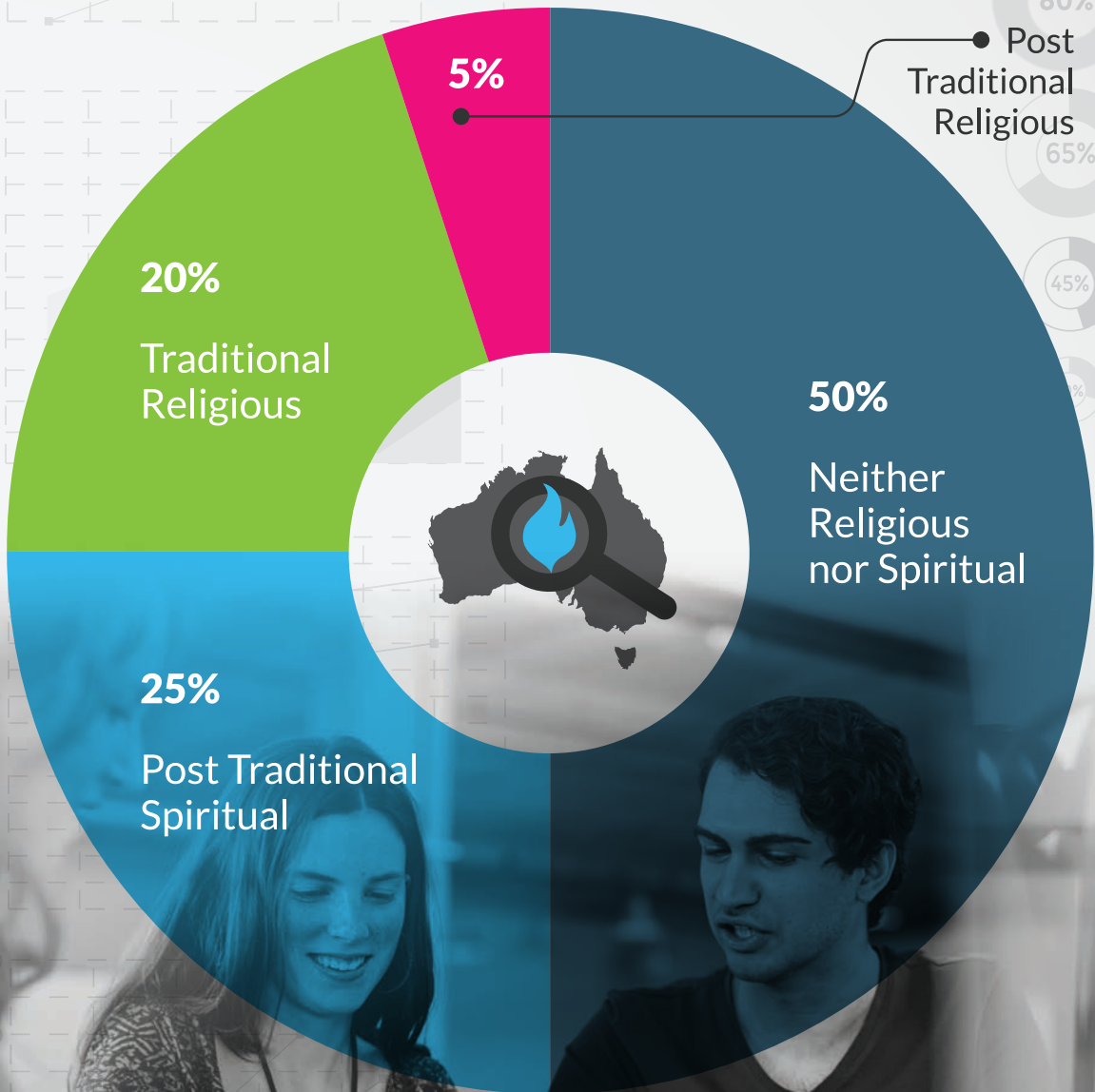


CHARTING THE FAITH OF AUSTRALIANS

Thirty Years in the Christian Research Association



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Charting the Faith of Australians:
Thirty Years in the Christian Research Association

by
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Christian Research Association

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Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ACU - Australian Catholic University | LOTE - language other than English |
| CALD - culturally and linguistically diverse | LRIN - Lausanne Researchers International Network |
| CRA - Christian Research Association | NCLS - National Church Life Survey |
| ITIM - Interchurch Trade and Industry Mission | UCA - Uniting Church in Australia |
| | UKCH - <i>UK Christian Handbook</i> |

Preface

Purpose

Approaching retirement, it is an opportune time to reflect. My life has centred around identifying how people find meaning and purpose in life and the role of the Christian faith in that process. At one level, it is a personal story which has its roots in the traditions and practices of my family. It is a story which has its origins in England, which involved an extended time in Thailand, and has largely unfolded in Australia. At another level, it has become the story of the Christian Research Association and the search for the place of faith in a changing Australian context. I will begin with the historical context of the great changes that have shaped both my life and the current Australian context.

The purpose of telling the story is to identify what has been learnt through it about faith in the Australian context. The analysis of the context demonstrates that there are, in fact, a multitude of cultures and sub-cultures in Australia. Faith takes different expressions among people of different generations, among immigrants and people born of Australian-born parents, in rural and in urban contexts. Thus, the process of charting faith in the Australian context is complex and multi-faceted.

In telling the story, it becomes clear that some parts of the Australian cultural landscape have been charted in detail, while other parts remain largely ignored. There is still much work to do to understand the Christian faith in the Australian context, and this book points to some of those opportunities.

Sections of This Book

This book is divided into three parts. **Part 1** is my own reflections on ministry and research. It includes a discussion of my primary question of the relationship between faith and culture, an account of how the CRA has addressed that question through its many research projects, and a summary of the conclusions that I have come to through the research.

Parts 2 and 3 are essays from other people who have been part of the story of the Christian Research Association. I invited a number of people who have been colleagues and partners over the years to contribute to the book. My thought was that these contributions would reflect something of the diversity of ways in which the CRA has touched people and churches and other religious groups. It would also indicate something of the diversity of challenges for faith in our contemporary world. I invited people to write long or short contributions. Consequently, the materials in both of these sections of the book vary greatly in length and are written from many different points of view. I was not seeking compliments in inviting people to comment, although I am grateful for their generous words and have not edited them. Rather, my hope was that this book, in reflecting on the past, would point to a future for Christian research.

Part 2 contains comments on the work of the Christian Research Association. Rev Dr Neville Carr, the first chair of the CRA Board has written briefly of the foundation of the CRA and has commented on the theological foundations of some of the themes in Part 1.

Prof Rev'd Gary Bouma, another former chair of the CRA, comments on the original vision of the CRA and the constraints which have shaped the CRA.

John Emmett was the director of Uniting Education and discusses the ways in which the CRA has partnered the Uniting Church in research. He draws attention to some of the characteristics which have contributed to the quality of that partnership.

John McGrath now works for the National Catholic Education Commission, but was previously Director of Mission at the Broken Bay Catholic Diocese. He describes the work of the CRA in relation to Catholic schools.

Stephen Reid, who works in the CRA, reviews some of the work the CRA has done on chaplaincy and the continuing issues in exploring that type of ministry.

Peter Bentley, a long-time staff member of the CRA, focusses on the CRA's work in relation to the public media. He discusses the significance of the CRA in its media presence.

Rev Dr Darrell Jackson, the chair of the Lausanne Researchers International Network, discusses the role of the CRA in relation to the international network of researchers working on ministry and mission.

Prof Alan Black and Dr Vivienne Mountain add some notes from their perspectives as colleagues in the research and in CRA's publishing ventures.

Part 3 examines some parallels to and applications of the work of the Christian Research Association. The first essay in this section is by Rev Dr Bruce Kaye, previously secretary of the Anglican General Synod. He addresses the issue of what research is needed by Christians to engage appropriately with the institutions of society.

Adrian Blenkinsop, who is working among youth for the Bible Society, addresses the question as to how the church should listen to its context. He illustrates what this has meant in relation to the Bible's Society's work with young people.

Dr Tom Edwards is a psychologist and a lecturer at Eastern College, Melbourne (formerly Tabor). He raises the questions of how psychology can inform ministry practice and he notes the impact of the Christian Research Association beyond its major focus on sociology.

Rev Prof Canon Lesley Francis, Rev Dr Andrew Village and Dr Ruth Powell demonstrate how psychology informs ministry by looking at the psychological profile of Australian Church leaders.

Associate Prof Rev Dr Darren Cronshaw also addresses the issue of training leaders, but does so in relation to the specific challenges of a culturally diverse church. In his essay, he reviews some of the work that the CRA has done in pointing to the impact of immigration on church life in Australia.

Dr Peter Brierley has written a history of a sister organisation, the Christian Research Association (UK). The parallels and the mutual support have been part of the journey.

Dr Jayant Bapat, an academic and senior Hindu priest in Melbourne, describes the issues of religious faith and culture from a Hindu and a multi-faith perspective.

I am most grateful to all of these people. Together they show something of the depth and diversity of the work of the CRA and the issues our research has raised. The contributions certainly point to the great richness of the work of the CRA with churches and schools, through media and in conjunction with other organisations across the globe.

The contributions also point to some of the characteristics of research that serves well the people of Australia, their institutions, and particularly the churches. They point to

the importance of listening carefully, of examining the values and assumptions on which the behaviour of both individuals and of social institutions is based. At the same time, working in partnership with other people and organisations means building relationships of confidence and trust. It means being practical in orientation, and intentional in comprehensibility and applicability.

A Note of Deep Appreciation

The various contributions demonstrate how the work of the Christian Research Association has been collaborative. The contributors work and have worked in a great variety of spheres: some in churches, others in schools, in theological colleges and universities. Some work in para-church organisations and others in research bodies. While most of them are Christian, I deeply appreciate that one of the contributors is a Hindu and writes from that perspective. We live in a multi-faith world and the chance to work with people of other faiths has been a rich privilege.

I have valued greatly all the staff with whom I have worked in the Christian Research Association. Each one of them has contributed out of their own experience and way of putting life together. Each of them has brought a particular set of valuable skills, and each has left their mark on the process of charting the faith of Australians. Tricia Blombery played a significant role in establishing the Christian Research Association. Peter Bentley has been a valuable colleague for 26 years. I wish to express special appreciation for the current staff, to Stephen Reid and Peg Fraser. Together, we have formed a strong team.

I also wish to express appreciation to the Board that has supported and guided our work and the many other people who have collaborated with us. I am most grateful to a number of people who have had a significant influence on the directions I have taken and I have noted some of those contributions in this essay. Many members of the Board have contributed to the work of the CRA over many years.



CRA staff in 2016: Philip Hughes, Peg Fraser and Stephen Reid.

(Photo by Philip Hughes)

Recognising that there is danger in singling out specific people, I would like to express especial appreciation to Pastor Rob Steed who has chaired the Board over the past eight years as a co-opted member; to Dr Ken Bartel who was treasurer for about the same length of time; to Grace Thomlinson, another co-opted member who has served on the literature committee, headed up the marketing committee and helped greatly with checking all our documents; and to Dr Bob Dixon who has been secretary and public officer for 15 years, head of the research committee, and who has been painstaking in his attention to detail in checking all the CRA's publications.

The CRA ethics committee has played a quiet but invaluable role, legitimating our research and assisting us in undertaking that research ethically. Michael Heaton QC has been chair of the CRA ethics committee since its foundation in 2000. I am deeply grateful

to him for his dedication to the task and his wise leadership. Dr Rowan Ireland, an expert in sociology, and the person who gave me the opportunity to work on the Australian Values Study Survey in 1984 which led to me taking up the role of senior researcher at the Christian Research Association, has also served faithfully on the CRA Ethics Committee since its foundation. He has contributed very significantly out of his own experience of research in the sociology of religion.

There are many other colleagues with whom I have worked. In the following chapters, I have noted some of them and the part that they played in the journey. My friendship with Dr David De Vaus goes back to 1965, to our days in secondary school together. He, more than anyone, is responsible for my movement from philosophy into sociological research, and he taught me directly and through his books many of the elements of sociological research. Conversations with his wife, Dr June De Vaus, have also been stimulating and informative.

I have valued greatly the continuing exchange on research and ministry since 1979 with Rev Dr Herbert Swanson. Since my time in Thailand, he has been a valuable partner in many aspects of the research, but particularly in relation to cross-cultural dimensions.

Dr Peter Kaldor opened up for me great opportunities for research, and I have greatly enjoyed our dialogue and collaboration over the years. I have learned much from the skills in research of Prof Alan Black and have valued the opportunity to both work and travel with him.

By far, the biggest contributor to my journey has been my wife, Hazel. Her companionship and support through both my studies and every aspect of my ministry has been unmeasurable. Her support has had many practical dimensions as she worked to provide an income during our studies, and as she has cared for all of us through many years full of ministry, meetings and travel. For many years, she was employed at the Christian Research Association and looked after subscriptions and sales and ran the office. Throughout the years, she has spent hundreds of hours in proof-reading and helping in other practical ways.

My children, Timothy and Rachel, have also been very supportive. Rachel was born just one month after I started working for the Christian Research Association and Timothy was just three years old at the time. From their earliest years, they have opened envelopes, sorted mail and answered the phone. They have filed papers, sorted books, scanned photos and stuffed envelopes. During his teenage years, Timothy's skills in IT surpassed mine. For the last 20 years, he has advised about computers and websites. Timothy constructed the front-end to several of our CD products, including *Research Methods for Ministry and Mission* and the compilation of the first 16 years of *Pointers*. An IT expert of a quality the Christian Research Association could never afford to pay, Timothy remains at the end of a phone line, ready to take over my computer and sort out my problems. Rachel also continues to give support and is always ready to assist with anything at the office.

Through the book, many other people will be mentioned. I am grateful for this opportunity to note their many contributions as we have sought to 'chart the faith of Australians'.

Philip Hughes

Part 1.
Christianity and Culture:
A New Axial Age?



An arrangement for a worship at the Christian Research Association Roundtable 'Shaping Australia's Spirituality' in 2010 created by Maria George. (Photo by Philip Hughes)

Chapter 1. Identifying the Issue of Christianity and Culture: A Personal Story

The World Wars of the 20th Century and Their Impact on Religious Faith in Australia

Among the major events of the 20th century were the world wars. The wars had enormous implications for millions of people and the economic life and the demography of countries around the world. There were also enormous implications for the Christian faith.

The First World War marked the end of Christendom. It was a demonstration of moral failure at an unprecedented level in Europe. Countries which claimed that the basis for their moral foundation was the Christian faith killed each other's citizens as well as soldiers with a ferocity that had never been experienced before. Those European countries which went to war expected support from their colonies. At the same time, the colonies were beginning to find their independence. The countries in Europe no longer had the economic or moral base to be exemplars of civilised society. The myth that dominated the 19th century, that Christianity brought civilisation to the world, could not be maintained.

At this time, many people in the West began to rethink what the Christian faith was all about. It was not long after World War I that small groups of thinkers in Australia began exploring Buddhism. Some rationalist societies looked for a new moral basis for civilisation. The vast majority of the population in Australia continued as Christian, but it seems likely that many took it less seriously. The exception to this trend were those involved in the sectarian Christian groups such as the Baptists, the Brethren, and the Churches of Christ. Many of these people saw themselves as distinct from the wider society and representing a purer form of the Christian faith. They felt they could not be blamed for the moral failure of World War I.

World War II had a different impact. There was little sense that Australia and its allies were fighting for civilisation. Rather, they were defending the free world against its enemies: Nazi Germany and its allies and imperialist Japan.

Following the end of World War II, there was a revival in the churches. A larger proportion of Australians went to church than at any time since the earliest days of the colony when church attendance was compulsory. There were a number of factors in this level of affirmation of the Christian faith. One was that, following the war, there was a baby boom. Families separated by war were again united. There was also a strong expectation that married women would look after the home while their husbands were engaged in the workforce. Many women were looking for a sense of community to support them in their homemaking and family development and found that sense of community in the churches. The churches provided many social activities for women. They also affirmed the roles of women in homemaking and caring for the family. Through their emphasis on marriage, the churches provide affirmation of family life. In their Sunday Schools, and other children's activities, they assisted parents in raising their children.

At this time, family mobility was limited. If a family had one car, it was often used by the husband for travelling to work. Women had to walk to their social activities and to do their shopping. The churches were centres of local community life and there was usually a church within easy walking distance.

Another factor in the strength of the church after World War II was immigration. The war had convinced the leaders of Australia that the population needed to be larger if it was to be able to protect its vast areas. Immigrants were welcomed into Australia in large numbers. Many came from countries where there had been significant economic impact due to the war: Italy, Greece, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands and, of course, the United Kingdom. These immigrants provided a workforce for driving growth in manufacturing and in some of the major national infrastructure projects such as the Snowy Mountains Engineering Scheme. Many immigrants found their sense of community through the churches. Orthodox churches were established to serve the Greek and other eastern European immigrant communities. Tens of thousands of migrants from Italy and Poland entered the Catholic churches, and in many places the Mass was said in Italian, Polish and a range of other languages. Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist churches as well as Anglican churches benefited from the flow of immigrants from the United Kingdom.

The focus on the formation of families, the flow of immigrants and the fact that people were looking for a new start in which the violence and horror of World War II was left behind, all contributed to the extra-ordinary period of religious vitality in Australia. The Billy Graham campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s built on these factors, offering people new life and forgiveness for the past. The personal salvation that lay at the heart of Graham's preaching touched many Australians.

Personal Roots

I was born as part of that post-World War II Boomer generation in London. My maternal grandparents had started a suburban Baptist church in north-west London. They had both been influenced by the teaching of Charles Haddon Spurgeon and had been baptised by him. Spurgeon was rooted in Baptist traditions although he had a formal separation from the Baptist Union in the United Kingdom. As part of a movement which had a strong emphasis on personal salvation, my grandparents had not been greatly influenced by the sense of the moral failure of the Christian faith which had affected some other churches.

My parents turned to their faith for support during World War II. My father was in the signals corps in the Army and served in Egypt and Palestine. While his parents had not been frequent churchgoers, my father read the Bible while he was overseas and made a commitment of faith as a result. After the war, my mother and father met while involved in youth work in different Baptist churches in north-west London. While the Baptist emphasis on personal faith was deeply significant to both of them, they also felt that it was important to address social issues from Christian perspectives. They turned to pacifism and, in the early 1960s were involved in the peace movement.

Their anxiety about the Cold War and the possibility of further war between America and Russia led them to consider emigrating to Australia. While still in England, my father was able to arrange work as a structural engineer in Australia. The whole family, including my two sisters, and two living grandparents, left England by ship in June 1964, arriving in Melbourne in July that year.

As with many other immigrants, the church played a significant role in our settlement.

My parents had been in correspondence with members of a Baptist church in Melbourne. They welcomed us at the docks, and took us to a house they had rented for us and stocked with food. About three days later, my parents purchased their own home. We continued involvement with that Baptist Church for five or six years, later moving to a Church of Christ.

In my early teenage years, I expected to enter into ministry in the church. I was encouraged by my family and by the ministers of the churches I attended during those years. I had always taken life seriously and ministry in the church seem to me to be the best way of using my abilities for God and for other people. A particular passage of Scripture which resonated with me was Isaiah 42.1-4: a description of God's servant. While I believed that description was fulfilled in a unique way in Jesus, it presented a challenge to all who would be God's servants. All were called, according to their particular talents and abilities, to gently and persistently seek God's way, the way of 'righteousness and justice' to use the words of Isaiah 42.

The Issue of Christianity and Culture

I began to read the books of Rudolph Bultmann during my final year of school as part of matriculation Biblical studies. They opened for me questions as to how the Christian faith might need to be reinterpreted in different cultural contexts. A prior experience had raised for me issues of cultural relativity. My parents were supportive of foreign mission work. I remember a missionary from New Guinea visiting our home. We had a discussion about marriage. He explained how older widowed women in New Guinea were married to younger married men after their husbands died. It was a way of caring for widows. Such marriages were quite different from those based on choice and romantic feelings such as those in Western world. I realised that enforcing monogamy in New Guinea had dire consequences for the care of widows. As I became aware that the nature and meaning of marriage could take different forms in different cultural contexts, so I began to realise that the Christian faith itself may also vary from one cultural contexts to another.

My first degree at The University of Melbourne was in philosophy. It gave me great opportunity to think about the world, ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, and the nature of reason. I was very involved in the Christian Union during my years at university and increasingly aware that many people did not share my view of the world or my Christian commitment. Studies in philosophy raised questions as to what extent could or should Christian commitment be grounded in reason. To what extent should one seek to commend the Christian faith through rational argument?

The work of Søren Kierkegaard helped me to wrestle with the issues of faith and reason. An honours project with Prof Boyce Gibson led on to a Master of Arts on the work of Kierkegaard under the guidance of Dr Max Charlesworth. My understanding of Kierkegaard's argument, stated in complex forms through the various pseudonyms under which many of his books were written, was that reason could take us to the edge of the decision of faith, but would never be sufficient to carry the weight of the existential commitment that faith involved.

Whatever the form of my ministry, I expected that it would have a teaching element. As part of my preparation, then, I began studying education. I completed a Master of Education at The University of Melbourne at the same time as studying for the Bachelor of Divinity. During that time I began lecturing in moral and religious education at The University of Melbourne.

I married Hazel Osman in 1972 and we moved into a small flat in North Carlton. We attended the North Carlton Baptist Church. When the church was without a minister, I helped out. Sometime later I formally took on the ministry of that church. I completed a Bachelor of Divinity with the Melbourne College of Divinity (now the University of Divinity) through Whitley, the Baptist Theological College, in 1976 and was ordained in 1977.

As I saw it, there was a great irony in ministry in that little church. In our various ways, we were seeking to share the news of God's salvation. We saw it as the most significant news that had ever been proclaimed. Yet, very few people in the area seem to have any interest. At this time, some of the old Victorian terrace houses in North Carlton were being sold and younger professionals were buying and renovating them. We held a mission called Nottrac in the high-rise flats and were overwhelmed by the involvement of children in our fun events. But it was hard to identify any longer term consequences. We seemed to have no way of connecting with the people living around us. The language we used in the church meant nothing to them. How did the church need to change in order to engage the wider community? This was the question that dominated my mind. The gap between the church culture and the culture in the wider community appeared to me to be very large.

I was also aware that there was another side to the issue. The church needed to have something to say to the wider community. If the church changed in order to communicate its message meaningfully, what did the church need to retain in order to have something meaningful to say? Many traditions, such as the link between marriage and sexuality, were being challenged by my contemporaries. In that changing culture, how did the church need to change? People like Harvey Cox, John Robinson and others were writing about the death of God. Did we need to go down a line of developing a secular faith?

My Master of Education thesis was an exploration of the implication of Paul Tillich's concept of 'new being' for education. I felt that developing educational methods that addressed the moral and religious development of young people was parallel to what I was trying to do within the church context. In both school and church, the aim was to empower people to live full and abundant lives both for themselves and for the sake of others. Education was ultimately about salvation, or in Tillich's term 'new being', even though it did not use those words. Were there some clues in those parallels which would answer of the question how the church needed to change to engage the wider community?

At this time, the liberation theologians were writing of salvation in terms of the wholeness of life of people in community. They drew attention to salvation as not primarily about the next life but about the quality of life in community which is experienced here and now. I began to develop some of these ideas through lectures I prepared as the 'theologian' for the House of the Gentle Bunyip which Dr Athol Gill had developed as an experiment in Christian community living in Clifton Hill.

One of my school friends, David De Vaus, later became head of the Department of Sociology at LaTrobe University and a world-respected expert on quantitative research methods. While much of my studies had been in philosophy and theology, David convinced me that empirical studies using sociological methods could resolve some of the theological and philosophical questions I had been grappling with. I became convinced that theology needed to be developed in specific contexts and should take into account the empirical understanding of that context. This was a major turning point for me in the exploration of faith and culture: from seeking the answers through philosophy and theology to exploring them in context using sociological tools. It therefore seemed to me

appropriate that, if I was to think through the theological issue of how the church must change to relate to culture, it would be appropriate to look at how the church had changed in relation to a cultural setting other than my own.

I began to plan my doctoral studies. I would examine the theological question of the Christian faith and culture, but would do so through a reflection on three case studies. The first case study would be in a context very different from my own. I was convinced that the future of Australia lay in Asia, and therefore I decided that it would be helpful for that case study to occur in Asia. In Asia, I could also look at how the Christian faith had developed within a culture in which there was another major world religion. I had visited Papua New Guinea and was keen for a second case study to occur there where I could examine how the Christian faith had related to an animistic culture. The third case study would take place back in the Western world.

As far as I knew, there was only one place in the world where I could study religion both empirically and theologically: Lancaster University in England. I was accepted for the doctorate there and began in September 1978, sitting in on classes in sociology of religion, as well as the theology of culture.

On the way to Lancaster, Hazel and I travelled through Southeast Asia looking at several possibilities for places where I might undertake my Asian case study. Northern Thailand appeared to be most suitable. I met staff at the McGilvary Faculty of Theology at Payap College in Chiang Mai and later wrote and asked them if I could do my studies in Thailand. They responded positively.

In September 1979, Hazel and I travelled to Chiang Mai in northern Thailand to begin the case study on Christian faith and culture there. My first task was to learn the language and this proved more difficult than I had expected. It took me a full year before I felt my grasp of the language was adequate for my studies.

Back in England, Margaret Thatcher had come to power and had raised the university fees for foreign students threefold. There was no way I could return to England and pay those fees to complete my doctorate there. I also realised that it would take me three years to properly complete my case study of Christianity and culture in northern Thailand. I applied to transfer to the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology which was based in Singapore and which served many theological colleges in south east Asia. They appointed three supervisors for my studies: two Thai lecturers at McGilvary Faculty of Theological, Payap College in Chiang Mai, Dr Maen Pongudom the dean of the theological faculty, and Dr Kamol Arayaprteep, and one American missionary who had a doctorate in anthropology, Dr Konrad Kingshill. Rev Herbert Swanson, the head of the Manuscript Division, Payap College, was a constant source of help, advice, analysis and criticism throughout the time I worked on my thesis in Thailand. He has continued to be a close friend and mentor in many aspects of my research, both in Thailand and Australia.

The Study of Christianity and Culture in Northern Thailand

It had become apparent to me during my ministry at North Carlton that what people actually believed did not necessarily correspond with the creedal statements they might affirm. That understanding developed further in Thailand. A Japanese missionary, Kosuke Koyama, who had been in northern Thailand a few years before my time, explained it very well in his book *Waterbuffalo Theology*. He noted that when a missionary went into the homes of members of the church he or she would be entertained in the dining room. Within that context, the members of the church knew what they



*The original First Church, Chiang Mai still stands on the banks of the Mae Ping River.
(Photo by Philip Hughes)*

were meant to say. They would affirm faith in the right way, as they had been taught. But Koyama went on to say that this was not the faith that fed and nurtured people. Rather that nurturing faith was developed in the kitchen. Just as many ingredients are placed into the great wok from which come marvellous aromas and nourishing food, so that which nurtured people in their daily lives arose from a great variety of sources (Koyama 1974). This insight has been important through the subsequent work with the CRA. One cannot discover what beliefs guide and nurture people from the creeds people recite.

On the surface, the Christian faith in northern Thailand appeared to be a copy of American Presbyterianism, influenced by the generations of American Presbyterians who had founded and supported the Christian faith there. The churches were built in rectangular fashion with wooden pews on which the worshippers sat in bus style. The ministers wore robes with dark blue trimming similar to the robes of Presbyterian ministers in the United States. Most of the songs they sang had been composed in America and translated into Thai. The music was American and usually played on a tiny organ or piano. Thai instruments were left at the church door.

While the Thai people have had a long history of adapting what they needed from other people and other cultures, most Thai people felt that they already had a good religion in Buddhism, and Christianity as a Western religion was not needed. They could certainly appreciate that Jesus was a good person and they were interested in his teaching but, if being a Christian meant giving up Buddhism, most Thai people were not interested.

To understand what really nurtured the lives of Thai Christians it was necessary to go below the superficiality of the religious structures. I sought to do this in several ways. One was to do content analysis of sermons: to seek to understand what in fact it was that the church leaders were saying to the people on Sundays. A second way of doing it was to run surveys among matched groups of Buddhist and Christian students asking them about their values and how faith played a role in their daily lives. A third way was to do in-depth interviews with a wide range of people of both religious backgrounds.

Having listened to 30 or 40 sermons, mostly delivered in village churches around northern Thailand, I found that the major theme of the sermons was that if people did their religious duties they would receive God's blessing. Certainly, religious duties were conceived in specifically Christian ways: in terms of prayer and going to church, for example. Nevertheless, the underlying theme was that if you do good, you will receive good. If you do evil, you will receive the consequences. This is, in fact, the Thai version of the law of karma. A common Thai saying is 'do good, receive good; do evil, receive evil'. This basic principle of Thai Buddhist culture was being re-expressed in the Christian context.

The surveys among Thai and Christian students indicated that their values were very

similar. At the top of the list was happiness in family life, having good friends and being successful. Then came peace in the world, calm contentment, and national security. One of the basic values in Thai society is harmonious and peaceful relationships with the wider society, with people close to you, and within yourself as an individual. These values were just as apparent amongst Thai Christians as amongst Thai Buddhists. I did some comparative surveys among missionaries and groups of American students from Christian colleges who were visiting Thailand. The results indicated that the values of Thai Christians were much closer to those of Thai Buddhists than to the American students or missionaries. The results supported the general conclusion that culture has a pervasive influence on our systems of values, and religion generally makes only small differences (Hughes 1984a).

In-depth interviews added to the picture. Most Thai Buddhists are animistic in that they believe in the spirit world. Everywhere one goes in Thailand there are spirit houses and people place small offerings to the spirits in those houses on a regular basis. Most Thai Buddhists believe that it is important to pay one's respect to the spirits and that failure to do so can lead to consequences such as sickness. The spirit house at Chiang Mai University became overloaded with flower garlands as examination time approached!

Most Thai Christians believed in that spirit world, but believed that the power of God was much greater than that of any local spirits. Consequently, they could afford to ignore the local spirits because of their relationship with God. However, their prayers and actions reflected, in some ways, how Buddhists paid respect to the spirits and sought their blessing.

A study of the history of Thai Christianity revealed that many people late in the 19th century became Christians because they had been accused by their neighbours of having offended the local spirits. The transfer of their allegiance to the great spirit, God, meant that the power of the spirits over them were neutralised. It may be noted that many others who became Christians did so because they had been pushed to the edges of society, particularly those who were leprosy patients or members of their families. I calculated that perhaps 20 per cent of all Christians in Thailand in the 1970s had been leprosy patients or members of their families. In many cases, the grandparents or great-grandparents had been the patients. Many other Christians in Thailand are members of hill tribe groups who have a distinct linguistic and ethnic identity and have never wanted to identify with the Thai culture (Hughes 1989a).

While there were similarities at depth in the beliefs and behaviour of Thai Buddhists and Thai Christians, this did not mean that the Thai Christians were syncretistic in their faith. They had accepted traditional Protestant Christianity, but the



The Original Roundtable. Anders Hovemyr (a Swedish Baptist), Herbert Swanson and Robert Collins (American Presbyterians), Sigmund Laschenski (a Jesuit) and Chayan Hiranpan (Church of Christ in Thailand) gather at Khun Tan, south of Chiang Mai, Thailand to discuss the Christian faith in Thai culture, 1982.

ways in which that had been incorporated into their lives demonstrated that the new is generally assimilated into life in ways which are meaningful in terms of former ways of thinking and patterns of behaviour (Hughes 1984b).

While doing my studies in Thailand I read extensively on Christian Buddhist dialogue. One essay had particular significance for my thinking. A Sri Lankan Buddhist, Mahinda Palihawadana, pointed to Jesus' teaching on material possessions in the Gospels. He argued that Christians, on the whole, had never taken that teaching seriously. Buddhists took much more seriously than Christians the teaching that occurs in Mark 10 that material possessions do not lead to happiness (Palihawadana 1978, p.41). Was this in fact one area in which Christianity has been molded to Western culture and one area in which Western Christians had compromised the teaching of Jesus and where Western culture had influenced the understanding of Christian faith?

My conclusion from my Thai studies confirmed the pervasive influence of culture and how deeply rooted it is. Basil Bernstein and Mary Douglas (Douglas 1973) have argued that the very framework of culture is rooted in the acquisition of language, and in early childhood experiences. Religious faith and traditions certainly interact with culture and can shape certain aspects of culture, but when the Christian faith enters a new culture, it does not replace culturally formed perspectives, values and worldviews, for the new faith can only be understood in the categories of the original culture.

The empirical case-study demonstrated that the seminal study of theologies of 'Christ and culture' by H. Richard Niebuhr (1951) was simplistic when applied to the understanding how Christianity interacts with culture. In a recent paper, published in the *Journal of Contemporary Ministry* (2015), I distinguished three dimensions of the expression of Christian faith, each of which can relate to culture independently of the other dimensions. I have since renamed the first dimension.

- the **material dimension**: the environment and patterns of ministry, including, for example, the style of architecture of the church building, the dress of the leader and the style of music;
- the **substantive dimension**: which has to do with the 'substance' of ministry and includes the teaching about faith and about the values associated with faith, such as values associated with sexuality and marriage; and
- the **essential dimension**: which is the ways ministry seeks to address how people make meaning and seek fulfilment in life (Hughes 2015a).

It was easy for Christian missionaries to introduce a new material dimension when they took the Christian faith to Thailand. Early missionaries thought they could also introduce new substantive and essential traditions. Certainly they offered meaning to groups of people who had been pushed to the margins of society. But the new message was interpreted, at least partially, in terms of the original Thai culture and old values were reinforced, although applied in new ways (Hughes 1984b).

Those studies in Thailand left further questions as to how the church should respond if it was to effectively engage the culture in which it exists. The attempt by Christians to impose an alternative substantive and essential dimensions of culture is unlikely to succeed. What Jesus did was not to impose a totally new culture on the people of his day, but to critique the culture and change it from within. For cultures are never static. They are always in flux. Perhaps that should also be the role of the church today. A group of friends working in Thailand spent a retreat together wondering what Jesus would have done if he had been born in Thailand. Surely he would have been a Thai Buddhist. Would

he not have then critiqued Buddhism as he in fact critiqued the Judaism of his day? We published our reflections in a small booklet: *To What Extent?*

Nine months after I concluded my doctorate, I was invited to participate in a month-long theological workshop in Hong Kong. It was held in a centre built by Norwegian missionaries in the style of a Buddhist temple for the purpose of engaging in dialogue with Buddhists. The leader of the workshop was C.S. Song, the Taiwanese theologian. He opened up another dimension of the issue of Christianity and culture.

He explored how the different social context of Asia raised different theological issues. The poverty and the lack of living space for many people in Asia, for example, raises issues about what is salvation. C.S. Song took the Zen experience of tea-drinking in a tiny room that can only be entered by removing all encumbrances. In this experience of Zen Buddhism, salvation is found in the 'infinite space' of the tiny tea-room. C.S. Song drew parallels with Jesus' teaching to 'consider how the lilies grow in the field'. In a parallel way, Jesus was encouraging people to give 'space' in their lives to faith, to make space amongst the worries of this world.

C.S. Song encouraged the students in that workshop to find parallels in Asian stories and practices to Christian thinking. By beginning with the realities of Asian life and with the deep and enduring Asian traditions, and seeking to express faith as responses to those realities, and in acknowledging the Christian realities present in Asian traditions, so theology may interact with that social context. It was a bold vision for the relationship between Christianity and culture.

My experience in Thailand confirmed that there were several dimensions to the interaction of the Christian faith and culture. It was relatively easy to transplant the material dimensions of the Christian such as church music and architecture from one culture into another, although it had led to the accusation in Thailand of the Christian faith being a Western religion. At the deeper substantive and essential levels, the forms that belief took and the ways the Christian faith was seen as the basis for values, the expression of the Christian faith was deeply influenced by the Thai culture. If culture and values are formed partly through the processes of child-raising and through the acquisition of language, it is inevitable that the Christian faith will interact, and in some ways, will be shaped, by the cultural context.

Having seen more clearly the dynamics of faith and culture through my studies in Thailand, I was ready to explore how those dynamics operated in my own Australian context. I had a strong conviction that it is not possible to be a theologian in a culture other than one's own, because one does not share the cultural assumptions. The Thai Christian community had to take responsibility for their own faith in their cultural context. My task was to explore how faith should interact with my own cultural context in Australia. Nevertheless, I have continued doing some research projects in Thailand, and have continued to find that context very helpful in understanding the relationship of faith to culture.

Further Pastoral Work

Back in Australia questions about the Christian faith, the church and Western culture remained with me. My next appointment was in a rural Baptist church in Wangaratta, northern Victoria. The church had a lively congregation of more than 100 people. They were friendly and welcoming and we enjoyed the hospitality one finds in rural Australia.

The Baptist congregation had a strong sense of being different from people who were not part of the church. That strong sense of difference did lead, from time to time, to people approaching the church because they were unhappy and wanted to change their lives around. I was involved quite intensively with one particular family for whom life was in chaos and for whom the church and the Christian faith offered the possibility of a new start. Overall, however, I felt that the Baptist Church did not communicate well with the wider community and existed as a separate sub-culture.

Foundations of the Christian Research Association

Keen to think about the dynamics of Christian faith and Western values, a new survey, the Australian Values Study Survey, provided an opportunity. I was able to access the survey through Latrobe University. Dr Rowan Ireland employed me a few days a month to work on the survey and my friend, Dr David De Vaus, taught me how to use statistical software to analyse the data. (Almost all analysis I had done in Thailand was accomplished with a programmable calculator.) The Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society published a couple of papers which were written from this analysis.

Rev Dr Peter Marshall of the Zadok Institute had helped to organise a variety of contributions from different denominations to the study of Australian values. However, there was no organisation to handle the interpretation and analysis. Hence, the question was raised about the formation of an organisation which might serve all the denominations of Australia in doing such work.

Rev Dr Bruce Kaye was a leader in the Anglican church at that time. He had recently been to a Lausanne Congress and had become convinced that it was important that the church really understood its changing cultural context in order that its ministry might be effective. He was also particularly concerned with the need for the church to demonstrate its commitment to social justice. He too saw the need for an organisation which might serve all the denominations in Australia in understanding their context. (See his account of this in *Pointers*, 20 (3), September 2005).

Dr Peter Kaldor had recently completed his doctoral thesis looking at the various groups in the population who attended churches and those who did not. He had published his thesis as a book, *Who Goes Where, Who Doesn't Care?* He and his mentor, Dr Dean Drayton, saw the need for more research on the relationship of the churches to the Australian culture and had convinced his denomination, the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of New South Wales, of that need.

These people got together with several others, including Dr Neville Carr who was working in the social justice unit of World Vision. They decided that they would form a research organisation which could study Australian culture and the place of the Christian faith within it using sociological tools and could serve the churches of all denominations.

In July 1985, the group approached me to consider working for such an organisation. I had been recommended to them by Dr Peter Marshall as a result of the papers I had published with the Zadok Institute. I was delighted with the idea. Working with the Christian Research Association would provide an opportunity of continuing the work that I had started in Thailand: examining the relationship between the Christian faith and culture. I was keen for this work to be practical and have the capacity to shape the practical life of the churches. The value of the research would ultimately be in its application, and I saw this as one of the great challenges for research. I proposed, then, that I would work half-time for the Christian Research Association (CRA) in order that

I could continue as a minister in a church setting to ground the research in practical ministry. Such an arrangement would also allow people with complementary skills to be employed.

Later in 1985, Dr Neville Carr as chair of the CRA and I interviewed other prospective employees. "Tricia Blombery was employed half-time as a co-researcher. Clara Bentley was employed on a part-time basis to assist with administrative work. After Neville Carr and I looked at several places in Sydney for an office, we were offered a place in an attic of some houses owned by Moore College.

In those early years, I travelled from Wangaratta to Sydney for approximately one week every month. I often stayed with Graham English and Erin White, friends from our days in Lancaster University. Other work for the CRA was done at home in Wangaratta. The Sydney Anglican Diocese and World Vision provided most of the funding in those early years, with some additional contributions from the Zadok Institute, the Bible Society and the Uniting Church Synod of New South Wales. Early in the history of CRA, the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne and the Interchurch Trade and Industry Mission (ITIM), and the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference joined the group of supporters.

I had faced some opposition to my ministry in the Baptist Church. Looking back, it would seem that at the heart of it was my failure to affirm their sense of Baptist identity as strongly as some members expected. While the church as a whole affirmed my ministry, this under-current led me to apply to transfer my ordination to the Uniting Church in Australia. I began ministry on a half-time basis at West Hawthorn Uniting Church in 1988 while continuing the research part-time. One of my major forms of ministry at West Hawthorn was the formation of an accommodation scheme in which the church created a Christian community of 20 young people who had come from rural Victoria to study at universities in Melbourne. Another was the development of a drop-in centre in conjunction with a local Anglican church to serve students at Swinburne University.

At that time, it was unusual for ministry appointments in the Uniting Church to be extended beyond ten years. While the balance of ministry and research had been highly rewarding, it had also been very hard work and involved long hours. I was ready at the end of nine years at West Hawthorn Uniting Church to take on research full-time. Financially that was not possible within the CRA. However, another opportunity arose which complemented well the work I was doing in the CRA.

Work with NCLS Research and Edith Cowan University

In 1997, NCLS Research (originally the National Church Life Survey), under its director, Dr Peter Kaldor, Anglicare (Sydney) and Prof Alan Black who was lecturing in sociology of religion at the University of New England, won an Australian Research Council linkage grant to study the relationship between religious faith and community across Australia. I was invited to be part of the research team. The following year, Prof Alan Black was appointed as Foundation Professor of Sociology at Edith Cowan University in Perth, where he also founded a Centre for Social Research. The linkage grant went with him, and I became a half-time employee of Edith Cowan University, working with Prof Alan Black, Dr Peter Kaldor, Dr John Bellamy and Keith Castle.

A large national survey, known as the Australian Community Survey, was conducted in 1998. It provided data for a range of projects. The books and major research papers which came from that survey included:

- *Why People Don't Go to Church,*

- *Exploring What Australians Value*, which was published jointly with the CRA,
- *Profiling Australians: Social and Religious Characteristics of the Population*, and
- *Building Stronger Communities*.

It also led to other research projects on volunteering in Australia and on the building of social capital. For some time, I was involved in a Think Tank meeting regularly with government officials in Canberra to discuss social capital and the building of stronger communities.

Prof Alan Black and I were invited by the Department of Family and Community Services to produce a major and detailed report, *The Identification and Analysis of Indicators of Community Strength and Outcomes*. This was later used as the Australian Bureau of Statistics began work on measuring social capital in the Australian population.

We were also asked to evaluate a range of community building programs that had been funded by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services. This project took us around the country as we visited thirteen projects including a couple in indigenous communities in Central Australia.

The team applied successfully for a second linkage grant, this time in conjunction with Deakin University. This led to another major national survey which was conducted in 2002 on Security and Wellbeing. A number of research papers were produced from this. The major book was *Spirit Matters* which analysed the difference that religious, spiritual and secular approaches to life make to personal and social wellbeing. We were able to show that being religious, and in different ways, being spiritual, compared with being neither religious nor spiritual, did relate to quite different levels of personal and social wellbeing.

