

3-15-79

Dear Ellen:

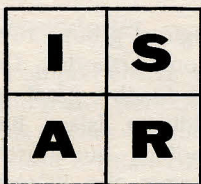
At long last, I am sending you the address of the Institute for the Study of American Religion which is on the enclosed brochure. The Institute is the only organization of its kind

in the country and its
library already has materials
which are not held anywhere
else. This has already
proven a valuable resource
for UKACTH Brotherhood Foundation
and will become more so
as it grows. It is still
relatively new and not
well funded.

In addition to putting the
organization on your mailing
list, any back issues you
could send would be
appreciated. Thanks for
your help.

Barbara and I both
send our best wishes to
you and Chick.
Hope to see you this
summer. Mark

The Institute
for the
Study
of
American Religion



Box 1311

Evanston, Illinois 60201

312-475-0601

Institute For the Study of American Religion
Box 1311
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Dear Sir:

Please send me the following

- _____ ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN RELIGIONS @ \$75.00\$
- _____ DIRECTORY OF RELIGIOUS BODIES IN THE UNITED STATES @ \$21.00
- _____ SOCIAL MIMESIS @ \$4.00
- _____ A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BLACK METHODISM @ \$4.00

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

Services Provided by the Institute

The Institute is continually attempting to expand its services to both the general public and the scholarly world. It sees as a prime goal the spreading of knowledge about America's growing pluralistic religious situation. To assist in this task, a number of thrusts have been given a priority in the emerging programs:

1) The Library — ISAR now houses more than 20,000 volumes on the small religious bodies of America. This library is open to the public and there is no fee for its use. Please contact the director for the current hours.

2) Via-Mail-Service — ISAR is happy to assist individuals who have inquiries about specific groups or issues. For a minimal cost we are happy to duplicate material in the collection (as permitted without copyright infringement) and thus expand the scope of the Institute's use. As the files on many groups are quite extensive, inquiries should be as precise as possible. Contact the director for current duplicating fee schedules.

3) Lectures — The Institute is eager to help organizations arrange for programs and lectures on issues concerning the small religious groups of the United States, especially the so-called new religions which have emerged in the past fifteen years. Not only is the Director available to address audiences on a wide variety of topics, but a list of possible resource people in various communities is kept for reference in local situations. Among many topics for presentation currently available are:

The Pagan Revival: Magical Religion Returns

The New Religions (Unification Church, Scientology, TM, Hare Krishna): Menace or Opportunity?

The Flowering of the Mystic East in Contemporary America

The Role of the New Religions in Expanding Religious Freedoms

Sinister Religions, Why they Happen?
(From Satanism to Manson to Guyana)

If your group desires to utilize the program resources of the Institute, contact ISAR, Box 1311, Evanston, IL 60201.

4) Publications — A growing list of publications are coming from Institute research. A list

of the several current books, including the standard reference books, the *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN RELIGIONS* and *THE DIRECTORY OF RELIGIOUS BODIES IN THE UNITED STATES*, is included in this flyer. A set of bibliographies covering all of America's religious family groups will be appearing in the early 1980s as will other directories covering religious organizations and religious orders.

You and ISAR

You are invited to participate in the total program of the Institute for the Study of American Religion. Beyond the various services that are available to you, you can assist our program in several ways:

a) Network Contact Person — ISAR is always looking for individuals to assist in the collection of materials, especially newspaper clippings, ephemeral materials (such as programs and on-the-street passouts) and local publications of congregations of the small religious bodies. Such people now form a network of researchers who feed material into ISAR's files and keep them current. If you would like to become such a contact person, please write the Institute.

b) Donation of Materials — ISAR has a collection of over 20,000 volumes, but is far from complete. It appreciates donations of materials concerning American religious groups and earnestly solicits books and other items concerning the many religious groups which present owners no longer want or need.

c) Donation of funds — ISAR is a completely independent research effort and its program is not underwritten by any particular religious organization. It relies on sale of publications, lecture fees, research grants and the generous donations of individuals to keep it going. Your efforts in this regard are gratefully appreciated.

d) Use of the Institute — The continued use of the facilities of the Institute have been its major building block. Such use has justified the vision that gave it birth and provided a firm foundation for future growth. The Institute enters a second decade of work optimistic of its ability to serve the public in the next decades.

WHAT IT IS

The Institute for the Study of American Religion is an independent educational research organization formed to further the study of the numerous small religious bodies that have added so much life and variety to the growing American culture in the 19th and 20th centuries. The idea of such a center was conceived some years ago but came to fruition in 1969 with the founding of the Institute, then located on the campus of Garrett Theological Seminary.

The original collection of resource material came primarily from the union of several private collections and was housed in a single room. Files and other material provided data on over 700 then known groups. Since that time the collection has grown to some twenty thousand volumes (1978) plus files and related materials on over 1300 separate denominational structures currently working in the United States and Canada. Other material relates to defunct bodies and non-denominational religious organizations.

American religious groups run the gamut of world faiths from orthodox Christianity (the dominant form) to the great world religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism) to psychics, snakehandlers, humanists and atheists. Having once begun the "Great Experiment," Americans pushed it to extremes in every direction imaginable. Yet this vast area of religion in American life is only beginning to be touched by scholars. To aid the exploration, ISAR was created.

