
Guide to the The Family International Records

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Guide to the The Family International Records 1940/2009

Special Collections & University Archives

Overview of the Collection

Collection Title: The Family International Records

Dates: 1940-2009

Bulk Dates: 1968-1981

Identification: MS-0560

Creator: The Family International

Physical Description: 4.17 linear ft

Language of Materials: EnglishFrenchSpanish;CastilianCatalan;ValencianBosnianThaiJapaneseChineseArabicNorwegian

Repository: Special Collections & University Archives

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Historical Note:

The Family International was founded in Huntington Beach, California in 1968 by David Berg. The group has gone by several names including Children of God, The Family of Love, and Teens for Christ. Berg was also know by several other names; Father David, Moses David, Mo, Grandfather, and King David. The group focused on spreading the Christian gospel through the counterculture of the 1960s and into the 1970s. Berg disagreed with mainstream Christianity and used his particular brand of Christianity to convert unchurched people, first in Southern California and eventually in many countries around the world. The first twenty or so years of the organization's history was fraught with controversy including child sexual abuse, practices such as "flirty fishing" and "sharing," as well as racism and anti-Semitism. After Berg's death in 1994, his second wife Karen Zerby took over leadership of the Family. Many of those controversial positions have since been disavowed by the current church leadership. This collection includes correspondence with federal agencies, news articles, Anti-Cult documents, scholarly statements on The Family International, official statements and publications from the Family International, cassette tapes, CDs, DVDs, and photographs, as well as information on related religious groups from the organization's early years.

Access Terms

This Collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Corporate Name:

Children of God (Movement)

Children of God (Organization)

Topical Term:

Children of God (Musical group)

Accruals:

2018-029

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Preferred Citation:

Identification of item, folder title, box number, *The Family International Records*, Special Collections and University Archives, Library and Information Access, San Diego State University.

Related Materials:

Peoples Temple Collection

Arrangement of Materials:

- I. Historic Publications and Photos, 1940-1988
- II. Photographs, 1969-1981
- III. News Articles, 1972-2001
- IV. Freedom of Information Act Files, 1971-2000
- V. Cult Awareness Network Files, 1974-1997
- VI. Anti-Cult Movement Files, 1979-1994
- VII. The Family International Publications, 1974-2009
- VIII. Academic Publications, 1993-2000
- IX. Audio/Visual Files, 1971-2008
- X. News Articles Original and Oversized Printings, 1972-2001

Scope and Contents

The Family International Records document more than six decades of church and personal activity and include newspaper clippings, photos, audio and video recordings, personal papers, organizational documents, federal agency records, and related anti-cult and scholarly documents. During this time, The Family faced many controversies based on their sexual practices and accusations of abuse. The majority of this collection features "witnessing" activities through photographs, church publications such as brochures and A/V materials, as well as news, government, and academic coverage of their religious movement. This collection has some personal documents from the earlier life of founder, David Berg.

There are ten series in this collection: [Historic Publications and Photos](#) (1940-1988), [Photographs](#) (1969-1981), [News Articles](#) (1972-2001), [Freedom of Information Act Files](#) (1971-2000), [Cult Awareness Network Files](#) (1974-1997), [Anti-Cult Movement Files](#) (1979-1994), [The Family International Publications](#) (1974-2009), [Academic Publications](#) (1993-2000), [Audio/Visual Files](#) (1971-2008), and [News Articles - Original and Oversized Printings](#) (1972-2001).

[Historic Publications and Photos](#) (1940-1988): This series contains Berg Family newsletters and photos as well as early pamphlets from the Children of God and photos of fellowship with the Jesus People Army.

[Photographs](#) (1969-1981): This series is divided by location and organized by year where applicable. The photos in this series depict activities and members for The Family International over its first 20 or so years all over the world with a combination of captioned and uncaptioned photos.

[News Articles](#) (1972-2001): This series comprises hundreds of news articles about The Family International from all over the world in various languages, some with English translations.

[Freedom of Information Act Files](#) (1971-2000): This series includes records released by various American government agencies: FBI, CIA, NSA, DOJ, the State Department, and the US Information Agency, as well as correspondence with these agencies.