Throughout my time at Edith Cowan University, I had the opportunity to attend international conferences and present papers both at the joint Religious Research Association and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion conferences that are held annually in the United States and at the biennial conferences of the International Society for the Sociology of Religion held mostly in different cities in Europe. Through those conferences relationships have grown particularly with a range of international scholars such as the team led by Rev Prof Leslie Francis at Warwick University and the team at the Research Services of the Presbyterian Church of USA, coordinated for many years by Dr Keith Wulff. A number of senior researchers in the sociology of religion have visited the CRA in Australia, including Dr David Martin, Prof Grace Davie, Dr Andrew Village, and Dr David Voas. I have also collaborated with Rev Dr Edward Bailey around the theme of implicit religion and the team at the Diaconal Institute of Sweden led by Dr Anders Bäckström which has been doing research on churches and welfare.

I was very grateful for the opportunity to work on these large projects with Prof Alan Black and with the NCLS team which included Dr Peter Kaldor, Dr John Bellamy and Keith Castle. I learnt much about conducting large national projects, about the analysis of data and its communication, and about Australian communities, values, social capital, insecurity, wellbeing and spirituality. While my background in the CRA had well prepared me for this work, the benefits of this experience flowed back into the CRA. I concluded my employment with Edith Cowan University in 2008 and was appointed an Honorary Research Fellow of the university. In 2009, I was employed full-time at the CRA.

Chapter 2. Activities of the Christian Research Association

The Early Years: 1985 to 1990

In 1985, the CRA was invited to work alongside a team of Catholic researchers looking at Australian culture through in-depth interviews with individuals about how they found meaning in their lives and how religious faith did or did not play a role in that. The team was led by Sister Carmel Leavy. The intention was that her team would do interviews with people in the Catholic Church and people who had left the Catholic Church. The CRA would do parallel interviews with people who had had connections with Protestant churches. We identified two suburbs in Sydney which would ensure that our interviews would cover people of different socio-economic backgrounds.

As the two CRA researchers, “Tricia Blombery and I, talked with people in their homes about what was important in life to them, and how they made sense of life. We asked them about faith, what it meant to them and what impact it had on their lives. In 1986, the CRA produced its first report: *Australian Beliefs and Practices Report*.



*“Tricia Blombery and Philip
Hughes around 1986*

The Catholic team was still doing their interviews. They were not under the same financial pressures as was the CRA. The CRA needed to move on to a survey to justify its annual funding and it was decided that the Catholic team and the CRA would go their separate ways. Shortly after that time, the National Catholic Research Council decided that it would directly support the CRA. Sr Eileen Jones was the first representative of the Catholics on the Board of the CRA, soon followed by Dr. Nick Tonti-Filipini and Rev Dr Michael Mason.

In 1987, the CRA conducted a major survey of the members of churches in five denominations. At the end of that year we produced a report on the *Combined Churches Survey for Faith and Mission*. Over the following three years, we analysed the data and produced a range of small reports. These included *Religious Broadcasting in Australia*, *Faith and Work*, *God through Human Eyes*, *The Australian Clergy*, *Tomorrow’s Church Today*, and *Patterns of Faith in Australian Churches*.

New Ventures in the 1990s

In July 1990, the CRA received letters from the Anglican Diocese of Sydney and World Vision saying that they were ceasing their support for the CRA. The Anglican Diocese of Sydney indicated that they were under financial pressure and were ceasing support of all ecumenical ventures. However, World Vision indicated that it had put money into forming the CRA but felt that it was not the role of World Vision to sustain it. World Vision was persuaded to keep its support for the CRA at a much reduced level for a number of years following this.

Without the financial support provided by these two organisations, a significant change was needed in the way CRA operated if it was to survive. Firstly, there was a search for other major sponsors. The Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, the Baptist Union of Victoria, the Lutheran Church of Australia, the Salvation Army (Southern Territory), the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and St James Mission joined as major sponsors over the following years.

Secondly, Associate Membership was started and the CRA sought people who would support the CRA on an annual basis for a fee, and receive in return the publications of CRA, including a new quarterly bulletin called *Pointers*. *Pointers* has been produced four times a year since 1990 and is now indexed for Australian academics by Informat.

Thirdly, a new venture was started: the production of *A Yearbook for Australian Churches*. Peter Bentley was employed for this project and the Yearbook was produced annually until 1997.

Fourthly, the CRA staff began actively looking for more commissioned research. This was done in two ways. One was developing projects such as the major study of youth ministry and then seeking organisations to contribute to them, often with a component in which the organisation received a report on its clients. The second way was through responding to requests from organisations for research to meet particular organisational needs or interests.

Around this time, the CRA office was moved from Sydney to Melbourne as I had moved to Melbourne from Wangaratta and most of the contributing organisations were based in Melbourne. ITIM had moved into La Verna, previously a Franciscan monastery, in Kew. We were offered a room in the building and established an office there, sharing a staff person, Leanne Bensley, with the Zadok Institute which had an office next door.

In 2000, when the Franciscans decided to sell their Kew property, ITIM moved its offices to East Hawthorn. The CRA rented a small office in Nunawading in 2003 and it has been the home of the CRA since that time.

The Broad Picture of Religion in Australia

One of the on-going tasks of CRA has been to draw the broad picture of religion in Australian society. One primary way of doing this was through analysis of the census data. The first publication to contain such analysis was based on the 1991 Census and published in 1993: *Religion: A View from the Australian Census*. In 1996, the CRA published *Religion in Australia: Facts and Figures*. Updates were included in the CD-ROM *Australia's Religious Communities: a Multimedia Exploration* between 2000 and 2010. In 2012 another book was published: *Australia's Religious Communities: Facts and Figures*. In these works, the rise and fall of identification with the various denominations has been carefully documented.

The CRA has also looked at the relationship between religious identity and many other demographic factors such as education, occupation, marital status, and also attitudes, beliefs and practices. In 1998, the CRA published *Australian Life and the Christian Faith: Facts and Figures*. While much of this work was up-dated in the CD-ROM *Australia's Religious Communities: A Multimedia Exploration* between 2000 and 2010, it was up-dated in book form in 2014 with the publication of *Life, Ethics and Faith in Australian Society: Facts and Figures*. These books have demonstrated that religious faith does have

an impact on many aspects of life, from occupation and family size to moral values and attitudes.

Another part of the continuing work of the CRA has been to provide churches and schools with information about the demographics, and most particularly, the religious demographics of the communities of people around them. Hundreds of customised reports have been prepared on local communities for churches and schools.

Through these projects on the national picture of religion in Australia, the diversity of cultures was evident. The major factor in the diversity of religious cultures was the ethnic differences. Since World War II, the diversity of ethnic cultures had increased, and along with that increase was a diversity in the religious traditions present in Australia.

The CRA has also made extensive use of the International Social Survey Program which has organised the conduct of surveys on social topics in many countries around the world. In 1993, the CRA put a page of questions into the survey in which the core questions were about religion. The responses to the survey provided an extensive set of data about attitudes to churches and clergy as well as information about religious faith among the Australian population. The CRA published results from that survey in *Believe It or Not: Australian Spirituality and the Churches in the 90s*. The book noted that apart from the diversity of religious traditions that had arisen through immigration, a 'religious supermarket' was developing in Australia and that there were indications of widespread interest in different kinds of spirituality.

The CRA collaborated with the Catholic Pastoral Research Office and NCLS Research to contribute questions to the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes in 2009. This survey included a core set of questions about religious faith which were asked in 44 countries. The results from this survey have provided the best picture of religion and spirituality since 2002 across the Australian adult population. The data was used extensively in *Life, Ethics and Faith in Australian Society: Facts and Figures*, published in 2014.

Working with Other Religions

In 1995, the CRA won a tender with the Commonwealth's Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research (BIMPR). This involved editing a series of 12 books on the major religious groups in Australia, including materials about the history, beliefs, organisation, and demographic information about the group. CRA staff wrote the whole or part of seven of the books.

Schools found these books very useful. Thus, in 2000 the CRA obtained permission from the Federal government to re-develop the material into a CD-ROM, adding book-length materials on another 16 major religious groups, and smaller materials on another 150 religious groups, developing a database that had been started by Dr Rowan Ireland. Keeping this material up-to-date has been a major preoccupation of the CRA with a third edition released in 2010. It has led to continuing relationships with a number of other faith groups including the Baha'i, the Jewish community, and the Sikh community. It has also led to on-going cooperation with Dr Adam Possamai who wrote the materials on neo-paganism, and Prof Purushottama Bilimoria and Dr Jayant Bapat who contributed materials on the Hindu community.

In working with the BIMPR, the CRA was responsible to Dr Trevor Batrouney. That relationship has continued. Dr Trevor Batrouney wrote the materials on the Eastern Orthodox for the 2000 edition of the CD-ROM and has assisted the CRA in subsequent revisions.

Dr Robert Dixon, the director of the Catholic Pastoral Research Office, wrote the book on the Catholic community. It was one of the early collaborations between the CRA and the Pastoral Research Office. There have been many other collaborations over the years. The two organisations have also shared staff for about 15 years. Dr Dixon has been a very assiduous and helpful proof-reader of all the CRA publications.

Apart from the CD-ROM, a number of additional books in the same style have been published from this project. These include:

- *The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia* by Alwyn P. Salom,
- *The Catholic Community in Australia* by Robert E. Dixon,
- *Baptists in Australia: A Church with a Heritage and a Future* by Darren Cronshaw and Philip Hughes.

In 2015, Purushottama Bilimoria, Jayant Bapat and I published a substantial book on the immigration and development of the Hindu and Sikh communities, *The Indian Diaspora: Hindus and Sikhs in Australia*.

Another book on the Oriental Orthodox Christians in Australia was in preparation in 2016.

The CRA also contributed to analysing the impact of immigration on religious faith in *Many Religions, All Australian*, edited by Prof Gary Bouma and published by the CRA. The research noted that, over time, commitment to the diverse religious traditions weakened. As immigrants and their children and grandchildren made stronger connections with Australians outside their religious and ethnic communities, so those religious and ethnic communities became less significant for their identity. The speed at which this change occurred varied from one ethnic group to another. And some people continued to identify with their religious heritage. The new religious organisations also adapted to the new Australian environment. The transitions in culture experienced by immigrants and their families continue to be an important subject for research.

Lausanne Researchers International Network

In 1996, I attended the second Lausanne Researchers International Network at the invitation of Dr Peter Brierley, the director of the Christian Research (UK) and a Lausanne Associate for Research. It was the first opportunity to engage internationally with other researchers doing similar work to the CRA (Australia) and it was encouraging to find people engaged in academic work that was linked closely to the understanding and development of Christian ministry and mission. The link with Dr Peter Brierley has continued since that time and I have very much appreciated his encouragement, his scholarship and dedication to the church, and the opportunity to organise several conferences with him. The link with the Lausanne Researchers International Network (LRIN) has also led to other connections. Dr Darrell Jackson paved the way for me to be a visiting scholar for a month at Redcliffe College in Gloucester, UK, during study leave in 2013.

In 1998, I attended another conference focussed on Christian nominalism also organised by Dr Peter Brierley. Then in 2001, I assisted in organising the Lausanne Researchers International Network conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

In 2005, I attended the conference in Cyprus and took on the role of chairing the steering committee for the LRIN. The CRA organised the LRIN conference in Geelong in 2008 and then had a significant role in organising the conferences in Sao Paulo in 2011 and Kuala

Lumpur in 2015. Because of my role in the LRIN, I also attended the huge Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. While still on the committee, I handed over the chair of LRIN to Dr Darrell Jackson in 2011.

Other CRA staff have been involved in these conferences. Sharon Bond attended the LRIN conference in Chiang Mai in 2001. All the staff were involved in the 2008 conference in Geelong. Stephen Reid attended, with me, the conferences in Sao Paulo and Kuala Lumpur.

Involvement in the Lausanne Researchers International Network has helped the CRA put its research in international perspective. Often, we have found that we were tackling similar issues to those being explored in other parts of the world and were using similar methods in our research. Sometimes, we have been introduced to new tools and to patterns of research through the



*Pastor Rob Steed, chair of the CRA, and other participants at the Lausanne Researchers International Network conference, Geelong, 2008.
(Photo by Philip Hughes)*

conferences. As some of the Lausanne Researchers, such as Dr Peter Brierley, Dr Darrell Jackson and Dr Todd Johnson, have opened up global perspectives on the church and its development around the world, and as we have met researchers working in many parts of the world, the CRA has been able to see its work in a global perspective.

These connections have added to the CRA's confidence as a research organisation. They have helped us to see that the CRA's research has contributed to the international body of knowledge and understanding. They have shown the CRA that its research is of international quality. Among the significant contributions has been the work the CRA has done on youth cultures, rural patterns of church life and on forms of ministry such as chaplaincy. The unique religious mix of having no established religion as have most countries in Europe, and without the strong link between national identity and the Christian that is found in many places including the USA, has contributed to what Australian researchers could offer the international community.

Australian researchers on religious faith, including the CRA, have some distinct advantages over researchers in other countries. Australia has more detailed information on religion from the census than any other country, both in terms of the detail of identity with different religious groups and the level of geographical specificity and ease of access. Many countries, such as the USA, do not have any reference to religion on their census and thus, for example, estimates of the number of any particular religious group vary very considerably. Other countries such as the United Kingdom and Thailand only count identification with the major religious groups rather than asking about denominational identity.

Another advantage of research in Australia is the very high level of collaboration across most denominations and even with other religions in gathering statistical information and doing research. There is no other research organisation around the world which

has the kind of ecumenical foundation and support that the CRA (Australia) has. This collaboration has made possible projects across a range of denominations, such as the studies of church leadership in rural communities and studies of youth ministry.

The Focus on Youth

In 2002, the CRA Board decided that a major focus of its work should be a study of youth culture. In the beginning, the initiative was taken by one of the members of the CRA Board, Rev Dr Michael Mason. With the assistance of Prof Gary Bouma, he formed a team which consisted of

- Rev Dr Michael Mason
- Dr Ruth Webber (from ACU)
- Dr Andrew Singleton (from Monash University) and
- Rev Dr Philip Hughes.

Seventeen organisations agreed to contribute to the funding of the primary project, The Spirit of Gen Y. The first stage was in-depth interviews with 80 young people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Almost all these interviews were conducted by the CRA staff. The interviews were followed by a national telephone survey of 1,200 young people plus a sample of 400 older people.

The CRA also conducted surveys and interviews of students in schools, providing some feedback to the various school systems which supported the project.

There was some disagreement within the team about how to interpret the data. While some members of the team wanted to identify those who said they did not know what to think about religious faith as 'nominal Christian' or as 'no religion', the CRA was keen to analyse them as a large and distinct group and to take their 'not knowing' about religion at face value. As a result, the CRA produced its own report on findings of the research. That report has been one of the best selling books that CRA has produced: *Putting Life Together: Findings from Australian Youth Spirituality Research*.

The research into youth culture has proceeded over many years. The CRA has continued doing surveys in schools, focussed in particular on the spirituality of the students. Many of the schools which conducted surveys in 2005 repeated them in 2011 and 2012. This has provided the opportunity to examine changes in the attitudes of students over time.

This work on youth culture has expanded to look at a number of specific topics in relation to young people and schools. The CRA has done studies on the impact of special experiences such as involvement in World Youth Day and attending the canonisation of Mary MacKillop in Rome. It has conducted studies of the attitudes and values of staff of Catholic schools in several dioceses and looked at programs developed for their formation. It has examined the collaboration between parish and school in youth ministry.

In the surveys of students, questions have been asked about the impact of religious education, school liturgies, camps and retreats, social justice programs and other activities. The responses provide a considerable bank of information about these aspects of school life and their impact on students.

One context in which I have continued to work through these issues has been through Kingswood College, a school of the Uniting Church in Box Hill, Victoria. I joined the Board of the College in 1997 and have been chair of the Board since 2008. I developed

a vision around ‘educating for purposeful living’ and the CRA held a conference in conjunction with Kingswood College in 2009 on this topic, attended by people from around Australia. The vision has continued to evolve and the school plans to build a Centre for Purposeful Living. Two Uniting Churches will contribute to the Centre and will use it as the basis for a new faith community, exploring ways of ministering in collaboration with the school.

The CRA conducted a study of chaplaincy in Uniting Church schools in 2000. In 2009, I was employed through Edith Cowan University to undertake a study of chaplaincy in government schools. Some staff from CRA were also involved in assisting with that study. The impact of chaplaincy in providing pastoral care for students and the impact on the moral values of students was noted. This study contributed to the Federal government’s positive regard for the program and resulted in a second round of funding for chaplaincy.

In 2012, the CRA undertook a study of how young people read the Bible. This led to the publication of *The Bible According to Gen Z*, edited by Adrian Blenkinsop. However, it also took the CRA into youth groups and raised questions about how effective youth groups were. In 2013, the CRA held a conference in conjunction with Tabor College Victoria (now Eastern College) on Growing the Spirit of Young People.

While schools have a very important role to play in the development of the spirit of young people, it has been evident that it is in voluntary activities that commitments of faith are most fully developed and supported. These communities provide long term support for young people as they seek meaning in their lives. In 2014, we began studies of youth ministry in local churches and by 2015 had completed 21 case-studies and gained many insights. In this work, Dr Armen Gakavian assisted us, both in doing interviews and contributing to the reports. In 2016 in *A Vision for Effective Youth Ministry: Insights from Australian Research* was published.

Rural Churches and Lay Leadership

Another major focus for CRA research has been the leadership of rural churches, which has involved research projects with Uniting, Anglican, Lutheran and Catholic denominations. The Uniting, Anglican and Catholic projects led to visiting rural churches and conducting interviews with lay leaders and other people involved. Patterns of ministry were recommended where clergy provided support to lay teams. A conference on rural ministry, organised by the CRA, was held in 2009.

Another project commissioned by the Australian Catholic Commission for Lay Pastoral Ministry was conducted in 2015. Dr Aoife McGrath was employed as project manager. It involved eight case-studies of lay pastoral ministry in both rural and urban settings around Australia.

Working with Theological College and Universities

Alongside the research, finding ways of communicating it has been an important consideration for the CRA. The most common way has been through the in-house reports for commissioned research and the public reports through books and through the CRA’s quarterly bulletin, *Pointers*. The CRA has run ‘Roundtables’ from time to time, the largest of which was ‘Shaping Australia’s Spirituality’ in 2010.

The CRA has also delivered papers in many national conferences, including those organised by the Australian Association for the Study of Religions, the Australian

Association for Religious Education, the Australian Association for Mission Studies, the Australian New Zealand Society for Theological Studies and the Conference on Contemporary Ministry at Harvest Bible College.

Another form of communicating the research has been through lectures at theological colleges and universities. Regular lectures were given for some years at Tabor College and the Uniting and Baptist colleges in Melbourne on the Australian religious profile. One year, the CRA was invited to conduct a course on sociology of religion at the Australian Catholic University.

Between 2005 and 2015, I served on the research committee of the University of Divinity, and in 2013 became an Honorary Research Fellow of that University.

Since 1997, the CRA has provided supervision for Masters and Doctoral students through what is now called the University of Divinity. It has also taught courses in research methods for post-graduate studies. There was discussion about putting a book together on research methods. However, it was decided to release the material as a CD-ROM because it could then be fully interactive and more easily revised. *The Research Methods for Ministry and Mission* was first released in 2003. It was fully revised in 2015 when I was invited to teach research methods to post-graduate students at Harvest Bible College.

I supervised the first PhD graduate from the the University of Divinity: my colleague, Rev Dr Herbert Swanson. His work was on the philosophies of the early missionaries which shaped their work in Thailand. A second doctoral student, Dr Trudy Dantis, was supervised jointly with Dr Bob Dixon.

In 2015, I was appointed chief supervisor for the masters and doctoral programs at Harvest Bible College and have been supervising another three doctoral students.

Over time, some theological colleges have come to recognise the importance of empirical research in contributing to how ministry and mission are best conducted. Through teaching in the colleges, the CRA has had some role in the development of that appreciation.

Other Projects

Various other projects, large and small, have been initiated by client organisations. They have included many projects with schools, a few with welfare and international aid organisations, and many projects with churches. One regular project has been a customer satisfaction survey with the Catholic Church Insurance, which has provided a small but interesting window into the changing nature of church life.

Through a great variety of research projects, the CRA has been painting the backdrop of Australian culture and the place of religious faith within the culture. It has drawn on its analysis of the censuses and surveys, its many case-studies and interviews in painting this picture. It has also contributed to the debate as to how might faith be developed in Australian homes, churches and schools.

While the CRA has always been a small organisation, most of the work has been a team effort. In the early years, Tricia Blombery contributed greatly to the research and to getting CRA underway. Her connections with the Australian Association for the Study of Religions were most helpful when we were editing their journal and organising their conferences.

Peter Bentley has been a very loyal member of staff since he joined in 1990 and has had

a particular role in gathering information on different topics and assisting with interviews of young people. Alison Sampson, then Cathy Cook (nee Wilson) assisted with research projects.

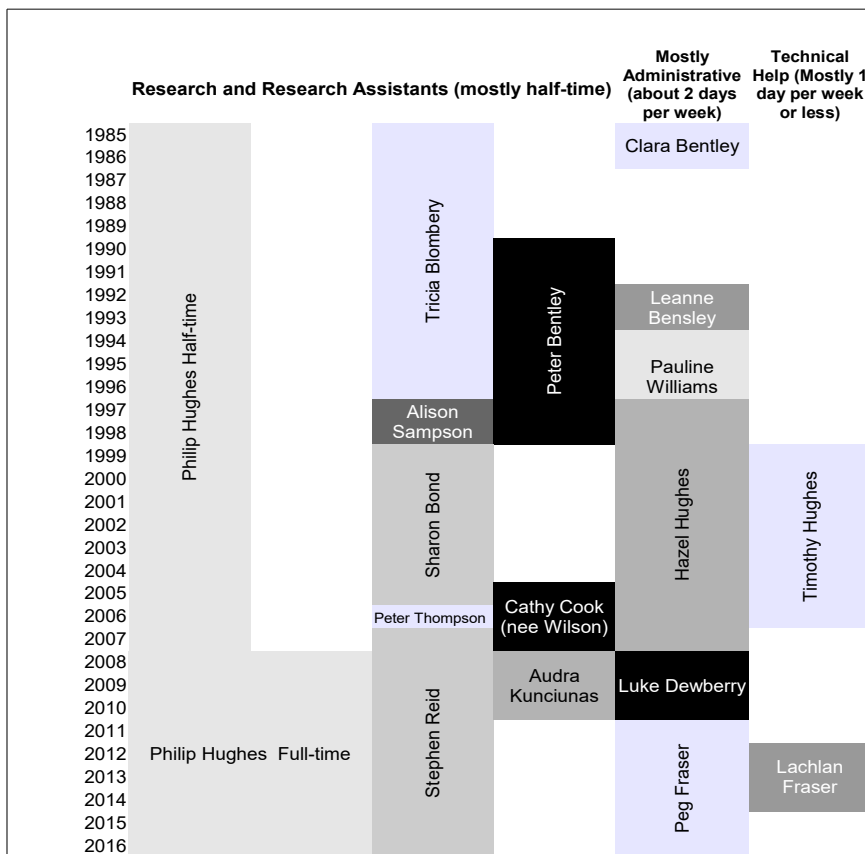
Sharon Bond served with great energy and enthusiasm for a number of years including the early work on youth culture. She did many of the initial interviews with young people. Peter Thompson assisted for a year.

He was followed by Audra Kunciuinas who assisted particularly with the rural projects. Her creativity was much appreciated.

Stephen Reid started with the CRA in 2007 and has done much work analysing Census and surveys. He has been involved in many qualitative projects too, conducting interviews with students, and doing studies of school and sports chaplaincy. Lachlan Fraser worked part-time for a couple of years, assisting with the materials for *Life, Ethics and Faith in Australian Society: Facts and Figures*.



Hazel Hughes and her mother, Jessie Osman, sending out copies of the Australia's Religious Communities CD-Rom. (Photo by Philip Hughes)



Australian Society: Facts and Figures.

The assistance from the administrative staff has been invaluable. Clara Bentley was the first appointed and worked with the CRA for a year. For some years, ‘Tricia Blombery and I managed that work ourselves. However, Leanne Bensley was appointed to assist the CRA around 1990 and worked in the office in Kew, also serving the Zadok Institute which had office next door. Pauline Williams served faithfully for a number of years. Hazel Hughes served on many

CRA Staff 1985 - 2016

occasions, both formally and informally, contributing greatly to the smooth operation of the CRA. From the earliest days, she has been a very faithful proof-reader, reading not only all the publications but many of the reports. From 1997 to 2007, she handled most of the administrative work of the CRA. Tim Hughes also contributed significantly, particularly in developing computer programs for running the *Research Methods for Ministry and Mission* and for the archive of the first 16 years of *Pointers*. Luke Dewberry was helpful in putting together materials for the 3rd edition of *Australia's Religious Communities* (CD-ROM) as well as looking after the finances and membership. Peg Fraser joined the CRA in 2011. She has not only handled the finances and memberships, but taking on the desktop publishing for books and *Pointers*, and assisting with interviews for the research. (See the table for the full list of staff.)

The work has been overseen by a Board consisting of representatives of the various Senior members of the Christian Research Association who contribute some funding annually. Several people have also been co-opted onto the Board following serving time as representatives of sponsoring organisations.

Dr Neville Carr was the first chair. He was followed by Dr Peter Kaldor, and then Prof. Gary Bouma. Dr Neville Carr returned when he represented the CCES (now ACCESS Ministries). As he went overseas, the task of chairing was taken on by Pastor Rob Steed of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He has given wise leadership since 2008. Many other people have served very faithfully on the Board for a long period of time. Dr Bob Dixon has long represented the Catholic Church on the Board and has been secretary, public officer, as well as a proof-reader, and head of the research sub-committee. Grace Thomlinson was co-opted following time as the representative of World Vision and has assisted with proof-reading all our publications and with the marketing sub-committee. For many years, Dr Ken Bartel was the Lutheran representative and the honorary treasurer. The continuing work of the CRA has been greatly enhanced by the contribution these people have made. (See Appendix 2 for the full list of representatives.)

The CRA has deliberately tried to engage each denomination on its own terms, honouring each denomination's theology. Many times, the theology of the denomination has provided the goals, and the sociological research of the CRA has focussed on the best means to achieve those goals.

However, looking back over the 30 years work with the CRA and work with other associated projects, the picture painted has been quite comprehensive and will be summarised in Chapter 3. The CRA has also explored how churches and schools might respond to the changing nature of faith in the Australian context and this research will be summarised in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3.

Australian Culture: Formative Influences and Major Components

Indigenous Influences

One set of roots of Australian culture lies in the ways of life that people developed in this land over tens of thousands of years. There was no one indigenous culture, but a range of cultures that developed in different parts of the country. Nevertheless, there were commonalities across these indigenous cultures. All were, to a large extent, hunter-gatherer cultures.

The indigenous cultures were oral, without written forms that represented speech. History was recorded in dance and song and art. Stories were told of how the land had come to take its present forms, and how the dream-time spirits had shaped the world in which they lived. Indigenous people had few material goods and few of what most Europeans would consider basic comforts in life. Yet, indigenous peoples have lived in Australia for at least 40,000 years and maybe thousands of years before that. While the landscape, flora and fauna changed a little under their influence, there was balance in the relationship between indigenous people and the land which enabled them to live sustainably in Australia over that period of time.

The CRA has done little research into Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultures. The CRA has reviewed, and, on occasion, commissioned the work of others. The work of Dr Bill Edwards on Aboriginal culture and the Christian faith, published in the *Australia's Religious Communities: A Multimedia Exploration*, is an excellent piece of work from one who has spent much of his working in Aboriginal cultures and speaking Aboriginal languages.

Aboriginal spirituality has had some influence on Australians of non-Aboriginal descent in the appreciation of land and the environment. However, this challenging area of research remains largely untouched by the CRA.

Immigrant Influences

The major influence which has shaped contemporary Australian culture has been immigration, and for most of the last 200 years, the dominant influences have been European. The major flows of migrants were from England, Scotland, and Ireland in the 18th and 19th centuries. While there were many migrants who arrived in Australia from China, India, and the Pacific Islands in the 19th century, non-European peoples were not given the opportunity to develop social infrastructure or to play a role in the development of the government of the colony. Most were discouraged from staying in Australia and their numbers dwindled significantly in the early 20th century.

The immigrants from Europe brought with them their various traditions, beliefs, their skills in craft and farming, their education in European ways of thinking and their European ways of living. The dominant forms of Australian culture, as it currently exists, is an offshoot of European culture, planted by those immigrants. Each group brought with them their own version of Christianity. The Scottish brought the Presbyterian traditions

and the Irish the Catholic traditions. From England came the Anglican traditions, along with the Methodists, Congregationalists, Baptists, Brethren, and many other smaller Christian denominations.

Immigrants have continued to flow into Australia in the 20th and 21st centuries. There were huge numbers of migrants from many parts of Europe after World War II including many from other parts of Europe. Italians, Poles and many other Europeans added to the variety of cultures within the Catholic Church. Greeks, and many other Eastern Europeans, brought to Australia various forms of Eastern Orthodoxy. The Dutch brought the Reformed tradition to Australia.

Wars have continued to be a major push factor in immigration, including:

- the Lebanese Civil War (1975 - 1990);
- the Vietnam War (1955 - 1975);
- the Sudanese Civil War (1955 - 1972; 1983 - 2005);
- the Iraq War (2003 - present)

All of these wars have resulted in significant flows of immigrants into Australia since 1970 when the 'White Australia' policy was discontinued.

Other immigrants have come pulled by the opportunity for making a good living through higher paying jobs than they would find in their home countries or through new business opportunities. Among these immigrants have been hundreds of thousands of immigrants from China and India, particularly since 1985. The handover of Hong Kong by the British to Chinese authorities in 1997 was a push factor for many Chinese who migrated to Australia.

Every group of migrants has brought with them their particular religious traditions. The immigration from the Middle East and Asia, particularly since 1975 has seen the rapid growth of Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu, Sikh and Baha'i communities in Australia. They have formed significant faith communities in Australia and created the unique multi-faith society that Australia now is.

From all of these countries have also come communities of Christians. Antiochian Orthodox came from Lebanon, Catholics came from Vietnam, Mar Thoma and many other Christian groups have come from India, for example. Hence, they have also brought considerable cultural and linguistic plurality into the Christian denominations.

CRA's analysis of the 2011 Census showed that the factor which had the most influence on the growth and decline of Christian denominations in the period 2001 to 2011 was the extent to which denominational numbers have been supplemented by immigrants (Hughes 2012b). If it was not for immigration between 2001 and 2011, the number of people identifying with Christian denominations in Australia would have declined by 3 per cent. In fact, the number rose by 3 per cent. Most of the growth of the Baptists, Catholics, Pentecostals, and Seventh-day Adventists, as well as the Coptic Orthodox and other oriental Christian groups, was due to immigration. If it was not for immigration, the decline in Anglican, Presbyterian, and Uniting Churches would have been greater than it was.

The CRA has calculated that twice as many recent immigrants attend religious services monthly or more often than do Australians born of Australian parents. Almost half of all people attending a church monthly or more often in Australia are immigrants or members of immigrant families (Hughes & Fraser 2014, p.117). Many immigrants form local

religious groups where their own language is spoken and where the values and customs of their homeland are honoured and celebrated. Other immigrants form sub-groups within Anglo congregations.

One on-going theme in CRA's research has been the challenge for immigrant faith communities in how to relate to the second generation of immigrant families. While the first generation sees the communities as a place where their language, values and traditions can be preserved, some of their children who are seeking to find a place in the wider Australian community do not share these priorities. Hence, some leave the immigrant faith group. On the other hand, some children of these families do not feel comfortable in the wider Australian society and find refuge within these immigrant faith communities. Indeed, in some cases, they can develop a strong opposition to the values and attitudes in the wider community and find nurture for themselves in the immigrant faith community.

The evolving presence of many immigrant faith communities in Australia adds to the rich and complex nature of Australian society. It is a reminder of the fact that there is no one Australian culture, but a continually evolving weave of cultures, interacting with and influencing each other. Understanding the shape, development and interactions of immigrant cultures has been one of the major aspects of charting the faith of Australians.

The Development of a Post-Traditional Culture in Australia

The other major influence on Australian culture, and particularly on its religious profile, has been the cultural changes which have taken place internally. Prior to the 1933 Census, the percentage identifying as Christian had been about 96 per cent. In 1933, it dropped to about 86 per cent and stayed in that vicinity through to 1971. Since 1971, identity with a Christian denomination has fallen gradually and may well be below 60 per cent in the 2016 Census.

Other surveys, such as the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, remind one that the identity measured by the Census does not necessarily reflect how people think about their own religious faith. For some, the identity indicated on the Census form is a matter of heritage. When people were asked in the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (2009) if they had a religion, just 55 per cent of adult Australians indicated that they had.

The CRA has charted not only the decline in religious identity since 1971, but similar declines in belief in God and in religious practices such as attendance at church and personal prayer (Hughes 2010a). The Boomer generation began the rebellion in the 1960s and 1970s. Most of them had been to Sunday School, but they left the churches in droves and have never returned. Neither have their children or their grandchildren. Many of the Boomers' parents, members of the Builder generation, are still attending churches, but their numbers are gradually diminishing because in 2016, those remaining were over 70 years of age. Many of the churches they have maintained are now being closed. It is likely that hundreds of small congregations of mainstream denominations (Anglican, Uniting, and Catholic) will be closed in the decade from 2015 to 2025. Among the exceptions are those where younger immigrant congregations have taken over the churches.

The CRA has reflected extensively over the years as to why this exodus has occurred. Many see it simply as the inevitable rise of secularisation and replacement of religious thinking by scientific thinking. However, that theory of secularisation does not readily fit the facts, particularly at a global level. If it was secularisation, why should decline in religious identity escalate so dramatically from 1971? The CRA's research has pointed to

the fact that much of the space taken by the decline of religious practices and beliefs in Australia has been taken over by a more spiritualistic individuality which is far from the secularism that is so often referred to.

The rebellion against the churches and the Christian faith more generally was not the only rebellion which occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Another rebellion was against marriage. Many people decided around that time that marriage was unnecessary, beginning a trend in 'de facto' relationships. While many people do continue to get married, 9 per cent of the Australian adult population was living in a de facto relationship in 2011. Seventy-eight per cent of Australians who were married in 2012 lived in a de facto relationship prior to marriage (Hughes & Fraser 2014, p. 34).

A significant factor in this rebellion against marriage was a dramatic change in attitudes towards sexuality. Sex was seen as a pleasurable activity in its own right, whether it occurred within marriage or out of it. The widespread attitude that sexuality did not need to be confined to marriage emerged in the 1960s, partly because the contraceptive pill had begun available. The churches, however, opposed the new attitude and were seen by many as repositories of the old traditions. Since the 1990s, another area of dissent between the churches and the wider culture has been over the acceptability of homosexual relationships.

A parallel rebellion took the form of the Women's Liberation movement. The expectations that women should not be involved in the work-force, that they should not pursue careers, that their role should be primarily in the home, was rejected by most Australian women in the 1970s. Again, the churches tended to be repositories of those attitudes which saw women as having different roles to men in home and society. One expression of this has been the desire of many people that women be welcomed equally into positions of leadership in churches. Some denominations have done this, but others have not. The relationship of gender to attitudes to religious faith has been close to the surface in several CRA studies, most notably one commissioned by the General Synod of the Anglican Church published as *Working in the Anglican Church: Experiences of Female and Male Clergy*.

Also, a continuing question has been the different levels of involvement in the church among men and women. Our research has identified the major factor in this as the different set of values, allied to the great divide in Australia between what has been described as the business and knowledge or 'people oriented' classes. Those whose lives are dominated by business, finance, manufacturing and the production of goods tend to be less interested in religious faith than those whose lives are dominated by the differences they are making in the lives of other people, such as through family, health and education. More men than women are involved in the former 'business and production' culture. Women, probably largely because of differences in their up-bringing, tend to be more oriented to the 'people-oriented' or knowledge culture, and found more support for those values in religious faith (Hughes et al. 2000).

There was also a dramatic change in attitudes towards drugs in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Why not enjoy the experiences that could come from marijuana or even cocaine and heroin? Churches have varied in their attitudes to alcohol. Many Protestant groups prohibited all use of alcohol but some of them have weakened their attitudes over recent decades. As in relation to sexuality, the churches were often seen by some as 'kill-joys'.

The 1970s saw a general rejection of many institutions. The policies of the Australian government were seen to have failed in relation to Vietnam. Service clubs such as Rotary and Lions found it more difficult to recruit members. The Freemasons declined rapidly.

Some political parties found it more difficult to get members. People were happy to be involved in events from time to time, but they were less willing than previous generations to be involved in institutions that demanded ongoing commitment and time and effort put into maintaining institutional structures.

The churches experienced significant decline partly, then, because they were seen as institutions which were demanding in terms of the time and effort needed to maintain them. They also experienced decline because they were seen as out-of-step with a 'free sex' society, with the idea that women could equally take positions of leadership and meaning in careers and with the rejection of other traditions such as marriage.

In an early CRA research paper (Hughes 1994), the essence of the cultural change was described in terms of a change from seeing the world as a system, in which each individual had to abide by certain rules, to seeing the world as a maze, in which individuals had to personally negotiate. It was argued that this change in the way the world was seen led to new perceptions of religious faith. Older generations saw God as the One who maintained the system and set the rules. Worship was an acknowledgement of God's control expressed through liturgical order. Younger generations saw God as One who walked with you through the maze of life. The essence of worship was seeking God's help in negotiating the maze of life.

The cultural change did not occur by everyone changing their attitudes, values and behaviour. Rather, the new culture emerged among young people in the 1960s and 1970s who were different from their parents in many of the ways that they saw the world. This generation has often been referred to as the Boomer generation. While some social commentators have identified different characteristics of subsequent generations, the X, Y, and Millennial generations, in most respects the characteristics of the Boomer generation have continued.

In other words, since the 1960s, Australia has had two distinct cultures linked to different generations with roots in different historical contexts. The earlier of these cultures has been described as 'traditional' because of its valued traditions, while the later culture has been described as 'post-traditional' (Giddens 1994). The philosophical division between the two cultures has been referred to as 'modern' compared with 'post-modern' culture.

The Lancaster researchers, Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead have given another, although similar, account of this change arising from research in the United Kingdom (Heelas & Woodhead 2005). They have argued that prior to the Boomer generation, most human beings found meaning in fulfilling the duties which came with their birth and with their positions in home and society. Thus, fulfilment was found, for example, by most women in looking after their children and their homes well. Most men found their fulfilment by being good at providing the financial resources needed for their homes and their families. Other duties were associated with the ethnicity, social class, the political party and the religion into which one was born. Meaning came from living out those duties to the best of one's ability.

However, in the 1960s and 1970s, Heelas and Woodhead argue, meaning began to be sought as personal fulfilment of what was seen as one's unique potential as a human being. It became a more personal thing rather than a matter of duty. Hence, anything, such as tradition, which inhibited one's attempt to find that fulfilment was seen as an obstacle to be discarded or overcome. Gender barriers to careers, for example, had to be removed, because these could be barriers to that personal fulfilment of one's inner potential. Religion, too, was generally seen as promoting duty and tradition, and having little interest in individual personal fulfilment of one's inner potential.

The result, however, has been a paradigmatic shift in the nature of how people find meaning in their lives in Australia, parts of northern Europe and the Anglophile world. For many, this has meant that religion is dismissed as part of a previous culture and now irrelevant. For some, it has been an adoption of the language of ‘spirituality’ which recognises the individual nature of the search for meaning rather than the language of ‘religion’ which continues to see meaning as deposited in institutions.

A large part of the work of the CRA has been describing this change and its outcomes in church and society. It has sought to help churches understand and address the challenges this cultural shift has raised. However, much more needs to be done if the churches are to connect with mainstream Australian culture. The trend has been for the churches to become increasingly marginalised.

Components of the Australian Religious / Spiritual Profile

The religious / spiritual profile of the Australian population can be described in many ways. Analysis in *Spirit Matters* from the Security and Wellbeing study conducted by Edith Cowan University and NCLS Research, identifies three major groups in the Australian population: religious, spiritual and those who are neither. It then divides these three into nine sub-groups (Kaldor, Hughes, & Black 2010, p. 13). The following analysis is similar, but divides religious groups a little differently to align more closely with our analysis on the major impacts of culture. The percentages given are very approximate and are somewhat different from those in *Spirit Matters* in that they are based on active involvement monthly or more often, rather than some activity in the past year as is the basis of analysis in *Spirit Matters*.

1. Traditional Religious Culture: Members of Mainstream, Orthodox and Immigrant Religious Groups (20%)

There are two groups in the Australian population which value traditional religious culture. The first group are members of the Builder generation born prior to the end of World War II. While many of these people have questions about how religious culture is meaningful today, many still have a sense of duty in relation to religion and remain active in their churches. The second group are recent immigrants who have come from countries which did not go through the cultural change experience in most parts of the Western world in the 1960s and 1970s and who continue to believe that the traditions that have been passed down to them by their parents and reinforced by their ethnic communities hold the key to meaning in life.

It should be noted that there are many people who were part of the Builder generation and who continue to value traditions, but for whom the traditions of religion and church have not been particularly meaningful. Many say it is enough to be a good person. One does not need to be religious.

Just 16 per cent of the population are involved in religious practices monthly or more often, but some of the religious groups do not have strong traditions of monthly involvement. There are some people who are just attend special religious occasions. There are others who, for various reasons, practise their religion personally but not publicly. Hence, to suggest that a total figure of around 25 per cent of the population are religious is not unreasonable.

2. Post-traditional Religious Culture: The Pentecostal and charismatic response (5%)

While it is difficult to quantify, a large proportion of people born in 1950 or after who are active in Christian churches are part of the Pentecostal and charismatic movement. This movement arose rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s at the very time when large numbers of people were leaving the mainstream churches. In 50 years from 1961 to 2011, the Pentecostal denominations grew from about 16,000 people in Australia to perhaps around 250,000. In one generation, Pentecostals have gone from a fringe movement to one of the largest denominational groups. In the process, the largest churches ever seen in Australia have been created, such as Hillsong in Sydney. While just over 1 per cent of people identify themselves as Pentecostals in the Census, probably 4 per cent of the population is connected with a charismatic church which has been influenced by some aspects of the Pentecostal movement.

Why was it that the Pentecostals grew when many other denominations were declining in numbers? This was explored in *The Pentecostals in Australia* which was one of the books commissioned by the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research. I argued that a major factor in their growth was that the Pentecostals responded positively to some of the major dimensions of the change to a post-traditional culture. The Pentecostals focussed on experience rather than belief. They adopted popular music and other forms of popular culture in their worship. They emphasised the fulfilment of the inner self. In a parallel way to pop concerts, they offered experiences that were exciting, where the supernatural was believed to break into life. These were highly positive experiences and led to a sense of renewal for many people.

