

# ICSA E-NEWSLETTER PRINT VERSION

This is an abridged, print version of ICSA's e-mail newsletter. Please send us your e-mail, if we do not already have it, so that you can receive the entire contents of the newsletter. **2009 Number 1**

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## ICSA

*Founded in 1979, the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA) is an international network of people concerned about psychological manipulation and abuse in cultic groups, alternative movements, and other environments. In order to help affected families and individuals, enhance the skills of helping professionals, and forewarn those who might become involved in harmful group situations, ICSA collects and disseminates information through periodicals and Web sites, conducts and encourages research, maintains an information phone line, and runs workshops and conferences.*

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## EDUCATION & RESEARCH NEWS

### Upcoming ICSA Workshops and Conference

- ICSA Conference. Denver, Colorado, October 2-3, 2009. Two-day conference focused on sessions for ex-members, families, and mental health professionals.
- Surviving and Moving On After a High Demand Group Experience: A Workshop for Second-Generation Former Members. Friday 3:00 p.m. April 16, 2010 to Sunday 2:00 p.m. April 18, 2010. West Cornwall, Connecticut.
- Call for Papers. 2010 Annual International Conference: Psychological Manipulation, Cultic Groups, and Other Alternative Movements, New York City, July 1-3, 2010.

More information: [http://www.icsahome.com/idx\\_events.asp](http://www.icsahome.com/idx_events.asp)

### Carol Giambalvo Retires (sort of!)

For many years Carol Giambalvo has scoured the Web for articles and other documents to place in ICSA's e-Library. Her steadiness and diligence is the primary reason that we now have more than 20,000 documents in the e-Library. However, a few months ago Carol decided that it was time to "retire." "Retire" is in quotation marks because there is so much more that Carol does - and will continue to do.

Carol will continue in a volunteer capacity to coordinate ICSA's ex-member network. She still makes herself available to talk to ex-members. She coordinates ICSA's workshops for ex-members and SGAs (people born or raised in cultic groups). She coordinates the ex-member track at ICSA conferences. If you wonder why the word "coordinate" is so often used in reference to Carol, it is because she has a special talent for making things happen, for reliably attending to details without ever losing sight of the big picture. That is why we are very happy that her "retirement" is in quotation marks!

### Joe Kelly New Head of ICSA "News Desk"

Joe Kelly has volunteered many years for ICSA in various capacities, most conspicuously at our conferences. Joe has now taken over Carol Giambalvo's job of Web scouring. In addition to collecting and processing news, however, Joe is implementing two innovations in how ICSA keeps its members informed about developments in the cultic studies field. First, he is sending selected news stories directly to ICSA members who have signed up for this "News Desk" service. (Write [joekelly@icsamail.com](mailto:joekelly@icsamail.com) if you'd like to sign up.) Later in the year or early next year, he will begin a regular video posting of the ICSA News Desk on our Website. In this News Desk video, Joe will briefly report on news that he thinks will be of special interest to ICSA members. This project will form part of a broader plan to use more video communications, a trend that has increased substantially since the creation of sites such as *YouTube*.

### Info-Cult/Info-Secte Collaborates in Conference

Le 29 octobre prochain, Info-Secte et certains de ses collaborateurs présenteront la conférence suivante dans le cadre du 5e colloque de Plaidoyer-Victimes, Au coeur des droits: [http://www.aqpv.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=326](http://www.aqpv.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=326)

### RIP

Long-time ICSA friend and supporter, Frederick Solomon, died April 27th in Bethesda, Maryland. Mr. Solomon's wife, Dr. Anita Solomon, has also been active many years in ICSA. We extend our deepest sympathies to the Solomon family.

- The Influence of Persuasive Strategies Used by Cultic Groups in the Context of Forewarning (Dariusz Krok, Ph.D.)
- Prevention Program on Psychologically Manipulative Techniques (Esther Maté, Olga Juárez, Núria Ribas-Fitó, Mónica Cortés, Maria Pau González, Miguel Perlado, Vega González, Josep Maria Jansà)
- Ritual of Separation: An Integrative Guideline for Helping Clients from High-intensity Faith Groups (Martin John Faulkner)

#### **Recognizing and Working with an Underserved**

**Culture: Child Protection and Cults.** Livia Bardin, M.S.W. 3 (2), pp 114-138.

The recently released Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life's "Faith in Flux" survey of American religions finds that: half of Americans, mostly on the younger side, have changed their religious affiliation at least once; many Americans have switched faiths altogether; the number of "unaffiliated" adults now stands at 16 percent; Roman Catholics leave in disputes over church teachings; Protestants converted in response to life changes, such as marriage and relocation, or because they have come to dislike institutions or practices. The poll concurs with other surveys indicating that "unaffiliated" has been the fastest growing category in the past two decades, although many of these respondents are still seeking a religion. More than half say they became unaffiliated because they found religious people hypocritical and judgmental, too focused on rules and not enough on spirituality. Of the seven percent raised without an affiliation, most have become religious. For all of those who switched allegiances, the reason most often given for joining a new church is the appeal of the worship service.