[Cult Awareness Network Files](#) (1974-1997): This series consists of files created by the Cult Awareness Network regarding the activities and practices of The Family International, including their opinions on the organization as well as scholarly work by Dr. Stephen Kent of the University of Alberta.

[Anti-Cult Movement Files](#) (1979-1994): This series is related to the Cult Awareness Network Files, containing documents related to an organization that is against alternative religions with controversial practices like The Family International. These documents were created by the Anti-Cult Movement regarding The Family International and include interpretations of The Family International featuring experiences of disaffected members who corroborated instances of abuse. The folders about Argentina and Chile are mostly, if not completely, in Spanish.

[The Family International Publications](#) (1974-2009): This series contains media guidance, press releases and policy statements made by The Family International as well as proselytizing brochures, all in various languages.

Academic Publications (1993-2000): This series is made up of a dissertation about sexual practices in The Family International and statements from scholars regarding The Family.

Audio/Visual Files (1971-2008): This series has CDs, DVDs, VCDs, and audio cassettes with proselytizing video, church-created documentaries, religious music, and scholarly presentations related to The Family International.

News Articles - Original and Oversized Printings (1972-2001): This series includes the original and/or oversized news articles that came as part of Series 3: Children of God/ The Family International News Articles, 1972-2001. Due to their size, folds, and age, they are separate from the photocopies in Series 3.

Historic Publications and Photos 1940-1988

Box 1, Folder 1

Berg Family Papers and Photos 1940-1965

Scope and Contents

Berg Family Newsletters and photos of David Berg's mother and family.

Box 1, Folder 2

Early Children of God Publications 1968-1988

Scope and Contents

Photos of publication from the 1980s. Children of God pamphlets from 1968-1977.

Box 1, Folder 3

Jesus People Photos 1971-1972

Scope and Contents

Photos of Jesus People and House of Judah who later joined Children of God.

Children of God Photo Archive 1969-1981

Scope and Contents

Photo archive was organized by location and is labeled first by continent or region and then by country if specified.

Box 1, Folder 4

Photos; Uncaptioned

Scope and Contents

Three photos, only one with a caption. No dates or locations indicated.

Box 1, Folder 5

Photos; United States and Europe- Uncaptioned 1972-1975

Scope and Contents

Mostly uncaptioned photos with no date or location indicated. Labeled as United States and Europe based on organization of the donor.

Box 1, Folder 6

Photos; Africa 1976-1978

Box 1, Folder 7

Photos; Africa- Libya

Scope and Contents

No dates in captions.

Box 1, Folder 8

Photos; Asia 1973-1982

Scope and Contents

Not all photos indicate any date or location.

Box 1, Folder 9

Photos; Asia- China and Hong Kong 1975-1981

Box 1, Folder 10

Photos; Asia- India 1972-1976

Box 1, Folder 11

Photos; Asia- Indonesia 1975-1977

Box 1, Folder 12

Photos; Asia- Japan 1973-1977

Box 1, Folder 13	Photos; Asia- Japan Heavenly City School Scope and Contents No captions.
Box 1, Folder 14	Photos; Asia- Middle East 1974-1976 Scope and Contents Contains photos from colonies and activities in Turkey, Iran, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Jordan. Some photos are not captioned.
Box 1, Folder 15	Photos; Asia- Philippines 1973-1975 Scope and Contents Most photos are not captioned. One photo is with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos who was in power from 1965-1986 but the photo does not indicate when during his reign the photo was taken.
Box 1, Folder 16 Box 2, Folder 1	Photos; Asia- Thailand 1973-1976 Photos; Australia 1972-1980 Scope and Contents Photo with Prince Charles. Photos of Vietnam War protests.
Box 2, Folder 2	Photos; Europe 1972-1976 Scope and Contents Most photos are not captioned. One photo location is captioned as Greece. Another photo is captioned as Malta.
Box 2, Folder 3	Photos; Europe- Belgium 1971-1979 Scope and Contents Includes photos from the Bilzen Pop Festival in Belgium 1976.
Box 2, Folder 4	Photos; Europe- France 1972-1979 Scope and Contents Photos include a lot of musical performances.
Box 2, Folder 5 Box 2, Folder 6	Photos; Europe- Germany 1971-1979 Photos; Europe- Italy 1972-1976 Scope and Contents Photos include from Pope Paul VI visit to Italy.
Box 2, Folder 7 Box 2, Folder 8 Box 2, Folder 9 Box 3, Folder 1 Box 3, Folder 2 Box 3, Folder 3	Photos; Europe- Italy Milano Pop Festival 1970-1974 Photos; Europe- Netherlands 1971-1975 Photos; Europe- Scandinavia 1971-1979 Photos; Europe- Spain 1974-1975 Photos; Europe- Switzerland 1972-1976 Photos; Europe- United Kingdom 1971-1972 Scope and Contents Only one photo is captioned with a date of "1971-1972?" the rest were only labeled "United Kingdom" when the collection was donated.
Box 3, Folder 4 Box 3, Folder 5	Photos; Europe- United Kingdom, England 1971-1975 Photos; Europe- Ireland 1972-1973