The Pentecostal experiential emphasis, particularly in its music, has now influenced many parts of the Christian church in Australia. While it has been very successful numerically in comparison with anything else that has occurred in the churches, it remains a relatively small movement in the Australian population as a whole. More research needs to be done to identify why the Pentecostal movement has had the impact it has had and what are the barriers to its further extension within the Australian culture.

3. Post-traditional Spiritual Culture (25%)

Another group which has emerged from the cultural shift to a post-traditional culture in Australia has been those who describe themselves as 'spiritual but not religious'. Indeed, even among those who say they are religious, many prefer to talk about spirituality rather than religion.

The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (2009) found that 23 per cent of the population identified themselves as 'spiritual but not religious'. Given the fact that a survey in 2002 found that 17 per cent of the population were spiritual, it would appear that this culture may be growing. Hence, we suggest that today it consists of about one quarter of the population.

The analysis published in *Spirit Matters* in 2010 identified two major types of spirituality in Australia. One was eclectic and involved people drawing on a range of different religious and spiritual resources, often including Buddhism and some New Age resources, as well as some Christian resources. The other major type of spirituality was based around an identity with the natural environment or the land.

Spirituality is a very individual matter. It has no major, enduring institutions to which

people flock. Rather, it is an attitude that the material world is not all there is. It is a belief that there is some sense of mystery at the heart of being and at the heart of the universe. It is a personal desire to find what in life will nurture the individual and provide them with the personal resources for meeting the challenges of life. Yet, as I reported in a paper to a conference of the Australian Association for the Study of Religions, there was actually less variation in many values and attitudes than there was among those who described themselves as 'religious' rather than 'spiritual'. Despite the individualistic nature of spiritual, particular patterns of values are found among those people who describe themselves in those ways, particularly in relation to tolerance and inclusivity.

There is widespread discussion about the nature of spirituality and the forms that it might take in the future. Some feel that it is simply a path to saying that religion does not matter. Others believe that it has some validity in its own right and should be taken seriously by those who want to help people find meaning and a sense of purpose (see, for example, the debate between Heelas and Woodhead (2005) and Voas and Bruce (2009) which is reviewed in Hughes 2011). Our own analysis suggests that the spiritual culture will continue to be a significant part of the Australian culture despite the fact that spirituality is individualistic and not well defined. It points to the fact that, while religious perspectives are not appealing to many, neither are purely materialistic perspectives on life (Hughes 2011a).

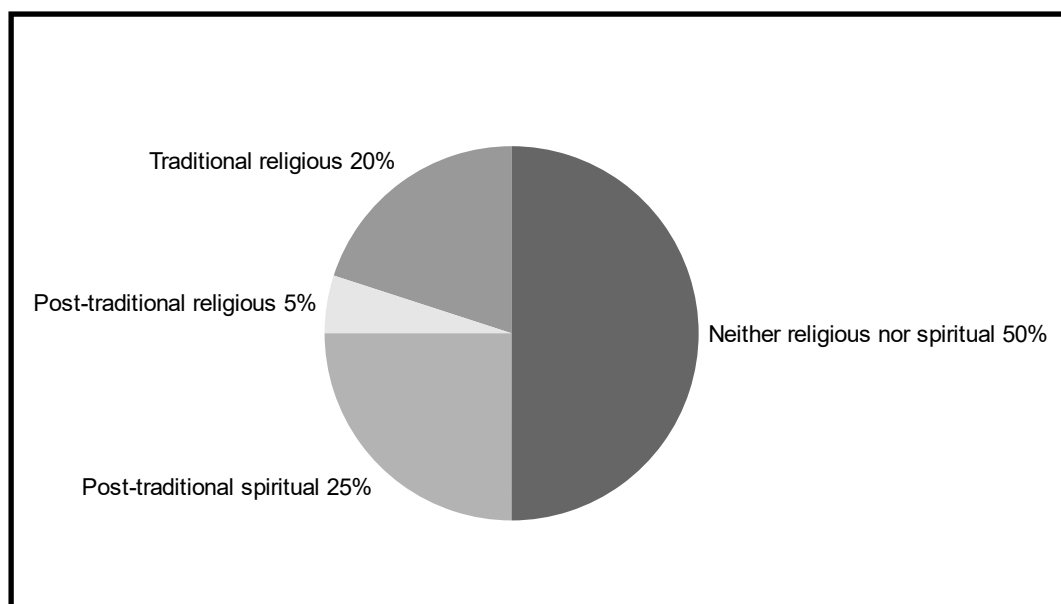
There remains much work to do to track the evolving nature of spirituality in the Australian and other Western contexts. There is much to do to explore how to respond to it, for example, in school, welfare and church contexts.

4. Traditional and Post-Traditional Non-Religious Non-Spiritual Culture (50%)

According to the census statistics, the proportion of the population describing themselves in terms that were categorised as 'no religion' was just 0.4 per cent in 1961. In 2011, it was 22 per cent (Hughes, Fraser, & Reid, 2012, p. 106) and, based on generational analysis, it is likely that in 2016 the proportion will be more than 25 per cent and will constitute the most common response to the census question 'What is your religion?' Indeed, it is likely that this group is significantly under-estimated by the census, if it is taken to be a description of how people personally relate to religious faith. When asked in the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (2009) 'Do you have a religion?', close to 43 per cent of the random sample of Australian adults said 'no' and another two per cent could not decide how to answer. Similarly, when asked in the same survey whether they were spiritual and/or religious, 30 per cent said they were neither, and another 16 per cent said they could not choose (Hughes & Fraser 2014, p. 106).

However, if one takes people's behaviour as a better guide to where they fit in Australian culture, 84 per cent are not involved in religious activities on a regular basis, and even if one takes into account the 25 per cent who see themselves as spiritual, one is left with more than 60 per cent. The 50 per cent designated for this part of the Australian population here is a little arbitrary and a different figure would be emerge according to how one does the measurement. However, it gives a general indication that, for a large part of the population, religion and spirituality are not really on their agenda.

The analysis in *Spirit Matters* identified three distinct groups which were described as 'no religion':



A Rough Picture of the Australian Population Divided into Religious, Spiritual and non-Religious, non-Spiritual sub-Cultures

- Those who said they thought there might be something beyond this world, but who were not doing anything about it.
- Those who said they did not know whether there was anything beyond this world, and who were not doing anything about it.
- Those who said they did not believe there was anything beyond this world.

Only the third group can be called atheists and some of these people may more properly be described as agnostics. Most Australians have not explicitly rejected religious faith. Rather, religion is simply not on their radar. It is not something they have made a decision about. Just as most Australians have never explicitly rejected Buddhism, mostly because the possibility of being a Buddhist has never entered their heads, so in contemporary Australia, most Australians have never explicitly rejected Christianity. The CRA has more fully explored this in the section in the extensive discussion of ‘no religion’ in the third edition of the CD-ROM *Australia’s Religious Communities: A Multimedia Exploration*.

It was interesting to find that the attitude to God was related very closely to people’s practice of prayer (Hughes 2012a). It seems likely that as the practice of prayer has faded, so belief in God has faded. It is quite likely that, to some extent, beliefs follow practice, rather than the other way around.

The fact that around 16 per cent of Australian adults ‘can’t choose’ whether they have a religion and only 24 per cent of Australian adults are sure they believe in God, confirms the fact that there is a lot of uncertainty about religion and God. These figures suggest that many Australians have simply not thought much about the issue. Many people are no more interested in atheism than in religion.

How then do these people find a sense of meaning in life, or do they even seek meaning? How do they form their values and what is it that guides their behaviour? How do they seek wellbeing? The very first project of the CRA in which many people were interviewed about their sense of meaning found that, for many, life revolved around a particular

segment of life such as their career, or, most commonly, family. For other people, there was a specific theme that dominated their lives, such as the need for security or a sense of belonging, or the desire to be successful. Other people had developed a specific philosophy of life, such as ‘getting the most out of life’, some of these philosophies being rooted in a religious faith (Blombery & Hughes 1993, pp. 2–3). However, one must ask to what extent these ‘accounts’ of life were simply the ways of organising thoughts about life rather than identifying what motivated and directed life. It is hoped that the ‘Contributing to Australian Society’ survey which was conducted early in 2016 will provide much more information. The ‘midi-narrative’ identified in the studies of youth culture which will be discussed may provide some further clues (see next section). There is much more research that needs to be done in this area.

Some Other Sub-Groups in the Australian Culture

All Australians fit into the profile described above of the religious (in the two groups - mainstream and Pentecostal/charismatic), spiritual, and those who are neither religious nor spiritual or do not know what to think. However, there are many other ways of describing Australian culture and the various sub-groups within it.

There are some significant differences in the culture of different localities in Australia. The culture of rural farming has raised specific issues for churches and has been another focus of CRA work. The following two sections describe briefly some of the findings in relation to these two sub-sections of Australian culture.

Australian Youth Culture

While Australian youth culture shares many characteristics with other age-groups in the population, there are some particular issues and dimensions of culture which are tied to the period in life between childhood and adulthood, which may be described as the period of ‘youth’. The age of this groups has been variously described. Some describe it as starting at 13 with the start of the teenage years, others a little later than that. The end point is often seen as that point in which the person is fully independent with their own home, apart from that of their parents, their own occupation and income, and their own intimate relationship. However, for many Australians today, these three measures of adulthood are often not present until well into the 30s, and some people never attain them. In our Spirit of Gen Y study, we arbitrarily decided that we would study the culture of young people between the ages of 13 and 24.

At the heart of youth culture is the fact that young people see themselves as putting their own lives together. Most contemporary young Australians expect to make up their own minds as to what they will believe. The idea that one is born into a religious community which is then ‘explained’ to one as one grows up does not do justice to the dominant reality that most young people believe that they should make up their own minds about what to believe and what religious practices, if any, to adopt.

Even more than is the case among adults as noted in the discussion of ‘no religion’, most young Australians do not have firm ideas about God and religion and most are not interested in the questions. The Spirit of Gen Y study found that while there was not a widely accepted meta-narrative about the nature of the universe among Australian young people, there was a midi-narrative which summarises how more than 80 per cent of young Australians think about life. There are some variations within the midi-narrative, but the basic structure of the midi-narrative is found throughout Australian youth culture.

In other words, while young people have widely different ideas or little idea at all about what the universe is all about, they have common ideas about what personal life is about. Most young people see family, friends and fun as central to the life they want to attain. The most common way of attaining such a life is through getting a good job which is interesting in itself and through which one makes some friends, but which also provides sufficient financial resources for one's family, for enjoying oneself with one's friends, and for special fun experiences such as travel, extreme sports, or whatever one finds to be fun.

This midi-narrative fits well with the findings of a study by Christian Smith and Melinda Denton that was published in 2005 (Smith & Denton 2005). This was a major study of the place of religion in the lives of American teenagers. Smith and Denton coined the terminology of 'moral therapeutic deism' to describe what religion was for most young Americans. 'Deism' is a reference to the fact that most Americans believe there is a God, who will help one out when needed (therapeutic), while making certain demands on behaviour (moral). In many ways, this description fits many Australians. 'Moral therapeutic deism', the belief in a God who will come to your aid as long as you do the right thing by God, is certainly common among young Australian people who believe in God, but the majority of Australians are very doubtful. It has been interesting to note, however, that many young people who say they do not believe in God say they will pray at times, 'just in case it works' (Hughes 2007a, p.157).

There is a need for continuing research on youth culture in Australia. Since the studies of youth culture between 2002 and 2005, social media have become an integral part of the lives of most teenagers. There is evidence that between 15 and 20 per cent of teenagers are finding it very hard to put life together and are experiencing mental health issues, drug-related issues, and other problems in life. The role that religious faith or spirituality might have in addressing these problems and helping young people find meaning in their lives is mostly unexplored. There is a continuing role for the CRA to play in describing contemporary youth culture and what it might mean for those organisations trying to assist young people to make sense of life.

Rural and City Cultures

There are some significant differences in religious faith and spirituality depending on where one lives in Australia and each capital city has its own cultural flavour. These cultural flavours, which have historical roots, express themselves differently in relation to such characteristics as the levels of religious involvement and the levels of ecumenical and interfaith activities.

A research project, based on census data, that I conducted with Prof Gary Bouma, gave concrete evidence that people of most religious groups lived in more residentially concentrated areas in Sydney than in any other major Australian city. This meant that there was a comparatively high level of geographical isolation of many religious groups. There was less likelihood, then, for most Sydney Christians to meet Muslims, Buddhists



Sharon Bond, a researcher with CRA between 1999 and 2005. Sharon did many of the interviews for the Spirit of Gen Y study. (Photo by Philip Hughes)



A rural church in north-west Tasmania. (Photo by Philip Hughes)

or Hindus in their local neighbourhood than in most capital cities. This may contribute to, or be a result of, higher levels of antagonism between the religious groups in that part of Australia (Bouma & Hughes 2014).

There are several types of rural communities in Australia. There are areas populated mostly by indigenous people, there are mining areas, farming areas, and holiday and retirement areas. Each of these types of areas has quite different characteristics. Farming areas also vary somewhat depending on the type of farming that is occurring.

Children growing up in farming areas are often aware of growing up in a community in a way that does not apply to children growing up in cities. In a farming area the parents may well know many, if not all, of the people who live around them. There is a sense of inter-dependence. People in farming communities know that they need to look out for each other. They share machinery. They cover for each other in times of sickness. The whole community comes together to support one another when there is a funeral.

In such a context, the church does not replace people's sense of community as it often does in the city. Rather, the church serves the community. It is one of many gathering points and a place where people look out for each other. It provides the basic values for the community: values of care and cooperation that may be necessary for the community to survive (Black and Hughes 2005).

The CRA has conducted some studies of Australian rural culture, mostly through its examination of issues of leadership of faith communities in rural areas. With increasingly large and sophisticated machinery replacing hand labour, many rural communities have seen declines in population and in church involvement. It has been hard to maintain the church communities and in many small rural communities impossible to find the money to pay a person to take leadership of the local church. Many clergy are not keen to serve in rural areas, adding to the problems of finding suitable leadership there.

As we have visited many rural communities in projects initiated by the Uniting, Anglican and Catholic churches, we have learned a little of rural culture and how that affects the nature of faith. We summarised some of our insights in the little book *Sowing and Nurturing*. We have noted some of the strengths of rural communities in the ways people care for each other, the oral nature of some rural cultures, and the practical orientation

of people who live in rural communities. These characteristics give faith communities in rural Australia a distinctive form.

However, many rural churches are under much pressure today. Most of the younger people have now departed from the rural churches just as they have from the city churches. There are relatively few migrants in most rural farming communities. With comparatively few resources in their small communities, with the challenge of finding creative leadership, in many places rural churches are feeling great pressure as they seek to survive. The CRA recommended patterns of leadership where paid leaders focussed on resourcing a number of lay teams who take leadership in their local communities, where possible with the assistance of part-time paid administrative staff. (See, for example, Hughes and Kunciuonas 2008 and Hughes and Kunciuonas 2009) .



The CRA staff in 2008: Stephen Reid, Audra Kunciuonas, Luke Dewberry and Philip Hughes. (Photo by Bob Dixon)

Some rural communities, even more than city communities, are feeling the pressures of the widespread use of drugs and binge drinking. Housing has long been comparatively affordable in rural areas and people without employment have moved there from the cities. However, employment has not been available in many of these rural areas and social problems have emerged that reflect the fact that people have lost a sense of identity and pride in the contribution they could make to the world. They arise out of an approach to life in which meaning is sought in the temporary feelings of elation provided by a drug, or even in the masking of all experiences through drugs.

Research needs to be done to find ways of overcoming these social problems in rural communities. In some places, the challenge is to re-develop patterns of community life in which people can find a sense of meaning and worth.

Putting the Description of Culture into a Larger Context

It has become evident that many of the cultural changes the Christian Research Association has observed and described in Australia have parallels in what is happening in other countries. We have described some of these parallels and some of the differences with Canada (Hughes et al. 1995, Hughes 2013d), the United States (Hughes 2009a; Hughes 2014c; Hughes 2015c), the United Kingdom (Hughes 2007b; Hughes 2014b), India (Hughes 2013e) and Thailand (Hughes et al. 2008; Hughes 2010c; 2014c), for example.

The identification with religious faith is more persistent in countries such as USA and Thailand than in Australia, largely because the national identity includes a strong religious component. Part of being American, for a large portion of the population, is being Christian, and part of being Thai is, for most of the population, being Buddhist. Nevertheless, a study of religion and spirituality across forty-four countries showed that in forty-three of them religious faith was more strongly affirmed by older people than young people, suggesting that the importance of religious faith is in decline in many places (Hughes 2013c). Where it persists, the practice of religious faith has become more of a personal matter and less something in which the whole community participates (Hughes 2010a; Hughes 2015c).

Western culture has developed most clearly its post-traditional form in northern Europe and in Anglofile countries such as Australia and New Zealand. There are several factors which contribute to these changes. Large proportions of the world's population are now raised in small families in large and amorphous cities where the sense of local community is often weak. Around the world, capitalism and its feeding mechanism of consumerism have strengthened and have been increasingly seen by the world's governments as the keys to jobs, economic prosperity and therefore, their remaining in power. As Western culture permeates every part of the globe, it tends to promote a sense that meaning and wellbeing reside in the life of individuals rather than communities. In that context, involvement in religious communities becomes a life-style choice of individuals rather than the duty of the population .

These factors, along with better health care and the prospect of living longer, has led to a fading of the importance of a life beyond the present. Most contemporary Western people focus more on this life than the next. Therefore, wellbeing has to be achieved in this life rather than the next. Again, where religious faith persists, it becomes a resource for the present life (Smith and Denton 2015) rather than a belief that, in the next life, justice will be achieved and peace and wellbeing will be found.

Some people in every part of the Western world cling to the traditions and communities of faith to provide a resource for this life and to help them make sense of life. Religious meta-narratives continue to give some people a sense of purpose and direction in life. In Australia, such meta-narratives are important for approximately one quarter of the population (a figure which has been substantially boosted by recent immigrants and which is in considerable flux). However, the other three-quarters of the population has little attachment to these meta-narratives. Their focus of life is on the everyday reality as they experience it as individuals, on family and friends, on having some enjoyment in life and finding meaning through positive experiences, and perhaps, through involvement in society.

At the heart of this change is the fact that most people in Australia and in the Western world no longer see meaning and purpose for life as something that is ordained by communities into which they were born. Rather, meaning is something that the individual must find for themselves. In the International Social Survey Program (2009) the majority of people in every participating country affirmed the statement 'Life is only meaningful if you provide the meaning yourself'. This was true even in countries such as the Dominican Republic, Philippines, South Africa and Turkey where more than 50 per cent of the population affirmed 'To me, life is meaningful only because God exists'. Even where religion is persistent, it is seen by most people as a personal option.

Quietly and with comparatively little public awareness, an immense change in the nature of the ways people find meaning and the role of religious faith in that process has swept across many parts of the globe. This change is one of the largest changes ever seen in the nature of religion in recorded human history. It could be compared in magnitude and significance with what Karl Jaspers termed the Axial Age (around 750 to 500 BC). This was the age of Confucius and Buddha, Jeremiah and Socrates, an age in which dimension of communal morality and social justice was added to the religious focus of honouring God (see the profound analysis of this by Karen Armstrong 2006). It was a movement which reached a peak in Jesus who universalised the moral dimension of religious faith, arguing that the moral values applied not only to one's male kin, but also to women and children and to strangers of other cultures.

In our age, we have seen a movement in the ways human beings find meaning of similar import. Within a generation the world has substantially moved from one in which:

- most people found their meaning in traditions of religious faith to one in which many (possibly most) give meaning to their own lives;
- most people found their identity in the religions of the world to one in which many people feel they can choose their identity and the extent to which they participate in religious communities;
- most people found the hope that gave meaning to this life was in a life beyond death, to one in which the focus is on the hope of making a life worth living in this world;
- most people found that the focus of meaning was rituals or beliefs to a focus on personal experiences.

Within this new world of individuals searching for their own meaning in this life, some find that meaning through their participation in religious communities, but many do not. Religious communities are fading in importance in many countries throughout the world, although they are far from disappearing and will remain an importance resource for many people. A great challenge for religious groups is whether they can change their structures to such an extent that they can continue to provide some resource and nurture for people in this new post-traditional age. Their future lies is being much more attuned to the needs of individuals rather than seeking to create communities which carry the traditions of the past. This will be explored more in the next section.

This new, individualised world is putting many stresses and strains on people. While some people are invigorated by the challenge of finding their own meaning, and take great delight in finding fulfilment of their personal passions and interests, other people flounder in the face of such challenges. They would rather be told how to live and what life was about than find it for themselves. They struggle to find a place in society in which they feel they can make a contribution. They struggle to build personal relationships that give them meaning and support in the long term. Some become confused, even cynical, about life. The post-traditional world has probably contributed to poor mental health and suicide among many people in the Western world. Others react in anger and violence, trying to force their way on others, contributing to the epidemic of domestic violence, and the widespread anger expressed in much rock, punk and rap music. Others try to cope with the pain of finding their own meaning by lowering their consciousness of it through drugs and alcohol. As a result, the post-traditional world is one in which there is probably a greater diversity of feelings of success and failure in life. The International Social Survey Program (2009) shows that more people who felt that life was meaningful if one provided meaning oneself felt unhappy with life than people who disagreed with that statement (mostly people who felt that meaning was given to them by their religious traditions or by God) as shown in the following table.

Table 1. The Levels of General Happiness in Life of People Who Agree and Who Disagree with the Statement that 'Life is Only Meaningful If You Provide the Meaning Yourself'

| | Agree that Life is Only Meaningful If You Provide the Meaning Yourself | Disagree that Life is Only Meaningful If You Provide the Meaning Yourself |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Very happy | 31% | 39% |
| Fairly happy | 56% | 56% |
| Not very happy or not at all happy | 13% | 5% |
| Total | 100% | 100% |

Source: International Social Survey Program (2009) for Australia.

One major caveat should be noted. There are major protest movements today which are operating at a global level. This protest is found, for example, in some expressions of Islam. The notions of strict adherence to the detail of religious ritual which lies at the heart of some forms of Islam has become a rallying point for that feeling. However, the protest is not just a religious one. At the heart of it are protests about Western individualism, and, in particular, the problem this poses for the creation of family life. There are also some Christian groups which would share in this protest. The Islamic world, and some other religious groups, maintain the need for clear roles within the family of wives and husbands, and of children and parents, roles which are seen as having divine origins.

For some Islamic people, this is a protest about Western power and the insidious nature of Western consumerism which is seen as replacing the power of colonialism and further undermining that sense of meaning that is found in their family and communal structures and roles. As is true in many movements, the strength of that protest varies widely. Not all Muslims are actively part of that protest although many see their religious values as opposed to some primary values of the Western world. For a tiny minority fringe, on the very edges of Islamic communities, the protest becomes a justification for violent acts which are designed to wreak havoc in Western communities.

Chapter 4.

Responding to the Culture

While there are some major commonalities across Australian culture, there are some important variations. There are variations across age and gender and across locality. The research of the CRA has touched on the variations across socio-economic level and education and has focussed on examining the variety in Australian culture in the response to the issues of faith and spirituality. It has explored the varieties of religious expressions across different religious and denominational traditions, those who see themselves as spiritual but not religious, and those who see themselves as neither. It has explored these variations across the cultures of various immigrant groups, among young people and in urban and rural cultures. However, another part of our work has been to ask what these differences in culture mean. What do they mean for creating community, for education and for church ministry? It is to these questions that I shall now turn.

Responding to Immigrants and Immigrant Cultures

The future for many local churches and, in some cases, whole denominations, lies in the ways they are able to respond to the needs of immigrants and serve immigrant communities. The CRA has been involved in several projects to assist churches in this regard. One project was commissioned by the Victorian Council of Churches and involved a survey of churches in Victoria regarding their involvement with immigrant groups. This led to the production of *A Handbook for Crosscultural Ministry* (2004). The book suggests that many churches need to become more aware of other cultures, of value systems, symbols and rituals. Awareness is best built through building relationships with people of different ethnic groups. A second stage is acknowledging other cultures by involving them in church life, for example, by including activities in worship in the languages of other cultures. It was noted how people are disempowered when they have to operate in languages in which they find it difficult to express themselves. The study noted that there are a variety of ways to conduct cross-cultural ministry. While there are some successful multi-ethnic churches in which people of many cultures find a place, developing such churches is not easy, and many people find worship in their own language and with their own cultural symbols more meaningful. Nevertheless, most churches could be more intentional in developing a greater awareness and understanding of other cultures, and developing patterns of church life which are more inclusive of people from different backgrounds.

One of the great challenges for immigrant churches is how they pass on their faith to the second generation of immigrants. Another pilot project examined how churches could best serve immigrant families as immigrants seek both to conserve their cultural heritage and to work out their place in the Australian society (Hughes 2015b). The CRA has noted that, in some places, young people have found their churches a hindrance to their attempts to fit in with Anglo-Australian patterns of life. Indeed, many young people do not fully understand the religious language of their homeland, and do not find worship in that language meaningful. Sometimes these young people have found other Anglo churches where they felt at home. At other times, they have ceased all connection with churches. How this occurs varies from one cultural group to another and is affected by a variety of factors such as the authority systems in their homeland culture. More research is needed in this area.

Creating Community in a Post-Traditional Milieu

One of the changes that occurred in the cultural shift that took place in the 1960s and 1970s was the change in the nature of community life. It has been noted that local communities existed in Australian suburbs through to the 1960s, but have since greatly diminished in importance.

The major change in suburban life occurred when married women entered the workforce in large numbers in the late 1960s and 1970s. As they entered the workforce, local communities became less important for their social life as they found that partly through the workforce. They also had money to pay for a second car. In 1960, the first regional shopping centre opened at Chadstone in Melbourne. Since then, an increasing proportion of shopping has occurred at regional shopping centres where people rarely meet their neighbours and which do not form a basis for local or any other kind of community. An increasing number of children have gone to private schools, again because families had more money to pay for their education. Schools, particularly at secondary level, no longer provided a centre for community life. Churches too have come to serve people living across a large area. People have frequently moved home and continued to travel to their church where they know the people, even if it is 10 or maybe 20 kilometres away.

In the Australian Community Survey, conducted by Edith Cowan University and NCLS Research in 1998, in which I was on the research team, Australians were asked what proportion of their close friends lived in the local neighbourhood. Of the 8,400 people who responded,

- 42% said none of their close friends lived in their area;
- 45% said some did, and
- 12% said most or all did.

There were significant differences by age group reflecting the changing nature of community life. Of those aged under 40, 46 per cent said they had no friends living in the local area, compared with 35 per cent of those aged 60 years or older.

The same survey also found that 52 per cent said that none or only some of their close friends knew each other. Many people relate to a number of different communities which often have no overlap. They speak different languages (literally different languages sometimes), use different patterns of speech, have different topics of conversation, hold different assumptions and even worldviews in these different community involvements. Hence, when I, along with other CRA staff and colleagues, came to write *Believe It or Not: Australian Spirituality and the Churches in the 90s*, we described the world in which people lived as fragmented, with most people involved in many distinct life-worlds.

This trend is less significant in some small, stable farming communities. Yet, even here, electronic communications have increased the range of people's regular communications. The significance of the local community has diminished.

One of the major consequences is that churches as centres of local community are no longer relevant to most Australians. There are many churches which remain as remnants of local community life that were created in the 1950s, but many of these will cease to exist by 2020. These neighbourhood churches are being replaced by regional churches. Some regional churches are relatively small, serving a specific linguistic or other sub-cultural group. Others are mega-churches attended by some hundreds, even thousands, of people. The CRA calculated that 20 per cent of all people who attend a Protestant church

in Melbourne on a typical Sunday attend just 2 per cent of the churches, each of which have more than 500 people attending each week.

Churches do provide community, but not often today as an expression of local community life in suburban Australia. For some people, churches become THE centre of their community. Some members form most of their friendships in the church. The church brings people together who have similar values and beliefs, and creates community through adding to their common experiences. Most of the large churches have a vibrant network of small groups through which people build relationships and find support. Smaller churches can act as small groups in which people watch out for each other and provide practical and emotional support to each other.

However, building community continues to be a significant issue for churches and for the wider community. This was a particular focus of work arising from the Australian Community Survey with Edith Cowan University and NCLS Research in 1998. It led to several government projects in which Dr Alan Black and I looked at the measurement of social capital and evaluated government-funded projects which sought to build community. The peak of this work was the writing of *Building Stronger Communities*. The book argued for building stronger communities through building the various types of relationship: the interdependence of close bonds, the collaboration of bridges, and the building of linkages between individuals and organisations. This book was written for the wider public, but a small reading guide was developed to assist churches to use the book in reflecting on building a stronger church community.

The nature of community has changed again as social media have become one of the major ways in which people connect with each other. In some of our research, we have touched on implications of the changing nature and use of media (see, for example, Hughes 2011; Reid 2011 and Bentley 2013). However, much more research is needed to explore what communities created by social media mean for the development of meaning, for faith and for church life.

Religious and Spiritual Education

Another theme in the work of the CRA has been the implications of the cultural change for religious education and the schools. There is a certain irony in that, as the Australian population has withdrawn from the churches, increasing numbers of children have been attending church-run schools. In 2012, it was calculated that approximately 1.9 million students were being taught at a school with a Christian affiliation. It is estimated that 37 per cent of all students attend a Christian affiliated school sometime in their primary or secondary education (Hughes & Fraser 2014, p. 25). Yet, when these schools seek to express their roots through worship or through religious education, most students are unresponsive.

Since 2005, the CRA has run surveys in schools, looking at the values and attitudes of students and taking measurements of how students see the school contributing to their lives. In 2011 to 2013, surveys were run in approximately 60 schools. We asked a total of 9,900 students, how much different influences had contributed to their thinking about life. We found that:

- 53% rated what they learnt at school as having a major impact on their thinking (scored 8 or more out of 10), compared with just
- 22% rating religious education as having a major impact; and
- 15% rating school liturgies and Mass having a major impact.

Looking more carefully at the results in relation to religious education, 45 per cent of these students gave it a score of less than 5 implying it had little impact, 33 per cent said it had some impact (a score of 5 to 7), and 22 per cent said it had a major impact (score of 8 or more).

The fact is that close to half of all students attending church-run schools do not hold the assumptions on which religious education is based. Across all of these church-related schools:

- 48% said they believed in God,
- 18% said they believed in some sort of spirit or life-force;
- 23% did not know what to think; and
- 11% said they did not believe in any God or life-force.

When asked whether religion helped shape their lives,

- 50% said that it does not:
- 22% said it does sometimes; and
- 28% said it definitely does.

Some students feel quite negatively about religious education because they do not share the assumptions on which it is based.

What, then, does have a significant impact on students at school in relation to values, faith and finding a sense of purpose? Certainly, some schools have excellent retreat and camping programs where students are encouraged to think for themselves. Some have strong community-based learning or social justice activities which encourage the students to develop values of responsibility and compassion for others.

Special experiences such as World Youth Day or immersion experiences can have a profound impact on students (see, for example, the study of a group of students who went to Rome for the canonisation of Mary MacKillop in Hughes and Reid 2012). Such occasions provide opportunities to meet other young people from around the world for whom faith is deeply meaningful. They provide experiences of patterns of worship, prayer and reflection on God that are developed especially for young people. These events contribute to a vision of the larger religious community, and they also create small communities of faith among those who share these special experiences. But such experiences do not always lead to involvement with local churches which do not offer the patterns of worship, prayer and reflection on God that these young people have found meaningful.

We have observed that those activities which are voluntary get higher levels of support from the students. Students who find faith meaningful are often frustrated by their fellow students who are not interested when there are compulsory services of worship. However, when a few students gather on a voluntary basis for prayer, Bible study or worship, this can be deeply meaningful to those who participate.

Many Christian schools seek to provide an educational context for the children of families who are deeply committed to the Christian faith. Some of these schools only enrol students from families who attend a church. Within these contexts, the assumptions on which the subject often called 'Christian studies' are based are meaningful to most of the students. There is usually a much higher affirmation of the value of Christian studies and of worship by the students in these schools. However, there is a consequence in that



Students in Assembly. What sort of religious education will best prepare them for life today? (Photo by Philip Hughes)

these schools only cater for a small sector of the population. In a study of the alumni of two such schools, it was interesting to note that many of the students had continued to identify with the Christian faith and to be involved in churches. However, some regarded their experience at the school as living ‘in a bubble’ disconnected from the wider world, and they found it hard to relate to that world when they moved out of the school.

The bigger question, however, is how can education be provided in a wider society which helps young people to ‘put their lives together’, to find a sense of meaning and purpose, and to make those big life-style decisions that affect how they live? If traditional religious education is no longer working in many contexts, what will work? And what are the appropriate forms of involvement of religious groups in government schools? What should be the roles of chaplains and those who take classes in ‘special religious education’?

In my position as an Honorary Research Fellow at Edith Cowan University, in conjunction with Prof Margaret Sims, and with the help of staff from the CRA, I undertook a major study of chaplaincy in government schools in 2009. It involved surveys with principals and chaplains and case-studies in 21 schools. It found that the chaplains were having a remarkable impact as ‘low level’ counsellors and as people who contributed to the moral tone of the schools. It was noted that young people self-referred to chaplains in ways which they did not do with school counselling staff. However, the spiritual impact of the chaplains was not particularly strong (Hughes & Sims 2009).

In a forthcoming book, I argue that schools might move towards the goal of seeking

spiritual literacy rather than religious education. Perhaps schools would be more effective with the majority of their students if they aimed at helping students to think about the big questions of life, learning a little of the alternative ways of looking at the world and encouraging them to develop commitments to the basic human values. However, while many schools are doing something in this direction, I do not believe there are any schools where a comprehensive program of spiritual education has been developed and put into place. Such a program would need to have a cognitive component which would include some philosophy and teaching about religions and about how to make decisions about religious approaches to life. It would also need to give opportunities for the development of thinking about life-style options and to reflect on life. An important part of the program would be the opportunity to be part of community projects in which values of responsibility and care for others were developed. It would provide voluntary opportunities to build communities of people committed to particular beliefs and values

Much work needs to be done in developing appropriate education to help students to live well in the world in which they find themselves. Most education is not preparing students well for life, even though it is preparing them to get through examinations and into post-secondary education. Knowledge has become 'cheap' in that information is so readily available, but the discipline and values needed to lead a 'good life' are sorely missing and often not even considered.

Welfare Agencies and the Churches

In 2013, the MCD University of Divinity (as it was called at that time) commissioned the CRA to prepare a literature review of the history and theology of Christian welfare. The work was a contribution towards the preparation of a new course that was being designed to introduce executives from Christian welfare organisations to the theology and history of Christian welfare (Hughes 2013a).

The underlying issue was the professionalisation of many areas of welfare in the 1960s. As social work became more widely recognised as a profession, volunteers were replaced with employees. People were employed on the basis of their professional expertise rather than their professions of faith. Decisions were made on the basis of evidence-based research with less reference to theological orientations. Hence, the gap between the church welfare agencies and the churches grew wider.

The changes were exacerbated in the 1990s by the decision of government to contract out many welfare services. As a result, some church agencies became agencies of the government for welfare, paid for largely by government funding. It has been argued in various books and papers that this has raised significant issues for church welfare organisations in terms of being driven by the funding and by government-mandated compliance, and has compromised the ability of church agencies to be true advocates for the poor and disadvantaged (Hughes 2013a, p.7). The Christian narrative has been separated from service delivery, some have suggested. On the other hand, it could well be argued that Christian organisations have been given greater opportunities than ever before to serve the poor. These arrangements have enabled church-based welfare organisations to have a profound impact on the welfare of Australians at the very time when the churches could not afford to provide the support needed due to their own shrinking finances and personnel.

The place of church agencies in the provision of welfare, and, for that matter, in the provision of education, has been affected by the recognition that significant abuse of the

young and vulnerable has occurred in some church organisations. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse began to gather evidence in March 2013. The Royal Commission has uncovered evidence of church organisations failing to act professionally, report abuse to police and take complaints seriously. These issues have certainly lowered the levels of confidence in church organisations in the wider society.

At the institutional level, there are increasing pressures for both churches and church agencies to act in more professional ways. Ethics training for clergy and other church workers has been introduced. State governments now require police checks for those working with children and the elderly. Denominational organisations are under pressure to become incorporated in order that they can be sued in similar ways to other organisations.

The issues of acting professionally according to rules and principles, rather than acting on the basis of personal relationships and trust built through personal relationships or based on positional authority conferred by church bodies, has affected all aspects of church life. There is a need for further sociological analysis of the movement to professionalisation within church related organisations. But it is having a profound impact on churches and church agencies at this time.

In various articles and books, the Christian Research Association has pointed to the low level of confidence in church organisations in contemporary Australian society (Kunciunas 2010; Hughes 2012; Hughes and Fraser 2014, p.116). Part of the solution to building confidence is to demonstrate that the churches are there not just to protect themselves as institutions, but are there for the sake of people of Australia. Another part of the solution is the need for churches and their agencies to act as 'expert systems' (a term coined by the social theorist Anthony Giddens (1990)) in which they demonstrate clear systems of accredited training, continuing professional development and accountability, public transparency in their financial affairs, and sensitive systems for dealing with complaints. Again, building confidence in the churches is another area in which more research is needed.

On a number of occasions, the CRA has been called on to assist with evaluation of organisations and their activities. For example, the CRA has conducted customer satisfaction surveys regularly for Catholic Church Insurance. As it has interpreted the data and the changing expectations among the company's clients, it has been able to interpret these in relation to the changing dynamics of church and church agency and, in some places, the professionalisation of various roles.

On one occasion, the CRA was invited by the Theology and Philosophy Department at the Australian Catholic University to evaluate a course designed for executives in Christian health organisations. Until the 1990s, many of the men and women who had leading roles in these organisations were members of religious orders. However, as the religious orders have declined in numbers, these roles have been taken over by lay professionals. The issue has been how can these agencies continue to maintain the ministry of the orders and, indeed, the ministry of the Church? Ensuring that the professional executives were well versed in the history and theology of these religious orders has been important to achieving these goals.

Like many other denominations, The Salvation Army has struggled to find ways to keep the welfare work and its congregations together. In 2000, the CRA was invited to undertake a study by The Salvation Army (Southern Territory) of some cases where there had been deliberate sustained attempts to take an integrated approach to ministry. The CRA produced *A Handbook on Integrated Ministry* as a result of that work (Hughes

2010b). It argued that the business and ministry plans for both the welfare programs and the congregation had to be developed in an integrated form.

More recently, the CRA has assisted The Salvation Army (Eastern Territory) in evaluating the Hubs process that the Army has adopted to bring about communication and cooperative ministry between its various community services and its corps (or local churches).

There has been substantial change in Australian government policies regarding welfare and its delivery over past years. As these policies have changed, so have the roles agencies and churches may fulfil, raising questions as to how church agencies can best retain their capacity to critique government policies, how agencies relate to local churches, and how, through them, the churches best serve the Australian public (Gallet 2016).

The Future of Local Churches

An on-going issue has been how should local churches respond to the cultural changes that have taken place in Australia over the past 50 years? This question brings us back to the quest which led to my doctoral studies and on to my work in the CRA. How could the church respond in such a way that it began to re-connect with people? How could it effectively communicate Good News in a world which had little interest?

As has been noted, two groups of churches are growing rather than declining. The first of these are churches serving recent immigrants. Many local churches serving various immigrant groups have grown very considerably over the past 20 years or more including churches serving Koreans, Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipinos, Indonesians, various groups of Pacific Islanders, Indians, and Sudanese. Helping churches to be aware of and collaborative with immigrant groups may give them a future they would not otherwise have. Immigrants have had a huge impact on the patterns of religious faith found in Australia and on the life and vitality of most denominations (Hughes 2012b). However, as has been noted, immigrant families face problems with passing on their faith to their children who, in many instances, are trying to find a place in a society where religious interest is low.

The second group of churches that grew when many other churches were in decline are the Pentecostal and charismatic churches. While some of their growth has come from immigration, particularly second generation immigrants, much of their growth has come from people switching from other denominations. We reported in 1993, that of all those who were worshipping in Pentecostal churches just 2 per cent came from a 'no religion' background and 80 per cent came from another denomination (Blombery & Hughes 1993, p. 10). For many churches, the growth of the Pentecostals has provided directions for the future.

In *Re-Imagining Church*, which was published by the CRA in 2014, Gerald Rose argued that the change from an emphasis on cognition to an emphasis on experience in Western culture was the primary factor in the growth of some churches and the decline in others (Rose, Bouma, & Hughes 2014). Those churches which attended to the experiential dimensions of faith, as did the Pentecostal churches, grew while those which attended to the cognitive understanding of faith tended to decline.

Certainly, the focus on the experiential was a major factor in the growth in some churches and the decline in others. It was also a matter of worship revolving around experiences in the idiom that was meaningful to them. The music of 19th century hymns played on

a pipe organ did not engender meaningful experiences to most young people in the late 20th or early 21st century as did rock-style music. When the Pentecostal churches started to use rock-bands as the basis of their music, many Australians found these experiences meaningful to them. That personal experiential dimension was further enhanced by speaking in tongues and the informal but challenging ways in which their leaders addressed their local church congregations.

On the other hand, the experiences of the Pentecostal churches were not meaningful to everyone and currently Pentecostal and charismatic forms of worship are touching just 5 per cent of the Australian population. Some young people we have spoken with said they were too emotional and manipulative. Many others have responded negatively to the authoritative ways the preachers have spoken and the strong views expressed about certain issues such as pre-marital sex and homosexuality.

The place of religion in society is an issue in many parts of the world, not just in Australia. A much stronger trend than the growth of Pentecostal and charismatic movement has been the growth in 'spiritual but not religious'. In fact, as one looks at the behaviour of Australians, people are looking to nurture the spirit through a great variety of ways.

This individualisation of religion into personal spirituality is occurring in many places around the world. Projects where I have collaborated with Thai researchers to examine religious faith in Thailand have pointed to some similar patterns in which young people are increasingly seeing religion as a personal rather than communal aspect of life, as something which may provide some personal resources, but not as a set of communal activities which they have a strong duty to fulfil (Hughes, Suwanbubba and Chaisri 2008). Similarly, a study of religion and spirituality across 44 countries showed that while religion was affirmed more by older people than younger people in 43 countries, there were many countries where younger people affirmed their identity as 'spiritual' people more strongly than did older people (Hughes 2013c).

There are two types of factors which help in understanding the quite complex patterns of growth and decline in the churches:

- factors internal to the churches, such as leadership patterns, style of worship, theology and focus on recruitment;
- factors external to the churches such as cultural patterns and immigration.

In general, the CRA has tended to focus on the second set of factors which have been explored through the Census and through national population surveys. NCLS Research has focussed on the first set of factors through its five yearly census of local churches. However, each organisation has also looked at both factors, and both I (as an employee of Edith Cowan University) and the NCLS team contributed to the major book on this question *Why People Don't Go to Church* (Bellamy, Black, Castle, Hughes, & Kaldor 2002).

Certainly, there are internal factors which make a difference. A church which is not welcoming does not see many newcomers. A church which has no vision and way of achieving its vision is not likely to attract and involve people. Churches which attract people tend to be churches which empower people and in which individuals find a place. This was highlighted by Trudy Dantis in her research on vital Catholic parishes (Dantis 2015) and in the Building Stronger Parishes project of the Catholic Pastoral Research Office (<http://www.buildingstrongerparishes.catholic.org.au/>).

