

info **SECTE CULT**

25 YEARS
(1980 - 2005)

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As of June 2006, # 7, "News from Info-Cult" can be found on our website.

[Missing Persons](#)

Every year we receive calls from families who haven't seen or heard from a family member in months or even years. Their disappearance has been reported to the Police but uncertain of what has happened to their loved-ones and not content just to wait they call us. These are some of the saddest calls we have to handle at Info-Cult.

We are seen as a last resort, a grasping at straws, hoping that maybe their family member who disappeared is alive and in a "cult" and was influenced to cut off all contact with their past. The pain is evident in their voices as they describe to us the events surrounding the person's disappearance. We take the time to listen to them though the majority of these callers have no information that they can provide that would point to a group being involved in their loved ones disappearance. All we can do is empathize with their situation and indicate that if they do find any details possibly relating to a group they should feel free to contact us again.

A "cult" involvement that might lead to a dramatic departure is a slim possibility. Nomadic groups are active in certain parts of the United States and have made incursions into Canada during the summer months. We have heard about these types of groups where new recruits have been convinced to run off with the group leaving without contacting family or friends.

Reasonable Accommodation

Over the last few years situations have occurred which have brought into conflict the religious beliefs and practices of certain groups and institutions. Some of these cases have been highly publicized and some have been taken to court.

At Info-Cult we have been dealing with this issue well before it became front page news. Over the years we have advised Governments, Hospitals, School Boards, Businesses, etc... on how to deal with situations of conflict involving individuals and religious groups.

Info-Cult's approach focuses on how to avoid disputes in order to find a resolution to problems. Based on our experience and access to information on thousands of religious groups we have provided information and analysis to among others, community groups, businesses, landlords, schools and school boards and government agencies.

Some of the situations we have been asked about concerning different groups include:

- ◆ Holidays and other religious days
- ◆ Working conditions
- ◆ Blood transfusions, vaccinations and other medical questions
- ◆ Head gear
- ◆ Door to door proselytizing
- ◆ Schooling (public and private)
- ◆ Clothing
- ◆ Behaviors
- ◆ Diet

Raelians and the Swastika

In January 2007 Rael announced that his group would go back to using their old symbol – A swastika inside of a Star of David. The symbol was originally used by the movement until 1992 when “Rael with the approval of the Elohim” replaced it with a spiral form. The reason given was to facilitate negotiations with Israel to allow the movement to construct an embassy to welcome the Elohim, and out of respect for the sensitivity of the victims of Nazism.

The recent decision was taken by RAEL, to make the original symbol, the only official symbol of the Raelian Movement worldwide and that doing so would educate “about the beauty of this 5,000 year old symbol of peace, instead of it always being referred to as used by the Nazis”.

We can not help but view this as one of a long list of provocative declarations that the movement has come to be known for. Since the announcement of having cloned the world's first baby which garnered the Raelians worldwide media coverage their profile in the media appears to have steadily declined. It would seem increasingly clear that there is an insatiable need for Rael and his movement's beliefs to be talked about. For the last few years Info-Cult has encouraged the media, who have contacted us, to take their need for publicity into account before deciding whether to report on the Raelians.

Does it merit coverage or is it only another attempt by Rael and the Raelians to be talked about?

“Any publicity is good publicity”, is an appropriate description of the movements relationship with the media. In this case they probably received the media coverage they merited – almost nothing.

Education and Awareness

ICSA Conference in Brussels:

Info-Cult is collaborating closely with ICSA (International Cultic Studies Association) in the upcoming annual conference to be held in Brussels, Belgium (June 29 – July 1, 2007). The program is available online at:

http://www.icsahome.com/infoserv_conferences/2007brussels/2007_agenda.htm

Sessions will be offered in English and French and there will be participants from 26 countries.

Info-Cult website

Some additions to our site are publicized to those receiving our e-mailings. Other new updates to our site are not publicized and some of the recent ones include:

Past TV and Radio programs that are accessible online via our Announcements page:

<http://www.math.mcgill.ca/triples/infocult/ic-events.html>

Recent court decisions from Canada such as those related to the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Gettliffe / Grant case which received extensive coverage in France as well as in Canada:

<http://www.math.mcgill.ca/triples/infocult/Legalcases.html>

Recent additions of Government reports and legal decisions in other countries (i.e. Belgium, France, Council of Europe, Switzerland)

<http://www.math.mcgill.ca/triples/infocult/ic-gov.html>

Info-Cult's Library Collection and New Acquisitions lists that are continually being added to and reflects the growing body of work from different perspectives on "cults", "new religious movements" and related groups and subjects :

<http://www.math.mcgill.ca/triples/infocult/ic-pub.html>

Info-Cult

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