Box 3, Folder 6	Photos; North and South America- Latin America 1974-1975 Scope and Contents Most photos are not captioned and were sorted by the donor as from Latin America. Some photos are captioned with a year and/or location including Guatemala and Honduras.
Box 3, Folder 7	Photos; North America- Canada 1971 Scope and Contents Only two photos- Vancouver 1971 and Toronto with no year.
Box 3, Folder 8	Photos; North America- Caribbean 1973 Scope and Contents Most photos are not captioned.
Box 3, Folder 9	Photos; North America- Costa Rica 1972-1975 Scope and Contents Also includes one photo from Chile and two from Panama in a collage.
Box 3, Folder 10	Photos; North America- Mexico 1971-1977
Box 3, Folder 11	Photos; North America- Puerto Rico 1972-1975
Box 3, Folder 12	Photos; North America- United States 1971-1974
Box 3, Folder 13	Photos; North America- United States, California 1969-1979
Box 4, Folder 1	Photos; North America- United States, Kentucky 1970-1972
Box 4, Folder 2	Photos; North America- United States, Louisiana Pop Festival 1971
Box 4, Folder 3	Photos; North America- United States, New York 1974-1975
Box 4, Folder 4	Photos; North America- United States, Ohio 1970-1971
Box 4, Folder 5	Photos; North America- United States On the Road 1970
Box 4, Folder 6	Photos; North America- United States Prophet Bus 1970-1971
Box 4, Folder 7	Photos; North America- United States Sackcloth Vigils 1969-1973 Scope and Contents In various US cities, some are captioned.
Box 4, Folder 8	Photos; North America- United States, Texas 1969-1974
Box 4, Folder 9	Photos; North America- United States, Washington 1971-1974
Box 4, Folder 10	Photos; North America- United States Work with Fred Jordan 1970 Scope and Contents Fred Jordan founded the Los Angeles-based Fred Jordan Mission in 1944. The Children of God briefly fellowshipped with Fred Jordan's organization to proselytize the gospel of Jesus.
Box 4, Folder 11	Photos; North America- United States Slides 1970-1971 Scope and Contents This folder contains photo slides from various cities in the United States and some are not captioned or dated.
Box 4, Folder 12	Photos; South America 1973-1974 Scope and Contents The folder contains some photos from Bolivia and Chile as well as one with no location listed.
Box 4, Folder 13	Photos; South America- Argentina 1973-1976
Box 4, Folder 14	Photos; South America- Brazil 1972-1975

