up in a new religion

Other notable visitors included:

- One of Inform's patrons, The Reverend Michael Heaney, The Moderator of the Free Churches' Group.
- A representative of Christian Concern.
- The Research Assistant to the Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury.
- Mike Whine, Director of Defence and Group Relations Division for The Board of Deputies of British Jews as well as the Director of Government and International Affairs for the Community Security Trust.
- A Trustee of the Panacea Society.
- Various people from the legal profession.
- A retired member of MI6.



*Dr. Dedong WEI,
Director of the
International Center for
Buddhist Studies,
Renmin University,
Beijing*

Eileen also met with a number of colleagues visiting from Japan, China, Vietnam, Russia and various parts of both Eastern and Western Europe and North America for the exchange of information.

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 2013, the Inform database held information on 4452 movements, groups and organisations; 239 new groups were added to the database in 2012, 23 during January-March 2013, and countless others were updated by Inform staff and interns.

Our library has also increased and our Endnote bibliographic database now has a total of 18,027 entries, 7,968 of which are entries of publications located at Inform, including 3,225 books, 249 edited books and 3,873 journal articles. 5,066 entries refer to publications among those located at Professor Barker's house, including 2,952 books, 428 edited books and 2,001 journal articles. (There are hundreds 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's research in the UK involved numerous visits and interviews with a wide variety of minority religions, including, among the better-known religions, the Dialogue Society, the Unification Church, ISKCON, Falun Gong, The Family International, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Exclusive Brethren

Her overseas research included interviews and visits to centres of, to take but some examples, Pagans, the Brahma Kumaris, Old Believers, and the Pyramid of Merkinė in Lithuania; the Unification Church, Scientology, a channeller and ISKCON in Israel; a Sufi group and various other Muslim groups in Morocco; an Osho organisation and the Knutby Filadelfia Church in Sweden; the Essenes Foundation, the Mission of the Holy Spirit, the Brethren, and members of various 'cult-watching groups' in Montreal and other parts of Quebec; The Family International, and a number of Orthodox and Catholic centres in Romania; the Westboro' Baptist Church, Pope Michael, the Society of Pope Pius X and several Mormon offshoots in Kansas and Missouri; and the Jesus People USA in Chicago.

Amanda attended:

- The Dalai Lama's talk at the LSE, which Eileen also attended.
- A workshop on academic funding opportunities organised by the AHRC, which she attended with Inform Governor Dr Abby Day.
- A conference entitled 'Culture, Spirituality & Psychopathology: integrating clinical and theoretical perspectives' at St Paul's Cathedral, organised by The Royal Society of Medicine and the World Association of Cultural Psychiatry.
- A talk given by the 'chaos magician' Phil Hine at Treadwell's Bookshop.

- A meeting with Ole Nydahl, the founder and leader of Diamond Way Buddhism, at a Diamond Way Centre in London.
- A panel event on new religious movements and religious freedom at the House of Lords during Interfaith week. Eileen and Sarah also attended the event.

Sarah attended:

- A meeting with representatives of the Jesus Fellowship at their head-quarters in Northampton.
- The 'Religion and belief, discrimination and equality: a decade of change?' practitioner workshop in London organised by the University of Derby, as part of their Religion and Society funded research project by the same name.

Suzanne attended:

- Two different Baba Ramdev yoga classes.
- Various meetings with members and former members of the NKT.

Sibyl attended:

- The free introductory class at the Kabbalah Centre, London. She later returned to the Centre to interview one of the teachers.
- One day of the 'New Forms of Public Religion' Conference, at St John's College, Cambridge, which showcased projects funded by the Religion and Society programme and the Religion and Diversity Project (Canada).
- A talk about Tzu Chi Buddhist economics at the LSE, which Adviya also attended.
- With Silke, Scientology's Gala for the 28th anniversary of the International Association of Scientologists at Saint Hill Manor in East Grinstead.

