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PhD by Published Work:

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Full text not included:

The articles listed below were originally included with the PhD.

The published articles are not included with the PhD due to the publishers' copyright restrictions.

To see the final full text version of each of the articles listed below, please visit the publisher's website. Available access to the published online version may require a subscription.

Links to the publishers' websites are listed below the articles.

Articles:

Art.1: 'Contrasting narratives on responses to victims and survivors of clerical abuse in England and Wales: challenges to Catholic Church discourse', *Child Abuse Review,* 21 (6), 414–426.

Art.2: *'*Clerical Abuse and Laicisation: Rhetoric and Reality in the Catholic Church in England and Wales', *Child Abuse Review,* 21 (6), 427–439.

Art.3: ''It never came up': encouragements and discouragements to addressing religion and belief in professional practice. What do social work students have to say?', *British Journal of Social Work* published online: October 11, 2012, *doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcs140.[*with Sheila Furness].

Art.4: 'Faith-based Organisations and UK Welfare Services: Exploring Some Ongoing Dilemmas', *Social Policy and Society,* 11 (4), 601 - 612*.* [with Sheila Furness].

Art.5: 'Social Work, Religion and Belief: developing a framework for practice', *British Journal of Social Work,* 40 (7), 2185-2202. [with Sheila Furness].

Art.6: 'Considering religion and beliefs in child protection and safeguarding work: is any consensus emerging?', *Child Abuse Review,* 18 (2), 94 – 110.

Art.7: 'Child abuse and spirit possession: not just an issue for African migrants',*childRight,* 245, 28-31.

Art.8: 'Well-motivated Reformists or Nascent Radicals: How do applicants to the degree in social work see social problems, their origins and solutions?' *British Journal of Social Work,* 37 (4), 735-760.

Art.9: 'Cultural barriers to the disclosure of child sexual abuse in Asian communities: listening to what women say', *British Journal of Social Work,* 36 (8), 1361-1377. [with Shamim Akhtar].

Art.10: 'The Role of Religion and Spirituality in Social Work Practice: views and experiences of social workers and students', *British Journal of Social Work,* 36 (4), 617-637. [with Sheila Furness].

Art.11: 'Child sexual abuse amongst Asian communities: developing materials to raise awareness in Bradford', *Practice,* 17 (4), 267-284. [with Shamim Akhtar]

Art.12: 'It isn't discussed'. Religion, belief and practice teaching: missing components of cultural competence in social work education', *Journal of Practice Teaching in Health and Social Care,* 15, 75 – 95.

Ch1: 'Religion and Belief' in A. Worsley, T. Mann, A. Olsen and E. Mason-Whitehead, *Key Concepts in Social Work Practice*, London: Sage.

Ch3: 'Faith-based Approaches' Chapter 6 in M. Gray, M. and S. Webb, *Ethics and Value Perspectives in Social Work,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Links to the publishers' websites:

British Journal of Social Work:
http://bjsw.oxfordjournals.org/

Child Abuse Review:
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1099-0852

Ethics and Value Perspectives in Social Work:
http://us.macmillan.com/ethicsandvalueperspectivesinsocialwork/Mel Gray

Journal of Practice Teaching in Health and Social Care:
http://essential.metapress.com/content/122774

Key Concepts in Social Work Practice:
http://www.uk.sagepub.com/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book236922

Practice:
http://www.tandfonline.com/openurl?stitle=cpra20&genre=journal

Social Policy and Society:
http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=SPS

Exploring neglected elements of cultural competence in social work practice: promoting and developing understanding of religion, belief and culture

Vol. 1: Review Statement

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Abstract

This PhD by published work consists of:

- five single authored articles in refereed journals;

- two main author articles in refereed journals;

- four jointly authored articles in refereed journals;

- a single authored article in a non-refereed journal;

- one jointly authored book, including five single authored chapters;

- two single authored chapters in edited books.

They were published in the period 2003-2013. None has been submitted for any other degree or diploma by me or any other person.

The theme running through these publications is the need for social workers to pay significant attention to issues arising from religion, belief and culture. The research reported highlights the impact of such issues on the lives, experiences, resources and responses of individuals, groups and communities for whom they are important. The work emphasises the importance of developing such understanding and of enhancing knowledge of different ways in which religion, belief and culture impact on the issues that social workers deal with. I suggest that these are essential aspects of culturally competent social work practice which have too often been neglected in both research and professional training.

The publications are listed in Appendix 1 (pp 56 - 59). They demonstrate how my thinking has developed over the past decade. They reflect and are, in part, a response to the developing professional, theoretical and political

context within which I have operated as a social work practitioner, manager and academic over a longer period. The majority are solo-authored. However, I remain committed to collaborative work and recognise that discussions with those researched, my collaborators, and others remain invaluable to the ongoing development of my thinking. Joint authorship declaration forms have been completed, in respect of all relevant publications, and are appended.

Eight publications (Art.12, Art.11, Art.10, Art.9, Art.8, Art.6, Art.5 and Art.3) are based on findings from primary research, while Art.1 and Art.2 explore published data or data supplied by others to provide original analyses of particular issues. The remaining publications, notably book chapters, are primarily conceptual in their approach. They are underpinned by findings from both the primary research reported elsewhere and the use of case examples collected from semi-structured interviews with social work practitioners.

Acknowledgements

Many people have contributed to my exploration of these issues. I owe thanks to current and former colleagues at the University of Bradford and, most especially to Sheila Furness who has collaborated with me on several projects. I am also particularly indebted to colleagues such as Shamim Akhtar who have informed my understanding of the diversity within Muslim culture in particular and to the many students, service users, practitioners, managers and others who have, over the past decade, agreed to participate

in interviews, questionnaires and discussions. Without their contributions I would have had very little to say.

Finally, I should thank my partner, Patricia and my children, Amy and Thomas. They have often, through discussions at home, in the car and on mountains, contributed to the development of ideas, even when they might, perhaps, have preferred to pursue other topics.

Dedication

To my father - Peter (1920-1970) and my mother - Jean (1925-2012)

Thank you.

CONTENTS

Exploring neglected elements of cultural competence in social work practice: promoting and developing understanding of religion, belief and culture

INTRODUCTION

This review has offered an opportunity to construct an account of my relevant published writings from the period 2003 to 2013 and an opportunity to reflect on and construct a new and particular account. In discussing my work and justifying its themes and development, I shall, on occasions, find it necessary to locate my theorising in the context of my biographical experiences. In doing so, I recognise that the relationship between the two is not always straightforward (Flax, 1993) and that my experiences will have been constructed and reconstructed according to context for particular purposes.

The review is structured so as to offer a brief introduction to the major themes of the relevant publications, followed by discussion of their impact and contribution, the relevant background and context, pre-existing literature and particular epistemological and methodological issues. It concludes with a brief overview of progress made, the limitations of the work discussed and acknowledgement of challenges that remain, followed by discussion of the relevance of a constructivist approach to the study of religion, belief and social work.

Much of the work submitted for this PhD has sought to build on and extend what could be characterised as my increasing awareness of four overlapping issues,

- The need for social workers to respond effectively to the impact (positive/helpful or negative/unhelpful or both) of culture, religion and belief in the lives and experiences of both service users and practitioners;

- The potential offered by culture, religion and belief to assist and to hamper people's recovery from trauma;

- The tendency in social work theory, education and practice (perhaps of the social sciences in general) to ignore and avoid the significance and complexity of these issues;

- The scarcity of adequate tools and frameworks to assist practitioners to explore the potential significance and impact of these issues for both themselves and those they seek to help.

I suggest that a sufficient understanding of the impact of religion, belief and culture is an essential aspect of culturally competent social work practice, whilst defining 'cultural competence' in terms of the capacity of individuals and organsations to be aware of, have respect for and to work effectively with people from ethnic, cultural, political, economic and religious backgrounds that are different from their own whilst also being aware of how their own background and culture influences their perceptions of and interactions with others (O'Hagan, 2001; Dominelli, 2004; Williams, 2006; Laird, 2008). Several of the publications included (e.g. Art.12, Art.9 and Art.6) highlight findings which suggest that, in contrast to other aspects of culturally competent practice (e.g. provision of interpreters, *halal* or Caribbean meals, information in a variety of languages or use of ethnically sensitive images and

inclusive, non-racist language in agencies' literature), religion, belief and particular aspects of culture have been neglected.

My contexts have usually involved social work practice with children and families, especially with regard to child protection and practice education. The work has often felt like a conversation with others (practitioners, students and other academics) who are also struggling to develop their own understanding of the issues and to articulate their experiences with regard to them. However, at times, it has also felt like I am attempting to start conversations which many would rather avoid. In Art.12 (75), I report that

> Semi-structured interviews with practice teachers and DipSW students, during the winter of 2002 / 2003 soon suggested that, even amongst those who are explicitly sympathetic to religion and/or spirituality and who are aware of its potential significance to their own practice in social work, there is a pervading sense of these subjects being too dangerous, too personal, too embarrassing, too old-fashioned, too uncertain or just too difficult to discuss.

Furthermore in Ch.2a: 1, I observe that

> Discussions and work with both student social workers and practitioners over several years demonstrates that some remain unaware of their own values whilst others struggle to disclose their values and beliefs. They fear that doing so will cause others to perceive them as oppressive or prejudiced or that it will lead to conflict or ridicule.