## **BOOKS, ARTICLES & WEB SITES**

### **Leaving A Cult**

By Jayanti Tamm. *Newsweek/Washington Post*, April 2, 2009

Jayanti Tamm was born and raised in the late Sri Chinmoy's group. This article describes some of her experiences, which are more fully related in her new book, *Cartwheels in a Sari: A Memoir of Growing Up Cult* (Crown Publishers).

In her article, Ms. Tamm says: "Sri Chinmoy claimed to have selected my soul from the highest heavens to incarnate on earth as his 'chosen one,' his perfect disciple. I was his. . . As a child, I was everything that he wanted, a perfect disciple. Draped in a flowing sari, I worshipped before him as he proclaimed he was both my father and God. Nothing and no one else mattered. He was the only family I would ever need. He was my all."

However, as a teenager, Ms. Tamm began to rebel against the guru's strict control and longed for "everything he forbade." Their struggle continued for a number of years and culminated in her banishment from the group at the age of 25.

Although rebuilding a new life was difficult, she ultimately succeeded, taking most joy from her family. Coincidentally, Sri Chinmoy died on the same day her daughter was born.

Ms. Tamm will speak at ICSA's Denver conference (October 2-3, 2009) on the subject: "Writing the Past: How to Successfully Write the Story of Your Hidden, Former Life as a Member of a Cult into a Published Book."

### **Obedience: Special Issue of American Psychologist**

The January 2009 issue (Vol. 64, No. 1) of *American Psychologist*, published by the American Psychological Association, includes six articles discussing Stanley Milgram's famous obedience experiment. ([www.apa.org/journals/amp](http://www.apa.org/journals/amp))

### **Jihad Lite**

Al-Qaida's dumbed-down recruitment manual. By Timothy Noah. *Slate*, March 24, 2009. The evidence that even al Qaeda is "dumbing down" in order to recruit is its new document, *The Art of Recruitment*, which began appearing on jihadi Web sites last summer. The techniques recommended by the manual are reminiscent of cults that try to project just the right image to persuade people to join.

### **Call for Papers from Polish Journal**

Ecumenical Society for Research on Sects in Bratislava (ESPŠS), founded in 1995, has issued a call for papers for its quarterly called *Rozmer* [Dimension], a magazine with a Christian religious orientation. *Rozmer* will consider: theoretical and empirical articles on sects, cults and new religious movements and reviews of scholarly articles and books. For further information, please see [www.sekty.sk](http://www.sekty.sk) or write Lucia Greskova [lucia.greskova@duch.sk](mailto:lucia.greskova@duch.sk).

### **FECRIS Scientology Lecture by Graham Berry**

Presented to the 2009 FECRIS meeting, this lecture, "Why the United States must investigate the crimes, abuses and frauds of the Scientology Enterprise," is available at: <http://griess.st1.at/gsk/fecris/spb/Berry%20EN.htm>

### **French Government Organization's 2008 Report Online**

La Mission interministérielle de vigilance et de lutte contre les dérives sectaires a remis le 19 mai 2009 son rapport au Premier ministre. Cette année, le rapport est construit autour d'un dossier central consacré au « risque santé » et plus particulièrement aux dérives pouvant être attachées aux pratiques non conventionnelles à visée psychothérapeutique. <http://www.miviludes.gouv.fr/-Rapport-2008-?iddiv=3>

**Selected Sessions from  
ICSA's Denver Confer-  
ence, October 2-3, 2009**

Overview of Mental Health  
Issues (Rosanne Henry, M.A.,  
LPC)

Introduction and Overview:  
Ex-Members (Carol  
Giambalvo)

A Loved One in a Group?  
Dealing with Alarm and  
Assessing the Problem  
(William Goldberg, M.S.W.,  
L.C.S.W.)

Understanding and Coping  
with Triggers (Carol  
Giambalvo; Joseph Kelly)

Conversion and Worldviews  
(Michael D. Langone, Ph.D.)

Cults, PTSD, and  
Dissociation: Is the Medical  
Model Helpful to Ex-cultists?  
(Cathleen Mann, Ph.D.;  
Monica Pignotti, M.S.W.)