Adviya attended:

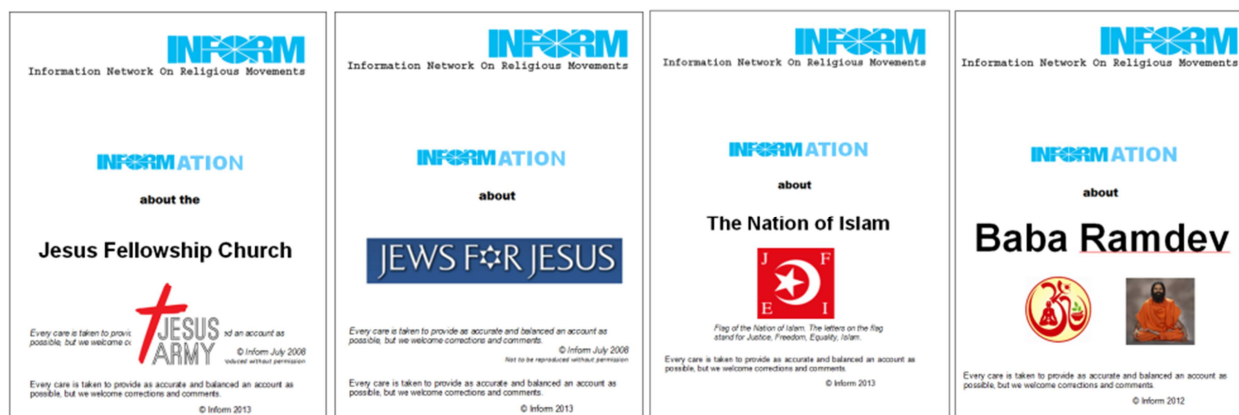
- Afruca safeguarding training day - a day of learning about Witchcraft, Juju and working to safeguard children in African communities within the UK.
- The launch of the Afruca 'safeguarding children in African communities' report held at the House of Commons, hosted by Meg Miller MP with Lisa Nandy MP, shadow minister for children as the keynote speaker.
- The Theos annual lecture at Central Hall Westminster, given by the outgoing Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, who spoke about human dignity, relationships and limits.
- A workshop about 'far right' political groups organised by the politics department at Queen Mary, University of London.
- One day of the 'New Forms of Public Religion' Conference, at St John's College, Cambridge, which showcased projects funded by the Religion and Society programme and the Religion and Diversity Project (Canada).
- The launch of the report *Muslim Participation in Governance* at the Bishopsgate Institute.
- The Royal Society's presentation on 'The Appeal of Islamic Fundamentalism' at Carlton House Terrace.
- The Faith and Fashion event organised by the Three Faiths Forum at the London College of Fashion.
- A lecture entitled Islam and the West at Queen Mary University.
- A conference on Campus Extremism, Freedom and Security at the LSE.
- The conference, and launch of the report, entitled *What is the New Far Right?* At ICSR at KCL.

Mat attended:

- A Lapido Media event to celebrate Lapido's fifth birthday and to launch their book series, 'Handy Books on Religion in World Affairs', the first of which was on Tablighi Jamaat.

New Leaflets

Staff members completed the four leaflets that had been funded by the Spalding Trust in 2011. The new leaflets are on: The Jesus Fellowship; The Nation of Islam; Jews for Jesus; and Baba Ramdev. Eileen applied for further funding from the Spalding Trust (and her proposal was under consideration at the end of 2012) and staff began to research and prepare leaflets on Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. It is proposed that these leaflets will give an overview of the main traditions as a background contextualisation for enquirers seeking information about NRMs that have developed out of them. Regular staff seminars were held throughout 2012 in which the staff, with Eileen, discussed and received feedback on their leaflets.



Inform publications in 2012²

In 2012, Inform staff were busy working on the Ashgate-Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements, edited by Eileen. Sarah and Suzanne completed their edited volume, *Prophecy in the New Millennium: When Prophecy Persists*. The full text was submitted in November 2012 and the book will be published in April 2013. Eileen edited the volume, *Revisionism and Diversification in New Religions*, in preparation for publication in the autumn of 2013. Amanda had a proposal accepted by the editorial board on the subject of new and minority religions and fraud and she also began to approach authors and collect papers for this volume.

² Publications for January-March 2013 will be included in next year's Report.