IMPACT AND CONTRIBUTION

The publications have challenged previous practice and attitudes. As illustrated below, they have led to increased recognition amongst social work practitioners, managers and educators of the need to question assumptions that religion and belief do not need attention. Such findings will contribute to changes in the social work curriculum which take effect from September 2013 and which require social work degrees in England and Wales to embed a new Professional Capabilities Framework (http://www.collegeofsocialwork.org/pcf.aspx) including requirements to address faith and belief in teaching, assessment and progression of students.

The publications report a variety of research which over the past decade has explored what were previously neglected elements of cultural competence in social work practice. These have led to ongoing work aimed at developing frameworks to assist social workers and others to provide more effective and relevant responses to issues in specialised areas such as child sexual abuse in Muslim communities and sexual abuse perpetrated by Roman Catholic clergy.

The publications listed (together with those sole authored by my colleague, Sheila Furness) still provide the majority of the literature and guidance available to social work practitioners, managers and educators on these particular subjects in the UK. However, since publication of *Religion, belief and social work: Making a difference* (2010) there has been a noticeable increase in interest from practitioners and

academics who recognise the need to find out more about matters relating to religion and belief. There has also been recognition of expertise by peers, notably in published reviews of *Religion, belief and social work: Making a difference* and invitations from colleagues at the Universities of Edinburgh and York to act as the external examiner of doctoral theses in this area. Hodge (2012) for example suggests that *Religion, belief and social work* "is an important text that helps move the conversation forward in the UK and elsewhere" (p129) and which "encourages readers to become more sensitized and committed to learning about religion" (p127).

Material from these publications has contributed to several annual one-day workshops for MA Social Work students at the University of Bradford, while seminars based around them have also been provided for qualified and student practitioners following invitations from the Universities of Coventry (March 2011) and Portsmouth (October 2011). A public lecture at the University of Bradford (March 2012) was well attended by members of the public, professionals and colleagues. Material from the book and other publications is being used and cited by social work researchers and educators in their teaching, books and journal articles on a regular basis.

Papers relating to this research and, especially the development of the Furness/Gilligan framework detailed in *Religion, belief and social work* and its potential to contribute to good practice have been presented at seven international conferences, including "Welfare and Values in Europe" (Uppsala, Sweden, March 2009), "Spirituality in a Changing World" (Windsor, May 2010) and the UK European Conference for Social Work Research (Oxford, March 2011). Beyond peer-reviewed journals, in July 2011, they have led to commissions to review and edit the

Community Care Inform guidance, 'Working with families from faith communities' and in October 2011 to contribute to an article in the *Community Care* magazine entitled 'How well should social workers know their holy books?'. In May 2013, they will underpin teaching to undergraduate and postgraduate social work students at the Western University of Timisoara, Romania provided through the *Eramus* exchange scheme.

My publications also contributed to the success of the *Beyond Belief: Religion and Belief in Professional Practice* conference at the University of Bradford (September 2011) which brought together service users, practitioners and academics, including international participants and workshops and papers covering 'Education and training', 'Safeguarding issues', 'Mental health', 'Faith-based perspectives', 'Policy and planning' and 'Practice and ethics'. The Conference *Beyond Belief* resulted in subsequent work guest-editing a special edition of *International Social Work* which will be published in May 2013 (International Social Work, 2013). An important feature of the networks which have resulted is that they encompass a diverse range of research interests and expertise across several disciplines.

It is also important to note that increased interest in the interplay of religion and social work has happened in parallel with a sometimes related and increased interest in social work and spirituality. Many writers (Bullis,1996; Becvar, 1998; Canda and Furman, 1999; Lindsay, 2002; Nash and Stewart, 2002; Coholic, 2003; Henery, 2003; Moody, 2005; Moss, 2005; Hodge, 2005; 2007; Derezotes, 1995; 2006; Coates et al., 2007; Holloway, 2007; Gray, 2008; Crisp, 2008; 2010; Mathews, 2009;

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Holloway and Moss, 2010) have, in recent years, made important contributions to research and thinking about the relationship between both religious and non-religious 'spirituality' and social work.

In relation to specialist issues, my own research and publications have led to involvement in practitioner and service user events focused on child abuse. For example: workshops focused on faith issues run on behalf of the British Association for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and a symposium at the 2009 BASPCAN Congress. Regarding Asian children, publications led directly to invitations to speak at the London Local Safeguarding Children Board conference (2009) and to assist with a National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children roundtable discussion (March 2012).

Regarding abuse by priests within the Catholic Church, my research has resulted in attention being given specifically to policy and practices in England and Wales in relevant professional journals, including the two articles included in the edition of *Child Abuse Review* focused on complex and institutional abuse (December 2012). It has led to invitations to address the Association of Child Abuse Lawyers (June 2010), to contribute to BBC Radio 4's *Sunday Programme* (March and June 2011) and *Channel 4 News* (September 2010) and to participate in the forthcoming international workshop on "Sexual abuse in the church and other institutional settings" at the Oñati International Institute for the Sociology of Law at the University of Leuven in Belgium (April 2014). It has also resulted in ongoing contacts with service user groups such as Minister and Clergy Sexual Abuse Survivors (MACSAS); and contributions to

conferences organised by Bradford Specialist Sexual Violence & Abuse Advisory Group (June 2011) and the Cassandra Learning Centre in London (October 2012).

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The work submitted for this PhD did not begin with the goal of promoting or developing more effective responses to religion, belief and culture in social work practice in any general sense. It began with largely disconnected attempts to explore and understand very particular challenges arising from my day-to-day practice as a social work practitioner, manager and educator. These included: the need to manage and supervise social work students struggling with dilemmas arising from the disconnect between aspects of their strong religious beliefs and the values of the profession they sought to join (Art.12) and the disproportionately small numbers of people from Asian/Muslim communities in Bradford accessing services for children and young people who have been sexually abused (Art.11 and Art.9). However, this early work quickly raised several significant and more general issues. In particular, it highlighted the degree to which most social work practice and literature had settled into unquestioned habits of avoiding and ignoring the potentially significant impact of religion, belief and culture in the experiences, responses and behaviour of service users and in the practice of social workers and social work agencies. It became clear, not only that such issues were not discussed, but also that attempts to raise them would frequently be viewed as dangerous and unprofessional or (more bizarrely) as 'oppressive'. Some social work colleagues (practitioners and academics) appeared to be starting from points which simply ignored the actuality of many people's

experience. They seemed more influenced by Durkheim's predictions from late nineteenth century Bordeaux than by what they could observe currently outside any mosque in Bradford on a Friday afternoon. My suggestion that social workers needed to consider the impact of cultural imperatives and/or religious beliefs were frequently met with expressions of concern that exploration of such issues would be equated with attempts to either promote or to pathologise particular cultures or beliefs or with denial that these were suitable or relevant issues for social worker practitioners or academics to consider. As shown particularly in Art.12, Art.10 and Art.6, raising such questions resulted in a minority of respondents' expressing views 'for' or 'against' particular beliefs or cultures or even 'for' or 'against' religion or belief as concepts; this, to an extent which seemed to exclude any possibility of their practising in ways which would take sufficient account of individuals' unique lived experiences or be sufficiently respectful of beliefs.

My interest in the interaction and interconnections between religion, belief, culture and other issues does, however, pre-date my career in social work. I was brought up in a Roman Catholic household and encouraged to see both the pursuit of social justice and direct responses to vulnerable individuals as 'religious' duties; often carried out through faith-based organisations. Studying 'Modern History' for my first degree I took it for granted that religion and belief had significance in determining the worldview and actions of people, whether in the context of the Synod of Whitby (Bede, 731/1955: 186-192), the ideals of the 'Diggers' (Winstanley, 1653) or Engels' analysis of the "charity of a Christian bourgeois" (Engels, 1892: 279).

Subsequent professional training as a social worker and practice experiences extended my understanding of contemporary society but also moved me into a world in which religion and belief seemed largely absent from explanations of human behaviour. Academics and practitioners appeared to accept a dominant discourse which included no requirement to question or test the broad conclusions of nineteenth and early twentieth century theorists such as Marx and Engels (1957), Durkheim (1915) and Weber (1904 / 1930) that, in the wake of 'rationalism' and 'science', religion and religious beliefs faced inevitable decline and would eventually disappear. 'Social Work' as a profession had itself been 'secularised' (Bowpitt, 1998; Gray, 2008; Vanderwoerd, 2011), and was insufficiently attentive to the extent to which it failed to take account of the potentially helpful and/or potentially damaging impacts of the religious and spiritual beliefs of either service users (Seden, 1995; Crompton, 1996; 1998) or practitioners ; a deficit which I explore particularly in Art.12, Art.10, Ch.2a and Ch.2b. Art.10 for example reports research with qualified social workers and students which demonstrated that:

- (S)ocial work professionals have received very little and inconsistent preparation around either how to respond to the needs of those individuals and groups for whom religion or spirituality is of central importance or how to resolve dilemmas arising from their own beliefs (632);
- While social workers tend to see many religious and spiritual interventions "as potentially appropriate, especially where these would be undertaken in response to the service user's explicit need or wish", "many have never utilized the interventions discussed, even when they view them as potentially appropriate." (633);

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- Except for Muslim students, "the question of whether or not they hold current beliefs does not appear to determine whether or not they view particular interventions as potentially appropriate" (633).