Clinical Issues: Working with  
Families (Facilitator: Lois  
Svoboda, M.D., L.M.F.T.)

After the Cult: Who Am I?  
(Leona Furnari, M.S.W.)

Domestic Terror: Focus on  
Hate Groups (Hal Mansfield)

Clinical Issues: Working with  
Second-Generation Former  
Cultists (Facilitators: Leona  
Furnari, M.S.W.; Michael  
Martella, Ph.D.; Joyce  
Martella, M.A.)

Trauma and Resiliency (Doni  
Whitsett, D.S.W., L.C.S.W.)

SGA breakout (Michael  
Martella, Ph.D.; Joyce  
Martella, M.A.)

Polygamy: A Panel Discussion  
(Laura Chapman; Nancy  
Miquelon, M.A., L.P.C.)

Countertransference with Ex-  
Cult Members (Lorna  
Goldberg, M.S.W., LCSW)

Writing the Past: How to  
Successfully Write the Story  
of Your Hidden, Former Life  
as a Member of a Cult into a  
Published Book (Jayanti  
Tamm)

How Grief Becomes  
Disenfranchised When Losing  
a Child (Rosanne Henry,  
M.A., L.P.C.)

Post-Cult Spirituality: Toxic  
Vs. Healthy (Doug Duncan,  
M.S., L.P.C.; Wendy Duncan,  
M.A., L.B.S.W.)

MeadowHaven: A Treatment  
Approach for Long-term  
Trauma Survivors (Rev.  
Robert Pardon)

## Alamo Guilty on all 10 counts

Summarized from *Texarkana Gazette*, July 25, 2009, By Lynn LaRowe

The five people - named "Jane Does" because of their age - who testified against 74-year-old cult leader Tony Alamo (aka Bernie LaZar Hoffman) wept and hugged when on Friday, July 24th he was proclaimed guilty "on 10 counts of transporting minors across state lines for sex."

Assistant U.S. Attorney, Krya Jenner, believes that Alamo will spend the rest of his life in prison.

Allegations that the government had been dragging its feet appeared to have been inaccurate, for the investigation proceeded quickly when the victims agreed to testify.

Ex-member of Alamo's church, Charlie Downs, said that Alamo had been able to avoid prosecution for so long because of the absolute control he held over witnesses. Downs said that Alamo determined what people ate, when they slept and prayed, and where and with whom they lived.

Members of the church needed Alamo's permission for even normal, everyday activities, such as using the phone, traveling, voting, or marrying. Alamo would assign jobs, take children from their parents, determine when children went to school and when they worked.

Witnesses at the trial described how Alamo drove them into financial destitution, if they chose to leave.

He also threatened that God would punish them.

The federal indictment said that Alamo brought the five Jane Does across state lines for sex, and that he married them as children. According to the girls, their parents' devotion to Alamo, whom they believed heard directly from God, prevented them from protecting their children.

The girls also testified that fear of physical punishments caused them to comply with Alamo's wishes. One testified that that her 3-year-old brother had been beaten with a board. Others said that Alamo had struck them.

Alamo's attorneys said they would appeal.

Cuffed and chained as he was led to and from the courthouse, Alamo told media representatives outside the courthouse that he would run his ministry from prison.

"I'm just another prophet rotting in jail for the gospel," Alamo said.

The punishment that Alamo faces could be affected by his prior felony convictions for tax-evasion, as well as the nature of the crimes for which he was convicted.

Alamo may also face a fine as high as \$250,000 for each count.

Alamo could receive "up to 30 years on three counts, as many as 15 on three others and four counts are punishable by up to 10 years."

If the judge ordered that the penalties should run consecutively and if Alamo received the maximum on each charge, he could face a sentence of 175 years.

The annual report of the **French government** agency **Miviludes** ("Interministerial Mission for Monitoring and Combating Cultic Deviancy) denounces "excessive" cult influence in international institutions, including the UN, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the European Council, as well as the U.S. State Department (through its Report on Religious Freedoms in the World). Miviludes spotlights certain non-governmental organizations (NGOs) it says try to legitimize cult activities by saying religious freedom rights protect them. Scientology, whose website logo looks like the UN's, has presented itself as being "Associated with the UN Department of Public Information" in its attacks on Miviludes. . .

In "fiercely secular" France, the government has struggled to strike a balance between maintaining church-state separation and honoring the right of citizens to express their faith. But in the current case against Scientology," says *Time Magazine* writer Bruce Crumley, "authorities have abandoned their usual attempts at fine-tuning religion's standing in French society—instead, they want to ban Scientology from France altogether."