The panel for the seminar 'Changing Beliefs and Schisms in NRMs': Massimo Introvigne, Eugene Gallagher, David V. Barrett, Susan Palmer, Masoud Banisadr, James Tong, Mike Mickler, J. Gordon Melton, Eileen Barker



The panel for the seminar 'Prophecy and the New Millennium': David G. Robertson, Abi Freeman May, Sarah Harvey, Andrew Fergus Wilson, Kevin Whitesides, Suzanne Newcombe, Gordon Melton, Sheila Tremlett, Simon Dein, Wendy M. Grossman, Hugh Beattie

Timothy Miller completed the book *Spiritual and Visual Communities: Out to Save the World*, and this was the first volume in the Ashgate-Inform Series when it was published in February 2013. Other volumes edited by members of Inform's network are in production. Mat Francis became co-editor, with Marat Shterin, of *New Religions in the Islamic Tradition*. Other volumes underway in the series include *Minority Religions and the Law* edited by James T. Richardson and François Bellanger; *African New Religions in the West* edited by Afe Adogame; *Global Transnational Service Movements Rooted in Religious Traditions*, edited by Stephen M. Cherry and Helen Rose Ebaugh; and *State Responses to Minority Religions* edited by David Kirkham.

Publications by Inform staff and governors during 2012

Eileen Barker

"Preface" to *Handbook of Hyper-real Religions*, edited by Adam Possamai, Leiden & Boston: Brill, ix-xii.

"My Take: Moon's Death Marks the End of an Era" *CNN Belief Blog* 3 September 2012, <http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2012/09/03/my-take-moons-death-marks-end-of-an-era/>

"Did the Moonies really brainwash millions? Time to dispel a myth", *The Guardian*, 4 September 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/sep/04/moonies-brainwash-dispel-myth?newsfeed=true>

"Ageing in New Religions: The Varieties of Later Experiences" *Diskus* Volume 12 (2011): 1-23 <http://www.basr.ac.uk/diskus/diskus12/Barker.pdf>

Podcast: "Eileen Barker on Studying 'Cults'", *The Religious Studies Project*, University of Edinburgh,

12 May <http://www.religiousstudiesproject.com/2012/05/14/podcast-eileen-barker-on-studying-cults/>

"England" in *Encyclopedia of Global Religion* (vol. 1), edited by Mark Juergensmeyer and Wade Clark Roof. Thousand Oaks, CA; London; New Delhi; & Singapore: Sage, pp. 343-5.

"Unification Church" in *Encyclopedia of Global Religion* (vol. 2), edited by Mark Juergensmeyer and Wade Clark Roof. Thousand Oaks, CA; London; New Delhi; & Singapore: Sage, pp 1318-1320.

"David Martin" in *Encyclopedia of Global Religion* (vol. 2), edited by Mark Juergensmeyer and Wade Clark Roof. Thousand Oaks, CA; London; New Delhi; & Singapore: Sage, pp. 748-9.

"New Religions" in *Encyclopedia of Global Religion* (vol. 2), edited by Mark Juergensmeyer and Wade Clark Roof, Thousand Oaks, CA; London; New Delhi; & Singapore: Sage, pp. 890-894.

Jim Beckford

(with Elisabeth Arweck) "Social perspectives" in *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*, edited by L. Woodhead and R. Catto. London, Routledge, pp.352-372

"Public religions and the post-secular: critical reflections" *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 51(1) 2012: 1-19.

"Public responses to religious diversity in Britain and France" in *Reasonable Accommodation. Managing Religious Diversity*, edited by L. G. Beaman. Vancouver, UBC Press, pp. 109-38

"Reified knowledge about 'religion' in prisons" in *Religion and Knowledge. Sociological Perspectives*, edited by M. Guest and E. Arweck. Farnham, Ashgate, pp. 25-38.

Abby Day

"Extraordinary relationality: ancestor veneration in late Euro-American society", *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 25(2): 57-69.

"Nominal Christian Adherence: Ethnic, Natal, Aspirational", *Implicit Religion* 15(4): 427-444.

"Post-secular Identities: Non-religious Christians" in the *Scripta Donneriani Aboensis*.

(with Simon Coleman) "Secularization" in *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Anthropology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Suzanne Newcombe

"Religious Education in the United Kingdom" in *The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education*, edited by Derek H. Davis and Elena Miroshnikova. Taylor & Francis, pp. 375-382.

"Global Hybrids? 'Eastern Traditions' of Health and Wellness in the West" in *The Gaze of the West and Framings of the East*, edited by Shanta Nair-Venugopal. Basingstoke, Hampshire, pp. 202-217.