Between 1976 and 1981, I had practised in almost entirely white communities giving questions of culture and ethnicity almost no attention in day-to-day practice; an omission which was challenged directly when I worked in the Kerio Valley, Kenya in 1982 and 1983. There, I lived amongst people whose worldviews were based in beliefs and traditions and in experiences which were very different to my own. Texts by indigenous anthropologists (Kipkorir, 1973; 1978; Peristany, 1964) did not prepare me for the actuality that my immediate neighbours viewed the world through very different frames (Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974) to those which I took for granted. They questioned assumptions that I had never questioned. They accepted, as routine, actions (e.g. female genital cutting / mutilation) that I had previously assumed would be unacceptable in any community, while, at the same time they showed levels of responsibility (e.g. for disabled children) that I had not seen in my own culture. Such experiences help in recognising the importance of deconstructing assumptions underpinning both an individual's worldview and professional practice originating in a dominant culture; hence, the emphasis in Ch.2c and Art.5 on developing a framework for assessing the significance of religion which not only "ensures that issues arising from religion and belief are adequately addressed in social work and social care assessments or in interventions arising from them." (44), but which also starts from the following principles:

3. Practitioners need to be self-aware and reflexive about their own religious and spiritual beliefs and their responses to the religious and spiritual beliefs of others.
4. Practitioners need to adopt an approach to their practice which recognises the inevitable limits of their own knowledge and understanding of unique

situations and which is underpinned by openness and a willingness to review and revise their working hypotheses.

5. Practitioners need to recognise service-users' expertise about their own needs and beliefs, and to listen to what they say about these.

6. Practitioners need to develop relationships with service users characterised by trust, respect and a willingness to facilitate.

7. Practitioners need to actively seek-out relevant information and advice regarding the religious and spiritual beliefs of those using their services. (Ch.2c: 44)

Indeed, research subsequent to development of the framework has tended to confirm practitioners' needs for such tools. Art.5, for example, reports findings which demonstrate that respondents had previously struggled with issues and situations as diverse as that requiring them to respond creatively to a Muslim woman who chose not to tell her family that she had been raped and that of responding sensitively to a young person with learning difficulties distressed about her pet going to heaven (2193). In such cases, the framework assisted practitioners to recognise that their knowledge and attitudes towards religions they are unfamiliar with had hindered appropriate practice. One respondent said:

Yes. I didn't really think of this case in terms of religion before, feeling more that I provided support that was needed .... I think it (the framework) made me realise how important it is to always be aware of beliefs. My lack of them leads to an assumption that unless explicitly stated otherwise, other people do not have them either. (2193)

Another wrote:

I suppose I didn't consider my own spiritual beliefs in relation to this case. I made an assumption that there was a conflict between his religious background and his sexuality, though actually his family were supportive. (2194)

In 1984 I began work within a faith-based agency providing social work services in Rochdale, at a time when the Central Council for the Education and Training of Social Workers (CCETSW) was increasing its emphasis on anti-racist and ethnically-sensitive practice (Curriculum Development Project Steering Group, 1991; CCETSW, 1991) and legislation was requiring agencies to adopt clearer equal opportunity policies in employment and service delivery (Equal Pay Act 1970; Sex Discrimination Act of 1975; Race Relations Act 1976). I was responsible, in particular, for ensuring that the agency adopted an equal opportunities policy; a process which taught me much about the tendency of some faith-based organisations and some of those within them to rationalise resistance to any change which challenged existing power relations on the basis of the need to preserve privileges based in faith traditions, regardless of whether they run contrary to law or accepted best practice. These experiences subsequently resonated with me whilst writing Ch.2e, Ch.2g, Ch.3, Art.1 and Art.2. In Ch.2g I expressed concern about 'the ability of faith organisations to deal appropriately with child abuse, especially when the alleged or proven perpetrator is in a position of authority' within the organisation (87) and in Art.1 suggest that the research reported "served to reinforce this concern" and to demonstrate that "There is a clear mismatch between the rhetoric of public statements and the outcomes in real cases." (436).

Between 1995 and 2004, as practice learning coordinator at Bradford Family Service Unit I worked for an agency explicitly committed to anti-oppressive practice and to its development in specific contexts (Eisenstadt, 1998; Starkey, 2000). Bradford FSU initiated a particular focus on the needs and experiences of Asian victims and survivors of child sexual abuse in the mid-1990s; work which highlighted the view that "an accurate understanding of the issues affecting black families requires a focus on the specificity of their experience" (Race, 1999: 25).

In 1997, I was responsible for establishing the Alma Street Project within Bradford FSU, as referred to extensively in Art.11 and Art.9. In its publicity materials (Bradford FSU, 2001), the project expressed an explicit objective of "encouraging the use of services by children, young people and their parents and carers from all black communities within Bradford" and emphasised in relation to its group work programme that "We wish, in particular, to ensure that we provide a service relevant to African Caribbean and Asian children/young people, and we would welcome referrals from those who need a specific black group." However, by 2002, it was clear that Asian children and young people were significantly underrepresented amongst the project's service users. This issue underpinned the outreach work reported in Art.11 and was to a very large extent resolved by it. This allowed the focus to move to issues beyond those of the project to consider more general questions regarding the general underrepresentation of Asian children amongst those seeking and receiving services. Art.9, reports on analysis of group discussions involving Muslim Asian women in Bradford which found that:

Members of Asian communities are aware of child sexual abuse, they

recognize that the issue needs to be addressed by all communities and they

report that many of those affected within their own communities have found it

difficult to access relevant services. .... (and) that difficulties, which appear to

arise from Asian women's fears about how agencies will respond, are

frequently compounded by the impact of cultural imperatives arising from *izzat*

(honour/respect), *haya* (modesty) and *sharam* (shame/embarrassment), which

have a considerable influence on how many will behave. (1361).

Such increasing awareness of the need to be alert to the potential significance of

cultural imperatives and religious and other beliefs coincided with growing awareness

of abuse of children and vulnerable adults perpetrated by some clergy and other

authority figures within religious contexts and especially within the Roman Catholic

Church. During the late 1990s and early 2000s information gradually emerged at

local, national and international levels about both contemporary and historical cases

of abuse (Binns, 1998; Nolan, 2001a; 2001b; Pilgrim, 2011). This highlighted a need

for awareness of the potentially significant impact of religious beliefs and immediate

religious contexts in heightening individuals' resilience, trauma or both. It also pointed

to a need to explore with victims and survivors not only how the immediate abusive

acts had impacted on them, but also what significance the particular religious context

and the ways in which religious institutions respond has on them and their recovery.

These issues are referred to in Art.6 and Ch.2e and dealt with in much more detail in

Art.2 and Art.1. Indeed, I suggest that the key practitioner messages of the research

reported include the following:

• Accounts by institutions about how they respond to victims and survivors of abuse need to be critically analysed using accounts offered by victims and survivors themselves.

• Institutions may seek to serve conflicting legitimacy communities and, as a result risk alienating victims and survivors of abuse where they have been led to expect that their needs will be prioritised over matters such as the financial interests and reputation of the institution. (Art.2: 414)

• Public declarations from the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales regarding responses to priests convicted of offences against children cannot be relied on to indicate action taken in particular cases.

• The mismatch between policy rhetoric and the reality of practice has potentially adverse impacts on victims and survivors. (Art.1: 427)

My employment by FSU also coincided with an accelerating focus on anti-racism and ethnically-sensitive and religion-sensitive practice from the Central Council for the Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) and elsewhere (CCETSW, 1991a; 1991b; 1996; Humphries et al., 1993; Crompton, 1996; Patel et al., 1998; O'Hagan, 1999). In social work education and practice, statements and policies committed agencies and professionals to developing what the then Director of CCETSW had described as "their ability to work effectively in a multiracial society" (Hall 1991: 6).

However, both in general terms and within my immediate experience, there remained a danger that this 'commitment' was stronger than the means to deliver it and that, regardless of the rhetoric, the realities of day-to-day, face-to-face practice would be little affected, except, perhaps, by an increased tendency for middle class

professionals to misuse their power to criticise the politically incorrect language used by white working class service users (Langan, 2002). Policy too often failed to recognise the complexities and dilemmas involved in their practical implementation. Moreover, as observed in Art.6, the pursuit of 'equal opportunities' could lead to very different practice in similar agencies. Thus, child protection practitioners asked to comment on whether their agency encouraged or discouraged them from discussing religious and spiritual beliefs, offered similar explanations for contradictory behaviours. 53% "reported that their agencies had done nothing during the previous 12 months to promote such discussions" while 40% said that "they had done so". However, individuals offered similar reasons (e.g. "political correctness") to explain why they did or did not promote discussion. One agency's discouragement of discussion was explained as a result of its being an "essentially ... secular organisation in the modern sense" which "tolerates all beliefs and none but practices without reference to any" while another's encouragement of such discussion was said to result from the fact that "Human rights of all members of our community are a strong ethic." (Art.6: 101).

CCETSW's promotion of anti-racism, ethnically-sensitive and religion-sensitive practice also coincided with events which led to my first discussions of issues related to the impact of religion and belief in social work practice with my subsequent co-author, Sheila Furness. These events are referred to briefly in Ch.2g ('Thomas') and vividly demonstrated the consequences of there being insufficient theoretical or practical frameworks within which to assist practitioners adhering to fundamentalist religious beliefs to work within relevant social work values, agency policies and the

law when in contact with people in same-sex relationships. As observed; at the same time as:

> it is essential that social workers address questions around their own religious and spiritual beliefs or the absence of them and their responses to those of others in particular pieces of practice. It is equally important that they have opportunities in supervision and elsewhere to explore the interface between their beliefs and their work in a more general sense and that they are challenged to recognise both the impact (positive and negative) of this interaction on their work and the dilemmas which may arise. (158)

Such a need is equally apparent from research which has explored factors influencing whether social workers do or do not address issues of religion and belief where these are potentially significant. The research reported in Art.6, for example, demonstrated that whilst 87.5% of the practitioners said that they recognised, in principle, that service users' beliefs are very important in the context of child abuse, protection and safeguarding, "there is little consistency in how such recognition impacts on practice" (103).