The CRA's first study of Australian church attenders explored the quite different patterns

of orientation to faith, described in *Patterns of Faith in Australian Churches* (Hughes & Blombery 1990). These patterns flowed through what was seen as the essence of Christian faith, the essential practices of faith, the belief in God, Jesus and salvation, and the understanding of the church. At one end of spectrum were those who saw faith primarily in terms of values. Jesus was a teacher and the church had the primary role of passing on that teaching about the principles of life. At the other end of the spectrum were those who saw faith primarily in terms of access to God. Jesus was the Redeemer who made a relationship with God possible and the church provided the opportunity for the relationship with God to be expressed. It should be noted that among those who valued access to God, values were also important as an expression of obedience to God. While this pattern was strong in the evangelical and charismatic churches, it was also strong in many other churches, including Catholic Churches where the focus was on devotion to God.

The CRA explored these patterns further in a major national survey (International Social Survey Program 1993) and found that of those who held the values pattern of faith 80 per cent had decreased their attendance at church since childhood. Of those who held the access pattern of faith, 28 per cent had decreased the frequency of their attendance (Bentley & Hughes 1998, p. 118). In other words, many of those who placed the emphasis on values felt that continuing church attendance was not seen as necessary. For those who placed the emphasis on access to God, regularly reaffirming that relationship in worship was generally seen as important.

Thus, the churches emphasising access to God, such as the Baptists and Pentecostals, have been more effective in keeping their members than those that have placed the emphasis on living by Christian values, such as the Uniting Church and some parts of the Anglican Church. However, that does not mean that all churches should place an emphasis on access to God as this simply means that the churches will lose connection with the large proportion of the population which sees the Christian faith primarily in terms of values.

In many of its surveys, the CRA has asked Australians about where they find a sense of peace and wellbeing. Most commonly people speak of their relationships with family and friends. They also speak of being in nature and listening to, or playing music. Religious resources, if they are seen as having any value, are generally of much less importance (see, for example, Hughes 2007a, pp. 50-55).

In Australian consumer society, people seek out experiences when and where they need them and in the variety and styles that suit them. This may be one of the keys to the future of churches. If churches want to connect with people's search for meaning, peace and wellbeing, then they need to offer resources that people will draw on from time to time as they feel appropriate. In effect, a spiritual market-place exists, whether the churches are in it or not. If churches wish to connect with spirituality of Australians, they must find an appropriate location in that market-place. This means a very different way of operating: from the focus on local church community which meets weekly for a similar pattern of worship on each occasion to offering resources from which people may partake from time to time. Communities meeting weekly will continue to gather, but other people will participate through the range of resources that a church might offer.

This could be seen as pandering to people's self-centred and selfish desires. Certainly some of the sorts of experiences that people seek are highly self-centred. On the other hand, not all experiences are of that kind. Meditational experiences can lead people not only to find a sense of peace within, but increase their energy and focus on the wellbeing

of others. Among the resources offered may well be opportunities to give to others, through involvement in aid, local welfare and other projects. When we asked teachers in Catholic schools what they would most like to do to nurture their spirituality, a common response was the desire to be involved in some international aid programs. Indeed, one of the root claims of the Christian faith, which today has some significant confirmation in sociological research is that experiences of working for the wellbeing of others often contribute more successfully to the sense of wellbeing than those experiences of self-centred individual enjoyment.

The CRA has found some specific evidence among young people that they look for this variety of activities in churches and become involved in aspects of church life which they personally find helpful (Hughes 2013b). For some that means participating in a discussion group. Others look for opportunities for helping others through a welfare or social justice program. Others find meaning in involvement in music groups and drama, while others look to social groups for wellbeing.

Mega-churches are able to offer a great range of activities. As previously noted, a study of churches in Melbourne that the CRA conducted for Transforming Melbourne found that mega-churches are attracting an increasingly high proportion of Protestant church attenders (Hughes & Reid 2009, p. 41).

While the spiritual 'super-market' has been operating for some, entering this market means a significant change in the concept of what it means to be a church. In a small way, I was involved in the development of a model in the form of a 'Community Living Centre' in 2005 at the East Ringwood Uniting Church. The Community Living Centre offers a range of activities from yoga and tai chi to scrap-booking, book clubs, armchair travel and ballroom dancing. Through its activities, it has sought to build community and point to the spiritual dimension of life. While it has attracted a considerable number of people from the local neighbourhood, the sense of it being a true centre for nurturing the self, rather than simply a collection of activities, has not yet been fully achieved.

One of the challenges for churches is the idea which has been dominant in most places for 2000 years that the heart of church life is the service of worship (for Catholic churches, the Mass) which takes place in a face-to-face gathering on a weekly basis. However, for many centuries, a large portion of the population has been involved in worship only on an occasional basis, usually at major festivals such as Christmas and Easter.

What is likely to occur is that the mega-churches will evolve as places where many activities are offered to 'nurture the spirit'. Many offer a great range of groups and activities and many people become involved in these, attending the worship service from time to time. For some, the worship service will fade as these other activities become dominant. It is likely that this development will be followed by some intentional 'Community Living Centre' projects built around the nurture of the spirit.

In a different way, chaplains operate out of a resourcing model rather than seeking to build community. They build relationships, and in some contexts, small groups. However, in most cases, whether it be chaplains to sporting teams, schools, hospitals, prisons, or places of work, chaplains are there as a resource, to nurture people's lives. In several contexts, such as sports and school chaplaincy, the CRA has found wide acceptance of this model of service among Australians (Reid & Hughes 2013).

From our analysis of the present situation, it would appear that a small portion of the population will continue to find their identity, their sense of belonging, and a comprehensive account of what life and the universe is about in churches that take the

Bible fairly literally and, in return, offer a high degree of certainty in their account of faith. Most of these will be evangelical, charismatic, and Orthodox churches. Closely associated with these churches will be those built around recent immigrants and their families which also hold tightly to a sense of tradition and which take the Bible fairly literally. Both the immigrant churches and the charismatic churches are likely to hold their numbers into the future, but are unlikely to grow substantially unless the rates of immigration change significantly.

These churches have a particular mission. They offer new possibilities for life for people in the community for whom life has not gone well. In presenting a different way of looking at and living life, they offer new hope for people who want new options for life. These churches will continue to be at the vanguard of conversions. There will be a steady flow of people into them looking for new life and finding it there.

But there will also be a steady flow of people out of the churches as they find that the comprehensive set of answers to life that they have been given do not work. While 'certainty' offered with authority is attractive to a range of people, that same 'certainty' will not work for many others, particularly in an age in which personal subjectivity dominates the search for personal meaning.

The issue of faith and culture becomes most poignant in relation to the large a-religious component of the Australian culture. Should communication start with the existence of God? Does such a discussion do justice to 'God' who certainly does not exist in the way that physical objects within the universe exist? Are there other ways in which religion can point to a transcendent dimension to human experience? Is there simply a different perspective of what the world and human life is about between those who are Christian and those who have 'no religion'?

Or does the communication start in relation to common human issues of values and sense of purpose? Should churches by-pass the issues of the meta-narrative, and focus on providing resources to nurture the spirit and holistically address wellbeing, focussing more on practices of faith than the cognitive content?

Most Australians are pragmatic in their approach to life. They will gravitate to whatever they see as working. The best means of communication for the church is through effective demonstration that the resources they offer do contribute to personal fulfilment and wellbeing.

Conclusion

What then is the answer to the question that I asked in the first church of which I was the ordained minister? How should the church change in order to communicate with the community in which it exists? It has become evident through both my doctoral research in Thailand and the research of the CRA in Australia that the answers are multiple and complex. There is no one solution because there are several sectors and demonstrations of Australian culture.

Australian culture in particular, and Western culture more generally, is going through a major transformation. The very way in which meaning in life is found is changing from being given to the individual by the institutions and communities of which person is a part, to being something that is sought internally in personal passions and interests. It is being transformed from something that is owned by communities and taught to children to something that must be discovered or created by the individual, a change from

something relatively static to something which is dynamic. This transformation has had a huge impact on the nature of religious faith, captured in part in the change of language from 'religious' (which implicitly refers to religious communities) to 'spiritual' (which implicitly locates the essence of faith in the individual. I suggest that this transformation in the nature of religious faith is perhaps as profound as any historical change that human beings have experienced, and as deep and far-reaching as the 'Great Transformation' of the Axial Age in which the moral dimension was added to the recognition of the gods between 700 and 400 BC (Armstrong 2006).

These immense changes have deep implications for religious institutions and it may take centuries for the full implications to be realised. I can only make here some brief concluding comments here. However, in making some suggestions I will return to the dimensions of culture outlined in relation to the Thai studies and developed in a recent journal article (Hughes 2015a).

Firstly, there is the material dimension of culture: the 'envelope' through which the churches communicate. This includes many things from the style of music used in worship to the architecture of buildings. The research has pointed to the importance of churches using the media, language and symbols which are familiar to the communities with which the church wishes to communicate. This includes using the aesthetic symbols that are meaningful: the forms of music, art, drama and spoken word. Certainly, the use of popular culture has been one of the major strengths of the charismatic churches and some evangelical churches.

Secondly, consideration must be given to the essential dimension of culture: that is, the ways in which people seek meaning and fulfilment in their lives. This is deeply rooted in the culture and the patterns which underlie this dimension of culture are developed in early childhood experiences. If one experiences the world as a highly ordered place in childhood, one grows with that expectation that there is an underlying order in everything that happens. On the other hand, if one experiences the world as a disordered maze of unique experiences, then a child grows to expect the unexpected. It is not easy, then, to shift the essential ways in which people seek meaning. To use the terminology of Heelas and Woodhead, if churches wish to connect with Australians in the Boomer and subsequent generations, they will need to show how 'subjective life' can be fulfilled, rather than just relying on a sense of tradition and duty.

In other words, churches that are focussed on maintaining their institutional structures and preserving ancient liturgies, or even those focussed on social justice, will not attract many people other than where those churches are preservers of a particular ethnic identity. In an age of individualism, churches must address the lives of individuals. They must offer people resources which will assist them in life, that will guide them and nurture them. They must address personal needs and fears, possibilities and challenges. They must put that support for individuals into practice as people walk beside each other in the maze of life, helping ensure that individualism does not slide into selfishness.

Thirdly, there is the substantive dimension which has to do with people's behaviour and values. It is appropriate for churches to be offering a critique of the culture, arguing that the self-centred fulfilment of inner impulses does not lead to the fulfilment that comes from seeking the wellbeing of others. One may start with the assumptions embedded in the 'midi-narrative' of culture, but offer different ways of achieving it.

The work of C.S. Song suggests there is a fourth contextual dimension. It has to do with the particular needs and issues which people face in a particular setting. There are some deep issues currently in Australian culture, including domestic violence, the use of

drugs such as ICE and inappropriate use of alcohol. While many Australian families are working very well, there are many others which are highly dysfunctional. Behind many of these issues are problems of people failing to find a sense of meaning or a respected place in family life or Australian society. While the cultural change of the 1960s and 1970s has opened up the possibilities of life for some, it has made it more difficult than ever for others to find fulfilment. Those who find education challenging and who lack the initiative and economic resources to take risks in creating a life for themselves have often floundered in the freedom that society gives. If churches are able to address these issues in significant ways, they could play a role in providing alternative 'sub-cultures' in which people find personal wellbeing.

The majority of Australians will continue to look for meaning as consumers of nurturing products and services. The challenge for the churches is whether they can find ways of re-engaging the wider community, and of playing some role in shaping Australia's spirituality, or will the churches content themselves with forming a few tight communities over against Australian culture?

It is easy to read one's own preferences back into the New Testament patterns. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which these patterns continue to be touchstones for the future. Personally, as I look at the ministry of Jesus, I see a person who did call together a relatively tight group of disciples. However, most of his ministry was engaged with the wider public: teaching and healing. He taught them to share their coats and their food and to care for the poor, to focus on the spiritual dimension of life, to trust a fatherly God and not become pre-occupied with material matters of life. I see the pattern of his teaching as critiquing the cultural and personal attitudes of people, attitudes to material goods, to women and children, to the law and tradition, and to God. He worked within the culture to transform it.

Chapter 5.

The Future of Christian Research

CRA's Future Roles

The CRA has sought to paint the picture of the Australian culture in its variety: its various communities of immigrants, the transformation of culture over recent decades, the religious, spiritual and non-religious components of the culture. It has undertaken special studies of youth and rural cultures.

Much of that work is on-going as Australian society continues to be transformed. New flows of immigrants arrive from various parts of the world and the culture continues to change. The advent of social media is changing again the notion of community as it changes the ways in which people keep in touch with each other. Changes in internet technology have meant that it is now feasible for the ordinary person to keep in contact with people on a regular basis across the world. Hence, many communities are now global.

As noted in the previous section, there are major social issues which have a spiritual dimension. The issues of family dysfunction, of domestic violence, addictions and drugs are rampant in some parts of Australian society. The CRA has done little in relation to these major complex issues. Perhaps finding a way of working with other organisations on these issues could be very productive for the whole of Australian society.

Changing immigrant patterns are having an on-going impact on the religious profile of Australia as a whole. They are also having an impact on most denominations, bringing greater plurality of forms and ideas into them.

We are at the beginning of processes in which schools are adapting to the new religious and spiritual realities in which young people are taking personal responsibility for what they believe and what they do not believe. Only gradually are churches and schools adapting to the focus of current generations on experience rather than on the cognitive understanding of religious faith. How these processes of adaption will occur over future decades is still unclear, although government has moved to limit the teaching of religious faith in government schools in many places around Australia. There is more research to be done here.

Many churches are struggling with youth ministry. Once again, the CRA has done some significant work. It has pointed to some of the issues and the challenges, but perhaps the CRA could do more to point to what might be some of the solutions.

The professionalisation of the church's welfare began in the 1960s and 1970s. However, it is continuing to raise significant questions for how local churches and welfare agencies may cooperate and how they can complement each other in helping those who need help. Some denominations, such as the Catholics and The Salvation Army are addressing these issues to some extent. But it is an on-going area of some concern to which the CRA could make a contribution.

One of the greatest issues lay at the heart of my initial question. How could the church communicate effectively with the local community and how should the content of that communication be expressed? The issue remains more poignant than ever. The churches have little communication with between 60 and 70 per cent of the Australian population.

The very basis for communication appears to be missing as a large part of the population professes that it either does not believe in God, or does not know whether there is any sort of God, or expresses no interest in the question. While there are theological dimensions to the formation of these questions, that theological thinking also needs to be done in relation to the empirical context. There is a continuing role for the CRA in that process.

Some Personal Reflections

At one level, the CRA experience has deepened my appreciation of many aspects of Australian culture. I continue to be deeply impressed by its richness and its diversity. As I have worked with people in the various Christian denominations and with people of other faiths, I have been impressed with the integrity and dedication with which so many Australians are trying to make this world a better place. I remember vividly the young people in a school on a Saturday morning, mentoring and entertaining children from struggling families in the local neighbourhood. I was deeply impressed by the church lay-preacher who was so concerned for the people in his 35 kilometre long street in a remote rural area during a period of drought that he organised 'street parties' to help his neighbours support each other. I visited a tiny church in another remote part of Australia where they sometimes had no one to lead. They gathered around the organ and sang some songs and prayed together. In another church I visited, two of the six members of the congregation had moved into a nursing home. So the church followed them, and the service was held around the bedside once a month, and the numbers had grown from six to ten! In small informal groups, as well as in large mega-churches, community is built and support and care is offered to millions of Australians.

At the same time, it has also been evident in many places that people in the churches have been more concerned with preserving traditions and buildings than in serving the communities in which they lived, or even supporting each other. Not that these people have had any malice. Rather, there has been a fear of the unknown and the dominant impulse has been that of self-preservation.

One of the great privileges in the research has been the opportunity to engage at some depth with people from almost all the faith communities, and with people of 'no faith'. The research has required me to seek to understand people, whatever their faith orientation. Early in my career, I expected to be a teacher. Rather, I have found myself called to the privilege of listening.

It has been a great privilege to work alongside colleagues who have been willing to share in all parts of the journey. I am very grateful for each one of them. All have willingly participated enthusiastically in the service the CRA has offered and have accepted the fragility of our organisation.

In order to serve all the churches, as the CRA was established to do, it has been necessary to suppress my own theological orientation. I have learned, at least to some extent, to speak the language and appreciate the beliefs and practices of each of the different religious groups with which I have worked. In so doing, I have learned that the real challenges for the world do not lie in exactly how one formulates one's beliefs, or how one's religious institution is organised. The human glimpses of the divine occur mostly through human relationships, and can never be adequately contained in personal beliefs, however formulated, nor in institutions.

Rather, the challenges lie in overcoming people's selfishness and self-centredness, the ways that they succumb to the pressures of a consumeristic world, and their lack of

empathy for and trust in those who have a different religious or ethnic background to themselves. It is these qualities which inhibit the depth of human relationships and the care, empathy and compassion that characterise them.

Religions do point to the divine in human relationships. But religions can also be corrupted by cultures of self-centredness and self-protection. One of the great challenges is when 'religion', or for that matter, a philosophy of life, is seen as more important than people.

Working for the Christian Research Association has been a huge privilege and I am very grateful for it. The opportunity to work across denominations and other religious groups, to observe and, at times, critique, the Australian culture, the opportunities to travel and to engage with colleagues around the globe, and to do research in Thailand, has been humbling. We all live on the fragile surface of one shrinking globe where it is increasingly imperative that we solve the environmental challenges together, and that we also work together in creating a world in which all people can find a place and a sense of meaning. More than ever, we need to listen and seek to understand each other, in order that we might work together effectively to build a peaceful, just and compassionate world. Only through gentleness and persistence can that ancient vision in Isaiah of a world in which God's justice and righteousness dominate every area of life be achieved.

Part 2.
Comments on the Work
of the Christian Research
Association

Chapter 6. Personal Tribute

*Rev Dr Neville Carr**

As founding Chair of CRA, I want to thank Harold Henderson of World Vision Australia in the 80s, for his organisation's support of such a ground-breaking venture, and of my own involvement with it as his research assistant – not to mention for providing major funding over several years, which gave CRA a solid start.

It was a challenging period, involving discussions with several Christian denominations and agencies about goals, funding and accountabilities. Turf protection and even professional rivalry between researchers and their agencies were factors to be dealt with at earlier Board meetings. I admired Philip's calmness and grace when things got heated in the board room!



*Rev Dr Neville Carr
(Photo by Philip Hughes)*

Involvement in a start-up organisation carries with it several challenges:

- creating a vision and strategy, along with achievable objectives and time frames;
- generating new sponsors across Protestant and RC churches and agencies;
- organising board meetings (Sydney-Melb alternate venues);
- consulting with Philip and research/admin team;
- gaining a consensus among initial sponsors of CRA about a research project;
- establishing credibility for and public awareness of research findings;
- appointing good quality admin and research staff to work with Philip; and
- proofing and editing early research reports.

The appointment of Philip was instrumental in achieving the viability and long-term success of CRA. It was only a matter of months before both the Christian and secular media took up key aspects of CRA reports into values and beliefs among Australians. The early efforts of Philip Hughes and Ms. Tricia Blombery gained attention in both print and radio outlets across the country. Philip has worked untiringly, with great support from his wife Hazel and son Tim and daughter Rachel, producing and editing Board and research reports, contacting potential donors, university peers, church leaders and printers.

* Rev Dr Neville Carr has had a number of roles in the Church. He was responsible for social justice at World Vision when he was the first chair of the CRA. Later, as director of Council of Christian Education, he again chaired the Christian Research Association. Rev Dr Neville Carr has also been involved in missionary work in the Philippines and in Tanzania.

Tribute must also be given to Revd Drs Bruce Kaye, Peter Marshall and the earliest Board members who worked hard to forge CRA's identity and secure its sustainability as a credible source of high quality social research.

I was privileged, on returning from missionary service with CMS in the Philippines, to resume chairmanship duties, before moving to St John's University, Tanzania, as Dean of Humanities and Education. I congratulate Philip and all associated with CRA over many years for the creative and productive service they have provided both the church in Australia and the various media outlets that still use its findings as a credible and significant source for social data.

Critical Reflection

Philip has offered a rigorous and intriguing account of both his own professional journey, and with it, of the CRA story itself; but also, of the ebb and flow of Christian beliefs and values in a rapidly changing Australian landscape and culture. He has also asked for comments or reflections on this analysis - I might add, in his typically humble and self-effacing manner.

I would like, therefore to pick up some of his comments, from my own personal and professional struggle with similar issues.

He raises the question of 'how the church must change to relate to culture' (2016, 10). More needs to be done, he says, 'if the churches are going to connect with mainstream Australian culture. The trend has been for the churches to become increasingly marginalised' (34). He asks, 'How should the church change in order to communicate with the community (to offer 'a critique of the culture') in which it exists?' (57).

If it is correct that the bulk of Australians spend a great deal of their time each week in the home, workplace or a learning institution, I encourage CRA to look more closely in the future at some of the shaping influences in such arenas on their beliefs, character and behaviour patterns.

Philip is right, for example, when he says, 'Most education is not preparing students well for life, even though it is preparing them to get through examinations and into post-secondary education' (50). Sadly, the same criticism can be levelled at much of the church's formation and education structures or programmes (a long-term concern and research interest of mine).

Both Jesus and Paul drew heavily for their ministries on going where people of their day gathered. Their teaching and preaching reflected a deep insight into the everyday hopes, fears, dilemmas and joys gained by being with people in their homes, along the streets, at weddings and wakes – not just at religious centres (e.g. Acts 17.23, 20.20). Preachers and the theological educators who form them could benefit enormously from such fundamental models today.

Hughes says,

For some people, churches become THE centre of their community. Some members form most of their friendships in the church. The church brings people together who have similar values and beliefs, and creates community through adding to their common experiences (47).

Whether it is because of demands on a pastor's time, a preoccupation with administrative, liturgical and preaching responsibilities, or a flaw in the way ministers are formed in theological college, the concept of discipling, training and equipping the saints for the

work of service (Ephesians 4) does not seem to be a high priority, nor does pastoral visitation, a key tool for getting to know church members.

I wonder, therefore, whether CRA has a bridging role to play within the wider church, by conducting research into the three domains mentioned already: home, workplace, and learning centres. Here, I am thinking more of TAFE's and universities than schools, where CRA is already involved. Findings from CRA-driven surveys and interviews with parents, workers, university or TAFE students and instructors, about the challenges they face as Christians in those contexts, could be fed back to clergy conferences, theological educators and campus ministry leaders and even mission agencies. With reference to ministry formation, Hughes is correct when he suggests that 'theological thinking needs to be done in relation to the empirical context' (60). This was a clear gap in my own theological education in the 70s.

Hughes again:

If churches want to connect with people's search for meaning, peace and wellbeing, then they need to offer resources that people will draw on from time to time as they feel appropriate. In effect, a spiritual market-place exists, whether the churches are in it or not. ..This means a very different way of operating: from the focus on local church community which meets weekly for a similar pattern of worship on each occasion to offering resources from which people may partake from time to time (54).

I agree once again that 'much more needs to be done if the churches are going to connect with mainstream Australian culture'.

My own research, based on a re-examination of the four creation mandates in Genesis 1 and 2, resonates powerfully with Philip's challenge in his fine paper:

- Building community ('be fruitful, multiply'..).
- Cultivating and nurturing the environment ('till and guard' Eden).
- Exploring and explaining the mysteries of creation ('naming').
- Resting, reflecting and worshipping God ('Sabbath').

My hunch is that, by downplaying God's original plan for humans and drawing largely on a 'sin-redemption' understanding of the Kingdom, pulpits and bible colleges alike have stripped something fundamental from the divine call for his people everywhere to engage in the transformation of culture, community and work in pursuit of human flourishing and the glory of God. Philip and CRA have been faithful for a long time to this biblical task. My prayer for CRA's Board and researchers is that their focus will not be diverted from such prophetic and visionary service for Christ in the future.

Chapter 7.

The CRA: A Servant To The Churches and Society

*Gary D. Bouma**

In the early 1980s Protestant seminaries and social service agencies were letting their sociologists go. John Bodycomb was the last in United Faculty of Theology, the theological faculty which served the Anglican Church, the Uniting Church and the Jesuits in Melbourne. Catholics continued to be well served, but thanks to the influence of Karl Barth, especially as wielded by Dick McKinney, sociology became despised and was dispensed. Rather than curse the darkness several academics and clerics saw the need for an organisation that would be faith friendly and capable of independent social research to help the churches understand and relate to a rapidly changing social and cultural environment. This vision gave rise to the Christian Research Association and early on to hiring Dr Philip Hughes as the director.

The initial vision was for a larger staff and there was hope for substantial on-going financial commitment from the Protestant churches. World Vision, ITIM and Sydney Anglicans contributed substantially and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne under Archbishop Penman provided some funding. But very soon it became quite clear that the CRA would need to make its living through contract research and the sales of books and informative pamphlets. Hughes proved an inveterate marketer and securer of contracts and occasional grants from government bodies.

The news was not always good or what the churches wanted to hear. British Protestants were in decline and losing their hegemonic position in Australia. Diversity both among religious groups and within them was increasing raising challenges to management. While secularisation theory was alive and well, its truth was not the only story. Secularists may have envisioned a society without religion, there was ample evidence of religious life – the charismatic movement, Pentecostal growth, and changes within congregations. Decline and death was not the only narrative, although there was some of that and there always is, there is more. The CRA sought in many different ways to take Australia's religious pulse, to attend to spiritualities, to attend to the rise and rise of new communities of faith and belief.

Being independent, the CRA could not only conduct research that was useful to churches but could also serve the larger society. Regular analyses of data, including census and survey data were directed toward religious organisations but also to Australia. A most significant contribution was initially funded by the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research to provide a description of the great diversity of religious communities in Australia. This has been up-dated and continues to provide one of the most helpful introductions to Australia's religious diversity as it combines census, NCLS and survey data with member descriptions of each community.

* Prof, The Rev'd Gary D Bouma AM, professor of sociology at Monash University, was a member of the CRA Board 1985-2004 and chair 1997-2004.

The CRA first aimed to speak to the needs of churches and as a result published most of its own research only occasionally appearing in scholarly or academic presses. Some see this as a criticism. I do not. Getting the message out, whether in *Pointers* or CRA published books, was the first priority. Waiting for the publishing cycle of a major journal or book publisher would result in delay. The CRA early on came to be a respected and expected participant in the major religious research professional and academic organisations.

With the retirement of the Rev'd Dr Philip Hughes will come a time of change and re-focussing. I pray that the original vision now made relevant to a very different time will energise a new team.

Chapter 8.

Assisting Churches to Benefit from a Research Partner

*John Emmett**

When a teacher in a rural context, I read my students a poem titled, “Reflections on a gift of watermelon pickle, received from a friend called Felicity last summer”. The watermelon pickle proved to be a provocative lens through which experiences of a long, warm Indian summer were later viewed, reconstructed and valued. On receiving the gift and opening the pickle jar, the appearance, texture, taste and scent of the pickle brought back a flood of wonderful and valued memories. And the gift giver, Felicity, was forever associated with the experiences those memories were built on.

My experience with the Christian Research Association (CRA) is similar to that of the poet who gave the poem such a ridiculously long title. Looking back, I can see that ministries and roles with which I have been associated can be viewed, and perhaps valued by local churches and their denominations, such as the Uniting Church in Australia, through the CRA lens.

Some UCA research projects undertaken by CRA

The CRA and various bodies of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) with which I have been associated shared in several research projects. Three stand out in my experience. Each of the following projects is something like that long, warm Indian summer the poem captured. Three projects, or research experiences, that are conspicuous for the writer include:

- research into adult Christian education;
- spirituality of young people; and
- a mission shaped research approach.

The writer is aware of other UCA research projects undertaken by CRA. These have been reported publicly through *Pointers* and by other means.

The Adult Christian Education Project (ACE) was conducted as part of a larger inquiry, authorized by the UCA Assembly (1997) into the teaching ministry of the Church. Of particular concern at the time was the declining participation of adults in Christian education and faith formation ministries of the Church. The findings were used to inform UCA policy determination about the roles and functions of its national Christian education body, and strategic development of more contemporary expressions of Christian education and faith formation ministries.

The Australian Youth Spirituality Project (AYS) was initiated in response to UCA schools indicating a crisis in school chaplaincy. More than 55% of chaplains in ministry placements to UCA schools would move to another ministry placement or retirement within a three-year period. Schools had noted that traditional approaches to school chaplaincy seemed no longer valid in their social and educational communities. Schools

* John A. Emmett was formerly National Director of Uniting Education, and Mission Catalyst for the UCA Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. He was a member of the Board of the CRA from 2007 to 2014.

observed church procedures to secure a ministry placement in a school as beyond the schools' control, taking a long time to be successfully concluded, and convoluted. The CRA implemented an extensive Australian spirituality literature search relevant to the project topic. This was conducted and reported to the commissioning organisation. A follow-up research element of the project designed and implemented by the CRA included all UCA school chaplains and schools governance bodies. The research projects' findings were used to inform both Church ministerial education and formation bodies, and UCA schools as they imagined and designed new ministries with students, families, staff, boards and alma mater.

The CRA also linked research being conducted with the students of a particular UCA school to aspects of the AYS project. In fact, research of students in respect to youth spirituality was offered to all UCA schools, but received only a very limited response.

Eventually some of the thinking that had formed the AYS project contributed to a larger and more thorough study of Australian youth spirituality. This work was undertaken by the CRA in partnership with other educational and tertiary institutions, and published by CRA as *Putting Life Together: Findings from Australian Youth Spirituality Research*, by Philip Hughes (2007). Results of the project were also reported through editions of *Pointers*, and conveyed in a series of seminars and conferences.

The Mission Shaped Research project (MSR) was designed "primarily to help the local church to reflect on the extent to which it is responding to its own call to participate in God's mission. Secondly, the survey can assist the wider church in ensuring that the appropriate supports are in place for local churches in their mission." [*Pointers* 22-2 June 2012.] This project produced several research instruments and early trials suggested the value to local churches and their judicatory bodies would be substantial. However, the sponsoring Commission of the UCA decided not to proceed to implementation. Elements of the research have been adapted and adopted for implementation in other settings, with good effect.

Each of the above projects was driven by purposes associated with ensuring effective and efficient ministries and mission initiatives. The research was original in every case, requiring the design and development of unique instruments and reporting processes. The information arising from a studied consideration of the data collected in each research project was reported in ways calculated to assist Church and Church school leaders in their leadership roles and functions. CRA and Church staff provided competent written reports, shared in discussion and conversations sessions, facilitated and informed workshops, and issued relevant publications.

Qualities Contributing Effective Relationships between the Churches and a Research Body

The projects commissioned are now completed. Data sets collected have been collated, interpreted, and reported. This article does not intend to address the learnings particular to any of the above research projects. Rather, let us consider three qualities churches and their leaders require of an independent research body and apply these to the development of the CRA. Three qualities essential to an effective relationship between churches and a research body are:

- confidence and trust;
- practical and particular; and
- comprehensibility and excellence.

Confidence and trust

Some Australian churches, including the UCA, tend to hold a somewhat ambiguous and contradictory disposition to research. On the one hand, church and denominational leaders seek information from beyond their usual anecdotal sources. They do so because they are aware of the issues of bias and prejudice, which might render insights and observations from anecdotal sources unreliable. So they want to avoid the traps of bias in observations of the state or life of their particular church. Research seems to promise objective reporting, especially where local and vested leadership runs a high risk of more subjective tendencies.

However, skepticism about independent professional research easily takes root in any community familiar with operating a 'hermeneutics of suspicion'. That is: the western mindset of a primary commitment to questioning the veracity and validity of any information presented is itself an issue to be addressed. Therefore gaining the church leaders' trust is a significant factor in developing and delivering research projects, which both researchers and the clients can be confident will contribute positively to the difference each desires.

Church leaders at local and judicatory levels are often untrusting of research bodies set up within their church's structures. For some, especially those with education or experience in various types and approaches to research, membership of a church can provide a platform for publicly questioning the veracity of the research methodology and reports. Others are simply afraid of the 'paralysis by analysis' syndrome, or anxious that the 'picture' revealed by research results is at odds with the 'picture' they have formed or are committed to as a 'reality' highly valued. Yet others of a more 'engineering mindset' can see issues the churches experience as problems to be solved so that the church denominational or local church 'machine' works better. Some church leaders struggle with an 'economic view' of research that might be considered in some way to reduce God's grace-gifted members to 'production units' contributing to their church's vocation. Others want to use research in ill-defined ways, or more often than might be necessary, simply because esoteric research can produce a range of engaging images and patterns, highlighting aesthetic features of local or denominational churches.

Such skepticism is easily and unwittingly transferred from perspectives held about internal research bodies to research bodies positioned outside of the denominational or institutional churches boundaries.

The CRA has had to develop ways to overcome church leaders' skepticism about research. The use of an independent, member-based Association offering various levels of participation, has contributed to establishing a non-denominational bias or influence. Membership is represented by Board participation, providing a governance structure that admits denominational and partner organisations' perspectives, but retains the Association's independence. The Board is responsible for policy and assessment of that policy's implementation.

Staff, often working in projects with member churches and organisations, implement the board's policy through the operational arrangements of day-to-day research projects. The CRA staff have always provided a professional and pastoral-educational presence to churches' leaders, reassuring them of the role research can play, and educating as to functions that will enable that role to be played to the church's advantage in matters of ministry and mission, worship, witness and service. Such a reassuring presence and professional acumen is extraordinarily valuable to building trust in leadership groups,

thereby enabling the proper role and functions of research. Without such attention to the context and culture of the church, research and researchers are highly likely to be treated as unwanted messengers, their research reports ‘shot’ and dispensed with. Indeed, many denominational offices and local churches’ bookshelves bear witness to the detritus of discarded research reports.

As with all matters in the life and mission of the church, everything begins, expresses its life, and ends in relationship. The presence of the CRA staff as persons of deep and abiding Christian faith with whom local and regional church leadership can form trusting relationships has lent credibility to the content and message they deliver as the result of the research. CRA has managed to address the ambiguities of church leadership towards research, mostly avoiding unhelpful confrontations and contradictions with church leaders because the CRA is couched in a practical theology of ministry and mission.

The churches, therefore can have confidence and trust in the CRA as a research body composed of a Board representative of the Association’s membership, professional staff, a broad but practical theology of Christian ministry and mission, reliable intellectual property in respect to research approaches and methods, and proper operational safeguards in respect to an ethical practice of research.

Particular and practical

The church’s vocation is always and at once particular and practical. Each local church is called and sent by the Spirit of God into its local context to engage resident cultures with the good news of God in Christ. A local church is a unique expression of the body of Christ within its context and according to the cultures with which it engages for the sake of the gospel. Church research, therefore, works most effectively for both the client church and the researching body when the research topic is particular and the approach and resulting methods are practical.

The CRA has developed an operating philosophy grounded in the particular and committed to practical outcomes. As a client, a CRA Board member and sometimes acting in the role of mediating consultant, I have discovered CRA staff and Board members committed to shaping research project topics by objectives that could be trusted to deliver practical information relevant to particular situations. CRA’s close attention to negotiating ‘the front end’ of a project contract has resulted in the CRA delivering quality research information in forms that make sense to local church leaders, as well as to denominational leaders.

The same approach to research that has focused on various intersections of religious and secular spheres of influence has produced information that has also made sense to civic and political leadership. For example: CRA research into various matters of social services, school chaplaincy, Australia’s religious communities, and social capital has been well received by non-church bodies and institutions.

The CRA has developed ways to maintain significant practical contact with members. For example: the quarterly magazine, *Pointers*, provides updates and overviews of research currently in progress or recently completed. This is a valuable tool for any denomination’s judicatory staff with ministry or mission enabling roles. The articles are written for consumption by ministers and church leaders. One does not require a background in professional research to understand and make good use of the materials offered through *Pointers*.

Another example of maintaining good practical and particular connections with CRA members is the website – cra.org.au – providing access to publications, events, research

projects, research materials, research reports, and more. Anyone accessing the website can gain access to particular research projects according to the perspective on Christianity and religion in the Australian context. One of the less well-known resources available on the website are the *Occasional Papers*. These papers provide informed and insightful collated comment arising from diverse research sources on a variety of topics such as *Homeless Welfare Australia: A Study of Church Based Welfare, Secular Not-For-Profit Organisations and the Rise of Social Enterprise*.

The CRA has also formed significant research relationships with other, like-minded organisations holding a similar values. There has been a longstanding relationship with the National Church Life Survey organisation and the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Pastoral Research Office. These organisations have been represented on the CRA Board, and collaborated on various projects. Yet each has also maintained its particular focus and commitments, approaches and methodologies. The Transforming Melbourne initiative of the early 2000's also collaborated in research projects with the CRA. The reports offered Melbourne churches, independent or denominationally aligned, a complete overview of the dimensions and impact of the churches in the city of Melbourne. CRA maintained a commitment to practical and particular research. There have also been joint projects involving various Australian universities, including Edith Cowan University, Monash and La Trobe Universities. Long term relations with organisations of similar values, beliefs and orientation in the United Kingdom, the USA and Thailand have also provided the CRA with the benefits of perspectives from a wider research community.

Through working partnerships and in relationships, the research projects have emerged as both practical and particular in nature. The benefit of such partnerships has been significant, contributing to a broader understanding of the religious context and cultures of Australia. In addition, these partnerships and joint projects have broken down denominational silos and barriers to discover commonalities and particularities that help all involved to gain a more informed and deeper understanding of the Australian context and the roles religion is playing in the evolution of contemporary Australia.

A more recent example of the CRA's commitment to research being particular and practical is the publication of a CD-Rom introducing and providing instruction in research methods relevant to ministry and mission. This is a very important tool for denominational and judicatory staff, as well as to students involved in original research as part of their studies into the ministry and mission of Australian churches.

Excellence and comprehensibility

Those who commission research do so to benefit the ministry and mission of their denomination or church. But what good is the information reported if it is not easily understood, or of poor quality? Perhaps the most difficult element of a research project is arranging data into patterns that yield information really worth having, easily communicated and clearly understood. Reflecting from the perspective of experience in commissioning research at national, regional and local levels of the UCA, the experience of struggling to determine exactly what the topic and focus of the research can be, is a demanding journey. As noted above, the CRA staff has developed considerable skills in joining the struggle through professionally facilitated conversations and discussions, yielding clear focus and achievable objectives for the research project. Such clarity, even when the topic is complex such as the Mission Shaped Research project, has proven essential to ensuring the comprehensibility of the research reports. Reports and

publication texts can be checked against the project's objectives to verify that the report indeed met the objectives agreed.

Research methods are also critical to ensuring excellence. CRA staff have persistently provided excellent professional advice with respect to research approach and methods. Sustained contact and, at times, project collaboration with various universities – Australian and those located in other countries – has contributed to maintaining a contemporary knowledge of and skills in research methodology.

Local churches have benefited by the CRA's commitment to excellence and comprehensibility through the ready availability of demographic studies of local communities through commissioned studies. The CRA Community Reports, when worked together with local church mission studies, provide a valuable tool by which to gain insight into mission opportunities within easy demographic and geographic reach of a congregation. Of course, local churches and congregations must be very familiar with the people and groups present in their neighbourhoods to match the theoretical opportunities identified from community reports into realisable opportunities on the ground.

Any independent research organisation lives with a two-sided coin. On one side, the research house depends on the quality and veracity of its research. On the other side, the research house is dependent on its ability to communicate the results of its research to parties that might be interested or to potential beneficiaries. The fact that the CRA is now well established in the Australian context (more than 30 years old), is well respected by churches of all denominations and polities, and is now beginning a second generation of leadership through the appointment of a new Director is strong testimony to the fact that the CRA has managed this two sided coin very positively.

Achieving particular and practical research is no easy task. Research must hold credibility in its own right as a discipline informed by philosophical debate, shaped by academic excellence and making sense to those for whom it has been conducted and reported. The CRA has found ways to ensure that, on the one hand, the research undertaken and reported is particular and practical. On the other hand the CRA has also found ways to ensure the credibility of its research in academic, church and civic settings.

Conclusion

Memories of the CRA as an inspiring organisation flood back with the arrival of each fresh edition of *Pointers*. On reflection, the CRA is an excellent example of the Christian vocation as, 'a long obedience in the same direction'. Yes, the CRA could be considered a small organisation, and due to the combination of its independence and size has at times been vulnerable to financial viability. However, by persistently attending to the essential qualities that make for effective relationships with churches, the CRA has grown to be an established and essential component of the Australian Christian community. Though small in size, the quality of the research and reporting undertaken is very significant to the ministry and mission of churches of all persuasions in the Australian context. Increasingly churches have learnt to trust the CRA, value its commitments to quality research, and to appreciate the practical reports for the influence they can have on the life, worship, witness and service of the church.

Chapter 9.

Research in Religious Education: A Reflection

*John McGrath**

I welcome the opportunity to comment on the journey of the Christian Research Association and the significant contribution of Dr Philip Hughes. I do so principally from the perspective of my work as a Catholic Education leader in the Diocese of Broken Bay to 2015. The very professional research work of Philip and his associates with students and teachers gave the Broken Bay school system compelling data for school improvement in mission, formation and religious education.

In 2005 surveys and in-depth interviews with a large number of primary and secondary students addressed questions about their values and goals in life, social awareness, attitudes to spirituality and religion, religious education, Mass and retreats; and the perceived influence of the school. In 2011 more than 1500 students responded to largely the same survey providing valuable comparative data. Broken Bay also commissioned CRA to research the impact on students of pilgrimages to the canonisation of St Mary MacKillop in Rome and to World Youth Day in Madrid. All these research projects assisted Broken Bay's strategic responsiveness to the actual realities of the student life which we termed 'mission-in-context'. Other educators benefit from CRA's work with young people through a range of publications, most notably Philip's book, *Putting Life Together*.

The 2009 surveys and interviews on the spirituality of Broken Bay teachers were customised for the diocese and profiled their religious orientations, attitudes to Catholicism in the school and responsiveness to staff spiritual formation initiatives. This research provided evidence about the degree of success of strategic responses and enabled grounded recommendations for their further development.

As an educator involved in the establishment of Studies of Religion in NSW, it would be remiss of me not to comment on how valuable CRA resources are to HSC teachers. Among others, I refer to the various print publications on census data on religion, the CD-ROMs, the books on major religious groups, and *Pointers*. The enthusiasm of the teachers is just one example of how Australian Catholic educators appreciate the work of CRA.

I highly value the interpretive value of CRA's research reports. Without placing personal preconceptions on findings, Philip makes cogent suggestions that embody his forty-year quest for the appropriate church responses to changing cultural contexts. This issue is important for contemporary Catholic education, especially in the many settings that are using an empirical methodology pioneered by the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria. 'Enhancing Catholic School Identity' proposes that a school shapes its Catholic identity in pluralised cultural contexts through dialogue and 'recontextualisation' of faith and practice. This approach

* John McGrath was Director (Mission), Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Broken Bay. He is currently Senior Education Officer, Faith Formation and Religious Education, National Catholic Education Commission.

has the potential to respond within all four of the dimensions of culture to which Philip refers. I also consider that Philip's promotion of a 'spiritual literacy' approach to religious education is a helpful construct because it draws on his research among the young and it provides them with tools for making decisions about how they should live.

