



THE RELIGION AND DIVERSITY PROJECT/RELIGION ET DIVERSITÉ



Linda Woodhead

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Professor

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Biography

Linda Woodhead MBE DD is Professor of Sociology of Religion at Lancaster University (Department of Politics, Philosophy and Religion and Institute for Gender and Women's Studies). She did her undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Cambridge (1982-1988), and then taught for three years at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Oxford, before moving to Lancaster.

She has been involved in a number of funded research projects including as principal UK investigator on 'VEIL', an eight country EU project on public debates and policy on the Muslim headscarf.

In 2007 she was appointed Director of the £12m UK research programme 'Religion and Society', which is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council. This consists of 75 separate research projects, which are run by academics across the UK, often working in multidisciplinary teams. The Programme ended in 2013. www.religionandsociety.org.uk

Linda Woodhead is the organiser of the Westminster Faith Debates www.faithdebates.org.uk, which bring religion research into public debate.

Her books include *Religion and Change in Modern Britain* (ed with Rebecca Catto, Routledge: 2012), *A Sociology of Religious Emotions* (with Ole Ris, Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 2010), *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality* (with Paul Heelas, Blackwell, 2005), and *An Introduction to Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Recent articles include 'Five Concepts of Religion', *International Review of Sociology* 21(1), 2011, 121-143; 'Holistic Spirituality, Gender, and Expressive Selfhood' (with Eeva Sointu), *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 47 (2) June 2008, pp. 259-276; 'Real Religion, Fuzzy Spirituality', in Dick Houtman and Stef Aupers, *Religions of Modernity: Relocating the Sacred to the Self and the Digital*. Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 30-48.

Research Statement

My general interests are in:

- How and why religion and belief has changed in the modern world – I argue that religion has been transformed since the 1980s
- What people really believe – which I explore using a range of qualitative and quantitative methods.

More specifically, I have written widely on Christianity, its growth, decline and transformation in modern times. In *An Introduction to Christianity* (CUP 2004) and *A Very Short Introduction to Christianity* (OUP 2004) I took a historicalsociological approach which paid particular attention to the ways in which power has been imagined and distributed within Christianity.

I am also interested in the rise of 'alternative' spirituality from the mid 19th century to the present. In *The Spiritual Revolution* (Blackwell 2005) Paul Heelas and I considered the significance of contemporary forms of 'holistic'/'mind, body, spirit' practices and reasons for their rapid growth since the 1980s.

I am currently writing on religious change in Britain since 1989.