A contractor in rural Sweetwater County, Wyoming, reports that he has been hired by **Scientology** to build a 22,000 square foot underground storage vault in which to store documents and perhaps other items. . . .

Scientologist Marion Whitta, who came to India as director of a Scientology tour in 2005, intending to stay three months, has remained four years. She says she's trained "thousands of civil defense personnel in Maharashtra, police in Bangalore, Delhi and Mysore, and the Border Security Force in Kilkata [Calcutta]," as well as "hundreds of personnel in the corporate world who've received **Scientology** training under the aegis of their company. In all, we must have trained 20,000 to 30,000 Indians so far,"

## GROUP NEWS

*Additional information on news reports may be available in the ICOSA E-Library.*

**Tony Alamo** Christian Ministries' efforts to gather evidence for a civil suit in federal court against the state—before jurisdiction has been determined—are really aimed, according to state attorneys, to interfere in state-court custody actions involving the followers of jailed leader Tony Alamo. The Alamo organization accuses the state Department of Human Services of harassment and civil rights violations in the removal of children from the Ministries. The legal action asks, among other things, that no Alamo followers be required to leave their homes or employment in connection with the suit's proceedings. In this, Alamo Ministries is essentially asking the federal court to overturn the state court's orders.

In a letter to the *Orlando Sentinel* in April, a mother reports that when her son studied **Transcendental Meditation** in his high school philosophy class he began chanting and burning incense at home. She sued to remove the course from the curriculum. The school board's lawyer argued: "This is not a class in religion. It's only a course in philosophy." A judge ordered an end to the offering, citing a New Jersey decision that TM involves instruction about a Supreme Being or power, which violates the First Amendment.

Physicist Victor Stenger, in *Quantum Gods: Creation, chaos, and the search for cosmic consciousness*, debunks the uses of quantum physics concepts in certain contemporary belief systems. One approach—Stenger calls it "Quantum theology"—offers quantum physics as a way for God to act in the world without violating natural laws. **TM** provides an example of this specious way of thinking. "Quantum spirituality" is equally untenable. It is rooted in the idea that quantum physics connects the human mind to the universe, allowing people to create their own reality. But there is no evidence, Stenger says, that the brain operates quantum mechanically.

Critics say that a program developed and taught in both after-school and day classes at elementary schools in Sherman Oaks by Karen Berg, wife of the of the Los Angeles-based **Kabbalah Center's** leader, **Rabbi Philip Berg**, is bringing religion into public education. In one instance, the teacher of "Spirituality for Kids"—which aims to teach children how to make wise choices—tells the students that their reward for figuring out the rules of a game is "greater satisfaction," which brings "spiritual power" from one's "inner light," which is found "in your heart." The head of elementary school counselors for the Los Angeles Unified School District says the classes are not religious, and she recommends them. A 2008 Kabbalah Center-financed Rand Corporation study found that the class improved children's social and study skills as well as leadership and communications, and helped with behavioral problems. The mother of a child in one of the classes says: "It was really teaching a belief system as opposed to teaching situational ethics or ethics in general. It was a way of approaching life, which I just didn't feel was appropriate for a public school."

Thousands of children in Nigeria, and great numbers in other parts of Africa and the rest of the world similarly accused of **witchcraft**, are incarcerated, sometimes by their churches, ostracized and abandoned by their communities, and suffer punishing exorcisms. Many of the victims have traits that distinguish them—learning disabilities, stubbornness, and ailments such as epilepsy, according to Gary Foxcroft, program director of Stepping Stones Nigeria, a non-profit that helps so-called "witch children." The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, who recognizes the problem, says, "We are trying to see whether it is a neglected protected issue [sic]." A Lagos, Nigeria, minister says he identifies in his dreams individuals "suffering from witchcraft." Aid organizations acknowledge that belief in witchcraft is acceptable and popular in some communities; they are simply opposed to the abuse it often leads to. Foxcroft made a documentary last year entitled, "Saving Africa's Witch Children."

Having removed the anti-Iranian terrorist **Mujahedin Khalk (MK)** from its blacklist, some 100 members of the European Parliament (EU) are asking the U.S. to do the same, citing the self-styled Marxist-Islamist group's commitment to the West and its opposition to religious fundamentalism. The *New York Times's* Elizabeth Rubin calls the **Masoud Rajavi**-led Mujahedin Khalk a cult that operates like "any other military dictatorship. No one can criticize Rajavi, and everyone must go through routine self-criticism sessions . . . if there is a sign of resistance, you are not considered revolutionary enough and you need more ideological training. Either people break away or succumb." Other cult-like features include psychological coercion, physical abuse, and forced sterilization.

including Delhi-based actress Sheena Chohan.