Marat Shterin

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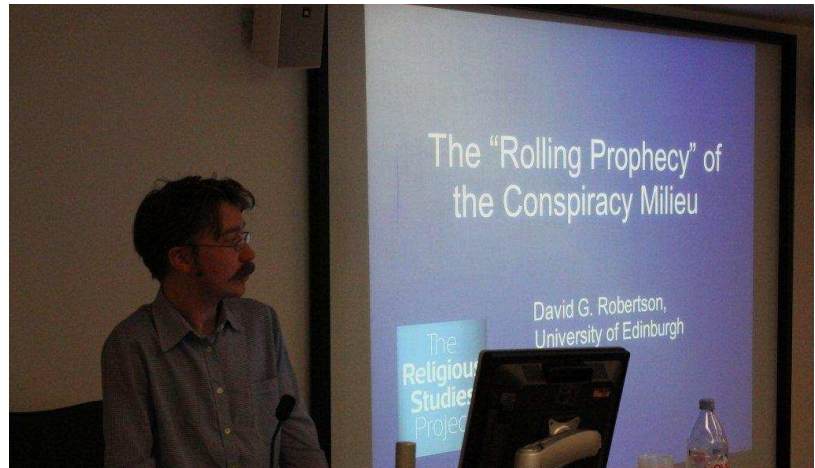
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Inform Seminars

Both of the seminars in 2012 were linked with the Ashgate-Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements, giving the authors an opportunity to present and receive feedback on their papers before publication. The Spring Seminar (May 2012) was entitled *Prophecy in the New Millennium* and was attended by over 70 people. (See Appendix II for the programme). The Autumn Seminar (December 2012) was entitled *Changing Beliefs and Schisms in New Religious*

Movements and was attended by over 90 people. (See Appendix III for the programme). Eileen hosted a closed workshop on the day following the Autumn Seminar in which the contributors to the *Revisionism* volume discussed their papers.



David G. Robertson speaking at Inform's Seminar Prophecy in the New Millennium



Changing Beliefs and Schisms Workshop discussion: Clare Borowik, Susan Palmer, Mike Mickler, James Tong, Gordon Melton, Eileen Barker, Eugene Gallagher

The Future

2013 should be an interesting year for Inform as we plan to have a salaried Director in post so that, although she will continue as the Chair of Inform's Board of Governors, Eileen can finally retire from the post of Honorary Director and concentrate on her research and writing.

The Spring Seminar (May 2013) will be on the subject of New Religious Movements and Counselling and is being organised with the assistance of Inform Governor Dr Hamish Cameron, a consultant counselling psychologist and Director of Hartland Psychology Ltd. It is hoped that the seminar papers will form the basis of an edited collection on the topic of counselling, edited by Dr Cameron, as part of the Ashgate-Inform Series on Minority Religions and Spiritual Movements.

Having opened on 1 January 1988, Inform will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2013. Plans are in place to recognise the work that Inform has done since its founding, with special sessions devoted to Inform's achievements and the changing religious scene over the past quarter of a century at the meetings of both the International Society for the Sociology of Religion (to be held in Turku, Finland) and the Society for the Study of Religion (to be held in Boston, Massachusetts). Plans are also in progress for a conference entitled 'Alternative Religions: Contemplating the Past and Anticipating the Future', which will include the official launch 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 2013 and to have the leaflets available through our website. Inform also plans to disseminate information through various talks and we already have a number of invitations for 2013.

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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eileen Barker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eileen Barker
Chair of Inform's Board of Governors

Appendix I

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Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia (Greek Orthodox Church)
Bishop Paul Hendricks, Nominee of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese
Professor Lord Desai of St Clement Danes
Lord Ahmed of Rotherham
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Former Consultant Child Psychiatrist at St George's Hospital, London & Cassel Hospital, Surrey
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Appendix II

INFORM Seminar XLVIII

Prophecy in the New Millennium

The presence of speakers on an Inform programme does not mean that Inform endorses their position. The aim of Inform Seminars is to help participants to understand, or at least recognise, different perspectives. For Inform's codes of practice see www.Inform.ac