> Even within this small sample, there was considerable variation in attitudes and much to suggest that actions and decisions are the product of individual choice rather than professional judgement or agency policies. (103)

Such findings have caused me to reiterate conclusions such as those first published in Art.12 (2003) and reiterated ten years later in Ch.1 (2013) that:

there are many reasons why all social workers, and children and families

workers, in particular, need to develop a working knowledge and

understanding of the religious beliefs and practices of service users. Without

such knowledge and understanding, we cannot adequately perform our

statutory duties or meet our professional responsibilities. And we cannot begin

to claim that our work is culturally competent. (Art.12: 88)

Social workers do not need to share the religious or other beliefs of the

individuals and groups they serve and must, of course, avoid promotion of

their own religious viewpoints. However, they must recognise and

acknowledge the potential for religion and belief to impact significantly on the

lives of those they serve and prepare themselves to respond accordingly.

(Ch.1: 207)

PRE-EXISTING LITERATURE

It would be disingenuous to claim that research into issues arising from the interplay of social work, religion, belief and culture arose from study of any large body of existing relevant literature or research. On the contrary, it arose in part from concern at the absence of such literature and research, particularly in the UK. It was accelerated by a need both to add to knowledge and understanding of these elements of cultural competence in social work practice and to develop frameworks for more effective responses to them. Noting the position as it was at least until the mid-2000s, Art.12 (77) reported that:

> Relevant literature available in British journals tends to deal with very specific issues, with particular groups, with issues in other countries or with history (Bowpitt, 1998; Garr and Marans, 2001; Kirton, 1999; Lloyd, 1997; Pacheco et al, 2003; Runnymede Trust / Wood, 1996; Smyth and Campbell, 1996).

It also notes that:

> This is in apparent contrast to the earlier resurgence of interest in the role of religion in both social work education and practice in the USA (Amato-von Hemert, 1994; Canda, 1989; Loewenburg, 1988; Netting et al, 1990; Sermabeikian, 1994; Sheridan and Amato-von Hemert, 1999) and to more confident explorations of the role of spirituality by some therapists and other practitioners in health settings in Britain (Bragan, 1996; Brandon, 1999; Cobb and Robshaw, 1998; Speck, 1998). However, whilst US social workers appear more sympathetic to religious or spiritually sensitive interventions than their British counterparts (Sheridan and Amato-von Hemert, 1999; Furness and Gilligan, forthcoming a)), more than one study suggests that around two thirds of social work students in the USA, also, report that they received very little input related to religion and spirituality in their graduate social work classes (Derezotes, 1995; Sheridan and Amato-von Hemert, 1999). (77-78)

Despite this, some literature relevant to particular aspects of the interface between social work practice, religion, belief and culture was particularly influential from the outset, as was more general data highlighting the potentially great significance of religion and belief in the lives and worldviews of a large proportion of the population in general.

In relation to how social work practice and education deals with the impact of religion, belief and culture and in exploring the mismatch between policy rhetoric and practice

reality, the work of Crompton (1996; 1998) and Seden (1995) were particularly helpful. Crompton (1998: xv) highlighted the view that "Children are legally entitled to spiritual and religious nurture, just as they are entitled to physical and cognitive care" and, in particular, that their exercise of such rights should not be dependent on the attitudes of their social workers.

The 2001 Census (National Statistics 2003) and 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey (Attwood et al., 2003) together with further analysis of this data (e.g. O'Beirne, 2004) highlighted that, especially for members of minority communities, 'religion' is of central importance for 'self-identity', while research focused on Britain's Asian communities demonstrated that populations adhering to the larger minority religions remain concentrated in particular localities and include very high proportions of individuals under 25 years who were actively maintaining the cultural and religious values of their parents (Drury, 1996; Anwar, 1998; Jacobson, 1998; Ghuman, 1999; Lewis, 2002).   Patel et al. (1998:77), meanwhile, advised that, for a large, and increasing, number of service users "Religion is a basic aspect of human experience, both within and outside the context of religious institutions", while Modood et al. (1997:297) reported that "religion is central in the self-definition of the majority of South Asian people".

More recently, published results from the 2011 UK Census indicate both a continuing decline in the number of residents who state that their religion is 'Christian' (59.3% in 2011 compared to 71.7% in 2001) and that those stating that they have no religion has increased from 20.5% to 25.1%. However, they also indicate that those stating that they are 'Muslim' has increased from 2.8% to 4.7% and that, in some locations,

the proportion of households stating that they have a religion has increased during the past decade (see http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-religion.html).

As noted in Art.11 and Art.9, an increasing number of official reports, inquiries and research studies highlighted both the disproportionate over- and under-representation of children from different black and minority ethnic communities amongst looked after children and children subjected to different forms of child abuse and the difficulties that social work and other practitioners have in responding appropriately to service users with cultural perspectives different from their own (Barn *et al.*, 1997; Brophy *et al.*, 1999; O'Neale, 2000); O'Hagan (1999: 279) going so far as to suggest "neglect of" and "negativity towards" culture amongst child and family social workers.

Meanwhile, several reports into high profile cases which had caused public alarm and been given prominence by the media pointed to the potential importance of religious and other beliefs and cultural factors in cases where children had been killed or seriously abused by their carers, most notably those of Victoria Climbié and 'Child B' (Laming, 2003; Dodd, 2005), but also less publicised cases such as that of a Bradford 'preacher' of Nigerian origin who physically abused both his sons (Loweth, 2007; 2008). All these incidents of abuse occurred in the context of beliefs in possession by evil spirits and the need for 'exorcism' (Stobart, 2006). Study of these cases informed Art.6, Art.7 and Ch.2e in particular.

As highlighted in Art.2 and Art.1 and in parallel with findings that religious beliefs and involvement with religious groups can aid resilience and recovery (Kennedy, 1995; Crompton, 1996; 1998; Doyle, 2001; 2006) researchers and campaigners, also, highlighted the ways in which sexual abuse in religious contexts may give rise to particular needs and vulnerabilities amongst victims and survivors (Milgrom and Schoener, 1987; Armstrong, 1991; Kennedy, 1995; Crompton, 1996; 1998; Flynn, 2008; Farrell, 2004; 2009). Farrell (2009: 39) reports, for example, that a majority of participants in his research considered that God had been "integral within the abuse". This literature informed Art.6, Art.2, Art.1 and Ch.2e in particular.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Crotty (2003: 1) suggests that, while we can construct "one reasonably clear-cut way of ... grasping what is involved in the process of social research", there are other ways of doing so. Meanwhile, Gergen and Gergen (2000) would argue that my research and publications have been undertaken in the 'post-post period' in which social science research can be understood as contingent, evolving and messy (McKenzie, 2005).

In my particular case, social research has been an activity arising directly from my ongoing practice as a social worker, social work manager and educator. It continues to be motivated primarily by commitment to changing social work practice for the better; applied research rather than research for its own sake (Blackstone, 2012). At the same time, it has sought to emancipate and give voice to the disadvantaged and

to those being 'researched'. It did not start with awareness of any particular epistemological or ontological frameworks. Indeed, I recognise that I have sometimes given relatively little attention to such issues until after I have begun writing. However, my awareness of epistemology and of the theoretical perspectives and methodologies of social research have gradually increased over the past decade, while preparation of this review has provided important opportunities to consider, unpack and clarify the assumptions which have underpinned and influenced my research and writing. This clarification will, hopefully, assist others and I to divine what my research has been and what it is saying (Crotty, 2003: 15).

I now recognise that my epistemology has always been broadly constructionist / constructivist. I assume that phenomena and their meanings are socially constructed and are undergoing continual change in the context of social interactions (Elliott, 2005; Bryman, 2008). However, my work has also been informed by what would usually be categorised as 'critical realism' (Bhaskar, 1998; Sayer, 2000; Houston, 2001; Oliver, 2012). It is underpinned by acceptance of the principle that, although all knowledge is socially constructed (epistemic relativity), reality exists independently of knowledge (ontological intransitivity) while there are rational grounds for preferring some beliefs over others (judgmental rationality) (Bhaskar, 1998). As presented by Sayer (1992) critical realism assumes amongst other things that knowledge develops neither wholly continuously nor discontinuously; that social phenomena are concept dependent; that "the production of any kind of knowledge is a social practice" and that "Social science must be critical of its object", because "In order to be able to explain and understand social phenomena we have to evaluate them critically" (Sayer, 1992: 5). Indeed the reality envisaged "is a complex, multi-layered,

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multicausal web of interacting forces, much like that experienced in social work practice" (Crompton, 2012: 374).

