



THE RELIGION AND DIVERSITY PROJECT/RELIGION ET DIVERSITÉ



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Biography

Gary D Bouma is Emeritus Professor of Sociology and UNESCO Chair in Intercultural and Interreligious Relations – Asia Pacific and Director of the Global Terrorism Research Centre at Monash University, and an Associate Priest in the Anglican Parish of St John's East Malvern. From 2006-2010 he was Chair, Board of Directors for The Parliament of the World's Religions 2009. His research in the sociology of religion examines the management of religious diversity in plural multicultural societies, postmodernity as a context for doing theology, religion and terror, religion and public policy. He is the author of over 20 books. Recent books include: *Australian Soul: Religion and Spirituality in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge University Press); *Democracy in Islam* (Routledge); *Religious Diversity in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands: National Case Studies* (Springer); and *Freedom of Religion and Belief in 21st Century Australia* (Australian Human Rights Commission). Recent books include *Being Faithful in Diversity: Religions and Social Policy in Multifaith Societies* (Australasian Theological Forum) and *Re-imagining Church: Positive Ministry Responses to the Age of Experience* (Christian Research Association).

He was invested as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for services to Sociology, to interreligious relations and to the Anglican Church of Australia in 2013. The Multi-Faith Advisory Council to Victoria Police and The High Level Multicultural Portfolio, Victoria Police. REENA (Religious Education and Ethics Network of Australia (promoting education about religions in schools). Clergy for Marriage Equality. Mentor to the National Church Life Survey, Australian

Catholic University. Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, part of small panel revising the Years 11 and 12 VCE Religion and Society Course

Current consultancies include: State of Victoria – Interim Advisory Board to the Social Cohesion and Multicultural Research Institute; Multifaith Advisory Group to the Premier in Cabinet

Research Statement

Gary D Bouma has focused on the study of religious diversity and interreligious relations for all of his career. He became aware of religious diversity in his family where his mother's side never went to church and his father's side was never found outside the church. Early engagement with Jewish friends and active involvement in the civil rights movement brought people of different beliefs together to work to achieve social justice. In 1961 he established the Interreligious Council at Western Michigan University, beginning a life long commitment to promoting healthy interreligious relations. He has served as a religious professional in eight different Christian denominations.

An early study of social stratification and denominations in Princeton and an article on the consequences of internal diversity among Presbyterians in Pictou Country, Nova Scotia commenced Bouma's scholarly work in this area.

The rich treasures of the Australian five yearly census which includes a question on religious identity have been regularly mined to describe and analyze the growth of religious diversity in Australia. Comparing the religious demography of different societies provides a foundation for examining differences in the ways religious diversity is understood and becomes a factor in social policy. The involvement of religions in social policy and the role of education about religions in social cohesion has become the current focus of his work.