Many frustrated young Muslim men with South Asian connections, marginalized in British society, are fascinated by the **Taliban**, support its goals, and hope that British and American troops are defeated in Afghanistan. One such young man patrols his London neighborhood attempting to enforce Islamist morality. Others, including educated men with jobs who rail against British prejudice that they say is holding them back, look to the comeback of Mullah Omar and their own return to Afghanistan.

**White Supremacist** activity is on the rise in the Phoenix area, one example being the vandalization of a Hispanic family's home while they were away on vacation in Mexico. The perpetrators completely ransacked the place, scrawled "obscene juvenilia," swastikas, and KKK hats on the walls, and painted "White Power" on a rug.

**Agus Imam Solihin**, leader of the 35-member cult **Satia Piningit Weteng Buwono**, went on trial in Jakarta in May for allegedly "inciting hatred and committing blasphemies against one of the religions [Islam] observed [practiced] in Indonesia." Prosecutors say that he: claimed to have received, in a 1999 dream, "spiritual guidance" from the country's first president, Sukarno; forced four couples to perform sex orgies—witnessed by him and two teenage girls—calculated to test the participating couples' loyalty to him; "banned" a woman, who subsequently died, from taking her medication; and banned his Muslim followers from praying and fasting.

Since the court-ordered 2007 closing of its school, which then had some 150 students, members of the **Mission de l'Espirt-Saint**, of Joliette, Québec, are either home-schooling their children or sending them to secret schools in private homes. Members believe that the world isn't round and that the sun is a reflection of Hell-fire.

As people raised in the **Jehovah's Witnesses**, we were especially interested in reviewing Kyria Abrahams' new book, *I'm Perfect, You're Doomed: Tales from a Jehovah's Witness Upbringing*, for "Sacramento News and Reviews." The book is hilarious [says journalist Jenn Kistler]. When I was a child, I tried to convert my friends. In the second grade, I placed the Bible Stories Book with one of them. The next day she brought it back and never spoke to me again. [Fellow journalist Kel Munger reports that] Abrahams says the belief that the world would be destroyed any minute kept me from forming attachments to people outside the Jehovah's Witnesses. When my mother was disfellowshipped, I joined in shunning her, and when I was disfellowshipped, she shunned me. When my father was disfellowshipped, we were semi-shunned by other members of the congregation, treated like lepers, and we weren't allowed to hang out with kids in my congregation, at their houses, if one of their parents was disfellowshipped.

Whether or not **Jehovah's Witnesses** is a cult—Abrahams thinks it is—it's a very rigidly controlled group that uses social isolation and the threat of social isolation to keep people in line. The pressure to witness was constant. Witness's kids taking high school biology had to give their teachers the group's anti-evolution book. Our children's books had disgusting pictures of things like Jezebel being thrown to the dogs, or a Canaanite getting ready to toss a baby into a fire or into the lap of their idol. The worst part was a section of a big panoramic picture of Armageddon: this little girl, her doll, her dog, and her bicycle, all falling down into this big chasm in the Earth. Gave me nightmares. It's probably why I was afraid to learn how to ride a bike. I stopped going [to the Witness church] the minute I turned 18, and so did my sisters. We're not the bad kids people said we'd be. We've all gone to college and we've got our lives together and we've got jobs and great relationships." But Jehovah's Witnesses still call us and preach return. . . .

A Canadian court in Calgary in May dismissed Lawrence Hughes' appeal of a lower court decision in his lawsuit against the Canadian branch of the **Jehovah's Witnesses**. He had accused the sect and its lawyers of being responsible for the death of his daughter, Bethany, 17, who died nearly seven years ago after refusing blood transfusions to treat her leukemia. Hughes' original legal action led to his being shunned by his children, divorced by his wife, and bankrupted by legal costs. The fact that Bethany eventually received 80 transfusions was enough to persuade the appeal court that the influence of the Jehovah's Witnesses believers had caused "no harm."

But Hughes still has reason for hope as he continues to press his attack on this legally aggressive sect accustomed to mobilizing the courts to block members from receiving life-saving transfusions against their family's or doctor's advice.

University of Calgary legal ethicist Alice Woolley explains that the judgment is significant in not saying that Hughes was wrong in claiming that his daughter received problematic advice, as Woolley puts it, from lawyers working not only for Bethany, but at the same time for a religious body intent on seeing her denied the blood she needed. "If I was advising the Watchtower Society [parent organization of the Jehovah's Witnesses]," Woolley continues, "I would now say: 'At some point, this [method of dealing with the blood transfusion issue] is no longer going to work out for you.'"

