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News from Info-Cult

No 15, April 2010

More than 75,000 ...

Since 1980 Info-Cult has responded to more than **75,000** inquiries. In the first few years the majority of requests were from worried parents whose son or daughter was involved in a “cult”, and who were often looking for a way to get their child out of the group.

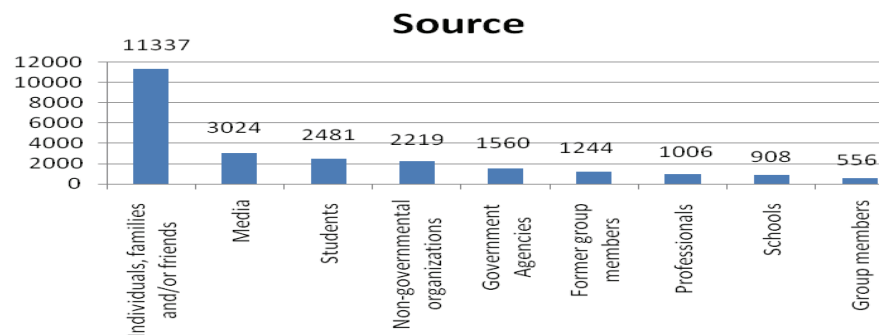
Since those early days there has been a change in the requests we receive which now cover a broad range of questions and concerns. Requests are received from among others, professionals, community and religious organizations, government agencies and media. What has remained constant throughout the years are the calls we receive concerning an individual involved with a group. Since 1980 Info-Cult received **11,337** requests of this nature.

Who Is Info-Cult

Founded in 1980, Info-Cult is a non-profit charitable organization that helps people concerned or interested about cults, new religious movements and related phenomena.

Our services include :
an information and assistance phone line, consultation, research, conferences, documentation centre and an internet site.

The graph to the right shows the source of a selection of the requests we've received since 1980.



Numbers, however, do not reveal the individual stories that are hidden behind those thousands of calls. I'd like to share two recent ones with you:

Mary* found out recently that for the past 6 years her 76 year old mother has been in contact by regular mail with “*channelers***” who reside overseas. Her mother had kept her communications with these people secret from her family. The *channelers* had been sending instructions about rituals her mother had to carry out that would improve her health and wealth. These instructions came at a cost and her mother who is living on a pension had very little left after sending these people money. Mary called us as it became evident to her and her family that her mother was becoming increasingly stressed in her attempts to complete all the rituals she was being told to do. We are working with Mary in looking at different approaches that might get her mother to reflect on her families concerns and reassess what she's involved with.

Thirty years after leaving his group **John*** started experiencing blackouts. He had grown up with his family in a group where he had been sexually and physically abused. Upon reaching the age of majority he left the group and since then had suppressed his experiences. He contacted Info-Cult after

More than 75 000... (continued)

having run the gamut of professionals and agencies he had gone to seeking help concerning his blackouts. He couldn't find anyone who would consider or hear about his group experience as a possible cause. We knew the group he had grown up in and had previous contact with other victims. We were able to put him in touch with a professional with experience working with former members of his group and supported him when he recently went to the police and made a complaint against his abusers.

These are only two of the hundreds of requests we receive each year and responding to each one requires a considerable amount of time. Giving of our time and expertise is what we provide as assistance and support are key components of Info-Cult's mission.

But that is not all that we do and a few of our other activities include:

- Meeting with and responding to students, from high school to those doing graduate work, who are learning about cults and new religious movements;
- Providing information and giving presentations about this issue to teachers, schools, community and religious organizations, the media, law enforcement, etc...;
- Updating the collection of information and resources on our unique website www.infocult.org ;
- Responding to members of groups who are considering leaving, wanting to share information with us about their group or seeking our help in resolving a family conflict.

Info-Cult is a recognized institution in Quebec and is known throughout Canada and beyond. We want to take this opportunity to thank all the individuals, groups, organizations and institutions who have supported us in our mission for they have played an important role over the years in enabling us to provide our services to all those who have called upon us.

* Not their real names

** Channelers are people who claim entities (i.e. Jesus, some other religious figure or master) speak through them and channel knowledge and information.

Education

Conferences and Presentations

INFORM Seminar April 24th "Cults and Crime"- London, England

Info-Cult's Executive Director was to make a presentation at this Seminar but had his trip cancelled as a result of the Volcano in Iceland. However, a colleague in the United Kingdom gave his paper. Information about this seminar can be found at <http://www.inform.ac/infevents.html>

Summer school course

«*Sectes et extrémismes religieux*», a summer course, will be offered in French at the University of Sherbrooke (Longueuil branch) from May 12 – June 18, 2010. Info-Cult's Executive Director will be one of the invited specialists during this course. (http://infosect.freeshell.org/infocult/Ecole_Ete.pdf)

ICSA Conference July 1 – 3, 2010 New York

The International Cultic Studies Association in collaboration with Info-Cult is organizing this upcoming conference. As part of the approximately 90 speakers from 14 countries Info-Cult Board Members Carolle Tremblay and Dianne Casoni as well as colleague Marie-Andree Pelland will be presenting. Further details about the conference can be found here: http://icsahome.com/infoserv_conferences/conference_home_2010_ny.asp

INFO-CULT WEBSITE

Our website is updated on an ongoing basis and a couple of recent additions of note include:

A doctoral thesis by Marie-Andrée Pelland *Allégations d'entorses aux lois : Effets sur la réalité sociale d'un groupe de mormons polygames canadiens*

And the article

The Psychology of Fundamentalism by Dr. Gerald Wiviott

They can both be accessed via our **What's New** Page:

<http://infosect.freeshell.org/infocult/ic-new.html>

Info-Cult E-mail information lists (English and French)

Info-Cult's email service allows those interested to receive articles on cults, new religious movements and related subjects, announcements of upcoming conferences, television programs and updates about Info-Cult.

To subscribe, email us at infosecte@qc.aibn.com.

The information sent on the English and French lists are generally different.

News from Info-Cult Online

Starting from bulletin #6, January 2006 **News from Info-Cult** can be found on our website at: <http://infosect.freeshell.org/infocult/ic-news.html>

News from Info-Cult is published on an irregular basis.



Info-Cult is a non-profit charitable organization and as such relies on the generosity of individual donors for an important part of its funding. If you would like to support Info-Cult you can make a donation through CanadaHelps:



or by check to Info-Cult, 5655 Park Ave. #208, Montreal, QC H2V 4H2