Box 5, Folder 1	Photos; South America- Colombia 1973-1974 Scope and Contents Some photos from Colombia television called "Hola Gente!" ("Hello People!")
Box 5, Folder 2	Photos; South America- Ecuador 1973-1980
Box 5, Folder 3	Photos; South America- Peru 1972-1977
Box 5, Folder 4	Photos; South America- Venezuela 1972-1973 Children of God/ The Family International News Articles 1972-2001 Scope and Contents Some folders contain articles in languages other than English. Some include translations done by The Family International. Many do not include translations. This series includes some comparative or concurrent media coverage on the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas and Jim Jones' People's Temple in Jonestown, Guyana.
Box 5, Folder 5	News Articles; Argentina 1989-1994 Scope and Contents Spanish language news articles about The Family International/ Children of God from Argentina (photocopied).
Box 5, Folder 6	News Articles; Protests for Members Incarcerated in Argentina 1993 Scope and Contents Protests were held in various cities around the world.
Box 5, Folder 7	News Articles; Australia 1992-1999
Box 5, Folder 8	News Articles; Brazil 1994 Scope and Contents Portuguese language article.
Box 5, Folder 9	News Article; Canada 1993-1995
Box 5, Folder 10	News Articles; Chile 1993-1996 Scope and Contents Spanish language articles, few in English.
Box 5, Folder 11	News Articles; Ecuador 1993 Scope and Contents Spanish language article.
Box 5, Folder 12	News Articles; Hong Kong 1993
Box 5, Folder 13	News Articles; India 1993
Box 5, Folder 14	News Articles; Mexico 1991-1995 Scope and Contents Spanish language articles, few in English.
Box 5, Folder 15	News Articles; Paraguay 1993 Scope and Contents Spanish language articles only.
Box 5, Folder 16	News Articles; Philippines 1987-1993
Box 5, Folder 17	News Articles; Romania 1994
Box 5, Folder 18	News Articles; Scandinavia 1993-1994 Scope and Contents One article in Norwegian, all others in English.
Box 5, Folder 19	News Articles; Singapore 1992-1993

Box 5, Folder 20	News Articles; Spain 1990-1994 Scope and Contents Spanish and Catalan language articles with many translated into English.
Box 5, Folder 21	News Articles; United Kingdom 1993-1995
Box 6, Folder 1	News Articles; United States 1972-1992
Box 6, Folder 2	News Articles; United States 1993 Scope and Contents Some Spanish language articles with English translations.
Box 6, Folder 3	News Articles; United States 1994-2001 Scope and Contents Some Spanish language articles.
Box 6, Folder 4	News Articles; Thailand 1993 Scope and Contents About half of the articles are in Thai without English translations. Some have translations and some articles are in English.
Box 6, Folder 5	News Articles; Uruguay 1993-1994 Scope and Contents Spanish language articles without English translations.
Box 6, Folder 6	News Articles; Venezuela 1993 Scope and Contents Spanish language articles without English translations.
	Freedom of Information Act Files 1971-2000 Scope and Contents Files came from The Family International requests to the United States government through the Freedom of Information Act including requests to government agencies; Department of Justice (DOJ), State Department, FBI, CIA, NSA and the US Information Agency.
Box 6, Folder 7	Freedom of Information Requests and Responses 1994-2000 Scope and Contents Minor redactions to these documents.
Box 6, Folder 8	Central Intelligence Agency 1991-1998 Scope and Contents Minor redactions in these documents.
Box 6, Folder 9	Department of Justice 1972-1997 Scope and Contents Minor redactions to these documents.
Box 6, Folder 10	Department of State (February 1995 Responses) 1992-1995 Scope and Contents Minor redactions to declassified files.
Box 6, Folder 11	Department of State (March 1997 Responses) 1992-1997 Scope and Contents Highly redacted documents. Several documents in French.