The methodologies adopted have included aspects of grounded theory, frame and discourse analysis while the research methods used have been predominantly qualitative. I have made particular use of semi-structured interviews with practitioners and service users, focus groups (see for example Art.12, Art.9, Ch.2d, Ch.2e, and Ch.2f) and practitioners' written accounts of case examples (see Art.5 and Art.3). Qualitative methods have also been supplemented by the collection of quantitative data through questionnaires. However, when used, the design of questionnaires has always encouraged respondents to include both specific and additional comments (see for example Art.10 and Art.6). I have sought to generate ideas about how particular aspects of the social world 'work'. Analysis of findings has been influenced by grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Oliver, 2012), attempting to ensure that any theory which emerges is connected to the reality being explained. Frame analysis has been significant particularly in terms of the influence of framing processes on individual actions (Crompton, 2010; Dombos, 2012)), while critical discourse analysis (van Dijk, 1993; Fairclough, 2000; Jäger, 2001; Krummer-Nevo et al., 2010) has been used most explicitly in Art.1. As Crompton (2010: 43) suggests, 'frames' are "a necessary theoretical postulate" to understanding "the way humans think, communicate and act". Thus, in contexts where researchers explore the influence and significance of particular beliefs and cultural imperatives for those using and providing social work services, 'frames' have provided an essential starting point for beginning to understand what is required for culturally competent practice; whether this is with members of Asian communities in

Britain (Art.9) or Ju/'hoan Bushmen in Namibia and Botswana (Keeney and Keeney, 2013).

I continue to share Snape and Spencer (2003)'s view that qualitative methods allow the researcher to focus on understanding the meanings which individuals attach to phenomena within their social worlds and accept Bryman (2008)'s contention that because of the focus on words in both data collection and analysis, the qualitative approach provides a necessary flexibility in the construction of social reality. Qualitative approaches have also seemed well-suited to the type of studies undertaken, allowing explorations of the processes involved, flexibility in the choice of specific methods used and adaptation to unique and individual situations (Robson, 2002).

Case studies, in particular, allow in-depth investigation of phenomena within their 'real-life' contexts, potentially adding to knowledge and understanding of more general individual, community, organisational, political and other phenomena (Yin, 2009) as well as "the particularity and complexity of a single case" (Stake, 1995: xi). That said, alongside recognition that studies have used relatively small and 'opportunity' samples (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006), it must also be noted that the case studies used in the publications presented are not necessarily representative of wider phenomena and cannot be used to make definitive generalisations. However, they can be used to suggest the possible characteristics of the phenomena involved, while Punch (2005) reminds us that, particularly when focused on new subjects, generalisation is not necessarily the primary goal of research. Development of concepts and theoretical propositions remain legitimate objectives of research

(Stake, 2005; Yin, 2009), as does the aim of contributing to the understanding and improvement of social work practice.

As in much of the interaction and many interviews within social work practice, qualitative interviewing in research is a method of learning about people's feelings, thoughts and experiences, based in a relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee and placing obligations on both (Rubin and Rubin, 2011). Interviewing techniques, such as the use of open questions and an 'exchange model' of questioning (Smale et al., 2000) developed during my social work practice since 1974 have therefore been significant in the interviews conducted, hopefully leading to interactions in which genuine expressions thoughts, feelings and views are facilitated through appropriate invitations, questions, prompts and encouragement, but without these influencing the content of what is said (Legard et al., 2003). Their proponents argue that because the approach is flexible enough to allow real time adaptation to particular situations, qualitative interviews provide occasions in which unplanned important issues can be investigated and where researchers can be reflexive in the context of what may be very sensitive topics (Lee, 1993; Mason, 2002; Robson, 2002; Legard et al., 2003).

Attention to 'frames', as in Art.8, has emphasised the extent to which specific cultural and religious contexts impact on individual and group responses to and views about particular issues and events (for example, discussion in Art.2 of the failure to laicise Roman Catholic clergy who have been convicted of sexually abusing children). Hence, the emphasis in Ch.2c on the need for practitioners to reflect on how their backgrounds influence the way they interact with and respond to others. Techniques

from critical discourse analysis, notably what Jäger (2001: 53) describes as 'fine analysis' of themes presented in particular 'discourse fragments', explicitly underpin the work reported in Art.1 emphasising contrasting attitudes apparent in narratives presented by the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales and those presented by survivors' groups. In this work it was important to recognise that any critique cannot be situated outside the discourse being analysed while at the same time acknowledging that an overriding concern of the analysis is to explore how a particular discourse is being used to legitimise the power of those who possess it (Jäger, 2001) and to challenge the exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups to the disadvantage of others (van Dijk, 1993). Ideas from critical discourse analysis have provided useful reminders that what is written or said and how things are written or said are not 'mere words', but may be one of the means through which control is being exercised (van Dijk, 1993; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2000).

Giving voice to the 'researched' has long been an important goal for all social research (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011), but is of particular importance in the context of social work research, which frequently involves individuals and groups who are disadvantaged, oppressed and unheard. Indeed, in the context of such research, there is broad general agreement that active involvement of service users is an essential component of best practice. In the particular context of sexual abuse and exploitation, this approach is well represented by the Daphne Project Research Team (DPRT) (2011: 9) who suggest that the success of their work is dependent on "a philosophically driven concern to directly involve service users wherever possible, in the design, delivery and evaluation of services" and who emphasise that "Without

that VOICE, much of what is provided may well prove to be irrelevant, marginal and inappropriate" (DPRT, 2011: 150). Many others highlight the importance of service user involvement in such research (Beresford, 2003; Beresford and Croft, 2004; Scottish Executive, 2005; Carr, 2007; Nelson, 2009), while France (2004) reminds us that service users can act as 'reliable witnesses' commenting on and theorising about their own experiences.

Reflection on Art.9, in particular, led me in 2009, to write a paper for an ESRC seminar exploring the methodological challenges of researching issues of 'race' and racism in which I emphasised my view that researchers need to be particularly committed to critical self-reflection about what they are doing; striving to be aware of the frames which influence their perspectives and alert to their own motivations and purposes and the potential impact of these on their work. I suggested that researchers need to start and finish with a commitment to respectful uncertainty and to learning from the researched. I stressed that the researcher / researched relationship needs to be one in which the researcher facilitates the giving of information, perspectives and views by the researched and gives priority to listening to and accurately recording what is said; that researchers need to recognise that one of their primary roles is to act as a conduit and medium for the transmission of information, perspectives and views provided by the researched in ways which make them accessible and understood by significant others (e.g. policy makers and practitioners), while at the same time accepting their responsibility to ensure that doing so does not undermine the potential for the researched to do so directly; that, in doing so, researchers need to always make it clear when and how they have selected, interpreted, translated or otherwise changed the information, perspectives

and views which they are presenting; and that, when dealing with individuals, groups and communities where there is any reason to think that they may lack relevant empathy, knowledge or understanding (e.g. white male academics researching the views of Asian Muslim women), that they ensure the involvement of others who can, potentially, fill such gaps .

I recognise that "that all research is value-laden and is inevitably political, since it represents the interests of particular (usually powerful, usually white male) groups." (Humphries, 997: 2.6) and note the importance of Bhopal's (2000: 76) observation that "Gender identity between interviewer and interviewee is not always enough to create common understandings or equalise the power relations between the two parties. ...".

 In that paper I pondered the questions, 'Can researchers give effective voice to communities to which they do not belong?', 'How can they get opportunities to hear the voice of communities to which they do not belong?', 'How should they listen to it?' and 'How can they help others to hear it?' I suggested that this needs to include more than adoption of an ethnographic and phenomenologist approach (i.e. involving participants as observers, avoiding preset limits to what will be observed, recognising that there can be no real end to studies of ongoing dynamic phenomena, focusing on people's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world, and seeking to understand how the world appears to others) and is more than a matter of borrowing the techniques of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss , 1967), so that any theory which results from the research will be rooted in observation. It also needs to ensure that participants' views are always to the fore.

I concluded that, although my starting point for the work discussed in Art.9, was much more pragmatic than theoretically based, I had subsequently recognised the process of having gathered data through generative questions and subsequently developing tentative linkages which could be presented alongside contextually relevant detail. I emphasised that such research needs to start from a commitment by researchers to listen to and respect the views of the researched, and that researchers need to recognise, from the start, that they are likely to learn as much (if not more) about themselves and the cultures (professional and others) to which they belong as they will about those of the researched; and that they need to be open to the challenges this learning will bring.

I agree with Humphries' (1997: 2.6) observation that "What is required is research which 'brings to voice' excluded and marginalised groups as subjects rather than objects of research, and which attempts to understand the world *in order to change it.*" and with Oliver's (2002: 11) conclusion that:

> If … research is ever to be useful, it must not only faithfully capture the experience of the group being researched but also be available and accessible to them in their struggles to improve the conditions of their existence.

This overlaps with the explicit approach which Sheila Furness and I have adopted in Art.10, Ch.2a, Ch.2b, Ch.2c, Art.5 and Art.3 to the role of religion and belief in social work. We have highlighted that our work is underpinned by a broadly strengths-based perspective (Saleeby, 2008) emphasising the need for collaboration and partnership

between practitioners and service users, and identifying that religion and religious and spiritual beliefs may be potentially significant resources and targets for intervention because they can often provide a 'helping environment' (Sullivan, 1992) or 'enabling niches' (Taylor, 1997) for some service users. For them, they are the main contexts in which the resilience of individuals, families and groups is built or enhanced, even though for others religion may be of either no significance or may at the other extreme significantly heighten or even play a part in causing the difficulties faced.