Indeed, one of the appellate judges said that the sect's advice to Bethany to refuse transfusions on religious grounds—a refusal supported by her Church-connected lawyers—appeared to present a potential conflict between the Church's interests—promoting its belief that the Book of Acts prohibits transfusions—and the unique interests of a sick girl.

Another Judge said that Bethany's mother, as well as the "hospital liaisons" sent by the Watchtower to stay constantly at Bethany's bedside, had persuaded the girl to refuse treatment by providing "incorrect information" [about the process], and unduly influenced her, clouding her ability to independently make decisions. Hughes argues that his daughter was the victim of implicit threats of social and family ostracism. "If you accept the blood transfusion," he says, "it's like someone standing there with a gun to your head."

Nor did the appeals court affirm the lower court ruling that Bethany's lawyers were not conflicted. "It is not necessary for us," the court said, "to decide whether the claims of conflict or misrepresentation were arguable." Woolley comments: "This is conspicuous. I think if they thought Macleod [the lower court judge] was right, they would have pronounced on it." In any case, the judges refused to dismiss the suit against the lawyers. That decision, Hughes believes, gives him the opportunity to show in court that hospitals must be more circumspect in accepting instructions from religious leaders and followers when treating Jehovah's Witnesses. "The Watchtower Society is sill in the lawsuit, so that

Authorities say inspection of the school indicated that the group's children were not getting a proper basic education.

The Saudi government is running a rehabilitation center outside Riyadh — “something like a college campus or Islamic seminary”—where former jihadists attend a two-month program and are “gently encouraged to abandon violence.” According to the U.S. Public Broadcast Service (PBS), the program seeks, through this **deprogramming**, to “correct theological misunderstanding” while addressing “the psychological needs and emotional weaknesses that have led many young men to jihad in the first place.” Saudi authorities say that of 85 men released following their participation in the program, 11 subsequently appeared on a list of those “wanted” for joining jihadist groups.

The Niger government has banned Islamic preachers from the radio, streets, and markets in order to prevent “religious anarchy” in this almost entirely Muslim country. The insults that the many competing **Muslim brotherhoods** hurl at one another “are likely to upset the tranquility among them,” the Religious Affairs Minister declared. They will now need official authorization to preach in public areas and must provide authorities with dates, locations and hours of sermons, in advance.

A political opposition rally in April in downtown St. Petersburg, Russia in defense of the right to gather was quickly dispersed by police, although five minutes later 50 **Hare Krishnas** were allowed to walk in formation and assemble close to the same spot.

**Falun Gong** in Montreal has accused organizers of the St. Patrick's Day parade of discrimination after being barred from participating, even though Falun Gong says it promised not to hand out pamphlets, as it had in prior years. The pamphlets illustrate torture of Falun Gong practitioners in China.

means I can still bring forth expert testimony and evidence [that] when it comes to the issue of consent, I can show . . . that the involvement of the religious defendants removed [Bethany's] consent.”

A year after the Texas raid on the Fundamentalist church of **Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints'** Yearning for Zion Ranch, “life has regained a familiar rhythm” despite continuing economic and social disruption. An FLDS representative said that the group's willingness to open itself up to public scrutiny, through media access, paved the way for the court's decision to return all but one of the 439 children taken into custody. An attorney for one FLDS Texas family says that the children “all still have problems of worrying about strange men coming around—are the police coming?—that sort of thing.” A spokesman for Texas family services said: “Despite feeling pride in their efforts on what they knew was a historic case, many employees [of the Department of Family and Protective Services] found the experience exhausting and emotional and experienced significant stress.”

The raid and its aftermath have engendered both a renewed sense of grievance among members and a resolve to defend their way of life. In Utah, the church is pressing—through a campaign called Principle Voices—for the legalization of polygamy. There is sympathy in the legislature for revising the law, and even the attorney general, Mark Shurtleff, who has gotten death threats for defending current law, says: “I'm not being soft on them. But I don't have the resources to throw them all into jail. I hope they now work through the process of changing the law if they disagree with it.” . . .