9.30 – 10.00:	Registration
10.00 – 10.10:	Professor Eileen Barker (Professor, LSE; Chair & Honorary Director, Inform) <i>Welcome</i>
10.10 – 10.20:	Dr Suzanne Newcombe and Sarah Harvey (Research Officers, Inform) <i>Introduction</i>
10.20 – 10.45:	Dr Simon Dein (UCL and University of Durham) <i>"Prophecy: Social Scientific Perspectives"</i>
10.45 – 11.10:	Sheila Tremlett (former member of the Worldwide Church of God) <i>"To a Place of Safety? The Elect in the Great Tribulation"</i>
11.10 – 11.35:	Coffee
11.35 – 12.00:	Dr Hugh Beattie (The Open University) <i>"The Mahdi and the End-Times in Islam"</i>
12.00 – 12.25:	Abi Freeman (mid-lifer) <i>"Living in the Time of the End"</i>
12.25 – 13.00:	Group Discussions
13.00 – 14.00:	Lunch
14.00 - 14.25:	Andrew Fergus Wilson (University of Derby) <i>"From the Mushrooms to the Stars: 2012 and the Apocalyptic Milieu"</i>
14.25 – 14.50:	Kevin Whitesides (PhD Candidate, University of Edinburgh) <i>"New Age: (Still) Doing What it Says on the Tin"</i>
14.50 - 15.15:	David G. Robertson (PhD Candidate, University of Edinburgh) <i>"(Always) Living in the End Times: The "Rolling Prophecy" of the Conspiracy Milieu"</i>
15.15 - 15.40:	Tea
15.40- 16.05:	Wendy Grossman (freelance writer and founder of The Skeptic Magazine) <i>"Chasing the Horizon: Prophecy in Secular Contexts"</i>
16.05 – 16.30:	Professor Gordon Melton (Baylor University and founder and Director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion) <i>"Looking into the Future: Why Prophecies Will Persist"</i>
16.30-17.00:	Panel Discussion

Appendix III

INFORM Seminar XLIX

Changing Beliefs and Schisms in New Religious Movements

Wolfson Theatre, New Academic Building,
London School of Economics, Saturday 1 December 2012

*The presence of speakers on an Inform programme does not mean that Inform endorses their position. The aim of Inform Seminars is to help participants to understand, or at least recognise, different perspectives.
For Inform's codes of practice see www.inform.ac*

- 9.30 – 9.50: Registration
- 9.50 – 10.00: Welcome and Introduction
- 10.00 – 10.25: **Eileen Barker** (Professor Emeritus, LSE; Chair & Honorary Director, Inform)
"Re-vision and Division in New Religions: Some Introductory Remarks"
- 10.25 – 10.50: **Claire Borowik** (The Family International)
"The Family International: Rebooting for the Future"
- 10.50 – 11.15: **J. Gordon Melton** (Baylor University)
"When Science Intervenes—Revising Claims in the New Age"
- 11.15 – 11.45: **Coffee**
- 11.45 – 12.10: **Susan Palmer** (Dawson College / Concordia University) *"The Mission of the Holy Spirit: One Hundred Years of Revisions and Schisms in a Quebec NRM"*
- 12.10 – 12.35: **Masoud Banisadr** (former member of MEK)
"Revisionism and Schisms within the MEK (Mujahedin e Khalgh)"
- 12.35 – 13.00: **Mike Mickler** (Unification Theological Seminary)
"The Post-Sun Myung Moon Unification Church"
- 13.00 – 14.00: **Lunch**
- 14.00 – 14.25: **James Tong** (University of California, Los Angeles) *"The Re-Invented Wheel: Revisioning and Diversification in the Falun Gong, 1992-2012"*
- 14.25 – 14.50: **David V. Barrett**, PhD (Freelance Writer)
"The Fragmentation of a Sect: Revisioning Beliefs and Schisms in the Worldwide Church of God"
- 14.50 – 15.20: **Tea**
- 15.20 – 15.45: **Eugene Gallagher** (Connecticut College)
"Present Truth and Diversification in the Davidian Tradition"
- 15.45 – 16.10: **Massimo Introvigne** (CESNUR, Turin) *"Mormon Origins - Revisionism or Re-Interpretation?"*
- 16.10 – 16.50: **Panel Discussion**