CONCLUSION:

Religion, Belief Culture and Social Work

A decade ago, research into particular issues, wider experiences and reading of the existing literature all brought stark perspective to the fact that social work and social workers seemed ill-prepared to respond to or to deal appropriately with issues arising from religion, belief and culture; whether these involved them in building on the opportunities provided by service users' involvement with a religious group to develop and promote resilience in the face of trauma or the need to challenge abusive behaviour being defended as a cultural requirement or excused as 'part of our religion'. Hence, the decision to begin a more comprehensive and more systematic enquiry into social work, religion and belief, and to attempt to develop frameworks to assist social workers to address issues arising from religion and belief in their practice.

In particular, the evidence suggested that five broad questions needed to be addressed:

- How can social workers ensure that they take sufficient and appropriate account of the beliefs of their service users and colleagues?
- How can social workers ensure that they do so respectfully, while also recognising and taking appropriate action where beliefs result in 'unacceptable' actions or inaction?
- How can social workers practice competently, if their personal values and beliefs contradict the values they are required to meet according to their profession, their employer or the law?
- Where they face such dilemmas, how can social workers explore them safely?
- How do we respond to 'unacceptable' actions or inactions based in beliefs held by service users and/or colleagues?

This has culminated in the work, represented in this submission by the three joint authored chapters (Ch.2a, Ch.2c and Ch.2h) and six single authored chapters (Ch.2b, Ch.2d, Ch.2e, Ch.2f, Ch.2g and Ch.2i) from *Religion, Belief and Social Work: Making a difference*. Subsequent pieces, such as Ch.3, Art.11 and Ch.1 have expanded on or reiterated particular themes developed in the book or have focused on evaluating the usefulness of the framework offered in Ch.2c (Art.5 and Art.3).

Having re-read my work for the purpose of reviewing it, I recognise that several major challenges emerge. A wide variety of conceptual, practice and policy concerns need

to be integrated. Publications reporting empirical research need to be accepted as scientifically valid by academic peers at the same time as they give authentic and convincing voice to those researched and seek to provide useful and pragmatic starting points for others to develop both their thinking and practice. The research has, however, consistently demonstrated the necessity for social work practice to be underpinned by an understanding of the potential importance of religion, culture and belief to both service users and practitioners and for practitioners to enhance their knowledge of the different ways in which these issues impact on actions and responses and on the issues which they aspire to deal with.

Progress has been made, but there are limitations to the research presented and much further work which needs to be undertaken. In my own publications and more generally there is insufficient data relating to first-hand service user perspectives. Art.9 and Art.1 are greatly strengthened by the inclusion of non-practitioner perspectives and viewpoints, but much of the research has used data from practitioners rather than service users. More research is needed which aims to gather relevant data directly from service users who identify religion and belief as important to them. To this purpose, Sheila Furness and I have obtained ethical approval for a project which invites service users who identify religious beliefs as important to them to share their experiences of the social work done with them with a view to producing video materials which could be used in teaching and training. However, it has so far proved very difficult to engage participants who are willing to be filmed and we recognise that our plans need radical review if we are to achieve our objectives. However, gathering data about service users' experiences of social work, their beliefs and issues, and more particularly, the impact of their beliefs will be crucial to our

better understanding of their needs and their potential to meet those needs, and thus to the development of more competent practice. We also need to give voice to service users in this regard..

There is an observable and increased willingness amongst practitioners, students and academic colleagues to discuss the potential importance and impact of religion, belief and culture on social work practice. This is apparent in an increased number of relevant publications; both books and articles in peer-reviewed journals. The December 2012 edition of *Child Abuse Review,* for example, focused on complex and institutional abuse and included four articles directly related to abuse within Roman Catholic contexts, while the forthcoming edition of *International Social Work* which I have guest edited is focused entirely on social work, religion and spirituality.

However, such developments are both patchy and varied in their impact, while some issues arising from religion, belief and culture have not, yet, received adequate attention from either researchers or practitioners; especially in relation to effective and culturally competent interventions. For example, issues relating to the abuse of children in the context of beliefs in spirit possession (Stobart, 2006; Art.8; Simon et al., 2012). At the same time, new issues will emerge unpredictably where practitioners have the opportunity and confidence to share their experiences and dilemmas; for example, Art.13 (Gilligan, forthcoming) regarding the needs of Muslim parents of children with autistic spectrum conditions in relation to religious requirements arose from a request for advice by a practitioner who had read Art.9 in relation to child sexual abuse and Asian communities and had recognised overlapping issues relevant to the challenges she was facing in a different context.

Applying a constructivist approach

Preparation of this review has focused attention on the extent to which my published work is underpinned by an emphasis on the need for social workers to understand individuals' particular constructions of 'religion' and the need for future work to explore more fully how such an individual constructivist approach can assist both understanding and practice. It has also highlighted the need to acknowledge the "everyday lived religion" of individuals (Woodhead, 2012: 3) and to focus on the impact of religion which is "grounded in personal experience and convictions", rather than "the externals of religion, constrained by collective norms" (Svidinskaitė, 2008: 183). Such considerations connect directly with the need to enrich and enhance future work through more extensive and direct involvement of service users and to give voice to their understandings of the need for social workers to consider religion, belief and culture and their recommendations for the ways in which this can be done. Like social work practice, such research needs to acknowledge and respect individuals' particular constructions of matters which are important to them.

Whilst acknowledging their contributions to the sociological study of religion, my work has started from a more post-modern interpretive perspective than that to be found in the works of Durkheim (1915) or Weber (1904/1930; 1922). Rather than examining religion as an 'institution' and seeking to explain general patterns observable across all cultures and throughout history, my focus has been on promoting the need to understand the significance of religious beliefs for individuals and groups and how religion impacts them in the 'here and now'. The emphasis is on what religion means to the individual rather than what it tells us about society or how it influences the

direction of society (Durkheim, 1915) or how it provides tools for stability or social change in society (Weber, 1904/1930; 1922/1993).

 As with all constructivist approaches, the assumption is that individuals are born into and exist in contexts of meaning bestowed on them by their culture and seen through social lenses (Cresswell, 2007; McLaughlin, 2009). The culture (including religion) and social lenses influencing individuals in similar circumstances and locations are likely to have much in common, but the outcome of particular interactions between individuals, their culture/religion, life experiences and other influences will always be unique and may be extremely divergent. In the USA, Ammerman (2010: 154) reports that:

> Religion itself is multi-dimensional, and the several dimensions of religious and spiritual experience can be combined in myriad ways across individual lives.....religion is multi-traditional and organized by plural producers of the goods and services and events that embody and transform religious tradition.

She suggests that to understand what religion means to an individual, it is necessary to explore all the many ways in which multiple religious alternatives are incorporated into their unique life story, recognising that multiple religious meanings may be interwoven in unpredictable ways, that multiple religious affiliations may be serially present at any given moment, and that religious beliefs and practices may be present in shifting sets of domains of everyday life—from "private" to "public" and back again (Ammerman, 2010: 156-157; Dillon and Wink, 2007).

To understand an individual and their behaviour or to assess and respond appropriately to their needs, social workers need to take account of what is unique to each person, including their particular and individual interpretations of religious beliefs, rejection or lack of religious beliefs and the degree to which religious beliefs are significant to them. Hence the emphasis in Ch.2c. and Art.5 on using a framework which is person-centred and which requires practitioners to recognise both service users' uniqueness and potential expertise about themselves and to give sufficient attention to reflexivity. The social worker and the service user impact on each other. At the same time, to varying degrees and according to circumstances, practitioners' experiences of religion and the nature and strength of their religious beliefs or lack of them impact on their attitudes to and practice with service users, while service users' religious beliefs or lack of them impact on their responses to the social worker. All such interactions will be of potential significance and will have particular and individual outcomes.

Like many other publications (see, for example, Moss, 2005 or Crisp, 2010), Furness and Gilligan (2010: 3) notes the "considerable challenges around definitions" in relation to 'religion' and the fact that "these challenges are greatly increased where individualised and occasional expressions of religious feeling and spiritual belief are included". In that piece of work, we were explicit in following Beckford's (1992; 2001) definition of 'religion' as largely what individual believers or communities say it is and implicit on our acceptance of Berger's and Luckman's (1966) central suggestion that reality is socially constructed.

Such an interpretive and constructivist approach does not look for copies of an outer reality in individuals' thoughts and responses, but sees individuals as "observers, participants, and agents who actively generate and transform the patterns through which they construct the realities that fit them" (Reich, 2009: 40). It accepts that reality is a narrative construction in the imagination of individuals (Bruner, 1991; 2004) for whom talking cures, religious instruction, and other interventions may have profound effects in changing a person's life narrative, because the life stories that individuals tell themselves are "susceptible to cultural, interpersonal, and linguistic influences" (Bruner, 2004: 694).

It is an approach that seems particularly relevant to attempts to understand and explain the impact and influence of 'religion' in real life situations and is arguably essential to the application of such understanding to social work practice. It also hopefully increases the likelihood that what individuals see as significant 'religious' beliefs and religious practices are recognised, acknowledged and respected as such. As noted in Ch.2a, social workers will, on different occasions and possibly within the same household, need to take account of a wide range of beliefs. These include those:

- dictated by several millennia of tradition and followed by whole communities;
- the many variations, off-shoots and individual interpretations within such belief systems;
- the results of schism, proselytising, hybridisation and forced and voluntary conversion; and
- the relatively fleeting religious beliefs and practices of isolated individuals in crisis.

Such an approach also takes account of Woodhead's (2010; 2012) observation that, too often, only those forms of religion which have to do with social power have been privileged in public discourse and her reiteration of Ammerman's and Berger's call for researchers to include "everyday lived religion" in their attempts to understand 'religion'.