THE DIRECTOR

The director of the Institute is Dr. J. Gordon Melton. He is a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College (A.B., 1964), Garrett Theological Seminary (M.Div., 1968) and Northwestern University (PhD, 1975). He brought nine years experience of research in American religious life when he became the director at the Institute's founding. In recent years he has spent much time on the road lecturing, meeting with leaders of the many religious bodies, and engaging in scholarly research. He is the author of seven books including *From Log Cabins to Steeples* (1972), *A Reader's Guide to the Church's Ministry of Healing* (1972), *A Directory of Religious Bodies in the United States* (1977), and *The Encyclopedia of American Religions*

(1978). He was an assistant editor of the *Encyclopedia of World Methodism*, in which he edited the sectarian material.

The Institute's Resources

The Institute contains a dynamic and ever-growing collection (growing at about 10% per year during the mid-1970s). As of 1978 the collection had approximately 20,000 volumes, mostly source material published by the over 1300 primary religious bodies currently existing in the United States and Canada and the hundreds that are now defunct. Supplementing the books (as many groups have never published anything so substantial as a book) are numerous pamphlets, leaflets, magazine and newspaper clippings, and ephemera all filed for easy access and reference. This material has been gathered over the last fifteen years from voluminous correspondence and many visits with religious leaders.

No attempt has been made to duplicate the already existing archival collections housed in the various seminary and denominational depositories and archives. Such collections are beyond the scope and purpose of the Institute, and only the main secondary histories and documents necessary for understanding the context of denominational families are included. The one exception to this rule concerns material from the many bodies of organized dissent and special cause organizations within the larger denominations. ISAR files contains a broad scope of such material from feminist groups, gay (homosexual) groups, conservative-evangelical organizations, and pentecostal fellowships.

While the Institute has endeavored to collect from all of the religious families in America, due to gifts, accidents of history and the special interests of Institute-related researchers, some areas of the collections are more fully developed than others. The Institute has endeavored as a matter of policy to obtain all of the volumes surveying multiple groups of American religious bodies, from the more popular *Yearbook of American Churches* to many more obscure works. Special strengths of the collection include:

- Old Catholicism
- Smaller Methodist bodies
- Jehovah's Witnesses and related bodies

BOOKS

Worldwide Church of God and related bodies
New Thought and Christian Science
Flying Saucer "contactee" groups
Magical religions
The American Experience of the great
Classical Religious (Hinduism, Buddhism,
Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, Sufism, etc.)
Approximately 400 periodicals, mostly from the
small religious groups, are received and filed
in the permanent collection. Many of these are
in long runs to the early years of this century.

Relations to Other Research Facilities

ISAR has attempted to keep cordial and working relations with the many depositories of religious archives around the country, especially with facilities working in cognate fields such as the Center for the Study of Contemporary Religious Movements in Berkeley, California. Within the Chicago area, the many seminaries and institutions of higher learning together with denominational headquarters provide the most extensive collection of material on American religion in the United States. Such collections include the Methodista collection at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and the Anglican collection at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, both in Evanston. In the more than thirty seminaries in the greater Chicago area, significant collections on Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Presbyterianism, Unitarianism, the Brethren, the Latter-Day Saints, the Adventists and Judaism can be found. Over 100 religious bodies representative of the broad spectrum of religious faith can also be found in the Chicago-land area.

The Elmer T. Clark Memorial

Dr. Elmer T. Clark was the single person most responsible for bringing the issue of small and minority religious bodies before America's religious community. He authored the classic work *The Small Sects in America*. During the last twenty years of his life he gathered material from many sources and following his death his widow graciously donated that material to the Institute. These volumes were the backbone from which the Institute has grown. They remain distinctly marked and will remain as a memorial to Dr. Clark's life and work.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN RELIGIONS by J. Gordon Melton

Organized into twenty-two chapters, the ENCYCLOPEDIA includes descriptive material on over 1200 primary religious bodies. Besides approximately 800 Christian denominations, from Eastern Orthodoxy to Adventism, over 500 groups outside the mainstream of American religion are treated. Psychic churches, Jewish synagogues, witch covens, Islamic temples, Hindu ashrams, magical lodges, and Buddhist zendos have their space. Each group is related to like groups which together form religious "families," delineated according to a shared life-style, heritage, and thought world.

THE DIRECTORY OF RELIGIOUS BODIES IN THE UNITED STATES by J. Gordon Melton with James Geisendorfer

The only comprehensive directory of the headquarters and major periodicals of the 1,275 primary religious bodies (denominations), both Christian and non-Christian currently functioning in the United States. Supplementing the directory in this volume is a discussion of the major structures making up American religion — the family groups and the primary, secondary and tertiary religious groups.

(305 pages) \$25.00

RELIGIOUS MIMESIS by Carl Oblinger

A study of the social bases for the Holiness schism in the late nineteenth-century Methodism in Illinois, 1969-1885.

(ISAR Monograph #1, 73 pages) \$4.00

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BLACK METHODISM by J. Gordon Melton

A comprehensive listing of titles covering not only Black United Methodism and the four larger black Methodist bodies, but the smaller groups as well.

(ISAR Bibliographic Series #1, 45 pages) .. \$4.00