Box 6, Folder 12	Department of State (May 1999 Responses) 1990-1999 Scope and Contents Minor redactions in these unclassified/declassified documents
Box 7, Folder 1	Federal Bureau of Information 1 1971-1972 Scope and Contents Moderate redactions in these formerly confidential documents.
Box 7, Folder 2	Federal Bureau of Investigation 2 1972-1973 Scope and Contents Moderate redactions in these formerly confidential documents.
Box 7, Folder 3	Federal Bureau of Information 3 1971-1972 Scope and Contents Moderate redactions in these formerly confidential documents.
Box 7, Folder 4	Federal Bureau of Investigation 4 1973-1974 Scope and Contents Moderate redactions in these formerly confidential documents.
Box 7, Folder 5	Federal Bureau of Investigation 5 1971-1980 Scope and Contents Moderate redactions in these formerly confidential documents.
Box 7, Folder 6	Federal Bureau of Investigation 6 1971-1986 Scope and Contents Moderate redactions in these formerly confidential documents.
Box 7, Folder 7	National Security Agency 1994 Scope and Contents Minor redaction made to this document.
Box 7, Folder 8	United States Information Agency 1993-1999 Scope and Contents Minor redactions made to unclassified documents.
	Cult Awareness Network Files 1974-1997
Box 8, Folder 1	Cult Awareness Network Re: The Family International 1974-1997 Scope and Contents Includes news articles as well as packets created by the Cult Awareness Network.
Box 8, Folder 2	Cult Awareness Network- Stephen Kent 1990-1997 Anti-Cult Movement Files 1979-1994
Box 8, Folder 3 Box 8, Folder 4	Anti-Cult Movement Publications 1979-1993 Anti-Cult Movement Argentina 1992-1994 Scope and Contents Only one item in English. All other documents are in Spanish without translations.
Box 8, Folder 5	Anti-Cult Movement Chile 1990-1993 Scope and Contents Spanish language documents without English translations.

The Family International Publications 1974-2009

- Box 8, Folder 6 **The Family International Media Materials and Press Releases 1993-2000**
 Scope and Contents
 One document in Spanish with no English translation. All other documents are in English.
- Box 8, Folder 7 **The Family International Policy Statements 1993-2004**
 Scope and Contents
 One copy in English. Second copy in Spanish.
- Box 8, Folder 8 **The Family International Regional Brochures 1974-2009**
 Scope and Contents
 Brochures in English, Spanish, French, Thai, Chinese, Arabic, and Bosnian.
- Box 8, Folder 9 **The Family International Statements and Press Releases- Argentina 1992-1993**
 Scope and Contents
 Spanish language documents only.

Academic Publications 1993-2000

- Scope and Contents**
Supportive or relatively objective scholarly work regarding the Family International.
- Box 9, Folder 1 **Nancy R. Vogt Dissertation- Correlates of Adolescent Sexual Activity in The Family, a Religious Group 1998**
- Box 9, Folder 2 **Scholar Statements Re: The Family International 1993-2000**
Children of God Audio/Visual Files 1971-2008
 Scope and Contents
 This series contains CDs, DVDs, and audio cassettes.
- Box 9, Folder 3 **The Family International Brochure Videos 2008**
 Scope and Contents
 Contains a DVD and a VCD.
- Box 9, Folder 4 **The Family International-created Video Documentaries 1971-2003**
 Scope and Contents
 The Acts of the Revolution for Jesus Part 1-6, Man alive (1971), All That Believe (1995), A Living Faith (1995), and The Revolution Continues Part 1-12
- Box 9, Folder 5 **The Family International Music Productions 1999-2005**
 Scope and Contents
 Music CDs in English, Thai, and Spanish of religious and Christmas songs.
- Box 9, Folder 6 **Refining Responses to New and World Religions in the 21st Century Audio Cassettes 2002**
 Scope and Contents
 Cassette recordings of scholarly lectures by J. Gordon Melton and James Chancellor.

Children of God/ The Family International News Articles Original and Oversized Printings 1972-2001

- Scope and Contents**
All of these documents have been photocopied and housed in Series 3: Children of God/ The Family International News Articles, 1972-2001

- Box 10, Folder 1 **News Articles; Argentina Originals/Oversized 1989-1994**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.
- Box 10, Folder 2 **News Articles; Australia Originals/Oversized 1992-1999**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.
- Box 10, Folder 3 **News Articles; Canada Originals/Oversized 1993-1995**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.
- Box 10, Folder 4 **News Articles; Paraguay Originals/Oversized 1993**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.
- Box 10, Folder 5 **News Articles; Philippines Originals/Oversized 1987-1993**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.
- Box 10, Folder 6 **News Articles; Spain Originals/Oversized 1990-1994**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.
- Box 10, Folder 7 **News Articles; United Kingdom Originals/Oversized 1993-1995**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.
- Box 10, Folder 8 **News Articles; United States Originals/Oversized 1972-2001**
Scope and Contents
This folder contains the original and/or oversized newspaper clippings that were photocopied for Series 3.