Older 'substantive' definitions of religion, as typified originally by Tylor (1903) restrict 'religion' to "faith in supernatural entities ... perceived as capable of influencing or controlling the world" (Hunt, 2005: 13). They risk excluding even major world faiths such as Buddhism in addition to individuals and groups for whom the distinction between the 'natural' and the 'supernatural' has no meaning and those whose interpretation of 'religion' emphasises matters such as moral behaviour in the 'here and now' rather than 'beliefs'. In contrast, 'functionalist' definitions follow Durkheim (1915: 47) in seeing religion as "a unified system of beliefs and practices ....which unite into one single moral community". They focus on what religion does and thus risk treating religious beliefs primarily as an instrument of "secular, social and psychological needs" (Kolakowski, 1982; Hunt, 2005). Such definitions are open to the inclusion of "new expressions of religiosity", such as "self-spiritualities and quasi-religions" (Hunt, 2005: 18) and may facilitate understanding of the existence and origins of religious beliefs and their impact in general terms. However, they struggle to encompass the particular power and significance of religious beliefs for individuals, because their emphasis is on "mere function" (Kolakowski, 1982).

Wider, phenomenological approaches, typified originally by Berger's (1970) emphasis on the need to explore the nature of people's subjective reality,

acknowledge that religion is, for many, an integral part of the construction of reality, while Beckford (2001) starting from a more interpretive perspective suggests that the focus needs to be on how individuals interpret situations and events as 'religious' rather than on questions about "what religion *really* is" (Hunt, 2005: 21). Such approaches have their own limitations. As summarised by Hunt (2005: 20), "anything may pass as religion if it is meaningful or provides ultimate answers to human existence, supernatural belief systems or not". Thus, definitions carry with them the consequence that the meaning of religion will be varied, inconsistent and changeable and there will be no fixed boundary between 'religion' and other social categories such a 'culture'.

Such an approach is perhaps more useful in the context of day-to-day practice with individuals than in research aimed at analysing wider social change or seeking to develop broader social policy. In those areas, a more circumscribed typology of 'religion' and clearer distinctions between what is 'cultural' and what is 'religious' may be necessary. Indeed, even in some areas of practice, distinctions between 'culture' and 'religion' may also be useful; for example, where social workers are responding to illegal and abusive behaviours, such as female genital cutting (FGC) (See Khaja *et al.,* 2009 for discussion of appropriate terminology) or forced marriage.

Programmes designed to prevent and eradicate such practices often place a strong emphasis on their 'cultural' origins and endeavour to facilitate changes in attitudes by persuading those involved that they are being asked to abandon 'cultural', rather than 'religious' traditions (see, for example, Khanum, 2008; Innocenti, 2010; Daniel et al., 2011). However, the evident efficacy of this emphasis on educating people serves to

highlight both the fact that such an emphasis is needed to counter widespread beliefs that these are, in fact, 'religious' duties and the expectation that individuals and communities will be more willing and able to change 'cultural' practices than they are to change 'religious' practices. At the same time, social workers dealing with FGC and forced marriage amongst migrant communities in Britain need to remember that in the worldview of the individuals involved their 'abusive' behaviour may result not only from a belief that they are acting in the best interests of the child, but also from a belief that they are fulfilling a religious obligation.

Official pronouncements by religious authorities do not necessarily determine what individuals or communities believe to be their religious or moral obligations. FGC is sanctioned by no sacred text or by any major religious authority. However, it is often associated with 'religion' because religion, tradition and culture are, in practice, intertwined (Caldwell, 2000; Innocenti, 2010). Those involved, frequently say that 'religion' is the reason for their adherence to the practice and a minority of local religious leaders tacitly support, its continuance in their communities (Berg *et al.,* 2010; WHO, 2011).

Regarding forced marriage, Article XIX-i of the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, for example, (Islamic Council, 1981) is clear in saying that "No person may be married against his or her will" (see also Rude-Antoine, 2005). However, the same Declaration emphasises the right to marry (Article XIX-a), while its contents are unlikely to be known amongst, for example, the Bangladeshi parents interviewed by Blanchet (2003) and her colleagues who they report to be following the idea of *kanya*

dan and *as* believing that "parents have the religious duty to marry their daughters before or soon after puberty" (Blanchet, 2003: 22; see also O'Hara and Martin, 2003).

 In practice, and regardless of the particular issues involved, social workers, need to respond to the actual and immediate situation. On occasions, this will involve them in interventions with service users and carers who believe they have a 'religious' duty to do something which is not generally recognised as such and which may, in the view of the social worker and the law, be entirely unacceptable. It may also involve them in interventions with service users who draw positive benefit from practices which they view as 'religious' but which fall outside conventional categorisations of 'religion'. Social workers will need to recognise and assess the significance of such beliefs and practices, and to assess the extent to which they are potentially beneficial, harmful or both.

There is considerable evidence that an approach which accepts individual constructions of religion reflects the nature of individual experience and of individuals' day-to-day behaviour and beliefs, particularly amongst majority white communities in Britain and other West European countries (Hunt, 2005, Davie, 1994; 1999). Experience and conversations about such issues with both social workers and service users also suggests that most individuals faced with choices or dilemmas do not stop to ask whether something is 'religious' or 'cultural' and that their behaviour, actions and responses will follow from their understanding of what they believe they are required or prohibited to do by a combination of interacting imperatives rarely separated into neat or easily quantifiable categories. Individual decisions, including

those concerned with psycho-social problems, interventions and outcomes are made according an individual's unique mixture of influences with varying degrees of freedom and coercion and with 'religion' having a varied impact at conscious, pre-conscious and unconscious levels. These are complex processes which cannot usefully be reduced to a numerical score, but which require "thick descriptions" of how people experience them (Dodd and Epstein, 2012).

Without more detailed information and dialogue, the fact that a service user or colleague is known to be 'Roman Catholic', 'Buddhist', 'Muslim', 'Jewish', 'Sikh', 'humanist', 'agnostic' or whatever will, in itself, tell a social worker very little about that person's attitudes, needs, strengths, beliefs or potential support networks. Different faith communities exhibit differing degrees of diversity and are extremely varied in the extent to which they officially tolerate, welcome or condemn individual dissent or plural perspectives. Very different approaches are evident, for example, amongst Unitarians and Pentecostal Christians, but individualised viewpoints will be found amongst members of all religious groups, especially in the private and personal spheres. In the UK and other parts of Europe, an increasing majority of those who report that they are 'Christian' do so without any formal or regular participation in the activities of any particular church or sect. Their approach to religion is individual and privatised (Gerard, 1985; Harding et al., 1986; Davie, 1994; 1999; 2007; Cook, 2000, Hunt, 2005). Hunt, (2005: 99-100) notes that "church attendance has been replaced by individualised and privatised religious practice and beliefs" (95) and by "selective adherence to Christian beliefs", often supplemented by non-Christian beliefs "in a kind of pick 'n mix way" (99-100), while Klip (2011: 212-213) reports that while a majority of people throughout Europe still turn to cultural

religious identities and rituals in order to maintain their psychological sense of certainty, order and meaning at crucial moments in their lives, increasing proportions of them express alienation from traditional religious services, beliefs and practices,. Lambert (2004) concludes that an autonomous and diffused religiosity is apparent throughout the nine countries included in the 1999 European Values Study, while Davie (1999: 82-83) uses the same findings as evidence for the existence "vicarious religion" in which "a significant proportion of Europeans delegate to their churches .... what they no longer consider doing themselves".

At the same time, it is essential to note that:

- Trends apparent in the nature and scale of religious beliefs in Western Europe are, in global terms, "The Exception That Proves the Rule". Religion is resurgent in the world and the global trend is towards desecularisation (Berger, 1999; Davie, 1999; 2007).

- The 2011 UK census data demonstrates that there are clearly divergent trends in different localities within the UK and between indigenous white communities and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities (see http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt-religion.html).

- Amongst the minority of the population who attend religious services an increasing proportion are from BME communities and an increasing proportion hold relatively fundamentalist religious views (Hunt, 2005).

- As observed in Ch.2b:

  - Data from the 2006 British Social Attitudes Survey (NCSR, 2007: 3-4) suggests that those belonging to a religion or attending religious services have markedly different attitudes towards issues such as pre-marital sex and abortion than those who do not have a religious identity and that the difference between these groups is widening,

  - Analysis of data from the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey demonstrates that for members of minority communities, 'religion' remains of central importance for 'self-identity' (O'Beirne, 2004).

Individual constructivist approaches to the understanding of religion and the intent to focus on "everyday lived religion" (Berger, 1970; Ammerman, 2010; Woodhead, 2012) also have direct relevance to future work in relation to those issues where there is conflict between social work values and the behaviour and mores prescribed by religious authorities and where there is a disconnect between individuals and the hierarchy or leadership of the religious group to which they 'belong'. Even amongst those who active members of a particular religion and regularly attend religious services, there may be a considerable difference in substance or detail between what the religious institution describes as their beliefs and prescribes as required behaviour and what those individuals actually do, think and believe. This is perhaps most clearly illustrated by considering the actual behaviour and attitudes of Roman Catholics in Britain and elsewhere with regards to contraception (McCorkell and Francome, 2010) or the dissident attitudes and aspirations of a significant minority of laity and clergy regarding the ordination of women or same sex relationships (see, for example, http://www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk/ and http://questgaycatholic.org.uk/). Indeed, it has been observed that while Christianity, Islam and Judaism all have at their foundations:

> sexism and the degradation of women, prejudice against gays and lesbians, the association of physical and mental disability with sin, provincialism, anti-scientism, condemnation of large numbers of the human race who are viewed as non-believers, and evangelism at the cost of native traditions ... most believers ignore or are unaware of such foundational values." (Cottone, 2010: 13).