Finally I would like to affirm the continuing role of CRA in the interface between empirical research and Philip's nagging question about renewed expressions of Christianity in response to new cultural contexts, a question as old as and still as relevant as it was in The Acts of the Apostles.

Chapter 10. Research in Chaplaincy

*Stephen Reid**

For many years the Christian Research Association has been researching and reporting on the developing ministry of chaplaincy in Australia. Sixteen years ago, in 2000, the CRA first noted the growing ministry, and the many new opportunities and challenges that it brought to Christian ministry (Hughes, 2000).

As early as 1993, the CRA had already undertaken its first research projects on chaplaincy. In that year, Inter-Church Trade and Industry Mission (ITIM, now Converge) had contracted the CRA to conduct a survey among small businesses in the Box Hill (Vic) area about workplace chaplaincy (Hughes, 1993).

In June 2000, Lindsay Carey reported in *Pointers* about national and international research into health care chaplaincy (Carey, 2000). In the September 2000 edition of *Pointers*, Peter Bentley reported on the work of chaplains in a broader article about ministry at the Sydney Olympic and Para-Olympic Games (Bentley, 2000). The following year, the CRA was commissioned by Uniting Education to explore how people associated with the Uniting Church understood chaplaincy and the role of chaplains in Uniting Church schools (Bond, 2001).

With an upsurge of Christian chaplains in government schools, stimulated by funding from the Federal Government, the National School Chaplaincy Association was keen to see continued ministry roles for chaplains in government schools. In 2009, the organisation commissioned Philip Hughes in his role as honorary research fellow at Edith Cowan University to undertake research into the effectiveness of school chaplaincy in schools. The findings of the research provided solid evidence of the positive role chaplains played in many government schools (Hughes & Sims, 2009). Similarly, a small pilot study of sports chaplaincy, carried out in 2013, found that chaplains to sporting



Stephen Reid has been a versatile member of the CRA staff. During the 2008 Lausanne Researchers International Network conference held in Geelong, Stephen was the bus driver. (Photo by Philip Hughes)

* Stephen Reid is currently employed part-time at the Christian Research Association and part-time at the Pastoral Research Office of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. He is also studying for a Doctor of Ministry at Harvest Bible College, Melbourne.

clubs had identified and responded positively to a real need within an important aspect of Australian society, and were creatively contributing to re-shaping Christian ministry (Reid & Hughes, 2013).

The chaplaincy research undertaken and reported on by the CRA over the last 30 years has revealed the uniqueness of chaplaincy as a ministry which takes place primarily outside of the four walls of a church. In going 'out into the world', chaplains have responded to a changing society which now sees organised religion through various lenses, many of which are not positive.

The limited but important research carried out by the CRA over the last three decades has highlighted the diversity of chaplaincy settings in Australia, as well as diversity in the duties which chaplains can have within their own contexts. The future of the Christian church in Australia may well depend on how well individual churches, and the denominations of which they are a part, respond to a changing society.

With a number of indicators suggesting Australians are increasingly dis-identifying and dis-associating themselves with organised and structured religion, the role of the chaplain in society becomes increasingly important. The church in Australia would do well to acknowledge the diverse ministries of chaplaincy in many parts of society (Mark 16). The CRA will no doubt continue to report and research the significant role chaplaincy plays in shaping Australia's spirituality in the future.

Chapter 11.

The Christian Research Association in the Media

*Peter Bentley**

The CRA has achieved significant prominence over the last thirty years because of Philip's wide-ranging contacts and ability to connect with a range of media interests and speak on a voluminous number of research areas related to faith in Australia.

Broadcast Media

Philip has been a regular radio commentator on ABC Religion programs, including interviews and commentary on issues in conversation with John Cleary on Sunday Night. There have also been strong connections with Rachael Kohn's program, *The Spirit of Things* (linking into the Spirituality research that has been a centrepiece of CRA for over 30 years).

Following the 2013 Growing Youth Spirituality Conference at Tabor College in Melbourne at which Rachael Kohn spoke, a whole program was devoted to youth spirituality in which she interviewed Philip.

There have also been contemporary news reports on *The Religion Report*, often in relation to new CRA publications, as well as interviews in secular media outlets.

Philip has appeared on ABC's *Compass* program, notably on the three part series that examined the changing face of religion in Australia after the 20th century: *Secular Soul*.

In the first episode *Spiritual Market Place* (23 June 2002) he is introduced in the following way, and the excerpt and response illustrates Philip's status and ability to succinctly comment on questions.

Narrator: Philip Hughes is also a keen observer of these changes. As well as being a Uniting Church minister, he's Director of the Christian Research Association, the main church group crunching the numbers measuring spiritual practice and beliefs. He confirms the move away from organised religion to personalised belief.
[and then goes on to comment]

Philip Hughes: From the 60's and 70's partly because of the influence of globalisation, partly because of the great range of alternatives that the mass media opened people to, partly because of the decline in local community life, partly because of the waves of migration and so



Peter Bentley at a CRA Bookstall (Photo by Philip Hughes)

* Peter Bentley was first employed by the CRA in 1990. His work continued on a casual basis after 2000, writing for *Pointers* and assisting with research projects. He has recently been president of Australasian Religious Press Association (ARPA). He is also director of the Assembly of Confessing Congregations within the Uniting Church in Australia.

on, that culture became something that individuals made, and, to a much greater extent, created themselves.

Another significant Compass program was the 11th November 2007 episode on the 30th Anniversary of the Uniting Church, with Philip providing analysis and commentary throughout, following opinions and comments from a variety of UCA members.

A growing area of contact since the 1990s has been the Christian radio network, with interviews on a range of stations including the 'local' Melbourne station Light FM, with Philip being able to provide specialised comment in a more defined Christian context, often helping to broaden understanding of the role of religion in Australia.



Philip Hughes in an ABC radio studio

Print Media

By far the major reference media point for Philip has been in print, especially the major city and regional newspapers. Usually, one interview or report was featured in a variety of publications, syndicated through major city newspapers, as well as regional and local newspapers, and then related stories usually of more depth were provided in church magazines and religious publications.

It would be difficult to quantify the references and mentions in Church publications, as this was vast during the 1990s with publication of the Religious Community Profile series, and continued on a regular basis as publications sought to include statistics of relevance to their own denominational context or situation. The CRA studies on rural life and churches were especially used in Uniting Church newspapers, and spirituality studies reported in Anglican circles, including *The Melbourne Anglican* (TMA). Melbourne Anglican media also featured Philip in a significant look at youth spirituality as recently as this year via You Tube (February 11, 2016).

Secular newspapers which have reported on the work of the Christian Research Association include *The Courier Mail*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *The Advertiser*, *The West Australian*, and *The Australian*.

Prior to 2005, there were many regular links between the dedicated religious affairs reporters in newspapers and Philip as a key person to provide comment on contemporary religious matters. Sadly the specialist role of religion reporter quickly disappeared from most major city based newspapers, with Barney Zwartz, the last key writer retiring at the end of 2013.

The lack of specialist reporting in the wider secular media has meant that the role of the ABC religion department is even more significant now. One of the difficulties here is the increasing trend within the ABC to forgo specialised religious reporting in favour of a generalist orientation, thereby losing even more of a base for specialist commentators such as Philip to contribute; as opposed to more general public figures who have less detailed knowledge and understanding.

There is no doubt however, that there has been and continues to be, wide interest in Australian society about religion and spirituality. A sample trail of news stories, interviews and reports illustrates the many themes, projects and ideas that Philip has

explored, and the way Philip was often able to offer comment on areas of faith and life. Of special importance has been Philip's wider work of critique, helping to correct or challenge erroneous ideas and thoughts about religious practice in Australia.

Through the CRA's continuing and new work and Philip's own continuing research I hope that there will be sustained opportunity to provide thoughtful comment and reflection in the wider and now convergent media sphere, and I will offer further comment about this in the conclusion.

Faith in Australia and the Faith of Australians

This is one of the main areas that Philip was called on to elucidate and provide a contemporary opinion and comment. Quite often it was related to a CRA publication, and any researcher or reader of religion in Australia would be aware of how influential and wide-spread CRA publications were, especially in the 1990s. It was during this time that the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research produced 12 books on the major religious communities in Australia: Anglican, Baptist, Buddhist, Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Hindu and Sikh, Jewish, Lutheran, Muslim, Pentecostal, Presbyterian and Uniting Church communities. The resulting newspaper coverage was extensive and also linked into more extensive reviews and material in the official religious publications of the profiled faith.

In the article 'Fewer priests have to make do on a wing and a prayer' (*Sydney Morning Herald*, Kelly Burke, Religious Affairs Writer, April 10 2003) we learn of changes in the leadership of faiths in Australia.

Overall, however, the number of Australians working as religious leaders has risen by 4.5 per cent over the past six years, to a total of 14,245 clerics.

Dr Philip Hughes, the CRA's senior researcher, says this increase is attributable to the strengthening of religions other than Christianity during this time, largely through immigration. Christian leadership has risen less than 3 per cent, slower than the rate of population growth.

More recently, the Religion and Occupation study that highlighted lay context for occupation in connection with religious practice achieved wider attention as illustrated by the article "Why our bush is the soul of God's country" (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, February 1, 2009). Andrew West extensively used Philip's comments to illustrate the spiritual dimension of country people, with the following illustrative of a succinct journalist's sentence gleaned from an interview: "FARMERS are the most religious folk in the country, with almost half attending church at least once a month, a new study of Australian spirituality reveals."

His role in analysis and critique was highlighted more recently in on-line coverage in relation to a recent study on religion and altruism. "New study claims religious children are judgmental" (November 7, 2015 News.com.au)

Christian Research Association's Reverend Dr Philip Hughes disputed the claims made in the report [Current Biology]. "Religion is very different and particularly in the United States, it's very different from Australia," he said.

Dr Hughes said there were two types of religion — intrinsic religion where somebody has made the commitment inside themselves and extrinsic religion where people are more focused on the social practices."

No Religion, Agnosticism and Atheism

A key area of interest for the secular media was the increase in 'no religion' and the increasing publicity given to the 'new atheism' and its high priests. Philip has helped, during the last 15 decade in particular, to give a fuller explanation to the religious census statistics. A full example is provided in the article: 'Faith no more – in the city of churches' (Andrew Fenton, *The Advertiser*, April 11, 2009)

Phillip Hughes, from the Christian Research Association, also says the data is flawed. "Some people who write 'no religion' are spiritual and religious; they just don't wish to identify with religious groups". Hughes says the rate of atheism hasn't changed much since the 1970s: what has occurred has been a "drift to secularisation". "People are adopting a non-religious approach to life, but that's different from atheism because they don't think there is no God, they just choose to live without regard to the question," he says.

Hughes says a large group of people don't know what to think and just try and muddle through without dwelling on the subject too much. "Secular by default, not atheist by commitment," is how he puts it. "Militant atheism is a product of the 1970s," he says. "(The AFA) are a group who formed in the 1970s and it was part of the rejection of religious traditions that happened then with a fair degree of passion and anger, and the feeling the church and faith had let people down and was misleading people." He says younger atheists - most of whom have never believed - don't have the same anger."

The Ageing of the Church and Patterns of Church Attendance and Changing Church Life

A major area of comment has been over many years has been related to the ageing of the traditional mainline denominations and the newer Christian groups.

Linda Morris' 2007 article headlined the general context and provides a good example as well as illustrating in the headline a certain form of church-speak to highlight a point: "Churches struggle as old guard promoted to glory" (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, October 1, 2007).

The number of Australians identifying themselves as Christian will plummet over the next 20 years as an ageing generation of dedicated churchgoers dies out, analysis of census figures shows. Painting a bleak future for Christian faiths, the Christian Research Association predicts the ranks of non-believers will steadily grow while there will not be enough young converts to replace elderly congregations. The research also questions one of the few success stories of Christianity, the Pentecostal churches, challenging assertions that they are hotbeds of Christian recruitment.

Philip was well-known for comment on a variety of chaplaincy work and research over the last 30 years and recently he has received coverage (not all positive as well) for expressing opinions based around the research on school chaplaincy. He weighed into the debate about the helpfulness or otherwise of school chaplaincy as the following letter illustrates.

'Support for chaplaincy' (*SMH Letters*, June 24, 2014)

Samantha Chung (Letters, June 21) asks about research into chaplaincy. Professor Margaret Sims and I at Edith Cowan University conducted a major research project in 2009 on the effectiveness of chaplaincy through a national survey of principals and chaplains and 21 case studies where staff of schools, parents and students were interviewed.

The research found that chaplaincy provided opportunities and support for students to talk through issues or deal with problems. It encouraged moral values and responsible behaviour

and contributed to the morale of the school. It was effective because chaplains proactively built relationships, did not have teaching or disciplinary roles, and worked holistically, connecting with families and communities. Chaplains referred students to counsellors for psychological assistance where needed. Ninety-eight per cent of principals who had had chaplains at their school said chaplaincy was important and wanted government funding to continue.

Another area of comment has been in relation to immigration. In an article entitled 'Asian followers give life to Christian church' Barney Zwartz and Peter Cai wrote:

AUSTRALIA'S churches have been transformed over the past decade or two and increasingly it is Christians with Asian heritage who are keeping them vibrant.

The Christian Research Association director, Philip Hughes, said second-generation Asian-Australian Christians were increasingly moving to mainstream churches.

"They are far more willing than most Anglos to accept the strong authority system they find in Pentecostal and other charismatic churches, which are a good stepping point away from traditional Chinese churches," Dr Hughes said (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, April 9, 2012).

Non-traditional Religion

It is certainly worth highlighting that Philip did not stop at being able to comment on traditional Christian groups. In these two examples of the 'play on words' headline, Philip achieved wide coverage in Australia, and also an interview in the *Financial Times* (UK): 'No rest for the Wicca' (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, Kelly Burke, June 30 2003).

Peter Jensen pities them, George Pell loathes them and Fred Nile curses them. But the neo-Pagans continue to move from strength to strength. The last census proved nature religions, and primarily Wicca and Paganism, were among the fastest growing in Australia. And now the Melbourne-based Christian Research Association (CRA) has carried out the first in-depth analysis of the religious group that accounts for more than 24,000 Australians. According to that study, the profile of the modern Australian Pagan is a female Melburnian under the age of 35, Australian-born, living in a de facto relationship, with a university degree. What is harder to analyse is the rising political force of Paganism...

The Reverend Philip Hughes, a researcher with the CRA, believes it may be linked to Melbourne's less materialistic ethos. "For many, Wicca involves a protest against the material world, against powerlessness, against the oppression of women, and against repressive attitudes to sexuality. And Wicca can be a protest specifically against Christianity, which is seen as having failed women in particular.

The article, 'Having a spell with witchcraft proves popular for women' (Barney Zwartz, October 16, 2005, *The Sun-Herald*), included the following comment:

Dr Philip Hughes of the Christian Research Association said the numbers of people participating in nature religions - mostly witchcraft and paganism - rose by 140 per cent between 1996 and 2001. Agnostics were on the rise too, he said. For many, nature religions were seen as environmentally friendly.

The Changing Future

One of the strengths of CRA's media connection has been its non-denominational base, and Philip's wide understanding of the church in general has been a centre-piece of this. To date, this has meant that he has often been seen as a source of factual analysis and comment. It has been evident though that over the last few years, there have been an

increasing number of organisations that have had input into the diverse media scene in Australia on religious matters (See P. Bentley, *The Search for a Public Christianity, Pointers*, Volume 25, No. 4, December 2015). This has also reflected a change in the orientation of the media from religious news reporting toward finding opinion and comment, often on more controversial and contemporary issues. One of the challenges for all Christian organisations will be trying to provide serious and grounded factual comment in a more ‘reality TV’ environment.

This certainly links to an area that is needing more attention and will undoubtedly receive attention, namely the provision of religious commentary through social media. At present the CRA has not connected here as much as it has done with traditional media, but the field is ripe.

Philip has done the CRA and the wider church a service by producing a wealth of material, including short reports and items that are tailor-made for transmission by Facebook and Twitter. I can see a daily Tweet with an interesting religious statistic provided by CRA, connecting with a Facebook story, photos and links to more substantial research pieces. In particular, I envisage a regular *Pointers* article series, helping to outline in a current historical way how the faith of Australians has changed over these years of the CRA’s existence.

Conclusion

One can never underestimate the impact of Philip’s media ministry as probably millions of people, including people in overseas countries through conferences and seminars have read a comment, heard him on radio or seen him on a panel on TV. Philip has provided a service to the whole of the church, as well as other faiths, by presenting an academic reasoned approach, always within a pastoral understanding, and at all times in a way that a lay person in the field of religion could understand. Religious academia was never for Philip a disconnected discourse, but a profound way to network and relate to contemporary life and I have no doubt this living networking will continue for Philip for many years to come.

Chapter 12.

A National Researcher of Global Significance: Philip Hughes and the Lausanne International Researchers' Network

*Rev Dr Darrell Jackson**

Introduction

There has never been a time in history when we have been faced with such an amazing array of data and information. Knowing which data to trust can be an almost impossible task. One shortcut to greater certainty is to look for evidence that the source of the research data has a long and reputable track record of delivering research data and research analysis. In this respect, Philip Hughes's work at Christian Research has been exemplary.

I first met Philip at a Lausanne consultation on Nominalism in December of 1998 at which he had been invited to present a paper by Dr Peter Brierley, then the Executive Director of the UK's Christian Research Association. Philip's paper on 'Nominalism in Australia' was included in the printed volume that followed the consultation. His presence was notable in that he was one of the few people attending with a laptop computer and he spent a lot of time printing out documents for the conference with long extension leads trailing down the corridor. The consultation venue, High Leigh in Hoddesdon, UK, did not have many electrical power-points in 1998! Since that meeting in 1998 I have followed Philip's work with interest, as a pastor, denominational leader, research director, and more recently as a lecturer in contemporary missiology in both the UK and NSW.

In my short contribution to this volume I hope to add an additional perspective to Philip's own contribution outlining his work with the Lausanne Movement for World Evangelisation (established in 1974 after its first Congress in Lausanne, convened by Billy Graham and John Stott).



Rev Dr Darrell Jackson speaking at the 5th Lausanne International Researchers' Conference, Geelong, 2008. (Photo by Philip Hughes)

* Rev Dr Darrell Jackson is Senior Lecturer in Missiology, Morling College, Sydney and Founding Director of the former Nova Research Centre, Redcliffe College, Gloucester, UK.

The Second Lausanne International Researchers' Conference, February 1996

Philip's personal involvement in with Lausanne pre-dates my encounter with him in 1998. He was invited by Peter Brierley to present a paper at the second International Researchers' Conference, also convened at High Leigh in February 1996.¹ At that conference, Philip's paper 'Government Data and Strategic Planning in the Churches' outlined the use of government census data by Christian researchers and its potential value for church and mission leaders. Fellow Australian researcher, Dr. Peter Kaldor, then the Director of the NCLS, was also present. A total of 62 participants came from 21 countries and approximately a third of these presented papers. Kaldor led one of the conference Bible Studies, published in the conference booklet (Wraight 1998) as 'Wisdom for researchers: seeing and discovering'.

The Third Lausanne International Researchers' Conference, September 2001

Following the 1996 Conference it was becoming clearer that Peter Brierley's staff team at Christian Research UK was taking a major load in organising the International Conferences and Peter gathered an informal group of peers to assist with the conference planning and organisation. The planning committee only gradually became 'recognised' but Philip was invited to become one of the planning group members. His invitation was a clear acknowledgement by peers of his significant contribution as a national researcher with a steadily growing international reputation. Following his appointment to this group he was to become instrumental in the Conference being held in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Philip had been actively involved in several research projects in Thailand and a colleague, the Rev Herbert Swanson (who was then running a history research unit for the Church of Christ in Thailand) gave the lead in the local organising committee.

In addition to his organisational input at the September 2001 Conference, Philip also found time to present a paper titled 'Spirituality as an individual project. How churches might respond'. He was accompanied by colleagues from Christian Research Association, including Sharon Bond, then a CRA research assistant, who presented on 'Christian Education and the Meaning of Life: the impact of Life-Approach on Christian Learning'.

Philip's role in Chiang Mai also saw him officiating in a Communion service, held at the close of the Conference in the Chapel of the McGilvary Faculty of Theology at Payap University. Philip shared in officiating with the Rev Dr Pradit Takerngrangsarit. A particular feature of that service was the celebration of the Communion, or Lord's Supper, which featured an unopened coconut and sticky rice as contextual substitutes for the bread and wine.

1. The first Lausanne International Researchers' Conference had been convened in Amsterdam in 1986. This had involved a much smaller group of invited participants, again convened by Peter Brierley of Christian Research UK.

The Fourth Lausanne International Researchers' Conference: 10th-14th April 2005, Limassol, Cyprus

Philip's role in organising the Conference in Cyprus was relatively minor. Dr David Greenlea had provided significant on the ground support though his contacts in Cyprus and Philip had mostly lent his support through his ongoing involvement in the planning group.

Philip's paper on the 'Spirituality of Young People in Australia' introduced his work on contemporary spirituality to a wider global audience, reflecting his developing interest in this area of research within his Australian context.

The importance of the Cyprus conference for Philip's involvement with the Lausanne movement would only become more apparent at the meeting of the planning group held on the afternoon of April 13th 2005. Philip had suggested the need for a more formal structure for the Researchers' Network and that was established at the Cyprus meeting. Conference participants were invited to attend a small discussion at which it was proposed that the organisation of the Conference and Network should sit with a small planning group. At that meeting, Philip was joined by six others; Peter Brierley (Christian Research, UK), Jayne Ann Harder (SAT-7), Darrell Jackson (Conference of European Churches), Michael Jaffarian (CB International), Todd Johnson (Center for the Study of Global Christianity), and Eila Murphy (a freelance researcher from Finland). After the Cyprus gathering, the members appointed were nominated as an Executive Committee with Johnson, Jackson, Hughes and Brierley providing ongoing organisational input to future conferences. It was at this meeting that Philip was appointed as the Chair of the Researchers' Network, a position he would hold until the conclusion of the sixth International Conference on the 8th April 2011. He served in that position for a total of six years covering two consecutive conferences.

Following the April 2005 meeting it was agreed to work more intentionally towards the development of an international network of researchers working in church or mission-related research. This would be done under the name of the Lausanne Researchers' International Network. A website and promotional leaflet were envisaged and eventually, Philip Hughes, with the support of Christian Research Association colleagues and family members, was able to establish a website for the Network. The Executive also signalled its intention to organise the next conference in 2008, in South Africa, with Peter Brierley as the conference organiser.

In an email to the group, sent on the 29th May 2005, Philip summarised his recollection of the Cyprus meeting and added:

I think we should have a statement of the purpose of the Network. As a starter for discussion I suggest something like the following:

1. To promote the sharing of skills, resources, materials, and ideas among those engaged in church-related or mission research;
2. To encourage each other in conducting such research;
3. To provide a basis for communication between people involved in such research.

I suggest we also add the following sentence:

Both organisations and interested individuals who are working in this area are invited to be part of this Network and to benefit from the communication links.

Philip's contribution to the Network continued to demonstrate his capacity for effective organisation and able administration of a disparate community of international researchers.

The Fifth Lausanne International Researchers' Conference, April, 2008, Geelong, Australia

The intention to organise a conference in South Africa did not come about and Philip offered to host the fifth Conference at an alternative venue in Geelong, south of Melbourne, Australia. His offer was warmly welcomed by the Executive Committee and plans were set in place for an April meeting of the Network and its fifth International Conference. Sixty participants attended.

In Geelong, as a participant in the programme, Philip presented something of the work of Christian Research Association in a session chaired by Ruth Powell of NCLS. He noted that at the time of the conference there was a staff of five working alongside him although only he was full-time. He paid tribute to Peter Kaldor for his encouragement to Philip in setting up the Melbourne-based CRA.

Philip's colleague at Christian Research Association, Stephen Reid, presented something of CRA's work in a session titled Painting Pictures with the Australian Census: So what does Melbourne really look like? The continuity of this theme harked back to Philip's presentation at the 2nd International Conference in 1996. It is this type of consistency of theme and approach that exemplifies the contribution of Philip and his colleagues at Christian Research Association in my introductory comments.

As the local host, Philip was outstanding, serving as Tour Guide along the Great Ocean Road, and helping to shuttle Conference participants backwards and forwards from Tullamarine airport to the Salvation Army Conference Centre in Geelong.

Philip collaborated at the Geelong Conference in a presentation with Peter Kaldor titled 'Wider Community Spirituality: Mapping it and exploring the difference it may make'. The paper explored the extent to which individuals in western societies, such as Australia, opt out of inherited religious affiliation and embrace alternative forms of spirituality following a process of personal selection and choice. He argued that personal choices extend far beyond categories familiar to organised religion and were posing challenges to typical means of mapping, measuring, and evaluating social and religious trends.

In Geelong, Philip collaborated with Janram Chaisri on a paper titled Christ, Culture, and Values in Thailand and Australia. The paper explored the comparative impact of religious tradition and culture on Buddhist Young People and Christian Young People, building on survey work among young people in both Australia and Thailand.

Philip's involvement in Geelong demonstrates an instinctive capacity for collaboration with, and the mentoring of, other researchers. His thematic discussion served to strengthen the contribution his research was making to the global conversation concerning contemporary spirituality and religiosity in western contexts and elsewhere.

In his subsequent report to the leadership of the Lausanne Movement, Philip identified several ways in which the Researchers' Network was being strengthened, pointing to the development of the website, the intended 6th International Conference scheduled for 2011, and the hopes for establishing a more formal membership structure.

His report of the conference themes highlighted research papers in three main areas;

identifying challenges and opportunities relating to the mapping of people groups, investigating the contemporary issues of migration, and papers exploring the changing nature of contemporary religious faith. Philip's reporting of the issues was judicious and, naturally, reflected his personal concerns and enthusiasms. He insightfully noted in his report that a common element in each of these three areas was a weakening of links tying ethnic identity to religious practice. He noted that for young people, religious heritage was being uncoupled from their ethnic heritage and, in its place, religious faith was increasingly seen as a personal life-style choice.

The July 2008 edition of *Quadrant*, the bulletin of Christian Research, UK, reported on the fifth International Conference, noting that it

was spearheaded by Rev Dr Philip Hughes, the Executive Director of the Christian Research Association of Australia, who was indefatigable in the way he organised the event. Aided by the staff of CRA, Australia, he planned a first rate Conference which all those present enjoyed very much. Philip took the opportunity to launch the Lausanne Researchers' International Network.

The praise from Peter Brierley was well deserved and reflected the high standard of organisation set by Philip and sustained throughout the Geelong Conference by Philip and his able staff team.

The Sixth Lausanne International Researchers' Conference, Atibaia, Brazil, 2011

The detailed proposal for a sixth International Conference emerged out a timely visit by Philip to the UK during July 2009. During this study visit, Philip was able to meet in Brighton on the 6th July, with Peter Brierley, Darrell Jackson, and Larry and Stephanie Kraft of OC International. They were joined by Chris Maynard of the Community of Mission Information Workers (CMIW) and via Skype by Todd Johnson. Philip's detailed agenda for that meeting made it possible for significant progress to be made with the planning for the sixth International Conference in 2011.

Larry Kraft's participation in the Brighton meeting of the Executive Committee was particularly important. Larry proposed the possibility of a venue in Brazil, the first time the Conference had been hosted in South America. In the only face-to-face meeting of the Executive Committee prior to the 2011 meeting, the group enthusiastically identified the 5-9th April 2011 as the most likely dates for the Conference. Sao Paulo and Iguassu were suggested as possible locations and Larry Kraft nominated a local planning committee with whom he was in regular contact.

At the July meeting, Philip and Peter Brierley were both keen to strengthen the links between the Researchers' Network and the leadership of the Lausanne Movement and consequently the executive Committee agreed to invite Doug Birdsall (CEO of the Lausanne Movement) to attend the Conference, with Todd Johnson and Bertil Ekstrom (Director of the World Evangelical Alliance's Mission Commission) as plenary speakers. Moreover, Philip highlighted the upcoming Lausanne Congress for World Evangelisation being held in Cape Town 2010 and noted that the Researchers' Conference would be the first major Lausanne gathering after the Cape Town meeting. He suggested that this pointed towards the need for a more intentional engagement of the Researchers' Network around strategic areas of Lausanne. Following this contribution from Philip, others suggested that it would be useful to have a member of the Lausanne Strategy Working Group attending the 2011 Conference.

With the major decisions taken or highlighted, the Committee members had time to introduce their current areas of research activity. These included the mapping of migration in Europe, a larger UK Churches Survey, leadership and discipleship among Muslim-background believers, work on the *World Christian Atlas*, and the triangulation of social scientific data sources with the figures published by global religious communities. Philip's contribution to this informal discussion highlighted his then current research focus on rural agricultural practices in Australia. He was particularly interested in finding out whether European agricultural techniques introduced into Australia over the previous century and a half were undermining all attempts to cultivate the land in a sustainable fashion.

When participants finally gathered for the 6th International Conference in Atibaia, Brazil, in 2011, Philip was serving as the Conference Chair. Characteristically he found time to prepare and present a paper based on his ongoing research work. His presentation, titled 'Commodification of Religion: World Trends', returned to the exploration of contemporary spirituality, drawing comparisons between the ISSP data for Australia and other participating countries. He noted that 'spirituality' as a self-description was far more common among young people and that the inner life, the individual ownership of the self-project, and consumerism were characteristic of these trends. Philip's passion for research has been equally well matched by his concern for its utility in pastoral and missional situations. He posed the question in Atibaia as to why these trends might be taking place and argued that the answers could be found in the greater emphasis on the use of critical faculties in education, the diminishing likelihood of children being raised in 'god-communities', and societies in which religion is seen as 'choice' rather than 'obligation' or 'duty'. All of this was accompanied by an increasing incredulity towards religious belief in a God. More optimistically, he noted that the movement towards faith typically followed an invitation from parents, in the face of a crisis, or an emerging sense of shared identity with a Christian community.

Throughout his involvement as an Executive Committee member and then as Chair of the Network, Philip has demonstrated a commitment to the twin tasks of organisation and academic presentation, contributing equally to both.

During the Atibaia meeting, on the 8th April, the Executive Committee met to take forward the activity of the Network and to begin planning for the 7th International Conference. Attending this meeting were Philip Hughes, Peter Brierley, Todd Johnson, John Baxter-Brown, Larry Kraft, Roy Wingerd, and Darrell Jackson. A date of 2014 was discussed with the possibility of a venue in Chiang Mai, Thailand, or Kisumu, Kenya.² It was at this meeting that Philip indicated that he would like to pass on the responsibility of chairing the network. The Executive Committee accepted his resignation from the position after warmly acknowledging his contribution to the development of this role. Darrell Jackson was appointed to succeed him.³

2. The dates of the 2014 meeting were left open until a final decision had been taken on the venue. Kisumu would eventually be deemed impractical and it was felt that a return to Chiang Mai was too soon after the 2001 Conference. After a lengthy process, Kuala Lumpur was identified as a suitable venue with Asia CMS identified as the local organising committee.
3. Darrell Jackson was serving as the Director of the Nova Research Centre, Redcliffe College UK, at this point although by the end of 2011, he announced his appointment to the faculty of Morling College, Sydney, as the Lecturer in Missiology.

The Seventh International Conference, Kuala Lumpur, 2015

As a continuing member of the Executive Committee, Philip continued to play a key organisational role in planning for the 7th International Conference, offering the services of his small CRA office staff for Conference registration.

At the Conference itself, Philip presented a paper titled ‘Measuring the Impact of Christian Faith on Society: A Contribution to Defending the Faith in Western Societies?’ He drew on the work of two International Social Survey Program (ISSP) surveys in 2008 and 2009 and identified three sets of responses that indicated popular views of organised religion. He concluded that

religious faith interacts with local cultures and customs, and is sometimes active in supporting and sometimes in challenging those cultures and customs. In some places, as has been noted, the Christian faith is seen as supporting patriarchal views of gender which lead men to believe that wife-beating may be sometimes justified. In other places, it challenges such views.

In offering his paper, Philip demonstrates a willingness to explore potentially provocative issues and to identify uncomfortable trends and issues revealed in the survey data. Philip’s carefully researched and well prepared presentation hinted at the complexities that lay at the heart of the work of the Royal Commission in Australia, particularly the issues of the relationship of religious faith and the abuse of children in the care of religious institutions.

He noted that while there were religious people who were highly intolerant of others, there were many other religious people who were highly tolerant. While there were religious people who use their religion as a pretext for violence, there were also many non-religious people who commit acts of violence and there were certainly many religious people whose faith inspires them to seek peace. He concluded that the impact of religion on people’s behaviour remains complex.

Philip’s ongoing commitment to the work of the Lausanne Researchers’ Network continues to be seen in his ongoing desire to engage in the work of the Executive Committee. His colleagues on the Executive have welcomed his ongoing engagement and this can be interpreted as a mark of the esteem in which Philip’s colleagues and peers hold him. His push to develop the network over the six years 2005-2011 demonstrated a form of leadership that was self-effacing and committed to serving the members of the Network.

Reflecting on his involvement in the Lausanne International Researchers’ Network over the years, Philip commented in a personal email that he

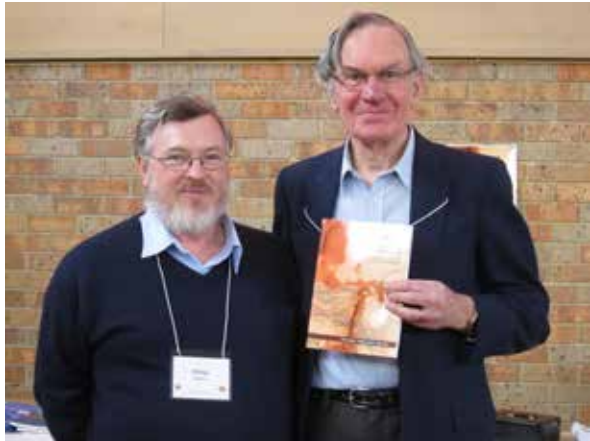
greatly valued connections with others in the [Executive] group... I think that involvement in the Network gave us some confidence that our work in the CRA was highly relevant to some of the issues that were being faced by others around the world, and that we had a contribution to make at the international level.

Philip’s outstanding contribution to the Lausanne Researchers’ Conference has consistently helped to establish the importance of intentionally making connections between the local and the global dimensions of common research problems and interests. He has done so in the company of equally committed researchers and Christian leaders and will doubtless continue to do so, God willing, as we prepare for the 8th International Conference, currently scheduled for our first ever meeting on the African continent in 2018.

Chapter 13. Comments from Prof Alan Black

*Alan W. Black**

Philip Hughes' review deals with the wide-ranging and multi-faceted intellectual journey that has marked his career, including his doctoral and post-doctoral research, his key role in the formation of the Christian Research Association, his collaboration in numerous research projects, his remarkable publication record, and his identification of issues for further research. I personally have valued his versatility, intellectual input and publication output in various research projects. It remains to be seen whether any one person has the academic background, breadth of vision, diverse skills and energy required to continue the work he has initiated and to pursue the agenda he has outlined for the future.



*Prof Alan Black and Rev Dr Philip Hughes
launching the book Spirit Matters , 2010.
(Photo by Hazel Hughes)*

Although I have now formally retired from my former position at Edith Cowan University, I have recently been asked to serve as the convener of a supervisory panel for a PhD student in the sociology of religion at Western Sydney University. The focus of the student's research is on the involvement of young people in a large Pentecostal church in Sydney. Inter alia, I am recommending that the student should read the present publication and some of Philip's previous work. In my view, social research is sharpened when one compares and contrasts a particular phenomenon with one or more alternative phenomena. Philip Hughes' research provides fine examples of such an approach.

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Chapter 14.

Appreciation to Philip Hughes and CRA

*Vivienne Mountain**

Philip's central concern regarding how the church can re-engage with the wider community is a matter of concern for all Christians. The church is called to be constantly reforming – “Semper Reformanda” (Groome, 1998,17). There is a call for Theological Reflection (Paver, 2006 and Whitehead and Whitehead, 1995) or Practising Critical Reflection (Fook & Gardner, 2007). Implicit assumptions, prejudice and bias because of individual experience can mislead. Teachings of the tradition also need careful analysis. As demonstrated in the case of Liberation Theology and Feminist Theology, the church needs to challenge itself regarding the place of tradition and support for the status quo, against the call of Christ to transform the society “your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:10).

I appreciated Philip's engagement with Richard Niebuhr's seminal work (1951), particularly his identification of the “Essential dimension” (8) of Christian faith relating to culture. The relational aspect of Christian spirituality links with “helping people make meaning” (the inner dimension of spirituality) as well as “seeking fulfilment” (the social/ environmental/numinous dimensions of spirituality). On one level the situation looks simple: the work of Jesus in compassion, healing and teaching guides us into the vision for ministry for the church today. However, when considering the church's concern with the whole society there is complexity. On the macro level the church must act to challenge society and cultural values such as selfish materialism, acceptance of violence and inequality. On the micro level, as we live in an age of individuality the church should offer people resources which will assist in life, “that will guide them and nurture them. They must address personal needs and fears, possibilities and challenges” (43).

The three pieces of research that I have had published by CRA have been completed with awareness of both the macro elements of educational influence and the micro elements of nurture and care.

In 2009 I was involved in a Church Council discussion at St Leonard's Uniting Church Brighton Beach. We were concerned about how the gospel message could be enacted, providing some kind of service of care and justice to the surrounding community. At that time I was School Chaplain at Firbank Girls Grammar School. Counselling was an important part of my role, so a counselling service was considered a possibility. This led to a research project investigating 12 counselling centres around Melbourne that were based in churches. I avoided the large welfare organisations that have grown from the church, such as Anglicare and Centacare, and identified a variety of local churches that provided counselling as part of their ministry of holistic health care. The churches selected came from a wide range of traditions: Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, Churches of Christ, Independent Pentecostal, Uniting Church and Salvation Army. The research included the stories of formation, services offered, mission, policy and procedure documentation, practical issues of finance and staffing and visions for best practice.

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This research led our church into establishing a “Centre of Living and Growing” involving a team of volunteers working together to provide psycho-education courses for children and adults experiencing grief and loss. We were modest in our vision using established material and training from the organisation “Seasons for Growth” (www.goodgrief.org.au). It was a gift from our church to our community with over 200 children and adults completing the program over a number of years.

Philip Hughes agreed to publish the research, providing much practical support and distribution options. It was published as a way to educate and encourage other churches who were looking for a mission activity involving counselling services to the wider community (Mountain, 2009).

Following a similar theme of the churches’ re-engagement with the wider community, in 2013 I became concerned that re-connection was needed for children and the church. In the past the church showed a vision of justice and care for children through campaigning for the rights of children, education for all and, in Australia, the setting up of kindergartens. The image of Jesus with the children is recognised and valued in stained glass, but the reality seemed far from this image. In many Protestant churches, children were relegated to a back room for Sunday School with largely untrained teachers so that the adult “church” could have quiet for the serious business of “worship”. Coupled with the media coverage of the child sexual abuse scandal it seemed this was the time for new awareness and action to support and value children.

At this time I was lecturing at the University of Divinity, Stirling Campus, providing units of study concerned with the spiritual life and welfare of children. The Child Theology Movement came to my attention as a personal challenge and calling (www.childtheology.org). The Movement centres on Jesus bringing the child to a place in the middle of theological debate, with the words “Unless you change and become like a child you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matt 18:5). This Scripture raises important questions: Who is the child? What is the place of the child in the church? What is the place of the child in the heart of God? It led to a new research project.

The research involved interviews with ministers and professional children’s pastors in eight different protestant churches regarding the relevance of ideas in the Child Theology Movement to the contemporary church. Thanks again to Philip Hughes and the CRA team who contributed to the guidance in transforming my work from academic thesis into a reader-friendly publication (Mountain, 2014).

Most recently I am thankful for the work of Philip and CRA in the publication of a second edition of my doctoral thesis. The thesis had originally been published overseas as a highly-priced academic text, with very limited sales and circulation. The research investigated children’s perceptions of the meaning and function of prayer. The 60 participants came from different schools. Most children came from schools teaching one of the faith traditions: Christian, Jewish and Islamic. However, one third of students came from schools with a secular philosophy with no teaching of faith. One finding showed the value of prayer for all of the participating children as a coping mechanism in the face of stress and the complexity of life. The work is a potential strong link between the church and the society concerned with the mental health of children.

This research is still a lone voice linking prayer, children’s spirituality and psychology.

The research continues to have much to say about the faith and hope of children and the responsibilities of adults to care for the needs of children.

After discussion with Philip the basic research was retained but in the second edition the discussion and findings were brought into a more contemporary setting with the addition of recent literature and research. Once again the work of CRA in publishing can be seen as a service to the church, presenting new ideas to stimulate discussion and change (Mountain 2016).

Part 3.
Applications of and Parallels
to the Work of the Christian
Research Association

Chapter 15.

Research That Helps Us Understand and Witness in our Social Context

*Bruce Kaye**

There is hardly a page of the New Testament that does not at some point refer to how Christians should live. The beatitudes paint a picture of a life-style that reflects the Kingdom of Jesus both proclaimed and embodied.

It is not enough to profess allegiance to Jesus. True allegiance is seen in action. ‘Not everyone who says to me “Lord Lord” will enter the kingdom of God, but those ... or if you hate your brother how can you...’

This theme runs strongly through the early years after Jesus’ death. It is exemplified in the martyrdom of Polycarp and elaborated in the letter to Diognetus.

They dwell in their own fatherlands, but as if sojourners in them; they share all things as citizens, and suffer all things as strangers. Every foreign country is their fatherland, and every fatherland is a foreign country. They marry as all men, they bear children, but they do not expose their offspring. They offer free hospitality, but guard their purity. Their lot is cast “in the flesh,” but they do not live “after the flesh”. They pass their time upon the earth, but they have their citizenship in heaven (Lake 1912, pp.359-361).

Beliefs and practices shape a life that witnesses to the kingdom of Jesus, which as he told Pilate, is not of this world.

This visible shape of the Christian calling to belong to Jesus is the primary witness to those whom Christians encounter in life.

Our thinking about how the Christian and the church display this primary witness needs constantly to be reassessed. The question of how the church relates to its host society has often been discussed under the heading of church / state relations. In part this is because of the influence over long centuries by the institutions of Christendom. In what we loosely call Christendom, the state was the partner of the church and the church was necessarily conceived of in its institutional form in order that it could be regarded as in the same institutional category as the particular state with whom it was in partnership. That way of conceptualizing the issue has been dominant in those church traditions where church state relations have been integral to their history and identity. The Treaty of Westphalia and its principle of *cuius regio cuius religio* set this in concrete for the churches



*Revd Dr Bruce Kaye AM speaking
at the 25th anniversary of the
Christian Research Association,
2010.*

(Photo by Tim Hughes)

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of the continental Reformation, but it had long been the pattern for the Holy Roman Empire and for Christians in England. The Royal Supremacy of the Tudors, which gave institutional shape to the English reformation is the pinnacle of this singular conception of sovereignty and the state.