“Apostates” who rejected Warren Jeffs' leadership and resisted his demands to abandon their homes, wives, and children, fear that negotiations between Attorney General Shurtleff and other interested parties may lead to a return to FLDS control of land and housing in the communities. The property was formerly held in a trust by the FLDS, but some of it has been given over to individuals since the trust was placed in the hands of court-appointed receiver Bruce Wisan. The apostates, claiming they're already being harassed by Jeffs loyalists, think they may eventually be run out of town. They say, “The word . . . is that the Colorado City and Hilldale will be purified of all unbelievers—a religious cleansing.” Shurtleff says: “We understand their concerns . . . We're looking out for them, absolutely. . . Much of our negotiation has been to protect the minority population down there,” where local government and police are still controlled by Jeffs loyalists. . . .

Receiver Wisan has refused an FLDS payment of \$192,000 in fees—half of what it owes for six months occupancy of homes in Hilldale and Colorado City—because, he says, the payment was made under protest, which means to him that the church wants to protect its legal right to argue against ultimately having to pay at all. A judge will soon decide whether or not to sell the properties—the FLDS trust holds \$114 million worth in Utah, Arizona, and British Columbia—if the church doesn't pay.

Brent Jeffs, one of the “lost boys” [thrown out of the FLDS community to make more young women available for marriage to older men] has written a book, *Lost Boy*. The account focuses on the accusation—the basis of a civil suit filed in 2004—that his uncle, jailed FLDS leader **Warren Jeffs**, repeatedly raped him. “In recurring nightmares, ‘shards of memory’ were completing a mosaic: He had been abused.” Brent says Warren Jeffs told him the encounters were “God's work,” and that if he told anyone about them, he'd “burn in hell.” Brent's heroin-addicted older brother Calyne, who killed himself in 2002, told a hypnotherapist that, as a child, Warren had abused him, too. “The book follows a familiar motif in memoirs by former FLDS members: A dysfunctional family, including a father with an explosive temper, and dueling plural wives who make life hell.”

Jancis Andrews, a self-made expert on the Bountiful, British Columbia, branch of the FLDS, who is campaigning to get the Attorney General to move against the polygamist group, told a local chapter of the Canadian Federation of University Women in March that “no group in Canada, religious or secular, has a Charter right to collect women and girls as concubines in harems, to force sex on them, which is rape, to deny them birth control . . . to force boys out of the community in order to make more concubines available for the elders, and to threaten anyone who tries to protest with burning for all eternity in Hell.” Reasons why the law is not acting more forcefully than it has include: refusal of women to testify against the men (although police generally have a right to charge an abuser without the abused person's consent or testimony); a trial of so many abusers would cost millions; if every man living with multiple wives were charged, there would be hundreds of men in jail, leaving wives with few ways to support themselves and needing state support for them and their children. (One of Bountiful leader **Winston**

Parade organizers said, “We do not entertain anyone with a cause in the parade.”

Prominent Mormons who were excommunicated for practicing polygamy have been posthumously re-baptized in **Mormon** temples, according to researcher Helen Radkey. They include murderer Ervil LeBaron and Rulon Jeffs, former leader of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Days Saints and father of current FLDS leader Warren Jeffs.

The Japanese Supreme Court has turned down Shigeo Sugimoto’s appeal to overturn his life sentence for participating in **Aum Shinrikyo**’s 1995 gas attack on the Tokyo subway system. His attorneys argued that he only transported the people who actually dispersed the gas, and that he regretted the incident.

Bulgarian authorities in April were considering whether or not **Astrologist** Emile Leshtanski committed the crimes of spreading false information and causing panic when he forecast a deadly earthquake for the city of Haskovo that did not happen. Because Bulgarians are very superstitious—psychics, healers, and fortune-tellers are widely popular—hundreds of residents slept in tents and cars on the predicted day.

**Raëlian** bishop Daniel Chabot’s \$10,000 lawsuit, claiming he suffered religious discrimination perpetrated by video game giant Ubisoft Entertainment, will soon be decided by a Montreal judge. Ubisoft canceled his company’s 2003 employee training project when it learned of his Raëlian connection.

A community of an estimated 150 **pagans**—people who worship multiple gods—has grown up in Israel. This reflects similar developments in Europe and the United States.

