



THE RELIGION AND DIVERSITY PROJECT/RELIGION ET DIVERSITÉ



Kim Knott

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Biography

Kim Knott is Professor of Religious and Secular Studies at Lancaster University, and Deputy Director of the Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST). From 2013-15 she held a Global Uncertainties Leadership Fellowship, working with Dr Matthew Francis to research and engage external stakeholders in debating the role of ideology in the move to violence. From 2005-11 she was Director of the 'Diasporas, Migration and Identities' Programme (www.diasporas.ac.uk) funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. In the final year, she held an AHRC Impact Fellowship in which she worked on a popular book and website, *Moving People, Changing Places*, and on activities to maximize the public benefit of the Programme and change how people think about migration and cultural difference.

She worked at the University of Leeds from 1982 to 2012, and her first job was as postdoctoral researcher on a project on media portrayals of religion and their reception. She completed a similar, comparative project as part of the UK's AHRC/ESRC 'Religion and Society' Programme in 2010, and co-authored a book, *Media Portrayals of Religion and the Secular: Representation and Change* (with Elizabeth Poole and Teemu Taira, Ashgate, 2013). With Lori Beaman, she was awarded an ESRC International Partnerships and Networking grant, on 'Religion, Discourse and Diversity', to bring Canadian, British and other international scholars together to examine and compare media coverage of religion in their respective countries and to engage with media professionals.

In earlier years she was Head of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, and Head of Humanities at the University of Leeds. She was President of the British Association for the

Study of Religions, and completed two terms as General Secretary of the European Association for the Study of Religions. She is a Fellow of the RSA.

Research Statement

Space, religion and the secular: Since 2005 I have worked on issues of religion, place and space and situated my research in the geography (as well as sociology) of religions. The first stage of the research focused on developing a spatial methodology for the study of religions and resulted in a book, *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis* (Equinox, 2005). The second stage involved applying this methodology to the location of religion in secular locations, including the left hand, public sector organisations, urban landscapes, everyday ritual and academic disciplines, and to the relationship between the religious, secular and postsecular. I directed an exploratory research project on 'Locating religion in the fabric of the secular' in which we used the spatial methodology to examine religious and secular beliefs and values in an English medical centre and a high school, and am currently part of a European team investigating 'Iconic Religion: How imaginaries of religious encounter structure urban space' (with Volkhard Krech and Birgit Meyer).

Diasporas, migration and identities: As director of this research programme across the Arts and Humanities in the UK, I was responsible for creating a coherent programme, overseeing the commissioning process, the monitoring of the Programme's forty-nine projects and networks, and the running of academic and stakeholder events in relation to these themes. The role also involved collaboration with the cultural sector, media, government, and community bodies, and working with other European centres and funding agencies. *Diasporas, Migration and Identities: Final Director's Report* is available on www.diasporas.ac.uk. In 2010, I co-edited a programme book (with Seán McLoughlin), *Diasporas: Concepts, Intersections, Identities* (Zed), and in 2011 produced the website www.movingpeoplechangingplaces.org and a related book to bring the findings of the programme to new non-academic audiences. I have worked in this field since my doctoral studies (on Hindu migrants in Britain and their religious practices and organisations), and have written on religion, ethnicity, migration and identity. Until the end of 2011 I directed the Community Religions Project at the University of Leeds and supervised student research projects on the 'Religious Mapping of Leeds' and on local religious communities and identities. She wrote *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2nd edition 2016) – which won the SHAP Book Prize for religion and education.

Religion and media: (see biography)