That tradition has long since passed by. The idea of the government as the dominant and single expression of the communities of the nation is no longer with us. In Australia we live in a nation in which public institutions other than the parliament and the executive government have immense influence on the shape of national life. One only has to think of the power and influence of such public institutions as the Reserve Bank and the host of independent regulatory authorities that intervene at a variety of levels in community life. The court system, with its appellate peak in the High Court, is also independent of the Parliament. The government, parliament and courts all sit under the constitution which holds together the vast range of public institutions and centres of power and authority in order to serve and sustain the community.

The parliament and the government are undoubtedly crucial players in the protection of the community and in the sustaining of its life and character. But for most people their lives are also shaped most directly and immediately by the particular institutions within which they work, take their leisure and pursue their interests. The particular characteristics of the business corporation in which people work shape the understanding, and influence the character, of people's working lives to an extra-ordinary degree.

In his history of *The Life and Death of Democracy*, John Keane (2009) has drawn attention to the variety of social institutions that go to make up participation in society in democratic countries. These institutions provide a monitoring function in the institutional life of the nation. The pattern of a citizen's life in Australia is shaped by interactions with and within all sorts of institutions, a point to which HC Coombs drew attention long ago (Coombs 1970).

I want to approach this question of any critique of society therefore not from the point of view of what is going on internally in the church and how that might be applied to the different circumstances in the broader society. I think that is not an inappropriate thing to do. Certainly the church through its institutions has a responsibility to respond to the issues that arise for Australians. Churches should indeed have social issues committees or public affairs commissions in order not only to respond to public events and debates but also to inform the church community. However by approaching a question of witness in this way, that is to say from the perspective of the life of the church, runs the risk of privileging the inherited patterns of church life and thinking both in terms of their power structures and their priorities about the nature of social organisation.

Rather it seems to me that most Christians actually find themselves engaged day-to-day in trying to make sense of the circumstances of working in a small-business, a large corporation, a public service department, school, university or whatever. The challenge they face is how they should fulfil their obligations to their employers and colleagues and also, in the process, fulfil their obligations as Christians to witness to the faith that inspires their lives. We live in a culture where there are significant forces that pressure Christians into thinking not only that their faith is irrelevant in their day to day circumstances but in fact that it has no place there. Both those convictions are false, but just saying so is not an answer. The alternative conviction that a Christian's faith has a place and is relevant has to be demonstrated by the way Christians function in the actual locations they occupy in society.

In this respect I agree with the point made by John Calvin in the seventeenth century in

his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and then more recently by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Christifideles Laici*. First, John Calvin (1961, p.724):

the Lord bids each one of us in all life's action to look to his calling ... lest through our stupidity and rashness, everything be turned topsy turvey. He has appointed duties of every man in his particular way of life. And that no one may thoughtlessly transgress his limits, he has named various kinds of living callings ... it is enough if we know that the Lord's calling is in everything the beginning and foundation of well doing ... from this will arise also a singular consolation; that no task will be so sordid and base, provided you obey your calling in it, that it will not shine and be reckoned very precious in God's sight.¹

In 1988, John Paul II published an encyclical, the Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*. The Pope sought to take up the teaching of the Second Vatican Council and, in referring to it, stated:

In giving a response to the question who are the lay faithful, the Council went beyond previous interpretations which were predominantly negative. Instead it opened itself to a decidedly positive vision and displayed a basic intention of asserting the full belonging of the lay faithful to the Church and to its mystery. At the same time it insisted on the unique character of their vocation, which is in a special way, to 'seek the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God.' ... Vocation of the lay faithful to holiness implies that life according to the Spirit expresses itself in a particular way in their involvement in temporal affairs and in their participation in earthly activities (John Paul II 1989, pp.25 and 41f).

Both Calvin and Pope John Paul II focus on the divine vocation of the laity in their work and life in society not on what they might do in church.²

I want to ask how might social research of the kind done by the Christian Research Association contribute to a more effective witness for Christians in our multi institutional and variegated community. I want to look at occasions, where life happens, and also agency, how are Christians effectively motivated and shaped in their witness in these occasions.

Occasions

It seems to me that there are three areas that warrant attention in this discussion; what I will call public institutions, civic institutions and social institutions.

By public institutions I mean those institutions that have been established by the community as a whole primarily through the action of government. What I have in mind here are such things as those financial institutions upon which our society is based,

1. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, originally published by Calvin in 1536 but later much revised and enlarged. The quotation is taken from the English translation of the 1559 Latin Text by F.L. Battles, London, 1961. (2 Vols.) collated with earlier versions. See Book 3.10.6. Volume L p 724. A useful discussion of Calvin's view on Christian vocation can be found in Wallace (1959). 'Moreover, in our earthly toil not only does the call of God reach us so that toil becomes a divine vocation directed by Him, but also the hand of God is stretched out to us assuring us that our labour will bear fruit.' p 155. Max Weber involved Calvin's name in his association of Protestantism and capitalism. Without engaging in the whole thesis of his essay, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London, 1930, it is fair to say that the specific theological character of Calvin's conception of vocation is not well represented in it. Calvin saw an almost necessary connection between Christian vocation and suffering. See for example, Green (1959) and Viner (1972).
2. I used these quotations in a previous essay on this theme (Kaye 1996).

business corporations, financial institutions such as banks and the stock exchange, the Reserve Bank of Australia and the various arms of government federal, state and municipal government and the justice system of the courts and law enforcement agencies.

In the last decade of the twentieth century the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University conducted a project on the 'Reshaping of Australian Institutions'. A series of books were published through Cambridge University Press. In the Introduction to the last volume Geoffrey Brennan and Francis D Castles reviewed the work. They noted a consensus that

something significant had been happening in Australian institutional life over the last two decades or so – a kind of institutional repositioning, a move to a more 'competitive' institutional order increasingly like that of the United States and increasingly unlike the Australian egalitarianism of the past ... In any event there seems to be widespread agreement that there has been a change, that the change is significant, and that it is to be identified as essentially an "institutional" matter (Brennan and Castles 2002, p.1f.).

They suggest a variety of possible causes for this change. Two things seem to me to both reflect this change and to contribute to it.

The first has to do with the adoption of a national competition policy. The operation of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)³ began in 1995 on the basis of the Hilmer report on competition in Australia.⁴ That report proposed competition as the principle of operation for commercial activity, and there were some implication about its wider significance in other areas. The ACCC has become a significant player in commercial activity in Australia.

The Hilmer approach came after a vigorous debate in the corporate world led by people like Milton Friedman in the United States and the so-called economic rationalists about the purpose of business, that is to say the purpose for which corporate entities exist under the law. The slogan was 'the business of business is business' that is to say making profits and returning a yield to the owners, the shareholders.⁵

The history of limited liability for corporations, however, sets the matter in a somewhat different light (Orhniel 1982). In the middle of the 19th century governments became aware that the development of the industrial revolution needed capital. Large-scale business activity was needed to enable society to provide goods and services and there needed to be ways of persuading people that it was worthwhile investing in projects of development without risking their whole livelihoods. So limited liability for corporations was introduced as a trade-off for the social good of providing goods and services for the benefit of the community in which those corporations existed. The argument that the corporation exists for the purposes of making a profit for the benefit of the owners is a hollowing out of the institution's social and moral principle that limited liability was established to provide, namely the public good.

For anyone working in a large corporation with almost any level of responsibility will be influenced by their view of the purpose for which the corporation exists and that

4. *National Competition Policy*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1993. <http://ncc.ncc.gov.au/docs/Hilmer-001.pdf> accessed 26 August 2010. The opening statement of the report sets out the social agenda. 'If Australia is to prosper as a nation, and maintain and improve living standards and opportunities for its people, it has no choice but to improve the productivity and international competitiveness of its firms and institutions. Australian organisations, irrespective of their size, location or ownership, must become more efficient, more innovative and more flexible.'
5. Things of course have never been as simple as that. See the variations in corporate history in Chandler 1977.

will make a great deal of difference to the way you exercise your responsibilities in the corporation. There is a world of difference between saying that a corporation needs to balance its books, even to make a profit, and saying that that is the purpose for which the corporation exists. You might as well say that the human organism must breathe in order to exist and therefore it exists in order to breathe. A Christian in such a situation who wishes to be able to give an appropriate explanation of their faith will need to have access to a Christianly informed understanding of these underlying issues for life in a corporation.

In a series of legislative changes begun in 1983 pension and superannuation laws in Australia were radically changed. One aspect of these changes was that superannuation became portable. This meant that for the first time people had a right to take their superannuation savings when they changed their employment. One consequence of this was that the average tenure of middle management in large corporations diminished very significantly. It was the beginning of the end of single career employment. That simple change, justified on many laudable social and economic grounds, has had a fundamental influence upon the character of the culture in large institutions. It was easy in the previous arrangements for “the way we do things here” to be well known simply by the passing of time, since most people spent a lot of time in the same corporation. This no longer applied and corporations had to develop culture transmission programmes and codes of ethics. The new challenge arose because of a simple change in an institutional arrangement.

In that context the way in which those values and cultural elements were developed went largely undiscussed by churches because they did not inform themselves as to what was going on or how it might affect a Christian view of humanity or social life.

It is a strange and sad irony that the Christians who did know about these things, that is to say those in the work place, did not have available to them the kinds of theological and research assistance which might have enabled them better to respond as Christian people to the changing circumstances. They had to fend for themselves while the churches, especially the institutional churches, were preoccupied with their own existence and activities.⁶

Where have the churches been in the underlying values for which such public institutions exist in our society? There are a multitude of public institutions that sustain the life of this nation. The difficulty for the Christian and for the churches is that the reality of the actual circumstances for those who inhabit these institutions are not the subject of serious analysis nor the subject of serious interpretive research from a Christian perspective. This means that Christians in these situations do not have appropriate help in seeking to witness effectively in their daily lives nor the tools to enable them to contribute to the life and character of the culture within those institutions.

Civic Institutions

I have in mind here institutions such as the family, marriage and voluntary organisations of one kind or another. In 1993 Hugh MacKay published a book called *Reinventing Australia* in which he outlined the immense social changes that had taken place in

6. It was a time of decline in church attendance numbers and the beginning of serious social research on the crisis in the churches. It was in this period the Christian Research Association and the National Church Survey came into existence.

Australian society. Those changes were undertaken for all sorts of social reasons. Divorce was made easier because of malfunctioning monogamy, and the conviction that women should be able to pursue careers so that their lives might have the opportunity along with men of equal fulfilment. These were reasonable and eminently defensible considerations in themselves. The influence of these changes upon the character of family life and the dynamics of marriage were not however as easily foreseen nor were they as easily addressed.

In an article on 21st August 2010 in the *Sydney Morning Herald* Hugh MacKay returned to the question of generational change with an article on 'What's right with gen Y'. He drew attention to a number of their characteristics; their powerful tribalism, their assertiveness, their flexibility in keeping their options open. 'If you grow up in a society where the rate of change – social, economic, technological - is faster than ever before and keeps accelerating, how should you respond? Wouldn't it be a good idea to keep your options open - whether you're talking about a course of study, a job, sexual partner, a fashion label, a set of religious beliefs or a musical genre?' Just as the institutional changes take place, so do the options for life decisions change. The current debate about the restriction of marriage to heterosexual couples is a good example of the kinds of social changes that often go inadequately analysed and as a result Christians and others are left with generalisations that are often misleading and unhelpful.

Social Institutions

By social institutions I mean those voluntary organisations that enable us to engage in organised sport, leisure and service in our communities. In one sense they are the cultural surplus of society. They are places where our herd instincts are satisfied and where Christians are called upon to witness to their faith in appropriate ways.

The point I want to underline in this discussion is that the greater part of Christian witness in our society takes place necessarily within the framework of the public, civic and social institutions that go to make up the human shape of this nation.

Of course the church is an important community for the nurturing of faith, the proclamation of the Gospel and the celebration of Christian sacraments. However the real witness of Christian people is the less visible activity that takes place at work, in social life, leisure and in the family. That is in the institutions of our society.

It is therefore imperative that these frameworks within which we have to witness to Christ are well understood and so that we are able to identify what is really important in our activities in these institutions so that how we might live as Christians in these institutions.

Agency

There are at least two other factors that influence the way in which people respond, including Christians. We all come to internalise as our values those principles that are implicit in the actions that we habitually undertake. The Christian church has understood this point for centuries. It lies behind the practices of the sacraments, hearing the gospel preached, prayer, and of attending to the Scriptures. But at the same time it is also true that the institutions which we inhabit, public, civic and social, also contain values upon which they are based and are tacit in their organisational arrangements. In time those who inhabit these institutions come to internalise these values. Perhaps in part this is what Paul had in mind when he talked about the 'schema' of this age (Romans 12.2).

Whether that is so or not it remains the case that if Christians are to be faithful and witness to Christ they will need to do so in the context of competing pressures embedded in the institutional circumstances in which they find themselves.

Of course the church as a community that exists over time also provides the opportunity for socialisation into the Christian virtues, into the practice of effective witness. However if it does that only in the context of its own ecclesiastical assumptions without reference to the world in which Christians are called to witness then it will not necessarily, perhaps not even at all, assist Christians in their fundamental vocation.

No matter what particular ecclesial tradition we belong to we will still need to understand the character of the realities that face us in the lives that we live as inhabitants of our public, civic and social institutions. Christian research which is perceptively interpretive of social arrangements and structures seems to me to be vital if we are to act out our critique of the culture in which we live and to witness to the Christ to whom we belong. The interpretative aspect of the work of the Christian Research Association has been both distinctive in the field and so valuable to Christians in their endeavour to understand their society.

If our various churches focus their activity and research on sustaining or rejuvenating their ecclesial activities, numbers, vitality or growth and go no further, then they are very likely to turn out to have been hollowed out of the reason for their existence and they will be found to produce hollow men and women.

It is not enough, of course, simply to provide some research that helps us understand how society and its institutions work. Christians need also to be helped to see how that understanding can be put into practice in their own actual life circumstances. It is often suggested that mission, and this often means evangelisation, or in church growth terms marketing, is the first priority of the church. By growing through outreach the church will survive and God will be glorified. This seems to me totally wrong-headed. The task of the church is to worship God through the way it, as a community, and Christians as individuals, live godly lives and witness to the hope that is within them. The ministry of the church in this context is to grow Christians in their faith and life. How Christians are enabled by any and every means to live lives that are manifestly Christian in the actual lived contexts that shape their lives is the crucial question for churches. The kind of research that is needed for this must be directed to the social context and its challenges and thus not simply empirically descriptive or analytical, but theologically informed. Not only social research is needed but also rigorous engaged contextual theology.

Chapter 16.

The Art of Listening

*Adrian Blenkinsop**

I was at a conference in Malaysia in 2010, hearing from different global mission organisations of what they were doing in terms of engaging young people with scripture.

As I heard their stories, a consistent thread emerged. It was simply that each of them had committed to listening to the culture around them. Many of them had been ‘doing what they always did’, in terms of ministry to young people, and had only recently stopped and asked the question ‘why are we doing what we’re doing?’, and then asked ‘what are our assumptions in what we’re doing?’

It’s a pretty brave question to ask, and it took the form of research for each of these organisations. For some of them, the research indicated they were not meaningfully engaging their young people – even though they thought they were – and that significant changes were needed in order for them to re-connect with young people.

I was challenged by the question ‘how are we (Bible Society Australia) listening to Australian young people, and how much of what we are doing is based on wrong assumptions?’

So I requested, and was given the opportunity to gather a group of national partners, and commission Christian Research Australia to do 18 months of research into Australian young people and the Bible. It was the first time that research focusing on Bible engagement amongst young Australians had been commissioned.

The research project covered every state in Australia, and the team spoke with 103 groups of young people (both Christian and non-Christian) aged 12-24 with a connection to a church, chaplain or youth leader, as well as 69 youth leaders.

The big question we wanted to explore was ‘What’s the state of Bible engagement in Australia with youth and those who lead them?’

There were a number of areas we wanted to find out more about:

- What are the ways youth DO engage with the Bible?
- What are the catalysts and barriers for Bible engagement?
- What’s the role of youth leaders and youth groups in Bible engagement?
- What are the denominational differences between youth?
- What are the social drivers and opportunities for influencing youth culture?

While there were no huge surprises in the research findings, it did paint a very dire picture. In fact, it’s fair to say it indicated there was a crisis in regards to young Australians engaging with scripture. One significant thing that emerged was that young people who identify as Christians didn’t see the Bible as being of any importance in their faith – to the point where they indicated it just wasn’t ‘on their radar’. For many who were engaging with it, the Bible served as nothing more than a ‘book of personal comfort’.

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Essentially they had their 4 or 5 verses they went to in times of crisis in order to feel better, and to be assured that ‘God would make everything ok’.

Many of them were lacking the Bible engagement modeling and encouragement from their leaders and home environment, and there was a real disconnect between what they were reading in the Bible, and how they were living their lives.

I took this body of research, and ran a series of Bible engagement forums around Australia, with the intent to share it with youth influencers (youth leaders, chaplains, teachers and mission groups), and to hear their stories, and together begin to address this issue.

There were many stories of both challenges and wins from these youth influencers in engaging ‘screenagers’. Here are some of their comments.

Lots of my youth don’t view the Bible as something ‘good’. They see the Bible as being about what not-to-do, plus lots of the at-risk kids I’m connecting with at our inner-city mission just find the Bible really threatening. The language and style of vocabulary scares them.

In my experience working at a state level, young people are more an oral culture, not a literate one. This means that youth often won’t read, but will listen. Hence good storytelling engages them.

So, I’m preaching at youth group, and there’s the group of boys on Facebook, there’s the kids sending text messages to each other, and there’s the group of girls trying to discreetly take pics of each other on Instagram. How can I compete with so many technological distractions!

This comment captured one of the issues our research found:

In our youth ministry we constantly battle the ‘me’ focus – that is, kids will read the Bible for what they can get out of it. There is a tendency to see the Bible as God’s letter to them, not as a bigger story. It’s such a consumerist way of reading the Bible.

Many also commented on the challenge of supporting, and encouraging Bible engagement in the home, and a youth leader wrote:

We’ve got lots of great Christian families in our church, but so many of them struggle to read the Bible at home. So we’re encouraging kids to get into the Bible at youth group, but in the home it’s not even talked about!

And the need to be creative in youth Bible engagement was bought out by this comment:

Working with a Mission organisation I work with lots of different youth leaders, and the most common ‘issue’ I encounter is leaders who have no imagination when it comes to getting their kids into the Bible. The old ‘stand and deliver’ model of Bible study DOESN’T engage a young person anymore!

These conversations mirrored the research findings, and together painted a clear picture of the challenges in engaging young people with scripture. One of these was that young people often have complex questions of the Bible – both in terms of the context of a passage, but also of exploring its message. There’s a tendency for leaders to offer easy answers to complex questions. And we found that when leaders don’t offer those easy answers, but actually encourage peer-to-peer engagement, it gives license back to the young people to explore it together, and hear from each other of what they think, and what God might be saying to them through it. It creates a deeper sense of ownership of both scripture, and their faith journey for that young person.

I term it ‘creating the itch, not scratching it’.

It’s a challenge for leaders however, and it involves equipping their young people with

the ‘tools’ – or simple interpreting skills – to find meaning in scripture themselves, as opposed to simply ‘being told’ what a passage means.

The stories of what IS working were also varied, and I found this story a great example of the approach to Bible engagement that needs to be encouraged and shared:

When we involve our whole body in the process of Bible engagement, many more young people ‘get it’ than when we use just auditory or visual methods. It can be as simple as going for a run before reading a New Testament passage about seeing life as running a race (i.e. 1 Corinthians 9, Hebrews 12) or standing on a shore reading any of the stories of Jesus and his disciples and boats. (i.e.: John 21, Mark 6). With the breeze in their faces and waves lapping at their feet, the stories can surprise and engage our young people in new ways.

This process of researching – or intentionally ‘listening’ to Australian young people – and then engaging youth influencers across Australia in responding to the challenges, caused Bible Society Australia to reflect on what we were doing, and why we were doing it.

At the same time we were re-thinking these things, we published a book. Taking the findings from the research and the forums, as well as my own thoughts, *The Bible according to Gen Z* was published in October 2013. It’s now into its 4th print run, which has been a great surprise, and has proven to be a vital resource for both understanding youth (Generation Z), and to read of case studies of effective Bible engagement approaches.

We also made some significant changes to our Bible engagement strategy.

At the heart of it was the desire to see scripture engagement as not about the acquiring of right information, or Bible knowledge (ie: what you need to know in order to live as a Christian), but rather, how does the big story of the Bible influence and shape how we live our lives and interact with the world around us.

We began to source the innovative, creative, ‘out there’ ways that were being used in youth Bible engagement, and we shared them with youth influencers. We partnered with individuals and groups who were focused on enabling young people to ‘experience’ the Bible in community– not just read it in isolation. We began developing resources aimed at equipping young people with the skills to make sense of scripture for themselves: simple hermeneutical tools that help them understand the context and culture behind a passage or story. And then young people are asked ‘what might God be saying to us today through this passage?’

And we offered practical training and support to youth leaders, chaplains and Christian teachers around understanding and engaging young people. The challenges of doing ministry in a post-Christian society, where consumerism influences everything (especially around reading the Bible for what it says to ‘me’), and where individualism means that young Christians believe it’s actually ‘important’ to pick and choose elements from all faiths, has dramatically re-shaped how young people view and interact with scripture.

The Bible Society has historically focused on getting scripture into the hands of people in a language they can understand and at a price they can afford, and to help them engage with it. It has meant we have had to discard some of the approaches previously used.

We know that peer-to-peer ministry is powerful, and that young people always have questions – about life in general, about faith and about God and the Bible. Creating spaces where young people can explore the Bible as narrative, in community, and with raw honesty is a key focus for us.

With that in mind, one of the resources we have build is an app that enables young people

around the world to post questions, and have live interactions with each other, and with a global community of young Christians who share responses via short videos (Vlogs). It's called 'Qbla' (as in 'question: bla bla bla'). It's a really simple idea, but a radically different approach for us, because we're not seeking to control the responses, or manufacture anything. You can find out more at www.qbla.Biblesociety.org.au, and see other resources, articles and links at www.youth.biblesociety.org.au

So, we have much to thank Philip Hughes and CRA for. If scripture is central to the discipleship journey for believers (young and old), then we need to be continually encouraging people to engage with scripture in life-giving ways, and in ways that are formed through firstly 'listening' to our culture.

Chapter 17.

Using Psychology to Inform Local Church Practice

*Thomas M. Edwards PhD**

It is a pleasure to be able to offer a comment on Dr Philip Hughes' work, especially at the time of his retirement from the Christian Research Association. As I am neither a theologian, nor a sociologist, I initially wondered what I may be able to contribute. However, as I read his substantial paper I became aware of two things: (1) that many of Dr Hughes' reflections were validated by my own experience of coming to faith and church attendance over the last 20+ years; and (2) that many of his observations have a psychological element. To the extent that this second point is true I feel able to comment given my own academic journey.

As a general observation it is important to first note the massive shifts in Australian culture from the 1960s and 1970s to today. Dr Hughes sums this up by stating that people have shifted "...from seeing the world as a system, in which each individual had to abide by certain rules, to seeing the world as a maze, which each individual had to personally negotiate" (p.24). Even as a general point, this has striking implications for the local church. One obvious concern being the effectiveness of Sunday worship when decisions about worship methods/style, preaching and fellowship are made by older authority figures, but impact Generation Y and Millennials.

That the local church may be missing the mark for both a proportion of its congregation, and failing in some evangelistic activities, becomes even more apparent when we compare and contrast how people engage the world as a consequence of childhood experiences. Dr Hughes comments "If one experiences the world as a highly orderly place in childhood, one grows with that expectation that there is an underlying order in everything that happens. On the other hand, if one experiences the world as a disordered maze of unique experiences in childhood, then a child grows to expect the unexpected"(p.57). Again, he sets-up a contrast between two types of people which may have far reaching implications for the effectiveness of local churches.

In saying this, my concern is not so much for the relationship between congregants who worship/fellowship together on a Sunday, as they share a broad equality in power relationships. What I do question is: (1) Whether ordination candidates predominantly come from 'ordered' homes having a well systematised world-view? (2) Whether training institutions prepare ordination candidates sufficiently to engage "...the world as a maze..."? (3) The implication for a local church, when it appoints a new pastor, is whether that pastor shares in the congregation's worldview.

In sum, Dr Hughes provides for us a rich legacy charting the changing face of Australian

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society and its dynamic relationship with the church. I am pleased to be able to provide this brief comment and congratulate him for impacting disciplines beyond his own.



Philip Hughes with UK researchers, Leslie Francis, Mandy Robbins, and Phillip Escott at a meeting of the International Society of the Sociology of Religion at Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 2009. (Photo by Bob Dixon.)

Chapter 18.

Psychological Temperament and Religious Orientation: An Empirical Enquiry among Australian Church Leaders

*Leslie J Francis**

Ruth Powell

Andrew Village

Introduction

In the opening essay in this volume, Philip Hughes narrates the remarkable story of the trajectory of the Christian Research Association in Australia over a thirty-year period (1985-2015), a trajectory closely associated with his own personal vision, inspiration, and academic skills. In recognition and celebration of Philip's remarkable achievement, this chapter has been crafted to link with aspects of Philip's earlier work. The first link is with NCLS Research. Dr Peter Kaldor was instrumental in founding both CRA and NCLS Research, two complementary research organisations that have each shared a strong collaborative ecumenical base. Over the years, Philip has collaborated with members of the NCLS Research team on multiple projects, including major Australian Research Council linkage grant projects, such as the Australian Community Survey (1998) and the Security and Wellbeing project (2002). Some books and major research papers resulting from this collaboration include *Why People Don't Go to Church* (Bellamy, Black, Castle, Hughes, & Kaldor, 2002); *Building Stronger Communities* (Hughes, Black, Kaldor, Bellamy, & Castle, 2007), and *Spirit Matters* (Kaldor, P., Hughes, P., & Black, A, 2010). (This chapter draws on current research undertaken by NCLS Research.

The second link is with research conducted among church leaders. In 1987 Philip was responsible for designing a detailed survey sampling church leaders from across five groups of denominations: Anglicans, Baptists, Catholics, Pentecostals, and Uniting Church in Australia. As well as providing a demographic profile of the clergy, Philip's data enabled him to discuss the following themes in his book *The Australian Clergy* (Hughes, 1989): the faith of the clergy, ministry in the Church, the exercise of ministry, resources for ministry, and the clergy as representatives of God. He employed the 1993 International Social Survey Program to review community attitudes to churches and clergy. Another key theme for CRA research was the role of leadership in rural churches. Building on these foundations, the present chapter employs psychological type theory to illuminate differences in faith style and personal profile among church leaders in Australia.

Psychological type theory, as originally proposed by Jung (1971) and developed within the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985) defined four core psychological

* Rev'd Prof Canon Leslie Francis is based at the University of Warwick, UK. Prof Ruth Powell is director of NCLS Research, Australia, and Rev Dr Andrew Village is at St John University, York, UK.

constructs, each of which is expressed by two opposing characteristics: two orientations defined as extraversion (E) and introversion (I); two perceiving functions defined as sensing (S) and intuition (N); two judging functions defined as thinking (T) and feeling (F); and two attitudes defined as judging (J) and perceiving (P). Drawing on these basic building blocks of psychological type theory, Keirsey and Bates (1978) proposed a typology distinguishing between four temperaments characterised as the Epimethean Temperament (SJ), the Dionysian Temperament (SP), the Promethean Temperament (NT), and the Apollonian Temperament (NF).

Psychological Temperament

Oswald and Kroeger (1988) build on Keirsey and Bates' (1978) characterisation of the four temperaments to create profiles of how these temperaments may shape four very different styles of religious leadership. The Epimethean Temperament (the SJ profile) describes people who long to be dutiful and to be useful to the social units to which they belong. SJ clergy tend to be the most traditional of all church leaders. They wish to protect and conserve traditions inherited from the past, longing for stability and continuity. They embrace simple and straightforward faith, endorsing practical rules for the Christian life.

The Dionysian Temperament (the SP profile) describes people who want to be engaged, involved, and doing new things. SP clergy tend to be the most fun loving of all church leaders. They have little need for or interest in the abstract, the theoretical, and the non-practical aspects of theology and church life. They want to bring the church to life with activities for everyone from cradle to the end of life. They are entertainers and performers at heart. They are better at starting new initiatives than seeing things through.

The Promethean Temperament (the NT profile) describes people who want to understand, explain, shape and predict realities and who prize personal competence. NT clergy tend to be the most academically and intellectually grounded of all church leaders. They are visionaries who enjoy academic study and the analysis of faith. They are motivated by the research for truth, for meaning, and for possibilities. They are more concerned with pursuing truth than promoting harmony and compromise.

The Apollonian Temperament (the NF profile) describes people who quest for personal authenticity and for self-actualisation. NF clergy tend to be the most idealistic and romantic of all church leaders. They are attracted to helping others and to dealing with human suffering. They are inspiring communicators, who influence others by touching their hearts. They are good listeners, showing real empathetic capacity and care for others.

This theoretical model of clergy temperament constructed by Oswald and Kroeger (1988) has been employed in a series of recent studies concerned to model trends within or between Christian denominations. Within this context particular interest has been shown in charting the incidence of the SJ clergy profile. One set of studies, drawn together by Francis and Crea (2015), has charted the strength of the SJ profile among Catholic priests, accounting for 62% of priests in the USA (Burns, Francis, Village, & Robbins, 2013), 68% of priests in Australia (Francis, Powell, & Robbins, 2012) and for 76% of priests in Italy (Francis & Crea, 2015). A second set of studies has charted the strength of the SJ profile among Ordained Local Ministers in the Church of England, accounting for 56% in a mixed sample of men and women reported by Francis and Holmes (2011), for 57% among men and 54% among women in the study reported by Francis and Village (2012), and 65% among women in the study reported by Francis, Robbins, and Jones (2012).

Religious Orientation

While these two sets of studies have demonstrated the utility of Oswald and Kroeger's (1988) conceptualisation of clergy temperament for modelling and exploring differences within and between Christian denominations, they have not been able to test empirically the implications of these clergy temperament profiles for the exercise of ministry. One conceptual framework within which some implications for ministry may be tested is provided by religious orientation theory.

Religious orientation theory has its roots in the pioneering work of Allport (1966) and Allport and Ross (1967), who distinguished in their model between intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity. While these two constructs may not form a good fit for the situation of religious professionals, the third orientation added to the model by Batson and Ventis (1982) may offer real insight into a difference of importance among religious professionals. Alongside intrinsic religiosity and extrinsic religiosity Batson and Ventis (1982) added the notion of quest religiosity. The quest orientation gave recognition to a form of religiosity that embraces characteristics of complexity, doubt, tentativeness, and honesty in facing existential questions. According to Batson and Ventis an individual who approaches religion with the quest orientation:

recognises that he or she does not know, and probably never will know the final truth about such matters. But still the questions are deemed important, and, however tentative and subject to change, answers are sought (Batson & Ventis, 1982, p. 150).

Batson and Ventis (1982, p. 145) proposed a six-item instrument to measure the quest orientation. Subsequently, Batson and Schoenrade (1991a, 1991b) developed a longer 12-item instrument that dropped one of the original six items and introduced a further seven new items. More recently, within the New Indices of Religious Orientation (NIRO), Francis (2007) re-examined the conceptual basis for quest religiosity and proposed a nine-item instrument reflecting three components of this construct: existentialism, self-criticism, and openness to change. Each of the three components were reflected in three items. Example items are: My life experiences have led me to rethink my religious beliefs (existentialism); For me doubting is an important part of what it means to be religious (self-criticism); As I grow and change, I expect my religion to grow and change as well (openness to change).

Individual differences in levels of quest religiosity may shape important differences in approaches to religious leadership, in the interpretation of scripture, in proclamation, preaching and teaching, in approaches to doctrine, tradition, moral teaching and in missional engagement. Temperament theory generates the hypothesis that SJ church leaders (the Epimethean Temperament) would be less likely than the other three temperaments to espouse the quest religious orientation, being themselves more closely attracted to the certainty offered by the tradition. Two recent studies, conducted among churchgoers rather than church leaders lend weight to this hypothesis. In the first study, conducted among 390 individuals attending a Christmas carol service in an Anglican cathedral, Walker (2015) reported a significantly lower mean score on the quest orientation recorded by the SJ Epimethean Temperament than by the other three temperaments combined. In the second study, conducted among 511 participants in services at Southwark Cathedral in South London, Francis, and Lankshear (in press) reported the same finding.

Research Question

Against this background, the aim of the present study was to explore the psychological temperament of church leaders in Australia and to test the hypothesis that church leaders displaying the SJ Epimethean Temperament are less likely to espouse the quest religious orientation.

Data to test these research questions are available through the Leaders Survey administered within the 2011 Australian National Church Life Survey (NCLS). The Australian National Church Life Survey is now a well-established instrument for assessing the opinions and attitudes of churchgoers and church leaders across a wide range of Christian denominations. Surveys have been conducted in 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011, and the findings have been widely disseminated (Kaldor, Bellamy, Correy, & Powell, 1992; Kaldor, Bellamy, Moore, Powell, Castle, & Correy, 1995; Kaldor, Bellamy, Powell, Hughes, & Castle, 1997; Kaldor, Bellamy, Powell, Castle, & Hughes, 1999; Kaldor, Dixon, Powell, Bellamy, Hughes, Moore, & Dalziel, 1999; Bellamy, Cussen, Sterland, Castle, Powell, & Kaldor, 2006; Kaldor & McLean, 2009; Powell, Bellamy, Sterland, Jacka, Pepper and Brady, 2012; Pepper, Sterland, & Powell, 2015; Powell & Robbins, 2015).

Method

Procedure

In 2011, 3,100 local churches from 23 denominations took part in the National Church Life Survey, which represents 25% of the estimated number of local churches in Australia (not including Orthodox, independent and house churches). (See Pepper, Powell, Sterland and Hancock for a methodological overview, under review). In 2011, one of the four variants of the Leaders Survey (Form LS2) included a set of questions relating to religious experience.

Participants

This analysis is based on 1,285 church leaders who provided data in respect of all the relevant variables. Of these 1,285 leaders, 55% were Mainstream Protestant, 26% Other Protestant, 5% Roman Catholic, and 6% Pentecostal. Their average age was 52.0 years ($SD = 13.7$); 64% were male, 62% were educated to degree level or above, and 14% had only school level qualifications.

Instruments

Quest religious orientation was assessed by the six item short form of the quest orientation proposed by the New Indices of Religious Orientation (NIRO: Francis, 2007). This short measure included two items representative of each of the three components of quest religious orientation that comprised the parent instrument: existentialism, self-criticism, and openness to change. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the six items on a five-point scale, from strongly disagree (1), through neutral/unsure (3) to strongly agree (5). Scale scores on this measure ranged from 6 to 30.

Psychological type was assessed by the 40 item Francis Psychological Type Scales (FPTS: Francis, 2005). This instrument comprises four sets of 10 forced-choice items related to each of the four components of psychological type theory: orientation (extraversion and

introversion), perceiving process (sensing and intuition), judging process (thinking and feeling), and attitude toward the outer world (judging and perceiving). Participants were asked to select the 'characteristic which is closer to the real you, even if you feel both characteristics apply to you. Mark the characteristic that reflects the real you, even if other people see you differently'. Each set of 10 items generates two scale scores ranging from 0 to 10, and in each case the two scores sum to 10.

Results

The first step in the data analysis explored the internal consistency reliability in terms of the alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951) for the six scales employed in the study: extraversion, $\alpha = .80$; intuition, $\alpha = .78$; feeling, $\alpha = .68$; perceiving, $\alpha = .76$; quest religious orientation, $\alpha = .72$; mystical orientation, $\alpha = .88$.

Table 1. Mean quest score by psychological temperament

| Temperament | N | Mean | SD | 95% CI |
|--------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|---------------|
| SJ Epimethean | 811 | 18.2 | 4.2 | 17.9 - 18.4 |
| SP Dionysian | 66 | 19.4 | 4.3 | 18.4 - 20.5 |
| NT Promethean | 184 | 18.8 | 4.4 | 18.1 - 19.4 |
| NF Apollonian | 224 | 20.0 | 4.1 | 19.4 - 20.5 |
| Total | 1285 | 18.6 | 4.3 | 18.4 - 18.9 |

Table 1 presents the numbers of the 1,285 participating church leaders who reported each of the four psychological temperaments. These data demonstrate that 811 reported SJ Epimethean Temperament (63%), 224 reported NF Apollonian Temperament (17%), 184 reported NT Promethean Temperament (14%), and 66 reported SP Dionysian Temperament (5%).

Table 1 also presents the mean quest scores by psychological temperament. These four mean scores were found to be significantly different ($F = 11.7, p < .001$). The SJ Epimethean church leaders recorded the lowest mean score of all the four temperament groups, and the NF Apollonian the highest. The post hoc Bonferroni test confirmed that the mean scores recorded by the SJ Epimethean church leaders were significantly lower than the mean scores recorded by the NF Apollonian church leaders ($p < .001$), but not significantly different from the SP Dionysian or NT Promethian church leaders. Mean scores for NF Apollonian church leaders were significantly higher than those for SJ Epimethean ($p < .001$) or NT Promethian ($p < .03$) church leaders.

Conclusion

This study set out to address two research questions. The first research question, building on Keirse and Bates' (1978) differentiation among four core psychological temperaments, explored the distribution of these four temperaments among church leaders in Australia. The data demonstrated that nearly two-thirds of the 1,285 church leaders participating in the 2011 Australian National Church Life Survey reported the SJ Epimethean Temperament (63%). The predominance of the SJ Epimethean Temperament among church leaders in Australia is consistent with the general picture produced by other recent studies that have applied this typology to religious professionals as reviewed in the introduction to the paper. By way of contextualisation, of the remaining 37% of church leaders, 17% reported as NF Apollonian Temperament, 14% as NT Promethean Temperament, and 5% as SP Dionysian Temperament.

The second research question, building on Oswald and Kroeger's (1988) application of temperament theory to clergy, tested the hypothesis that SJ church leaders (the Epimethean Temperament) would be less likely than the other three temperaments to espouse the quest religious orientation, being themselves more closely attracted to the certainty offered by the tradition. The data provided by 1,285 church leaders participating in the 2011 Australian National Church Life Survey demonstrated that the SJ Epimethean church leaders recorded the lowest mean quest scores among all four temperaments. This finding is consistent with the findings from two earlier studies conducted among churchgoers (Walker, 2015; Francis & Lankshear, in press).

The findings from the present study do, however, go beyond the findings of the two earlier studies reported by Walker (2015) and Francis and Lankshear (in press). These two studies tested the comparison between SJ participants (the Epimethean Temperament) and participants exemplifying the other three temperaments considered together. The present study, working with a much larger sample of participants (1,285, compared with 390 and 511) was able to set out quest scores for all four temperaments considered separately. The data show that NF participants (the Apollonian Temperament) recorded the highest quest score. This finding is consistent with the conceptualisation of the Apollonian Temperament as being concerned with the quest for personal authenticity and the quest for self-actualisation. Here are people open to experiencing change in the pursuit of such quests.

This association between psychological temperament and quest religious orientation among church leaders is important for two reasons. The first reason is primarily of academic interest. Here is some empirical evidence validating the theoretically derived models produced by Oswald and Kroeger (1988). Church leaders displaying the SJ Epimethean Temperament record the lowest mean score on the quest orientation. Future studies should now build on the model established by the present project, but employing a diverse range of measures to establish a more broadly-based picture of the distinctive strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities of different psychological temperaments engaged in religious leadership.

Much of Philip's work through CRA has utilised empirical tools to understand the changing Australian context. A key underlying question has been to ask how the church should change in order to communicate with the community in which it exists. How can the church begin to re-connect with people - particularly the a-religious group of Australians - when there is little interest in the 'Good News'? The second reason for the importance of the key finding from the present study is primarily of applied interest.

Church leaders who bring quest religious orientation to their ministry are likely to display and to proclaim a distinctive expression of the Christian Gospel that remains less tightly bound to tradition, and is more critically open to the interpretation of scripture, the assessment of established doctrine, and the application of moral teaching and behaviour. Church leaders who espouse the quest religious orientation may at one and the same time be less acceptable to established church leaders and more accessible to those standing on the edge of, or even beyond church life. These are the people that Philip has cared for deeply and consistently, as he has used his gifts and experiences to serve God, the community and the churches.



Philip Hughes and Darren Cronshaw at the launch of Baptists in Australia: A Church with a Heritage and a Future (2013). (Photo from the Baptist Union of Victoria, used with permission.)

Chapter 19.

Training Next Generation Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Baptist Leaders for Mission¹

*Darren Cronshaw**

The Baptist Union of Victoria (BUV) has three strategic priorities for our current season of ministry: to develop pioneering leaders, to connect better with younger generations and to embrace cultural diversity. This chapter begins to explore issues for BUV in addressing these priorities through training next generation immigrant leaders, especially Karen and Chin from Burma (Myanmar). The chapter is based on an overview of the Christian Research Association literature on immigration and youth cultures and implications for BUV training, alongside consideration of relevant BUV research, conversations and strategy development. It outlines possible future ministry development and further research and training needs.

BUV Cultural Diversity and Generational Bridging

Almost a third or 70 of BUV's 216 churches worship in a Language other than English (LOTE). They used to be called "ethnic churches", but that is a problematic term since all churches are "ethnic" in that everyone has cultural ethnicity. They are sometimes referred to as Multicultural or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) congregations, although LOTE churches themselves are usually mono-cultural with one linguistic group. BUV's LOTE congregations include Arabic (1), Hungarian (1), Khmer (1), Nepali/Bhutanese (1), Slavic (1), Sudanese (1), Persian (1), Indian (Telugu) (2), Spanish (2), Indonesian (3), Filipino (Tagalog/English) (3), Romanian (3), Vietnamese (4), Korean (4), Samoan (5), Chinese (11), and most recently but increasingly Karen (9) and Chin (17). The 26 Karen and Chin congregations from Burma (Myanmar) have all started since 2000, yet now total more than a third of BUV's LOTE churches.

Some of these cultural groups and churches have been in Australia for a number of generations. For example, Vietnamese and Chinese congregations include first generation immigrants, 1.5 generation immigrants (children who immigrated but who grew up in Australia) and second and sometimes third generation immigrants (children and

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grandchildren of immigrants who were born and grew up in Australia). There are also usually sizeable numbers of international students who bring another set of perspectives. (Doan and Pallot 2016) But other cultural groups, including different groups from Burma who are mainly from a refugee background, have arrived in the last decade and are all first generation or 1.5 generation (and mostly under 40 years of age). The more recent arrivals may learn second generation lessons from other LOTE churches, including where leaders have been raised (or not) and faith contextualized (or not).

An intrinsic challenge of second generation young people is that they bridge or navigate two cultural worlds. They decide whether to identify with their traditional culture of their family heritage, or the majority Western culture where they study and work, or their own second generation culture, or socially construct their identity between all three. Straddling between these worlds can challenge wellbeing and mental health, foster marginalisation, and lead youth to leave church and faith (Chan and Chan 2015). Unlike western youth, however, who often leave as they finish primary or high school, second generation migrants usually stay and enjoy the community belonging of church until they are young adults (e.g., 25-30) and might then differentiate themselves and leave (Chan and Chan 2016; cf. Cronshaw et al. 2016).