**Blackmore**’s wives recently gave birth to his 119<sup>th</sup> child.) . . .

The Ontario government’s Office of the Children’s Lawyer (OCL) wants to change an agreement a 19-year old helped broker between his parents, who are involved in a bitter **child custody** dispute. The agreement would have removed his two younger brothers from foster care and sent them to their mother’s home, where all three sons would live with her for 100 days and not be forced to undergo treatment for “parental alienation.” The 19-year-old believes that the OCL’s proposed modification of the plan amounts to control of the family and opens the door to forced deprogramming, which his younger brothers have strenuously resisted; they were first placed in a psychiatric facility for five weeks, and then in foster care last December. Said one lawyer: “I thought the role of the OCL was to give a voice to kids who didn’t have a voice. But this isn’t the voice of the kids, this is the voice of professionals saying, ‘We know what’s best.’ ”

Twenty-six former followers of **Dahn Yoga**, which operates more than 130 centers across the U.S., have sued the organization; they say it practices “psychological manipulation,” and experts call it a cult. The complaint says, “Members were required to acknowledge . . . absolute devotion” to leader **Ichi Lee** and to his “Vision,” give all their cash and credit [cards] to the organization, and “disconnect from their previous life, including friends and family and any personal interests outside of Dahn.” Some Dahn recruiting takes place through “Body and Brain” clubs on college campuses. A former member at the University of New Mexico says, “They advertise it as being something to help you de-stress from school.” Group retreats include “competitive events” where losers were forced to stick their heads into the toilet, drink toilet water, and lick and kiss other members’ feet on the floor of the men’s bathroom.

Alan Honner pleaded guilty in April in Hamilton, Ontario, to charges of kidnapping and forcible confinement associated with the attempted **deprogramming** of Mirella Brun Del Re from the **Dominion Christian Centre** in 2005. The woman’s father, a physician, his wife, and his son—all of them scheduled to stand trial in October—allegedly kidnapped Mirella, forced her into a van, and took her to a secret location for 10 days.

**Juliano Verbard**, guru of the **Sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary**, a cult on the French island of Reunion, in the Indian Ocean, 1200 miles off the African coast, escaped in a helicopter from a prison on the island in April. He was serving a 15-year term for rapes and sexual assaults on children in the group. A psychiatrist at Verbard’s trial called him “an extremely powerful manipulator with great intelligence.” Verbard founded the group in 2002 after persuading scores of followers that the Virgin Mary appears to him every month. They each paid him \$26 for the honor of participating in an appearance ceremony.

The Irish Roman Catholic Church’s Commission to Inquire into **Child Abuse**, following nine years of investigation, was expected in May to make public a report that says thousands of former pupils in state schools and orphanages were subject to sexual abuse during the last 60 years by some 500 priests. A second report will say how the Church handled the multitude of abuse reports it received over the years; critics will allege systematic cover-ups. The Irish government in 2002 offered compensation to the victims—£725 million, based on 10,000 claimants, but the cost will likely be £10.8 billion if the estimated 150,000 victims come forward. Bishop Pat Buckley said that at least 1 in 10 of the 5,000 Catholic priests in Ireland regularly had sex with women, and that 40 percent of Catholic clergy in the country were sexually active. . . .

Although **Islamic fundamentalism** is on the rise throughout much of the Muslim world — due mainly to the widespread failure of political and economic development—most Islamists, including the Afghan Taliban, do not advocate or pursue global jihad. Nor do they host terrorists or undertake operations against the outside world. The Swat Valley in Pakistan is a good example of fundamentalists stepping in to provide, among other things, a functioning court system and social order amidst the chaos and corruption of a secular national government. In Northern Nigeria, the Islamic “revolution” of 2002, which was to have transformed the country, has all but petered out; “The government has helped push Sharia [law] in a tamer direction by outlawing religious militias.” Even Southern Iraq, where the Shiite majority has implemented a very strict version of Islam, is not a hotbed of jihad. “The veil is not the same as the suicide belt.” [Fareed Zakaria develops these views in the March 9, 2009, issue of *Newsweek*.]



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## **AWARDS AT ICSA'S 2009 ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN GENEVA**

### **2009 Rosedale Award**



The 2009 ICSA Herbert L. Rosedale Award went to Francois Bellanger, Ph.D. Dr. Bellanger is Professor of Law (University of Geneva), Attorney at Law, has been a legal expert on cults for the Department of Justice of the Canton of Geneva (Switzerland) and is one of the authors of the official report on illegal sectarian practices published in Geneva in 1997 ("Audit sur les dérives sectaires"). He has published several articles on cults and religious freedom. He is the President of the Information Center on Beliefs in Geneva.

### **2009 Singer Award**



The 2009 ICSA Margaret Thaler Singer Award went to Lorna Goldberg, M.S.W., L.C.S.W. Ms. Goldberg is President of ICSA (the award was a surprise to her!) and a psychoanalyst in private practice with children, adolescents, and adults. She has co-lead a support group for ex-cult members with her husband, William, for over 30 years. She is the Dean of Faculty, Institute for Psychoanalytic Studies, Teaneck, New Jersey. She has written extensively for social work and ICSA publications.