Part of the cultural gap is language, but it is also a generation gap and differences in values. Samuel and Kim Chan explain that Australian-born Chinese do not hold as strongly to Confucian values (filial piety, harmony, honour and respect). Instead of feeling like there is no choice other than simple submission, fighting or leaving (cf. Yee 2013), they counsel second generation, adopting the posture of missionaries and seeking to understand and respect these cultural differences (Chan and Chan 2015: 108).

Praxis Director Tim Jeffries similarly maintains that after encouraging second generation youth to celebrate their culture, respect their parents' generation and show initiative, LOTE church leaders more willingly hand over power and responsibility. In fact, as the second generation can walk in both worlds they are invaluable leaders and can be of great service to their community. For example, Praxis and Werribee Karen intern Mi Doh Htoo developed a community project as part of his youth work studies on how young people can help the Karen community access community services. He is now doing a placement with Wyndham Youth Services, contributing to the Karen Church youth leadership team and making himself available to serve as a driver or community liaison helper. Rather than the Western dream of making their own way in the world, the Karen value of serving the family and community may well be closer to a gospel value and indeed worth learning from for our Anglo children (Allbright and Htoo 2016; Jeffries 2016).

All Karen and Chin leaders with whom I have talked recognise the importance of connecting with their next generation. A big felt need is how to maintain the faith and belonging of youth and children, and how to equip them to help others who are younger. Werribee Karen Baptist Church's Rev Gail Moe Dwai says, "The future is all about the young people" and "When we've lost the children, we've lost everything" (2016). Chin Baptist Church Pastor Arohn Kung explains leadership development is necessarily bicultural:

We have to prepare and plant now and recruit our young children to be qualified in the church in English as well as one or two dialects. We need bilingual leadership for Chin people. Otherwise we will lose many of our children and they won't have a church to go to in the future. Unless we bring up our children well in faith, who will be the church of the future? (2016)

Rev Moo Hei, Pastor of the Karen speaking service of Croydon Hills Baptist Church,

commented that whereas a Karen village pastor controls everything in church, it is important in Australia to delegate responsibility to young people and thus encourage next generation leadership development, and to do so learning from other Australian (Anglo) churches (Ha et al. 2016). Australian Zotung Church Pastor in Sunshine, Rev Za Tuah Ngur, sees ministry to children as one of the church's main expression of mission, and is eager for resources and networks to help (Ngur 2016).

Mark Mullins explains sociologically that engaging the next generation is an imperative for all LOTE churches. LOTE churches are the institutions that most foster cultural maintenance for an immigrant group, yet over time successive generations progressively assimilate. It is a natural part of their life-cycle that the ongoing survival of the church requires adapting to the acculturated generations. In the second and third generations of the LOTE congregation life-cycle, they develop bilingual ministry and service options and ultimately some form of multiethnic life, or they cease to exist (Mullins 1987: 322-324). Karen and Chin churches do not want to see an exodus of their next generations and are eager to develop strategies to empower them.

As well as LOTE churches, other BUV churches have varying degrees of culturally-diverse representation reflecting a multicultural society. As a denomination, we are culturally and linguistically diverse. All churches face the question of what is happening to children and young people with faith formation, church belonging and leadership development. But the LOTE streams of BUV are growing the most, and feel the greatest need for help with developing new leaders and seeing lasting conversions and transformation among younger generations. The term "next generation" refers to all children and younger or emerging generations in our churches – whether first, 1.5 or second generation young adult immigrants, or Australian-born Anglo youth and young adults. There are challenges and lessons that apply to all next generation leaders, and things to learn across our cultural diversity. But our focus here is BUV's next generation LOTE church leaders, especially Karen and Chin.

The overall goal is to explore models and practices of mission training for the next generation of BUV culturally diverse leaders. This is an action-research project developing realistic and viable plans for leadership development pathways in consultation with culturally-diverse church leaders. It is essential to develop initiatives in conversation with the church "elders" where these young leaders come from, and embedded in the community of churches with whom they belong. It is also imperative to give the next generation a significant voice about what strategy is needed. The project is part of the "continuing conversion of the church" that Darrell Guder (2000) appeals for. In this case the necessary conversion includes transformation towards intercultural intelligence of our denominational system.

Context – Victorian Baptists and Immigration (CRA research)

The research of Christian Research Association (CRA) has underlined the importance of understanding faith perspectives of immigrants and their children. CRA have been researching migrant and cultural diversity issues for over twenty years. The recent census data that I have analysed with CRA's Senior Research Officer, Philip Hughes, has been especially informative for Baptists. The 2001-2011 census data shows that Baptists owe 98% of their growth over that decade to immigration growth (compared to 65% of Australian population growth from immigration). Of people living in Australia

who identify as Baptists in the 2011 census, 29.9% were immigrants and 17.3% were second generation immigrants. So almost half of Baptists were first or second generation immigrants (Hughes and Cronshaw 2013).

What, then, can we learn from the research of CRA about immigration, religion and the next generations of culturally diverse young people and their relationship with our churches? What follows is a literature review of the relevant CRA books and articles in conversation with developing BUV perspectives.

Religious plurality

In 1995 the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research (BIMPR) commissioned Gary Bouma to explore immigration. Philip Hughes and others worked with Bouma, and CRA published the results as *Many Religions, All Australian* (Bouma 1997; reviewed in Hughes 1997: 12). It details the history of Australian immigration and the increasing cultural and religious diversity of migrants. With case studies of Vietnamese Buddhists and Muslim women, and a newly developed theory of religious settlement, the writers show how religious organisations often help in settlement. They also explored the dilemmas of authority, leadership, human rights, the faith of second generation immigrants and responses to religious diversity and plurality. Australia has only increased in religious pluralism since this book's publication, and our next generation leaders are growing up in a pluralistic society we need to better understand. Moreover, second generation leaders with their necessary experience of bridging different worlds will be well placed to lead the church in navigating religious as well as cultural and generational plurality.

Youth subcultures

CRA researcher Sharon Bond reviewed research from the *Australian Youth Subcultures on the Margins and in the Mainstream* project, including identity and conflict in what she termed "ethnic youth subcultures" (White 1999; Bond 2000). She commented on the centrality of identity construction for youth subcultures, accentuated by ethnicity:

Young persons born overseas and second generation youth must locate themselves with respect to their parent cultures and languages as well as the ethnic majority Anglo-Australians. Support networks and friends are important for such young people who may be highly visible because of their physical characteristics or behaviour and thus come under more scrutiny from other young people and members of the community.

Bond explained that identity is a matter of self-description (who young people say they are, based on shared language, culture or religion) and/or ascription (who others say they are, including sometimes stereotypical assumptions). Culturally diverse youth often experiment with different identities, changing how they self-describe for support or to shield themselves against conflict and racism. Bond appeals for celebrating positive stories of different cultural groups (rather than stereotypical accounts of violence or crime) for the sake of community spirit and pride, as well as broader respect from others in Australian society.

Medium or message?

Bond also reviewed Anya Wood's Melbourne-based research of language and faith, *Medium or Message?* (Woods 2004; Bond 2004). Woods celebrates cultural diversity as part of the essence of church and a corrective to ethnocentrism:

Clearly, multiculturalism in the Australian Church is a great challenge, not because it goes against the tenets of the Christian faith – in fact, exactly the opposite – but because of the ethno-centric and essentially monocultural walls which the Christian Church in Australia has, in the past, built around itself (2004: 6).

Woods argues denominations need to be aware of the importance of language of the heart and cultural identity, and work with churches on cross-generational issues of faith, language and culture.

Woods' research investigated two or three congregations across seven denominations in Melbourne, including Arabic and Spanish Baptist churches (in Brunswick and Dandenong). There is usually a close connection of language with ethnicity and religion, and, in some religious communities, a special language is prescribed for worship. However Baptists do not tend to prioritise any particular liturgy or language since the Baptist emphasis on the personal relationship with God allows use of intimate and ordinary language. Also Baptist worship usually uses ordinary language and has no set liturgy. This may be part of the effectiveness of Baptists with non-English speaking background groups. Yet some churches including Baptists may prioritise community language use not for religious reasons but for cultural maintenance. Furthermore, people sometimes come to Baptist churches from other denominational and cultural backgrounds, bringing their own assumptions about liturgy and worship language.

Woods differentiates churches focused on linguistic/cultural maintenance from those focused on communicating the gospel, and suggests the latter are more positive about the future. "Medium" focused groups offer youth programs in community languages for cultural preservation, even if the language capabilities of second generation youth is limited, but "message" focused churches offer programs in English when convenient. These language choices are especially a challenge for youth ministry since youth in LOTE churches are not homogenous but include international students, those who migrated as children, and second and third generation, all with varying proficiency in their community language and English. Woods comments that language is not likely to be the only reason for declining participation of youth, and that youth can also feel distanced by traditional liturgy. If second generation migrants feel worship is disconnected from or strange to the world they inhabit for the rest of the week, then they are more likely to devalue it or stop participating. This potential cultural distance may also apply to other aspects of church life, including approaches to governance and behavior norms.

Woods' research raises two issues for Karen and Chin churches. Firstly, given the importance of Chin and Karen languages and dialects, it would be helpful to utilise or develop resources for worship and mission training in Karen and Chin languages, and contextualise existing resources for use in the Australian context. Marc Chan, BUV's Multicultural Inclusion worker, comments that use of resources in the "language of the heart" from people's country of origin helps them to maintain their identity. He observes that Burmese refugees have a range of existing resources, but they could helpfully be modified to reflect the change in the way in which churches are developing in Australia (Chan 2016).

Secondly, Chin and Karen churches feel the tensions of linguistic/cultural maintenance and engaging relevantly with younger people in English. Young people and pastors sometimes find it difficult to negotiate with their churches for some youth programs or worship in English. Moreover, young people learn in Western forms at school, but the churches and leaders do not necessarily know how to run Sunday School or Youth Group in such forms. It will be helpful to develop and model different ways to help Karen and

Chin stay connected with the message of faith and church including using English, as well as using community languages as a medium for maintaining their cultural heritage. Rev Moo Hei, for example, says he used to preach 100% in Karen but now mixes Karen with some English for the sake of children, and expects that in a decade's time he may be using 50% English. (2016) Rev Gail Moe Dwai explains Karen youth understand Karen and so it is easier to use Karen in worship and youth ministry, but as children are more comfortable with English it is becoming more important for effective children's ministry (2016).

Vietnamese migrant women case study

Mary Nosedá investigated the Catholic Church's relationship with Vietnamese migrant women and how churches help migrants with resources as they arrive, and contribute to stability and belonging as they settle (2003: 10-13). She notes belonging involves some embracing of the new and some letting go of their home cultures. Vietnamese migrants have maintained the central importance of family values and respect for parents and the elderly. Women usually maintain traditional roles of homemaker/mother but also become the main liaison with welfare and schools. Many also worked outside the home to supplement the family income. Vietnamese men sometimes had to take lesser jobs than they had had in Vietnam. She also notes other studies which underline that migrant priorities are English language mastery and employment, which are seen as the basis of other goals including home ownership, children's education and family reunion.

There is overlap in what Nosedá found among Vietnamese migrants and their challenges around English, employment and negotiating work roles and other migrant groups. Yet it is important for BUV to continue to talk with Chin and Karen Baptist communities directly and understand what challenges they face with settlement and how BUV can help.

Survey of Cross-cultural ministry

In 2004 the Victorian Council of Churches commissioned CRA to research cross-cultural and multicultural ministry (Hughes 2004b: 1-3). This led to a resource book *A Handbook for Cross-Cultural Ministry* (Hughes and Bond 2004). The project identified the importance for migrants of worshipping in the "language of the heart". It also addressed issues of power and control, noting decision-making is often controlled by those who control the dominant language.

Of particular relevance to next generation ministry, the project discussed youth spirituality interviews suggesting that people from different cultures approach faith and worship differently. This means that forms cannot easily be transposed from one culture to another, and the attempt to do so can create misunderstandings. It also means there are things we can learn from and strengthen one another.

Finally, the project outlined models of cross-cultural ministry that churches adopt:

- inclusive congregations, of mainly Anglo-Celtic background but welcoming the gifts of other cultures;
- ethnic churches, with mono-cultural worship in a language other than English;
- ethnic congregations within a multi-congregational church; and
- multicultural congregations, where worship is expressed with a variety of languages and cultural practices (Hughes 2004: 3).

BUV churches are represented across this range of culturally diverse forms of ministry (Yang 2012). As well as mapping the ways BUV churches gather for worship and express inter-cultural ministry, it would be worthwhile to conduct an audit of cultural diversity in governance and decision-making. It is imperative that the voices and leadership of LOTE church members are welcomed in the broader denomination. It would also be worth investigating the missional goals of various churches. Some focus or limit mission to those who share their culture and language, whereas others recognise a call to broader mission and see language as a challenge to grapple with rather than a boundary to work within.

Spirit of GenY

The Spirit of Generation Y Project interviewed 155 young people including nine immigrant and eight second generation immigrants, showing different perspectives to faith. (Hughes 2004a) The young immigrants, from different cultural groups, spoke positively about faith and attended church with their extended families. It is unclear whether they regularly attended church worship, or only for family and community events. Several spoke of God helping them and feeling close to God. They expressed the feeling that they were judged by religion rather than being able to judge or evaluate faith, and, in contrast to most Anglo-Celtic youth, these immigrant young people said they should not question or doubt God (or ministers, teachers or fathers).

Second generation young people still felt strong connections with their parents' cultural background as well as their adopted country, and most were still involved with their church and faith. However, there was a little more ambivalence about questioning faith:

In many cultures across the world, the sense of authority is important and faith is an aspect of life that is transmitted in an authoritative way and is not to be questioned. Faith is something that belongs to the whole community, and worship is an important part of the life of many ethnic communities.

As ethnic links begin to weaken a little among second generation immigrants, it would seem that young people feel a little freer to question aspects of faith. Yet, there remains hesitation, even a sense of guilt sometimes, in challenging the tenets of faith (Hughes 2004a: 11).

Some had left church and some had changed churches or attended other denominations such as Pentecostal churches. Hughes suggests that attending a church of a different denomination may be an "Australian" option while maintaining the faith traditions of their parents (2004a; also Hughes 2009b: 3-4).

Kim Chan suggests that not questioning or doubting is consistent with traditional Confucian values and helps make young people acceptable to their parents. A crucial question is whether this perspective will keep them in the church, or whether they will find a "first generation" style of faith difficult to maintain. First and second generation youth are often comfortable in a LOTE church enclave as they navigate teenage and early young adult years, when other factors marginalize them from Anglo-Australian society. As they grow beyond 25, they may develop completely different responses and frameworks (Chan and Chan 2016; cf. Chan and Chan 2015). Our conversations with the next generation in LOTE churches needs to include those of different ages and stages, and prophetic rebels who have left as well as loyal stayers still in the churches.

National Church Life Survey

CRA have published findings from the National Church Life Survey (NCLS) which has investigated the cultural background and attitudes of migrants. NCLS 2001 asked about involvement in (so-called) ethnic ministry and relationship with LOTE congregations.

NCLS shows that Baptists are more culturally diverse and more involved in ministry among culturally diverse groups than Uniting and Anglican churches, but less than Catholic and Pentecostal. NCLS is translated into a number of languages but NCLS figures underrepresent migrant attenders because of lower participation of monoethnic churches (Powell 2004; Powell 2009). With another five yearly NCLS coming later in 2016, it will be important for BUV to encourage LOTE churches to participate in NCLS and make financial support available.

Religion and Immigration

Hughes and CRA have been mapping the influence of immigration on religion in Australia through articles analysing census and other data (Hughes 2004; 2009; 2012). Hughes explains that since World War II, Australia's cultural and religious landscape has transformed from when 80% of the population belonged to one of four Christian denominations (Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian) till now when a much smaller proportion of the population identifies with these denominations, and many other groups are growing including diverse denominations such as the fast growing Oriental Orthodox, other world religions such as Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, and those who register "no religion" (Hughes 2004b: 1-3).

Of people who identified as Christian in the 2011 Census, 22.5% of were born overseas and 19.1% were born in Australia of parents born overseas (second generation Australians). As mentioned above, of those who identified as Baptists in Australia, 29.9% were immigrants and 17.3% were second generation. So almost half of Australians who identified as Baptists were first or second generation immigrants. This partly explains why Baptists owe 98% of their growth of 2001-2011 to immigration growth. Between 2001 and 2011 Baptists grew from 309,205 to 352,497 but this included 42,412 immigrants who identified as Baptist (Hughes 2012b: 1-5). Without these Christian immigrants who identified as Baptists, there would have been the same number of Baptists in 2011 as 2001 and Baptist numbers would not have kept up with population growth (Hughes and Cronshaw 2013).

Moreover, compared to average Australian churchgoers, immigrants are more committed with church participation and tend to be younger. They bring a natural vitality to Baptist or other churches. This may be because they are more religiously committed from their backgrounds. Or they may become more strongly involved as they seek new levels of belonging and support (Hughes 2009b: 2). However, the research shows that as they and their children spend longer in Australia, they become less involved. In the 2009 Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, 26% of immigrants reported attending services of religion at least monthly, compared to 14% of Australian-born people. However immigrants' involvement tends to decline as they and their children live longer in Australia:

- 29% of migrants who have arrived in Australia in the last 20 years attended monthly or more, compared with
- 26% of migrants who lived in Australia 20-30 years;
- 23% of migrants in Australia 30-50 years; and
- 19% of migrants in Australia for more than 50 years.

Hughes commented that religious groups often provide immigrants with a place of community belonging and shared language and values, but that the importance of such a place declines with time. The attendance at a church of second generation immigrants

is down to the same as the Australian average of 14% (Hughes 2012b; also Hughes 2015). The church in general is “haemorrhaging” the faith of young people (Cronshaw et al. Forthcoming 2016). We need to pay special attention to the faith and church involvement of immigrant’s children as their declining participation is more dramatic.

Moreover, of church attenders aged under 64 years, 41% are migrants. The future of the church depends to a large extent on welcoming and inviting their contribution. This includes adjusting facilities and language accessibility, but also understanding cross-cultural differences. Rev Dr Si Khia explains that Chin churches, in contrast to Anglos, recognise authority as being predominantly male, that age is important, and that teachers have a hierarchical relationship with students (2016). Hughes comments many immigrants come from cultures which value tradition, respect for authority and elders. This is different than typical Anglo-Australians, and part of why church attracts immigrants while alienating other Australians (Hughes 2012b: 5-6, 8). These are some of the specific values that Chin (and perhaps Karen) Hughes summarised some of these differences in a presentation to Baptist leaders:

Table: What appeals in faith

| To immigrants | To Anglos |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious faith confirms sense of order and identity • Expressed in ritual • High level of involvement • Uncritical faith • Hierarchical authority | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious faith is a personal commitment • Experiential base • Varied levels of involvement • Reflective faith • Democratic governance |

I would like to hear more from Chin and Karen groups on these matters. For example, ‘ritual’ is a negative word for some Baptists. These differences create a tension for migrant second generations. Hughes concluded pointedly in his article on immigration’s impact on religious groups:

The children of migrants often feel strongly the tensions between these two worlds and the two sets of values. They are deeply aware of the respect their parents expect and the respect for tradition and the Church which their parents value. But they are equally aware that being true to their own thinking and being critical, especially of authoritative organisations and structures, is valued widely in the Australian context. Continuing the high level of commitment to faith in the second generation of immigrants is a great challenge for the whole Church as well as for migrant families (Hughes 2012b: 8).

Young people from LOTE churches have a lot to offer their own churches and the broader church and society, especially as multicultural leaders. BUV wants to respond to this challenge and develop ways to welcome and celebrate the contribution of next generation leaders from LOTE churches, with appropriate mentoring and training in cultural intelligence.

Baptists in Australia

Philip Hughes and I investigated the role of Baptist immigrants and their faith in Baptists in Australia (2013), exploring Baptist history and distinctives, and Australian statistics and trends. Given that so many Australian Baptists (almost half) are first or second generation immigrants, we thought it was important to identify where these migrant Baptists came from, what languages they spoke and where they settled.

Baptists have welcomed immigrants from many parts of the world, but never more than in the last decade. Overall, 30% of Baptists were born overseas (close to 100,000 people), but 44% of Baptists born overseas have arrived since 2000. The rising figures tell the story:

- 286 Baptist migrants living in Australia arrived before 1940;
- 1,269 arrived between 1941 and 1950;
- 3,960 arrived between 1951 and 1960;
- 7,954 arrived between 1961 and 1970;
- 8,931 arrived between 1971 and 1980;
- 15,220 arrived between 1981 and 1990;
- 16,327 arrived between 1991 and 2000; and
- 42,416 arrived between 2001 and 2011.

Baptist immigrants have come from many countries around the world. Many Europeans arrived after World War II including Slavic refugees. Spanish-speaking churches started in the late 1960s as migrants came from South and Central America. Since the 1970s Vietnamese congregations grew.

Nevertheless, the largest single groups were mostly from English-speaking countries (immigrants from Europe, Northern America or New Zealand making up 10.1% of the current Australian Baptist community). Yet there are also sizable groups born in the Middle East or Asia (overall now 13% of Baptists, compared to 9% of the Australian population). The largest Asian “sending” countries of Baptists to Australia are:

- 12,410 from China or Hong Kong;
- 5,804 from Myanmar;
- 4,512 from the Philippines;
- 4,122 from Malaysia;
- 2,787 from Vietnam;
- 2,541 from Korea;
- 2,153 from Thailand;
- 1,766 from Indonesia; and
- 1,719 from India.

The 2011 Census showed approximately 80% of Baptists spoke English at home, and the ten other most spoken languages were:

- 12,071 Cantonese;

- 7,804 Mandarin;
- 4,495 Afrikaans;
- 3,977 Karen;
- 3,713 Tagalog or Filipino;
- 3,189 Vietnamese;
- 2,790 Korean;
- 2,618 Arabic;
- 2,324 Spanish; and
- 1,901 Burmese.

Census birthplace statistics reflect the existence of communities of Baptists which arose as a consequence of missionary activity. They also reflect that Baptists in Australia have encouraged the formation of LOTE Baptist communities.

Of the 42,416 Baptist immigrants arriving in Australia 2001-2011, more settled in Victoria than any other state:

- Victoria received 10,669 immigrant Baptists;
- Queensland 9,716;
- New South Wales 9,474;
- Western Australia 8,703;
- South Australia 2,369;
- Northern Territory 517;
- Australian Capital Territory 500;
- Tasmania 467 (Hughes and Cronshaw 2013: 74-77).

Sydney and Melbourne, and capital cities in general, attract a higher proportion of immigrants than other parts of Australia. This places a particular responsibility on Victorian and Melbourne-based Baptists to give priority to welcoming and embracing CALD newcomers.

Migrant families and churches

The most recent CRA research relevant to LOTE Next Generation training explored how churches help or hinder migrant and refugee families as they settle (Hughes 2015b). Immigrants often find a sense of community in a faith community with whom they share language and values. Their children want to find a place in Australian society and necessarily navigate the cultural differences and family expectations. Other research has addressed the “tug-of-war” that second generation immigrants feel between their background culture that sometimes ignores their Western influences or education, and Western society that does not always recognise their cultural uniqueness (e.g., Tiatia 1998). But there has been minimal research on the faith of second generation Australians and how churches help or hinder. CRA interviewed small groups of youth, parents and leaders from a Sudanese and Chinese church about differences in culture and worship patterns.

The Sudanese church, mainly refugees, had struggled with English. They held a strong sense of community and interdependence. They appreciated the church supporting them like a big family, and offering lots of youth activities – sport, music, socials and youth group. The Sudanese expressed a strong sense of faith and gratitude, despite famine and war they had experienced. They said they were not as distracted by material things causing them to forget God like their Australian neighbours. The community was feeling the tension of different forms of discipline for children in Australia, and navigating age and gender-related roles. Sudanese girls felt pressure to look after younger siblings and do more housework, and there was some questioning of their dowry system. A strong respect for older people meant children were expected not to question parents, and younger leaders in church were expected not to publically disagree with elders. The church has leaders with an Anglo background and has morning services in English, which helps the youth negotiate Australian culture. Parents and students said they would especially appreciate help with English language and extra tutorial support for their young people to get to university (Hughes 2015b: 2-6).

The Chinese (Cantonese) Church interviewees also noted a greater respect for older people and parents, and more reserve with feelings and opinions than other Australians. They said that people in China and Australia both tended not to take religious faith very seriously and were more concerned with family life and making money. Most children of the first wave of immigrants worshipped in a neighbouring English church or nowhere. The Chinese church was doing more than the Sudanese church to preserve Chinese language and culture, but this may be isolating for some youth. They felt the tensions of cultural and generational differences (Hughes 2015b: 6-8).

Hughes concluded that most denominations are multicultural and need to understand cultural differences and sensitivities around values and roles. CRA is eager to extend this project among other churches (Hughes 2015b: 6-8). A similar study among BUV Chin and Karen churches could be valuable to help us understand how they are navigating life and faith in Australia, but also investigating how they understand and practise mission. BUV needs to help resource all our churches in helping immigrant families settle in Australia and maintain their faith. Part of the challenge is that young people have arrived from Burma or via refugee camps where they had lots of free time and have missed school years. Rev Kung compassionately explains they can fall into a vicious cycle of purposelessness fuelled by stress, depression, lack of education and English, unemployment, distrust of police, alcohol and drug abuse, shame and isolation, and gambling (2016). Karen and Chin churches support people through all sorts of social care issues and it would be valuable for BUV to explore how best they might help.

Next Generation LOTE Church Leadership Development (BUV research)

CRA offers helpful background research on immigration and religion, but BUV have started some specific research into Burmese churches and leadership development, on which this project on training LOTE church leaders for mission is being built.

Firstly, a group of researchers from the Baptist Union have investigated the life and mission of Karen and Chin Baptist churches in Australia, recognising the significant source of growth and new opportunities and challenges for multicultural ministry that 8,500 Baptists from Burma have brought to Australian Baptists over two decades (Cronshaw et al. 2015). We celebrated their strengths and identified challenges, including

English and employment, and specifically for the need for church leadership training and hosting networks. One other big issue was how to help them in mission beyond Chin and Karen migrants or supporting mission back in Burma, since many do want to settle permanently in Australia. Rev Ronald Suah, pastor of Melbourne Mizo Church, said with a sense of destiny for local mission, “God has called us here for a reason” (Cronshaw et al. 2015: 266).

Another big challenge is how to foster ministry for second-generation Karen and Chin young people. Of 5,607 Burma-born people in Victoria in 2011, 31% were aged 0-25 and another 22.7% were 26-34. They are very young churches with a high proportion of teenagers and young adults. Almost two-thirds (63.4%) are in a family consisting of two parents with children (compared to 47.1% in the broader population). Youth and family ministries are critical. Many parents and church elders want to maintain their cultural identity, but do not want to isolate themselves or their children as they learn English and adapt to local careers, gender roles and parenting styles. The young people themselves are usually eager to adapt, and sometimes struggle to decide to what extent they can honour or whether they need to leave their culture behind. Chin and Karen have appreciated lay leadership training and network meetings and multicultural pastors’ retreats hosted by BUV, and Whitley College’s TransFormation program with its monthly Saturday Diploma classes for LOTE students. There is also a need for training in local mission including understanding Australian culture and appropriate evangelism (Cronshaw et al. 2015: 272-273, 277). Chin and Karen people have a strong sense of mission, but it is usually focused on supporting mission back in Myanmar or hosting week long gospel crusades with international guest speakers here in Australia (Kung 2016).

This is part of the basis for the proposed clusters for training Next Generation LOTE church leaders for mission.

Secondly, Stacey Wilson and I examined Generation Y emerging leadership development (Cronshaw and Wilson 2016). We identified that growing Generation Y leaders requires: a culture of mission-focused leadership development focused; opportunities of apprenticeship of learning by doing; mentoring; an empowering and collaborative leadership model; financially sustainable training and ministry; and reframing our definition of leadership. Within this context, it is necessary to take into account gender, age and cultural diversity.

We recommended adopting these frameworks and developing individual coaching and “communities of practice” group coaching for 15-40 year old emerging leaders. BUV is appointing a Next Generation Mentoring Network coordinator and local churches will be invited to nominate prospective mentors and emerging leaders. BUV will pair 25-40 year old emerging leaders with mentors. Younger 15-25 year olds will be invited to participate in group coaching cohorts or “communities of practice” that combine input on mission and leadership with space for action-reflection on faith and ministry experience. These programs will cater for Anglo and other culturally diverse leaders. But from our conversations with LOTE church leaders and to cater especially for CALD emerging leaders, we also recommended hosting regular conference days, retreats or camps for biblically-based leadership development as combined Multicultural Ministry and Next Generation events. More importantly, we need to consider the cultural differences for Gen Y leaders within LOTE churches and what frameworks and methods best help them grow in faith and leadership.

Ongoing conversations with Karen and Chin leaders, including the interviews for this chapter, suggest that mentoring, learning communities and seminars would be valued,

but an important place to start for training next generation leaders is to equip them for children's and youth ministry. Chin churches can get Chin Sunday School resources from Burma and America, and Karen teachers can translate English or Burmese resources. But pastors say they need improvement in interactive and learner-centred teaching methods and locally contextualised content, and guidelines for Bible teaching, discipline and child psychology (Ha et al. 2016; Ngur 2016; SiKhia 2016). Next generation leaders such as Allbright, Mi Doh and Marry say they need mentors and role models. They want to learn from what is happening successfully in churches of other cultures, and put into practice some of the activity based learning they have experienced with Praxis. They also commented that any training must be built on relationship and trust, so next generation leaders can learn who BUV is (Allbright and Htoo 2016; Ha et al. 2016). A commonly favoured timeslot for this kind of learning community is Saturday mornings, including lunch, so leaders and teachers can eat together. The focus could begin with children's and youth ministry, but include faith formation in a next generation LOTE context and equipping them for mission in Burmese and Australian cultures.

The need for ongoing conversation and mutual learning is underlined by the complexities of the issues involved. Rowan Lewis, Whitley College's NEXT coordinator, reported that the principles that guide NEXT faith formation are Western, and that Chin and Karen young adults also need to grow in owning their own faith, but the trajectory and process will likely be different to Anglo Australians (Lewis 2016). Rev Moo Hei, Matt Moran and Marry at Croydon Hills are developing mission trips to liminal places such as Uluru and the Thai-Burma border so that young people of Karen and other cultures can explore their faith and identity in the context of mission and cultural difference (Ha et al. 2016).

Samuel Chan asserts that resources and training programs are a good start, but not enough for really influencing second generation Christians. Influence will come best from entering into the community and not just being another service deliverer that LOTE church parents deliver their children to, alongside music lessons and school. Chan urges entering into the life of second generation culture, really seeking to understand the young people and their experience, and tailoring training and mentoring and providing companionship to suit. It is the task of a good missionary even as we seek to cultivate the heart and skills of missionaries in Karen and Chin young people (Chan and Chan 2016). From another perspective, it calls for high intercultural intelligence in teachers and mentors, an area that many of us may need more training in, even as we seek to cultivate that intelligence in Karen and Chin communities in bridging to Anglo society (Jeffries 2016).

Ultimately, new training programs are not just for the sake of LOTE churches, but for developing the intercultural intelligence of our denominational system. This is a project of "diaspora missiology" which seeks to develop three directions of mission:

- "to" diaspora people who come to us;
- "through" them to reach their own people, whether here or back in their home countries; and
- "by and beyond" them as we encourage them to engage in cross-cultural mission, as "bridge peoples" (Smith 2010).

Diaspora missiology focuses on reaching, but also sending, migrants and refugees with the gospel. It recognises the balance of Christianity is shifting from the West to the Majority World, and that the church in the Western world has a lot to learn from other contexts.

Ross Langmead, who was Professor of Mission Studies at Whitley College and a good friend of many Karen and Chin, wrote about how mission among refugees includes elements of mercy and advocacy, but also mutual learning and “openness to a transforming divine presence”. Langmead discussed Miroslav Volf’s teaching about hospitality as being like an embrace, with four movements:

- open arms in offer (or open our door),
- wait for free acceptance,
- close arms in embrace (inviting others into our home to help them feel at home), and
- then open our arms again (and let the guest go) (Volf 1996: 140-147; Langmead 2014: 45).

These movements are a helpful framework for conceptualizing BUV’s approach to training Next Generation LOTE leaders for mission. On the journey of shared learning BUV will hopefully foster mission to, through and by and beyond LOTE church leaders, but also be transformed by the heart and hospitality of LOTE church sisters and brothers. This was Langmead’s vision that he wrote about in one of his last articles:

If the churches in the “receiving” country catch the vision of mission as hospitality, strangers will become guests, and then hosts. Those without defenders in their old country will have advocates in the new. Those on the margins will, at least in faith communities, become “insiders” “at home”. Our welcome will in some way reflect God’s abundant welcome. We should not underestimate how countercultural this vision is, or how challenging it is to live out in a fearful and often selfish society (Langmead 2014: 39).



*Dr Peter Brierley, founding director of the
Christian Research Association (UK) at a
conference on nominalism in 1998.
(Photo by Philip Hughes)*

Chapter 20.

Christian Research Associations

*Peter Brierley**

The real beginning of the various Christian research organisations which flourished across the Western world at the end of the 20th century and early 21st century was in the 1960s, a little behind the secular market research world which had its tentative start in the 1930s, but only really got under way in the 1950s after the War ended.

Christian research organisations started through a manager in an aeronautical engineering company in Los Angeles in the late 1940s, who began to feel the Lord calling him into full-time service in the early 1960s. Accordingly Edward Dayton, always abbreviated to Ed, attended Fuller Theological Seminary and then began to ask questions such as, “Who is applying management theory and practice to Christian organisations?”

Given the opportunity by his friend Ted Engstrom, the long-serving Vice President of World Vision (WV), to take a room in his Los Angeles office, Ed did so, and over the course of the next year (1967) began an organisation called Missions Advanced Research and Communications Centre (abbreviated to MARC, with one C, not two, at the end). Over the next few years, under Ed’s influence, MARC expanded. He led it to develop in three broad areas:

- He began to research the Christian populations of many countries, initially those in which World Vision was working, updating and extending the work previously done by Sir Kenneth Grubb and others published in the *World Christian Handbook* in 1957, 1962 and 1968.
- He began suggesting that mission agencies move away from the old ‘comity’ arrangement whereby one particular mission would be primarily responsible for evangelism and Christian community work in a given area or country, to the concept of working with particular groups of people.
- He began helping Christian organisations with management theory and ran courses on subjects like Time Management.

MARC had a stand at the Lausanne ‘74 Congress, inaugurated by Billy Graham, showing a population “clock” and how many people were becoming Christians as each minute passed, and how fast the world population was increasing. Ed also helped launch other MARCs, such as MARC Australia and MARC Canada. In 1978 WV declared a global strategy for its work and thereafter called itself World Vision International. This meant starting offices elsewhere, including Europe. Ed suggested that along with that, as part of it, there should be a MARC Europe. The newly appointed Director of WV Europe, James Tysoe, said his first priority was to start fundraising offices in Europe (starting in Britain, Finland, Germany and Switzerland for example) and MARC Europe could come later.

* For many years Dr Peter Brierley was the director of the Christian Research Association in the United Kingdom. Since 2007 he has continued the work of Christian research through Brierley Consultancy. Dr Peter Brierley is also the Senior Associate for Research of the Lausanne Congress and has taken a leading role in developing the Lausanne Researchers International Network.

The Work of MARC Europe

MARC Europe began in April 1983 when Peter Brierley, an ex-Cabinet Office statistician who was then a director in the British and Foreign Bible Society, was put in charge. He had met Ed in 1972 when Ed visited the UK and wanted to discuss mission statistics with someone. As Peter had just completed a detailed missions survey for the Evangelical Missionary Alliance, he was asked to meet him, and he and his wife entertained Ed and his daughter Jill in their home one evening.

MARC Europe followed Ed's lead in two areas – undertaking national research (as well as many dozens of surveys of local churches and Christian agencies), and teaching Christian management. The last of these was mainly through a brilliant teacher, former Head of Management Training at Shell, Dr David Cormack, who travelled all over the UK and many places in Europe. Over the 10 years of its existence, MARC Europe gave management help to over 20,000 Christian leaders. It also began publishing Christian management books under the wonderful enthusiasm of energetic Tony Collins, initiator of the Monarch publishing company and now Editor-at-Large of LionHudson. For a time MARC Europe was the 15th largest Christian publisher in the UK but, very sadly, shortage of WV funds in 1987 meant the subsidy to MARC Europe from WV was severely curtailed and there were a number of redundancies that year, including the publishing department.

Peter had undertaken an English Church Census in 1979 by going to every church in the land asking for membership and attendance details, the latter broken down by age-group and gender, published by the Bible Society as *Prospects for the Eighties* in two separate booklets. MARC Europe repeated this study in 1989, with a very thorough listing of virtually all of the addresses of England's 38,000 churches, and had an incredible 70% response rate to this second English Church Census. Two books were published early in 1991 about the results – *'Christian' England* which gave the commentary (with two Forewords, one by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Rt Rev George Carey, and the other by Sir John Boreham, who became the Head of the Government Statistical Service) and *Prospects for the Nineties* which gave the detailed county and denominational tables. At that stage, Church Censuses had also been undertaken across both the Welsh churches (in 1982) and the Scottish churches (in 1984). MARC Europe also began a quarterly bulletin called *LandMARC* in 1986.

The 1989 Census showed that a huge number of teenagers had stopped attending church, across all denominations. A meeting of all the major youth organisations was held to think through the issue and a survey was commissioned to try and find out why so many had left. The results were published in the book *Reaching and Keeping Teenagers*, and basically helped to encourage churches to employ Youth Workers, academic courses on which were beginning in some colleges in the late 1980s. Why had teenagers left? Church was 'boring' and 'not relevant'.

In addition to all its research work, MARC Europe continued the biennial publication of the *UK Christian Handbook* (UKCH) which Peter had started in booklet form back in 1972. It became a substantial volume with church statistics forming an integral part of it as well as listing all the then known Christian organisations and societies based or working in the UK, some 4,000 in 1988. Apart from books giving research results, the *UKCH* was the only book MARC Europe continued to publish. However, Peter was asked to write a book on future thinking and planning and *Vision Building* was the result, published by Hodder & Stoughton in 1989, the first of some 15 books he was to write. In 1990 MARC Europe moved its offices in south London, and bought a small four room

block in Eltham which it also called ‘Vision Building’, symbolising precisely what it saw as its mission.

In all of this, MARC Europe’s work paralleled in some ways what was happening with the fledgling Christian Research Association in Australia. However, the aims of the two organisations were slightly different as MARC Europe wanted to help Christian leaders make better strategic decisions. In order to make such decisions, data on the Christian scene was important, although it was recognised that numbers do not make the decisions, simply influence them. MARC Europe wanted to supply the necessary researched information to aid that process.

Ed Dayton continued to be associated with MARC Europe, visiting every time he was travelling in Europe. Ed became the Chair of the Lausanne Theology and Strategy Working Group as, after the 1974 Congress, Lausanne continued as an organisation, initially called the Lausanne Committee. The Working group began appointing a number of Associates across the world to focus Christian thinking and activity on particular topics. In 1984, Peter became the Research Associate. Ed Dayton became responsible for organising the second Lausanne Congress, held in Manila, Philippines, in 1989, which Peter also attended.

In a typical African or Indian rural situation, after 10 years World Vision will move to another village, providing sponsorship for many of its children and using some of that sponsorship money to build a new classroom, community hall, provide a water pump – whatever the village elders request. In that way, more children and communities are helped. It applied this same 10 year move process to MARC Europe so that after its initial 10 years World Vision no longer continued its subsidy and therefore MARC Europe was no longer part of WV Europe.

The Work of Christian Research

That meant that MARC Europe had to close down and its team take redundancy. Peter wished to continue publishing the *UKCH*, however, and so continued with a new charity (with exactly the same aims as MARC Europe) called the Christian Research Association (CRA, although it speedily became known just as Christian Research). He had become tired of being addressed as Mr Mark Europe! With some funds left over from MARC Europe just 3 staff were retained in addition to himself.

Statistical Bulletin. It was tough going financially at the beginning, but a letter sent to all 38,000 church leaders advising them of the change and inviting them to join the new Christian Research organisation as a member produced a 4% response, sufficient for initial viability. Members would receive the regular bulletin *Quadrant*, produced in the same style as *LandMARC*, which was now discontinued. Christian Research’s programme of research projects also continued, as did the production of the *UKCH*.

Training. Although David Cormack and his successor Bryn Hughes had left, Peter continued to take some seminars himself, especially one on vision building and another on time management which became very popular, based on his new book *Priorities, Planning and Paperwork*. Christian Research also continued to organise training Conferences for Archdeacons, holding a National Conference one year and a New Archdeacons’ Conference the next. It also began to organise Senior Leaders’ Conferences every 4 years – when Bishops, Chairmen, Moderators, Commanders and others of like level across the different denominations could meet and discuss issues of importance. One outstanding speaker was Archbishop (later Cardinal) Tom Winning who spoke in 1996 on his “25 year strategy to reach the people of Glasgow”.

UK Christian Handbook. A problem arose with the production of the 1996 edition of the *UK Christian Handbook* – it was getting too thick for economical binding! Two inches thick was about the maximum. So it was decided in future editions to split the content into two separate publications and make the page A4 size. The title *UK Christian Handbook* would continue with names and addresses (and much other information) of Christian organisations as before, but all the church statistics would be put in a new volume called *Religious Trends*, also to be published every two years or so, but on a different timetable from the *UKCH*. Altogether seven editions of *Religious Trends* were published during the 15 years Christian Research existed as an independent organisation (1993 to 2008).

Lausanne. During the 1990s, the work of Lausanne in England faded, although it continued in the other 3 constituent countries of the UK. In 1994, when Peter was appointed Senior Associate of Research, he helped to strengthen a resurgent English Committee, and served on the international Committee formed under the wise leadership of Rev Fergus MacDonald, then Director of the National Bible Society of Scotland (now the Scottish Bible Society). Through the appointment in 1998 of Rev Paul Cedar, the pastor of a Congregational megachurch in Los Angeles (which Ed Dayton attended), as International Chair, Lausanne International was rejuvenated (as Paul was able to access American funds). Peter found himself on the International Board for the next 6 years. He helped initiate the Lausanne Forum held in Thailand in 2004, out of which came the desire for a further Lausanne Congress, held in South Africa in 2010, at which Peter gave two seminars on global trends. In preparation for the 2004 Forum, Christian Research went to nearly 2000 senior world leaders (bishops of all denominations and others at similar seniority), to ask their opinion about what topics should be discussed. The top 20 of these featured in the Forum programme.

International Conferences. In 1997 Christian Research organised an International Lausanne Conference for Researchers, which Philip Hughes of the Australian CRA attended. Peter and Philip met for the first time! There was also at that time a New Zealand CRA, but they were unable to send a representative. Subsequently in December 1998 Christian Research organised a Lausanne Conference on Nominalism, also held in the UK, attended by people of some 20 different nationalities, but also attended by Philip. Further International Lausanne Conferences for Researchers were held in 2001 and 2005, and 2008 (under the chairmanship of Philip Hughes) and subsequently in 2011 and 2015.

Deputy Director. In 1995, the work of Christian Research had expanded and its Board felt that an Assistant Manager should be appointed. Heather Wraight, former Head of Radio Worldwide, part of WEC International, who had just completed her MTh at Edinburgh University, accepted the post. She became enormously influential in Christian Research's subsequent development, undertaking and helping with numerous research projects, speaking at training seminars (especially at one called *Know Yourself Know Your Team*, affectionately known as "Kick-it"!). Heather concentrated on editing the *UKCH* (while Peter focussed on *Religious Trends*). She was promoted to Deputy Director and stayed until she retired in 2007, moving to York to be with her ageing parents. She also wrote two books while at Christian Research, one on women's ministry, *Eve's Glue*, and one on how churches once expected to close had flourished instead, called *Back from the Brink*. Heather also did the majority of the qualitative research work at Christian Research, leading focus groups literally all over the country.

Church Censuses. A further English Church Census was undertaken in 1998 (so that the results could be published in time for the new Millennium), although it was called the English Church Attendance Survey, as not everyone wanted a 'Census' at that time as it was known that numbers attending church were dropping fairly drastically, especially

with the loss of many young people. The results were published in the book *The Tide is Running Out*, with a foreword by the then Archbishop of York, the Rt Rev David Hope. It revealed quite a grim picture, as the church in general, and especially the major denominations, had lost much ground during the 1990s, even if that decade had been called 'The Decade of Evangelism'. It proved, however, to be of great interest to church leaders, who wanted both to know the facts and to think through the challenges of what to do in the light of the results. Christian Research held a dozen regional seminars and, over the next couple of years, its staff were asked to speak at scores of churches or groups of leaders.

Tweenagers. One of the findings of the 1998 study was another drastic drop in the number of young people, especially those aged 10 to 15, attending church across all denominations, a group which came to be called "Tweenagers." Again Christian Research called together a meeting of the leaders of the major youth organisations to explain the findings and to ask what should be done. As a consequence a major survey was commissioned by them to look into the relevant issues, which also was published, this time in a book called *Reaching and Keeping Tweenagers*. Again, part of the issue was boredom in church and irrelevance to their lives as they started secondary school, and also as young people faced challenges in the teaching of science. Churches began to employ children's workers as well as youth workers, and larger churches especially found the employment of professionals to do particular jobs was both helpful to the ministry and a factor encouraging more people to join them, so the practice spread into other areas, such as administrators and managers of projects. Christian Research was asked to undertake many seminars on the topic of Tweenagers.

More Censuses. Two further Scottish church censuses were held in 1994 and 2002, and another in England in 2005, the results of which were published in *Pulling out of the Nosedive* (commentary) and *Religious Trends* No 6 (tables). Again there was great interest in the results and Peter was asked to present them to different groups on 60 different occasions. The censuses focus on attendance and provide a very firm database. Half, exactly 50%, of churches completed the form in 2005, and half a million churchgoers indicated their age, gender, ethnicity broken down by denomination, churchmanship and Local Authority.

Consultancy work. Christian Research engaged in some detailed consultancy work, which included undertaking studies of churches within four Deaneries (a group of up to 10 or 15 individual Church of England parishes) in the Diocese of Rochester, funded by some of the Livery Companies in the City of London. These included holding a census-type evaluation one Sunday across every church in a particular Deanery, but using a different questionnaire, called the Congregational Attitudes and Beliefs Survey. Reports were written and presented to each Diocese and its Synod, and the Bishop, Rt Rev Michael Nazir-Ali. They showed a wide diversity of practice but a very real commitment to the church, especially in what used to be called "working class" parishes. All four of these were held in the years around the turn of the century.

Large projects. From time to time Christian Research was asked to undertake major surveys for a particular organisation or denomination. These included:

- The 1995 Ansva Survey of Social Behaviour to help an insurance company known for insuring teetotal churchgoers how far they might relax their core principles.
- A 2000 survey for the Church of Scotland on Ministry among Young People to help the Parish Education Dept get a better idea of trends and needs. The survey showed the value of grants being given to churches to enable them to install gym equipment in their church halls which young people greatly appreciated.
- Another large survey, or more correctly surveys, was undertaken for Scripture Union

(SU) across the turn of the new century looking at every Bible Reading Aid they published for young people and seeking to know the strengths and weaknesses of each one. These were then faithfully transferred into new designs and formats. Another book came out of this study, published by SU, called *Steps to the Future*, and looked at issues facing the church in the new Millennium.

- A 2002 survey for the Salvation Army looking at why churches grow, and where new churches could best be started. This was a fascinating study comparing churches known to have grown with churches known to have declined (from the 1998 Census) and seeing which factors were significantly different. It was found that the key difference was that most growing churches had a person who in Belbin terms was called a “Shaper”, an outgoing dynamic person with a high need for achievement. The results were published in a booklet called *Leadership, Vision and Growing Churches* and 15,000 copies were printed and distributed.
- A 2005 survey in Britain for the American Josh McDowell who was very concerned at the increasing rise of sexual expression among churchgoing teenagers. How far had they gone? This was a very personal survey asked with great care but showing just how far the sexuality issue had seeped into churchgoing young people, alienating them from traditional church teaching (or lack of it!) and from the church itself.

Work continues. In its 15 years as an independent agency, Christian Research undertook 150 different research projects, and it was frequently asked for information about church life from the Press, church leaders (and not just in the UK!), academics, researchers, and so on. In the early years of the 21st century it experimented with further seminars, continued to publish *Quadrant*, now every two months, as well as the *UKCH* and *Religious Trends*. A successful advertising agency, Cornerstone, based in Plymouth, had managed to pull in sufficient advertising to make the *UKCH* financially viable, which was hugely important for its survival. Our unpublished motto at the time was, “Do everything we possibly can to make sure the trends we forecast don’t happen!” A number of initiatives by others began with the same desire – such as Back to Church Sunday by the Rt Rev Nigel McCulloch, Bishop of Manchester (2004), Fresh Expressions (formally launched in 2005) and Messy Church (in 2008).

The Issues Being Faced

What were the key issues that church leaders were facing in the 21st century? In all of this the changes being seen in church and society in the UK were broadly parallel to what was happening in Australia. Philip and Peter exchanged the publications that each other’s organisation produced and met whenever possible, Philip not infrequently coming to the UK.

Decline. There had been a widespread loss in the number of churchgoers, especially seen among those under 30. Many programmes had attempted to woo them back, but generally they were not as successful as hoped. Part of the problem was how to grapple realistically with some of the tensions young people faced.

Youth habits. These included the great popularity of celebrities and young people’s desire to follow them. There was a huge avalanche of information afforded through mobiles, ipads, tablets, and so on and there was increased ease of communicating with each other, especially through the growth of Twitter, Facebook and other like mechanisms. There was an increasing openness to sexuality, with many young people in their teens experimenting with sexual intercourse (often, it was found, out of peer pressure or sheer curiosity), but followed through with many in their 20s cohabiting rather than marrying in the first instance.

Societal change. Society itself was changing rapidly and the church struggled to change with it. Sunday shopping began in 1994 in England. Many sports fixtures were held on a Sunday.

Schools often held music practice on a Sunday and the concept of a 'day of rest' or at least a day with a difference was lost. Cohabitation led to more frequent separation than among people who married, and many families were divided. Research showed that only two-thirds of church children in 2005 lived with their two natural parents, a similar proportion as in society generally.

Values weakened. Some of the major tenets holding society together loosened. Integrity, honesty and uprightness were compromised by many in the public sphere, including politicians, business leaders and media moguls. The general public frequently followed suit. Unfortunately some church leaders were caught up in the same trend. Those standing firmly on the 'old' values found it harder to stand firm. In 2003 the Government repealed Section 28 of the 1998 Local Government Act which forbade Local Authorities to promote homosexuality and gradually homosexual activity and publicity increased until in 2013 a law allowing same-sex marriage was passed by the Houses of Parliament. Many conservative Christian leaders considered such was anti-Biblical.

Rural churches. Of the 16,000 Anglican churches in England some 9,000 are located in rural areas, and there are a further 6,000+ rural churches in other denominations, making up two-fifths, 41%, of the total. However, only 10% of the population live in rural areas, although 12% of those who do attend church. But the fact remains that many rural churches have small, often elderly, congregations who are unable realistically to support the ministry of a minister or maintain the fabric of their building. What do senior church leaders, including bishops, do in these circumstances? Some denominations have tried closing many of their churches (especially Methodists and Roman Catholics), with varying success. Anglicans have the additional problem that 90% of their rural churches are "listed", that is, recognised as being of especial architectural merit and therefore cannot be changed without (often very protracted) discussion. Some ministers look after 12 or more rural churches, while research by Christian Research showed that usually four is the maximum that can sensibly be coped with by one person.

Ageing churchgoers. As well as fewer people, many churches have many more older people in their congregation. Often these are more resistant to change, have less energy to do things, and are unwilling to volunteer for roles such as being on the Church Council, or helping with the Sunday School, or general hospitality, etc. The proportion of older people in church congregations is about double the proportion of people of similar age in the population (30% to 16% in 2010 and likely to become 36% to 19% by 2020).

Growing churches. All is not doom and gloom, however, as there are many churches which are growing, especially in south-east England. Over the years 1989 to 2020, an estimated 9,000 churches opened or will open while 8,000 closed or will close. Especially in London, immigrant and black churches are prospering and similar things are happening in Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland and some of the larger English cities. It is these churches which are attracting leaders, while those churches not seeing growth are manned by a decreasing number of ministers, both male and female, which leads to its own problems.

Larger churches. Taken to be those with a Sunday congregation of at least 350, Christian Research held three special week-long "Staff Colleges" in 2003, 2004 and 2006 out of the first of which came the suggestion of a National Larger Anglican Churches' Conference which began in 2005 and has continued every two years since. Many of these churches are growing. Those attending found this was their first training they had received in respect of leading a larger church, and also the first time many met each other. Nor did they have to apologise for leading a larger church, which they often did when meeting other church leaders in their locality.

Closure of Christian Research

In November 2006, Peter received a letter from the Group Chief Executive of the Bible Society, James Catford, informing him that the Bible Society would like to take over Christian Research instead of re-starting its own research department (which had been dormant for several years). The Christian Research Board at its next meeting decided this would be a good move, and would resolve the constant worry of inadequate finance for Christian Research's activities. This coincided with the decision of Heather to retire (March 2007), while Peter decided to leave at the end of June 2007, having felt that the personal position offered him by the Bible Society was fraught with difficulties. He began a new organisation, simply called Brierley Consultancy, on a self-employed basis.

The Bible Society published one further edition of the *UKCH* in 2009, now called the *UK Christian Resources' Handbook*, but declined to do more, as the web began to take over. However, the web version of the *UKCH*, is nothing like as comprehensive – in 2015 it listed 1,100 organisations whereas the *UKCH* listed over 5,000. In addition the use of the internet meant that the statistics gathered alongside the *Handbook* information, showing how Christian organisations were faring, were felt by the Bible Society to be irrelevant.

Brierley Consultancy

This began in July 2007 and has continued ever since. Initially the Bible Society found that they were unable to continue writing *Quadrant*, so Peter and Heather continued doing this until the end of 2008. However, the Conferences arranged for 2008 were attended by Peter along with his successor at Christian Research, Benita Hewitt. Brierley Consultancy began *FutureFirst* at the beginning of 2009, taking over the role of *Quadrant*, which, while it continued under Bible Society, took a different stand point by reporting more on societal changes than church trends. Peter also began a series called *UK Church Statistics*, which was modelled on *Religious Trends*, which had ceased publication under the Bible Society.

The larger church Conferences, however, have been continued by Brierley Consultancy, now in co-operation with CPAS, an Anglican leadership training and youth agency, and Peter continues to answer numerous questions which arrive constantly by email! The desire for clear, firm information about the church, needed to help leaders in their decision making, and researchers in their projects, has not ended and it is a privilege to help provide that whenever it can be done.

Brierley Consultancy also undertakes research projects, undertaking, for example, a large Living the Christian Life study in 2012 for Langham International Partnership, and also in the same year organising the London Church Census at the request of the London City Mission, across its 4,800 churches. A fourth Scottish Church Census (with 4,100 churches) is to be undertaken in 2016, so the process of researching continues, augmented by help from others as necessary.

In all of this, parallels with the Christian Research Association in Australia abound. We have a similar set of societal trends, a similar desire for leadership to understand the Christian dimension, and the aim of monitoring the religious influences in that society. The location is different, the culture similar but not identical, but the needs are the same. Long may the work continue, both in the UK, Australia and worldwide!

Chapter 21.

Some Thoughts on Philip Hughes’ ‘Charting the Faith of Australians’

*Jayant Bhalchandra Bapat**

Although comparatively modest in its size, Philip Hughes’ work, *Charting the Faith of Australians: Thirty Years in the Christian Research Association*, is thought provoking, challenging and full of ideas and suggestions for the future. Good research often provides some answers but raises many more questions. Philip’s work is no exception to this dictum. He asks many questions, answers some and leaves the reader and researcher to look further into the complex topics of culture and religion in the present society. Being a rare combination of a devout Christian, an accomplished statistician and a gifted researcher, Philip seeks answers to important questions and offers many lucid explanations. His research output is testimony to his wide ranging scholarship.

Although I have known Philip for many years, it is only in the last 6-7 years that we worked together (along with Purushottama Bilimoria) to produce a substantial volume on Indian Diaspora in Australia. It is in this process that I discovered Philip’s ability to seek answers to perplexing questions and statistically analyse the results. I am ever so grateful to him for his insights into comparative religion.

Having come to this land 51 years ago and having lived in Australia as a migrant ever since, I have seen many of the changes that Philip describes in his work. In 1965 when I arrived here, White Australia Policy still reigned supreme. I was one of a dozen or so Indians in Melbourne. There were no Indian films, no Indian foods and no spices. There were hardly any Chinese or South Asians. Shops closed at 5 pm on week days, were open only till 1 pm on Saturdays and were closed on Sundays. Pubs closed at 6 pm. Most people religiously attended the church services on Sundays. Australia was very much an Anglo-Saxon ‘roast beef and Yorkshire pudding’ country. There were no Hindu temples, no Sikh Gurdwaras and certainly no ‘interfaith dialogues’. Like most young people, I knew little about Hinduism, my religion, and what it stood for. It was a High School teacher in Bendigo (a Christian) who asked me to speak on Hinduism to her students, and this led me to study what my faith was in some depth.

It was the Catholic Archdiocese in Melbourne who were the pioneers of ‘interfaith dialogue’ in Victoria. It was through them that I was introduced to Christianity, Buddhism and Islam. Back in India, in the traditional Hindu society where I was raised, these faiths were the ‘others’. I often wondered why it was the Catholic Church that took this first step towards interfaith dialogue in Victoria. I remember asking a devout Catholic friend as to why the Church bothered with this. Tongue in cheek, I said to him, ‘shouldn’t a good and devout Christian and most certainly the Church get on with their duty of converting heathens to the way of Christ? Are they not doing the wrong thing by seeking interfaith dialogue?’ Seriously though, I think this step that the Catholic Church took in approaching other faiths to a dialogue was bold, ahead of its time and courageous.

Since my arrival in Australia in 1965, the country has certainly changed dramatically and

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certainly in terms of its religious profile. I remember a Catholic colleague in 1966 who sought to marry an Australian Christian woman of another denomination and was refused permission to do so. As against this, as a marriage celebrant, I have been performing mixed weddings between Hindus and Christians for quite some time. The Hindu wedding is followed by a Church wedding or vice versa. I have also conducted combined weddings where both the Hindu and Christian priests are present at the same place and the rituals follow each other. Parents from both sides are very willing to give their blessings to such couples. Even the normally orthodox Greek and eastern European Churches are no exception to this.

In spite of being basically a Christian country (61% Christians, 2011 Census), Australia has embraced other religions with open arms. Indians now represent the fastest growing community in Australia and as a result, Hinduism the fastest growing religion. Melbourne now boasts 16 Hindu temples and more are under construction. In addition, Hindu presence is felt through hundreds of Yoga centres, week-end meditation retreats and the ever increasing number of Yogis, preachers and Swamis who visit here on a regular basis and are eager to disseminate their own kind of spirituality. I started acting as a community priest nearly 40 years ago due mainly to the fact that there were no Hindu priests in Australia. Today, a priest can perform a Hindu ritual every day if he wanted to. We have now trained women priests as well who meet the ever increasing demands of life-cycle rituals for the Hindus in Melbourne. I believe that this is an area where some Christian denominations are still lagging behind.

To an outsider such as myself, Christianity was and still is a cohesive whole in spite of having many different denominations and sects. To me, compared to Hinduism, these differences appear to be minor. On the other hand, Hinduism presents a very confusing, baffling and perplexing scenario even to a Hindu. In building the very first temple in Melbourne, our idea was to bring in a sense of cohesion and unity. That is why the temple was deliberately designed to include major gods and goddesses under one roof so that most of the major branches and sects could be catered for. Although the experiment has been successful, the rapid growth in Hindus from various parts of India and from overseas has resulted in the construction of temples belonging to particular sects. India has always been a highly complex mixture of many different languages (25 main ones), dialects (over 600), ethnicities, beliefs and cultures. This is reflected in the Hinduisms that are practiced within India. Unfortunately many such differences have also been brought to this adopted land and this has been baffling for the Indian migrants and especially their children. Part of the reason for this is that Hinduism is not taught in the schools in India. Also, because of the different ethnicities and language backgrounds, the practice of Hinduism can vary substantially from state to state. Unlike the churches, there is no overarching Hindu body that can dictate and harmonize the behaviour of the populace.

One has to bear in mind that Hindus represent no more than 2-3% of Australians. Unity and cohesion are therefore values that must be placed on high priority and need to be inculcated amongst our young.

What are the things that Hinduism can share with the other faiths in Australia? It is a well-established fact that Hinduism has two main strengths that can benefit any faith or culture. These are: *bhakti* or devotional worship shared by a group of people, and secondly, a strong spiritual leaning without seeking an intervention by God. The *Bhakti* movement brought religion and god to the masses. It believes in selfless devotion to the god irrespective of one's caste or creed. Because of its universal appeal, it became the only source for the common man to seek god. Great Indian saints spread the word amongst

the masses that god was approachable through total devotion, free of greed, malice and self-interest. The movement is very popular in India even today. In Australia, Indian families get together every so often, pray and share one another's experiences. They also eat together. This is a function not unlike that of the Christian Churches in the olden days. The church was a place of gathering where people looked for each other, cared for each other and cooperated with each other. Suitable matches were also made at the church after the prayers. Sadly, it is less and less relevant today. As Philip points out, the practice of prayer has faded in Christianity.

Spirituality is another area where Hinduism has always been at the forefront. Knowing that 23% of Australians call themselves spiritual but not religious, it would be worth their while for the Churches and the community as a whole to take on board the spiritual dimension of human behaviour in a major way. I believe that such training needs to be offered to students at the school and at university level. It may stop young people venturing in the direction of drugs, wanton sex and alcohol. Modern Australian cultural norms demand that the young are responsible for putting their own life together. The focus on individual development at the expense of the society has led to an emphasis on experience over cognition. This can often result in pandering to self-centred and selfish desires. The young these days are not often interested in questions about god, religion, family values and social responsibility.

In Hindu thought, children are still needed to be obedient to the elders and adhere to family and society values. They are part of the family, a clan and a culture and they need to abide by a range of rules and expectations. This is not necessarily bad. Piaget has shown us that even up to the age of 20, many men and women still lack maturity. Total freedom in such inexperienced hands does often result in disaster.

Like any other migrant groups, Indians and especially their children face a number of challenges. They need to discover their identity, their heritage and most importantly, their commonality. While they quickly adopt the peer group norms, there are often clashes with the elders whose expectations can be very different. I agree with Philip when he says that schools may need to move to spiritual literacy rather than religious education. To this I would add the need to address heritage and cultural values of both the local and the migrant groups. This will hopefully enable students to adjust well to the environment they live in.

Indian migrants are not immune to problems such as family violence, alcoholism and drugs. Added to this are problems such as the perceived superiority of the Indian male, the entrenched dowry system and the like. I believe that organisations such as the Hindu Council of Australia, the Christian Church and Islamic and Jewish Councils need to get together to develop blanket policies that would address such problems in the society we live in. Such an expert body could organize accredited training courses and continuing professional development for community leaders and volunteers.

I conclude by asking the same questions that Philip has posed. How should any faith respond to cultural, moral and generational change? How should one formulate such a response? How should any faith address the problem of adopting to modern ways of communication in order to reach the young?

These are very real and difficult questions. While one hopes that God will provide us with the answers, one must strive hard to read his message in whichever way we can.

Appendix 1. CRA Board Positions (1985-2016)

| | Chair | Deputy-chair | Secretary / Public Officer | Treasurer | |
|------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1985 | Rev Dr Neville Carr | Rev Bryce Wilson | Prof Gary Bouma | Rev Dr Peter Marshall | |
| 1986 | | | | | |
| 1987 | | | | | |
| 1988 | | | | | |
| 1989 | | | | | |
| 1990 | Dr Peter Kaldor | Rev Dr Michael Mason | Ian Webber | Rev Barry Prior | |
| 1991 | | | | | |
| 1992 | | | | | |
| 1993 | | | | | |
| 1994 | | | | | |
| 1995 | Dr Joan Clarke | Rev Dr Michael Mason | Dr Joan Clarke | Rohan Pryor | |
| 1996 | | | | | |
| 1997 | Dr Joan Clarke | | | | |
| 1998 | Rev Prof Gary Bouma | | Rev Dr Michael Mason | Brett Parris | Dr Keith Purdie |
| 1999 | | | | | |
| 2000 | | | | | |
| 2001 | | | | | |
| 2002 | | | | | |
| 2003 | Rev Dr Neville Carr | Pastor Rob Steed | Dr Bob Dixon | Cptn Christian Thompson | |
| 2004 | | | | | |
| 2005 | | | | Kelvin Merrett | |
| 2006 | | | | | |
| 2007 | | | | | |
| 2008 | Pastor Rob Steed | John Farquharson | Dr Bob Dixon | Dr Ken Bartel | |
| 2009 | | | | | |
| 2010 | | | | | |
| 2011 | | | | | |
| 2012 | | | | | |
| 2013 | Pastor Rob Steed | John Farquharson | Dr Bob Dixon | Dr Ken Bartel | |
| 2014 | | | | | |
| 2015 | | | | | Rev Dr Darren Cronshaw |
| 2016 | | | | | Grace Thomlinson |

Appendix 2.

Senior Members of the Christian Research Association and Representatives on the CRA Board

Please note the following is not a full list of all representatives. The Constitution allows for alternates which means that, in some cases, an organisations appointed someone to represent them on rare occasions when the usual representative was not available. The list does not include some people who were representatives for a short while and attended only one or two meetings of the Board.

ACCESS Ministries

Rev Dr Neville Carr (2004 - 2007)

Dr Evonne Patterson (2008-2011)

Shirley Culhane (2012 - current)

Anglican Diocese of Brisbane

N C Reid (1993-1994)

Bishop John Noble (1995- 2002)

Trevor Smith (2002 - 2009)

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Rev Prof. Dr Gary Bouma (1985 - 2004)

Prof. Dr Ruth Webber (2004 - 2007)

Dr Murray Seiffert (2007 - 2014)

Rev Dr Nicholas White (2015 - current)

Assemblies of God

Brendan Roach (2001 - 2007)

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Sr Eileen Jones (1987)

Dr Nick Tonti-Fillipini (1987 - 1992)

Rev Dr Michael Mason (1991 - 2004)

Sr Bernadette Keating (2004)

Dr Bob Dixon (2004 – current)

Baptist Union of Victoria

Merridie Costello (2001-2003)

Rev Howard Wilkins (2004 - 2010)

Ron Jessop (2012)

Rev Dr Darren Cronshaw (2011 - 2015)

Bible Society

Jenny Dean (1985 - 1986)

ITIM / Converge International

Rev Dr Laurie Styles (1985)

Rev Dr Peter Marshall (1986 - 1994)

Rev Dr Keith Purdie (1995 - 2001)

Dr Lindsay MacMillan (2003 - current)

Lutheran Church of Australia

Dr Ken Bartel (2005 - 2015)

Mission of St James and St John

Tevor Hogan (1986)

Dr Joan Clarke (1986 - 1988)

Prahran Mission

Dr Joan Clarke (1989 - 2005)

Salvation Army

Cpt. Christian Thompson (2000 - 2005)

Lt. Colonel Kelvin Merrett (2005 - 2006)

Mj. John Farquharson (2007 - 2014)

Cpt. Rowan Castle (2015 - current)

Seventh-day Adventist Church

Pastor Rob Steed (1998 - 2005)

Pastor Roger Govender (2006-2015)

Tabor / Eastern College

Dr Tom Edwards (2012 - current)

Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of NSW

Dr Peter Kaldor (1985 - 1996)

Keith Castle (1997 - 2007)

Dr Ruth Powell (2007 - 2010)

Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania

Rev. Barry Prior (1989 - 1993)

Rev Dr Dean Eland (1994 - 1997)

Rohan Pryor (1994 - 1997)

John U'Ren (1998 - 2007)

John Emmett (2008 – 2012)

Laura Cregan (2014 – 2015)

World Vision

Rev Dr Neville Carr (1985 - 1988)

Ian Webber (1989 - 1991)

Brett Parris (1991 - 1998)

Grace Thomlinson (1999 - 2005)

Zadok

Rev Dr Peter Marshall (1985 - 1986)

Rosemary Christmas (1986 - 1989)

Digby Hannah (1989 - 1990)

Co-opted Members of the Board

Craig Stapleton (1985 - 1986)

Bob Dixon (1992 - 2004)

Grace Thomlinson (2006 - current)

Rob Steed (2006 - current)

Appendix 3.

Books and Research Papers Published by the Christian Research Association 1986 - 2016

Books

1986. Hughes, Philip, Tricia Blombery, and Clara Bentley. *Australian Beliefs and Practices Project, Stage One Report*. Sydney.
1987. Hughes, Philip and Tricia Blombery, *Combined Churches Survey for Faith and Mission. Preliminary Report*. Sydney.
1988. Blombery, Tricia, *Religious Broadcasting in Australia*. Sydney.
1988. Hughes, Philip, *Faith and Work*. Sydney.
1989. Blombery, Tricia, *God through Human Eyes*. Sydney.
1989. Hughes, Philip, *The Australian Clergy*. Melbourne.
1989. Blombery, Tricia, *Tomorrow's Church Today*. Melbourne.
1990. Hughes, Philip, and Tricia Blombery. *Patterns of Faith in Australian Churches*. Melbourne.
1990. Bentley, Peter, Tricia Blombery, and Philip Hughes. *A Yearbook for Australian Churches 1991*, Melbourne.
1991. Bentley, Peter and Philip Hughes, *Lay Adult Christian Education: Principles and Possibilities*.
1991. Bentley, Peter, Tricia Blombery, and Philip Hughes. *A Yearbook for Australian Churches 1992*, Melbourne.
1992. Bentley, Peter, Tricia Blombery, and Philip Hughes. *Faith Without the Church? Nominalism in Australian Christianity*. Melbourne.
1992. Bentley, Peter, Tricia Blombery, and Philip Hughes. *A Yearbook for Australian Churches 1993*, Melbourne.
1993. Blombery, Tricia, and Philip Hughes, *Faith Alive: An Australian Picture*. Kew.
1993. Hughes, Philip, *Religion: A View from the Australian Census*. Melbourne.
1993. Bentley, Peter, Tricia Blombery, and Philip Hughes. *A Yearbook for Australian Churches 1994*, Melbourne.
1994. Bentley, Peter, Tricia Blombery, and Philip Hughes. *A Yearbook for Australian Churches 1995*, Melbourne.
1995. Hughes, Philip, Craig Thompson, Rohan Pryor, and Gary D Bouma. *Believe It or Not: Australian Spirituality and the Churches in the 90s*. Melbourne.
1995. Bentley, Peter, Tricia Blombery, and Philip Hughes. *A Yearbook for Australian Churches 1996*, Melbourne.
1997. Bentley, Peter and Philip Hughes, *A Yearbook of Australian Religious Organisations, 1997*.
1997. Hughes, Philip, *Religion in Australia: Facts and Figures*. Melbourne.
1997. Bouma, Gary D. *Many Religions, All Australian: Religious Settlement, Identity and Cultural*

Diversity. Melbourne.

1998. Bentley, Peter and Philip Hughes, *Australian Life and the Christian Faith: Facts and Figures*. Melbourne.
1999. Bentley, Peter and Philip Hughes, *A Directory of Australian Religious Organisations 1999*. Melbourne.
1999. Ballis, Peter H., and Gary D. Bouma, (eds) *Religion in an Age of Change*. Melbourne.
2000. Hughes, Philip (ed) *Australia's Religious Communities: A Multimedia Exploration. CD-ROM*. Melbourne.
2002. Salom, Alwyn. *The Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Australia*. Melbourne.
2003. Hughes, Philip (editor) *Research Methods for Ministry and Mission*. CD-ROM. Melbourne.
2005. Dixon, Robert E. *The Catholic Community in Australia*. Melbourne.
2005. Hughes, Philip and Sharon Bond, *A Handbook for Cross-Cultural Ministry*. Jointly published with the Victorian Council of Churches. Melbourne.
2006. Hughes, Philip (ed.) *Australia's Religious Communities: A Multimedia Exploration. 2nd edition*. CD-ROM. Melbourne.
2006. Hughes, Philip (ed.) *Pointers Vol. 1 to 16, 1990 - 2006*. CD-ROM. Created by Timothy Hughes. Melbourne.
2007. Hughes, Philip. *Putting Life Together: Findings from Australian Youth Spirituality Research*. Melbourne.
2009. Mountain, Vivienne. *Responding to Need: A Study of Selected Church-Based Counselling Services in Melbourne*. Melbourne.
2009. Hughes, Philip, and Stephen Reid. *All Melbourne Matters: Research of the Church in Melbourne for the Future of the Church and the City: The Citywide Report*. Melbourne.
2009. Hughes, Philip and Audra Kuncionas, *Sowing and Nurturing: Challenges and Possibilities for Rural Churches*. Melbourne.
2010. Hughes, Philip (ed.) *Australia's Religious Communities: A Multimedia Exploration. 3rd edition*. CD-ROM. Melbourne.
2010. Hughes, Philip. *Shaping Australia's Spirituality: A Review of Christian Ministry in the Australian Context*. Melbourne.
2012. Hughes, Philip, Margaret Fraser, and Stephen Reid. *Australia's Religious Communities: Facts and Figures*. Melbourne.
2013. Hughes, Philip and Darren Cronshaw. *Baptists in Australia: A Church with a Heritage and a Future*. Melbourne.
2014. Hughes, Philip, and Lachlan Fraser. *Life, Ethics and Faith in Australian Society: Facts and Figures*. Melbourne.
2014. Rose, Gerald, Gary D. Bouma, and Philip Hughes. *Re-Imagining Church*. Melbourne.
2014. Mountain, Vivienne. *Children and the Church: Jesus Brings the Child to a Place in the Middle*. Melbourne.
2015. Hughes, Philip (ed.) *Research Methods for Ministry and Mission. 2nd edition*. Melbourne.
2016. Hughes, Philip, Stephen Reid and Margaret Fraser, *A Vision for Effective Youth Ministry:*

Insights from Australian Research. Melbourne.

2016. Mountain, Vivienne, *Children's Prayer: Multi-faith Perspectives*. Melbourne.

Research Papers Published by the Christian Research Association

1994. Blombery, Tricia, and Philip Hughes. Australian Families: Practices and Attitudes. *Research Paper No. 1.*

1994. Hughes, Philip. A Maze or a System: Changes in the Worldview of Australian People. *Research Paper No. 2.*

1997. Hughes, Philip. Values and Religion: A Case Study of Environmental Concern and Christian Beliefs and Practices among Australians. *Research Paper No. 3.*

1999. O'Leary, Zina. Reaction, Introspection and Exploration: Diversity in Journeys out of Faith. *Research Paper No.4.*

2003. Hughes, Philip and Sharon Bond with John Bellamy and Alan Black, Exploring What Australians Value. *Research Paper No.5.*

2005. Bentley, Peter and Philip Hughes, A Brief Review of Church-Related Research 1975-2005. *Research Paper No.6.*

2008. Hughes, Philip and Audra Kunciunas, Rural Churches in the Uniting Church in South Australia: Models for Ministry. *Research Paper No. 7.*

2008. Hughes, Philip, Spiritual Capital: An Important Asset of Workplace and Community? *Research Paper No.8.*

2009. Hughes, Philip and Audra Kunciunas, Models of Leadership and Organisation in Anglican Churches in Rural Australia. *Research Paper No.9.*

2011. Hughes, Philip, Christian Faith and the Economy in a Globalised World. *Research Paper No. 10.*

2011. Hughes, Philip and Stephen Reid, Taking Holistic Education Seriously. *Research Paper No. 11.*

2012. Kozlovic, Anton, The Religion-and-Film Genre: A Select Bibliography. *Research Paper No. 14.*

2013. Hughes, Philip, History and Theology of Christian Welfare in Australia: A Review of the Literature. *Research Paper No. 12.*

2013. Reid, Stephen and Philip Hughes. The Values and Benefits of Sports Chaplaincy in Australia. *Research Paper No.13.*

2015. Woolcott, Lisa. Homeless Welfare Australia: A Study of Church Based Welfare, Secular Not-for-Profit Organisations and the Rise of Social Enterprise. *Research Paper No. 15.*

Appendix 4.

Books and Articles Published by Other Organisations of Which a CRA Staff Member has been a Co-Author

Books

Hughes, Philip (1982). *Thai Culture, Values and Religion: An Annotated Bibliography of English Language Materials*. Chiang Mai, Thailand: Manuscript Division, Payap College.

Hughes, Philip J. (1989) *Proclamation and Response: A Study of the History of the Christian Faith in Northern Thailand*. Chiang Mai, Thailand: Payap University.

Hughes, Philip J. and Brian Sheehan (1993) *Culture and Business Practices: Two Cross-Cultural Case-studies*. Melbourne: self published.

The following series of books on different denominations and religious groups in Australia was edited by Philip Hughes for the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Rubinstein, William D. (1995) *Judaism in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Adam, Enid and Philip Hughes (1996) *The Buddhists in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Bentley, Peter and Philip Hughes (1996) *The Uniting Church in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Bilimoria, Purushottama (1996) *The Hindus and Sikhs in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Blombery, Tricia (1996) *The Anglicans in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Burke, David and Philip Hughes (1996) *The Presbyterians in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Dixon, Robert E. (1996) *The Catholics in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Godley, Stephen and Philip Hughes, (1996) *The Eastern Orthodox in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Hughes, Philip (1996) *The Pentecostals in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Hughes, Philip (1996) *The Baptists in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Omar, Wafia and Kirsty Allen (1996) *The Muslims in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Schild, Maurice and Philip Hughes (1996) *The Lutherans in Australia*. Melbourne: Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research.

Emmett, John and Philip Hughes (2000) *Making Disciples: A Survey of Christian Education in*

UCA Congregations, Melbourne: Uniting Church Press.

Hughes, Philip (2001) *Working in the Anglican Church: Experiences of Female and Male Clergy*. Sydney: The Anglican Church of Australia.

Black, Alan, and Philip Hughes (2001) *The Identification and Analysis of Indicators of Community Strength and Outcomes*. Vol. 3. Occasional Paper. Canberra: Department of Family and Community Services, Commonwealth of Australia.

Hughes, Philip, & Bond, Sharon (2001). *Youth Spirituality: A Summary of Published Research Relating to Youth Spirituality, Religiosity and Values*. Melbourne: Uniting Education.

Hughes, Philip, & Bond, Sharon (2001). *Chaplaincy in Uniting Church Schools*. Melbourne: Uniting Education.

Bellamy, John, Alan Black, Keith Castle, Philip Hughes and Peter Kaldor, (2002) *Why People Don't Go to Church*, Sydney: NCLS Research.

Black, Alan, Hughes, Philip, & Wilson, Lou (2002). *Report of the Evaluation of the Family and Community Networks Initiative*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Bellamy, John, Keith Castle, Peter Kaldor, Alan Black, Philip Hughes and Nathain Secker (2003) *Profiling Australians: Social and Religious Characteristics of the Population*. Sydney: NCLS Research.

Howe, Brian and Philip Hughes (2003) *Spirit of Australia II: Religion and Citizenship in National Life*, Adelaide: ATF Press.

Hughes, Philip, Alan Black, Peter Kaldor, John Bellamy and Keith Castle (2005) *Building Stronger Communities*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.

Hughes, Philip (2008) *The Spirituality of Teachers in Catholics Schools: Project Report*, Melbourne: John Garratt Publishing.

Kaldor, Philip, Philip Hughes and Alan Black (2010) *Spirit Matters: How Making Sense of Life Affects Wellbeing*. Melbourne: Mosaic Press.

Reid, Stephen, Robert Dixon and Noel Connolly (2010) *See, I am Doing a New Thing! A Report on the 2009 Survey of Catholic Religious Institutes in Australia*. Melbourne: John Garratt Publishing.

Bilimoria, Purushottama, Jayant Bapat, and Philip Hughes (2015) *The Indian Diaspora: Hindus and Sikhs in Australia*. New Delhi: DK Books.

Chapters in Books:

Hughes, Philip (1982) "Incarnation and the Communication of the Gospel in Thailand." In H. Swanson (ed) *To What Extent*. Chiang Mai, Thailand: Manuscript Division, Payap College. pp.24-33.

Hughes, Philip (1987). "By Their Fruits": Educational Implications of Research Findings on Values and Religion in Australian Society. In G. M. Rossiter & D. M. Stewart (eds.), *Education and Care of Youth*. Sydney: Christian Brothers Province Resource Group. pp.11-22.

Hughes, Philip, & Blombery, Tricia. (1988). *The Work of the Christian Research Association*. In Robert Withycombe (Ed.), *Australian and New Zealand Religious History 1788-1988*. Canberra: ANZSTS/ATS.

Hughes, Philip (1997). Australia's Religious Profile. In G. D. Bouma (ed.), *Many Religions, All Australian* (pp. 29–50). Melbourne: Christian Research Association. pp.29-50.

Hughes, Philip (1997). Issues for Religious Groups in Australia. In G. D. Bouma (ed.), *Many Religions, All Australian*. Kew, Victoria: Christian Research Association. pp.111-121.

Hughes, Philip (1997). Australia's Religious Profile. In Department of Immigration and

- Multicultural Affairs (ed.), *Australia's Population Trends and Prospects 1996*. Canberra: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. pp.61-81.
- Hughes, Philip (1999). Nominality in Australia. In Heather Wraight (ed.), *They Call Themselves Christian: Papers on Nominality given at the International Lausanne Consultation on Nominalism December 1998*. Eltham, London: Christian Research and the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. pp.32-40.
- Hughes, Philip (1999) 'Social Change and Its Impact on Religion in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand', in Collis, M., L. Munro and S. Russell, *Sociology for a New Millennium: Challenges and Prospects*. Melbourne: Monash University. pp.427-432.
- Hughes, Philip, & Black, Alan (1999). Comparison of the Changing Nature of Religion and Church Involvement in Rural and Urban Australia. In M. Collis, L. Munro, & S. Russell (eds.), *Sociology for a New Millennium: Challenges and Prospects*. Melbourne: Monash University. pp.445-452.
- Hughes, Philip, John Bellamy, Alan Black and Peter Kaldor, (2000) 'Dropping out of church: the Australian Experience', in Leslie J. Francis and Yaacov J. Katz (eds) *Joining and Leaving Religion: Research Perspectives*, Leominster, England: Gracewing.
- Hughes, Philip, John Bellamy and Alan Black (2000) 'Building social trust through education' in Ian Winter (editor) *Social Capital and Public Policy in Australia*, Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies. pp.225-249.
- Hughes, Philip (2000). Worship of the Past? Anglican Attendance in 20th Century Melbourne. In C. Holden (Ed.), *People of the Past? The Culture of Melbourne Anglicanism and Anglicanism in Melbourne's Culture*. Melbourne: History Department, University of Melbourne. pp.89-106.
- Hughes, Philip (2004). Small Religious Groups in Australia. In J. Healey (Ed.), *Religions and Beliefs in Australia*. Thirroul, NSW: The Spinney Press.
- Black, Alan, & Hughes, Philip (2005). Social Capital and the Sustainability of Rural or Remote Communities: Evidence from the Australian Community Survey. In A. Dale & J. Onyx (eds.), *A Dynamic Balance: Social Capital and Sustainability Community Development*. Vancouver: UBC Press. pp.159-175.
- Hughes, Philip (2006) 'The Australian Religious and Social Context' in Doug Hynd, James Barr and Gordon Preece (eds) *Theology in a Third Voice*, Adelaide: ATF Press. pp.3-24.
- Hughes, Philip (2006). The Future of Religious Education in the Context of Postmodernity. In M. de Souza, K. Engebretson, G. Durka, R. Jackson, & A. McGrady (eds.), *International Handbook of the Religious, Moral and Spiritual Dimensions of Education* (Vol. Part One). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer. pp.349-362.
- Hughes, Philip (2007) 'Religious Trends in Australia' in Ross Langmead (editor) *Reimagining God and Mission*, Adelaide: ATF Press. pp.27-44.
- Hughes, Philip (2008) Hinduism in Australasia. In D. Cush, C. Robinson, and M. York (ed) *Encyclopaedia of Hinduism*, London: Routledge.
- Hughes, Philip (2009). Australian Young People and Religion. In J. Jupp (ed.), *The Encyclopaedia of Religion in Australia*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press. pp.712-717.
- Hughes, Philip (2009) Spiritual confidence and its contribution to wellbeing: Implications for education. In M. de Souza, L. J. Francis, J. O'Higgins-Norman, D. Scott (editors) *International Handbook of Education for Spirituality, Care and Wellbeing*, Dordrecht, Springer. pp. 907-920.
- Hughes, Philip (2010). The Religiosity Of Youth In Australia And Thailand. In G. Giordan (Ed.), *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion*. Brill. pp.115-146.
- Hughes, Philip (2013) 'Bible engagement among Australian young people' in Pauline Hoggart, Fergus Macdonald, Bill Mitchell and Knud Jorgensen, *Bible in Mission*, Regnum Edinburgh

Centenary Series, Oxford. pp.200-207.

Hughes, Philip (2013) 'Bible Engagement among Australian Young People' in Adrian Blenkinsop, *The Bible According to Gen Z*, Minto, NSW: Bible Society Australia. pp.7-25.

Hughes, Philip (2015). Teenage Participation in Local Church Life: Multiple Doors. In A. Village & R. Hood (Eds.), *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*. Brill. pp.40-56.

Hughes, Philip (2016). Contemporary Spirituality and Mission in Australia. In D. Jackson and D. Cronshaw (eds) *Cultural Diversity and Worship in Baptist Life*, Macquarie Park: Morling Press, 2016.

Articles in Journals:

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