Ch.2j notes that an apparently definitive announcement by Bishop O'Donoghue that implementation of new adoption regulations would force the Lancaster diocese to withdraw from adoption and fostering because "this legislation contravenes the certain teachings of the Church and our own consciences" (O'Donoghue, 2007: 1), did not prevent the trustees of Catholic Caring Services in the Diocese from subsequently implementing an open policy towards all couples and publishing a statement welcoming the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Caldwell, 2008).

Such recognition that institutional hierarchies, formal authorities and faith leaders do not necessarily represent either the views or needs of the members of their faith communities or the needs which arise from their religious beliefs is of crucial importance in responding appropriately to the needs of individuals who have been sexually abused by clergy or other authority figures within a faith community. As outlined in Ch.2f and explored more fully in Art.1 and Art.2, religion and religious activities may provide contexts where those who have been abused can find recovery and build their resilience (Kennedy, 1995; Crompton, 1998; Doyle, 2001, 2006). However, there is also evidence that, especially for those for whom religious beliefs are of ongoing importance, failure by the institutional Church to respond sensitively and adequately to their needs will heighten distress (MACSAS, 2006a; 2006b; 2006c; Lawrence, 2011). Some will find alternative contexts in which to express and benefit from their religious beliefs, including informal and formal religious services organised by survivors' groups both independently and in cooperation with Church authorities. However, others may continue to seek a more adequate direct response from what they have been taught and may continue to view as "the 'pillar

and bulwark of truth" to which "belongs the right always and everywhere to announce moral principles" (Chapman, 1995: 440).

As in other contexts, the needs, strengths and responses of each victim and survivor are a unique result of the interaction of many factors, which in this context are likely to include the impact of particular religious beliefs on the particular experience of being abused and the impact of being abused on their religious beliefs (Farrell, 2009). Indeed, Kennedy (2003: 4) concludes that:

> Victims of abuse find it incredibly difficult to understand why it is that God/Jesus did not protect them. They blame God/Jesus for their abuse. It's quite something to feel betrayed by your human family, but really huge to feel betrayed by an all-powerful deity.

Some victims and survivors of such abuse 'accept' the Church's response or quietly withdraw all contact with it, but others (including many 'believers' and those who remain members of the Church) publicly campaign for a different 'more Christian' response and express anger at responses which they see as "a scandal to Christianity" (MACSAS, 2011). Acknowledgement and validation are essential components of healing for adult survivors of sexual abuse (Salter, 1995) and, for at least some, experiencing an adequate response from 'their' Church may be crucial to recovery. However, whilst activists within survivors' groups (whether their religious beliefs change, increase or diminish and whether or not they continue as members of the Church) seem likely to benefit from both the experience of solidarity and the empathy and understanding of contact with other survivors, such emotionally secure bases may not be available to the majority of relevant victims and survivors. Those

who are not active within survivors' groups will remain dependent on other sources of support. They may ultimately benefit from the work of survivors' groups in pressing for more appropriate and consistent responses from the Church and others, including social workers in secular organisations, but much work remains to be done to establish both their needs and the most effective and sensitive ways of meeting these. Future work will usefully apply a constructivist approach to understanding their individual needs as it may in other contexts.

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Appendix 1: The Publications

Journal articles

2012

Art.1: 'Contrasting narratives on responses to victims and survivors of clerical abuse in England and Wales: challenges to Catholic Church discourse', *Child Abuse Review,* 21 (6), 414–426. [R, P, *]

Art.2: 'Clerical Abuse and Laicisation: Rhetoric and Reality in the Catholic Church in England and Wales', *Child Abuse Review,* 21 (6), 427–439. [R, P, *]

Art.3: ''It never came up': encouragements and discouragements to addressing religion and belief in professional practice. What do social work students have to say?', *British Journal of Social Work* published online: October 11, 2012, *doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcs140.* [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]

Art.4: 'Faith-based Organisations and UK Welfare Services: Exploring Some Ongoing Dilemmas', *Social Policy and Society,* 11 (4), 601 - 612*.* [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]

2010

Art.5: 'Social Work, Religion and Belief: developing a framework for practice', *British Journal of Social Work,* 40 (7), 2185-2202. [R, P, ***] with Sheila Furness]

2009

Art.6: 'Considering religion and beliefs in child protection and safeguarding work: is any consensus emerging?', *Child Abuse Review,* 18 (2), 94 – 110. [R, P, *]

2008

Art.7: 'Child abuse and spirit possession: not just an issue for African migrants', *childRight,* 245**,** 28-31. [U, P, *]

2006

Art.8: 'Well-motivated Reformists or Nascent Radicals: How do applicants to the degree in social work see social problems, their origins and solutions?' *British Journal of Social Work,* 37 (4), 735-760. [R, P, *]

Art.9: 'Cultural barriers to the disclosure of child sexual abuse in Asian communities: listening to what women say', *British Journal of Social Work,* 36 **(**8), 1361-1377.   [R, P, ** with Shamim Akhtar]

Art.10: 'The Role of Religion and Spirituality in Social Work Practice: views and experiences of social workers and students', *British Journal of Social Work,* 36 (4), 617-637.   [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]

2005

Art.11: 'Child sexual abuse amongst Asian communities: developing materials to raise awareness in Bradford', *Practice,* 17 (4), 267-284. [R, P, ** with Shamim Akhtar]

2003

Art.12: 'It isn't discussed'. Religion, belief and practice teaching: missing components of cultural competence in social work education', *Journal of Practice Teaching in Health and Social Care,* 15**,** 75 – 95. [R, P, *]

Chapters in books

 2013

Ch1: 'Religion and Belief' in A. Worsley, T. Mann, A. Olsen and E. Mason-Whitehead *Key Concepts in Social Work Practice*, London: Sage. [R, P, *]

2010

Ch2a: 'Introduction', Chapter 1, 1-14 [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]

Ch2b: 'The requirement to consider religion and spiritual beliefs', Chapter 2, 35-52 [R, P, *]

Ch2c: 'Frameworks and models to develop cultural competence in relation to religion and belief', Chapter 3, 53-66 [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]

Ch2d: 'Religion, belief and social work with children and families', Chapter 4, 67-82 [R, P, *]

Ch2e: 'Child abuse,…religion and belief', Chapter 6, 83-92 [R, P, *]

Ch2f: 'Religion, belief, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers', Chapter 9, 137-150 [R, P, *]

Ch2g: 'Faith-based social work: contributions, dilemmas and conflicts', Chapter 10, 151-164 [R, P, *]

Ch2h: 'Concluding Remarks', 165-172 [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]

Ch2i: 'Appendix: A brief guide to religions and beliefs: sources of further information', 173-181 [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]

Ch2a to Ch2i are published in S. Furness and P. Gilligan, *Religion, Belief and Social Work: Making A Difference,* Bristol: Policy Press.

Ch3: 'Faith-based Approaches' Chapter 6 in M. Gray, M. and S. Webb, *Ethics and Value Perspectives in Social Work,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. [R, P, *]

Appendix 2: Forthcoming Publications

Art13: 'Muslim parents of children with autistic spectrum conditions: exploring the challenge of specific cultural 'explanations' and religious requirements', submitted to *Journal of Religion, Disability & Health* (1522-8967). [*]

Art14: Editorial: special issue on 'Religion and Spirituality and Social Work', *International Social Work, (*Print ISSN: 0020-8728 Online ISSN: 1461-7234). [*** with Sheila Furness]

Appendix 3: Other published work

In addition to the publications included in this submission for a PHD by published work and forthcoming publications relevant to it, I have engaged in a variety of other collaborative research and writing projects since taking up a part-time academic post in 2002 and more especially since accepting a full-time post in 2004. These have concerned a variety of matters ranging from the issue of what 'personal' information needs to be shared with social work agencies by universities about individual students undertaking practice placements to evaluation of endeavours by children's services to engage more fully with 'fathers'. Such work has focused primarily on themes other than those central to this submission. However, the potential impact of religion, belief and culture in these, as in other areas, has been increasingly apparent, at least in hindsight, and such reflections have also informed the development of my thinking as regards cultural competence more generally; for example, in relation to the differing constructions of 'fatherhood' in different communities, the need for practice educators in placement agencies to explore the potential reasons underpinning a student's reluctance to work with same sex partners or the need for projects promoting healthier eating by primary school children to take account the cultural significance of salt to many Asian households.

2012

Art15: ''Fathers' involvement in children's services: exploring local and national issues in 'Moorlandstown'', *British Journal of Social Work,* 42 (3): 500-518. [R, P, *** with Martin Manby and Carol Pickburn]

Art16: 'Healthy Heroes: Improving Young Children's Lifestyles In Lancashire; an evaluation of a challenge based schools' programme', *Health and Education,* 30 (4): 87-94. [U, P, *** with Martin Manby]

2011

Art17: 'Evaluating the impact of *Pyramid for Parents* courses in North Town in 2009-2010: listening to the views of mothers and fathers', *Pastoral Care in Education,* 29 (3), 175-191. [R, P, *** with Martin Manby]

2008

Art18: 'Social service support for disabled children, children with complex needs and their families'. In J. Teare (ed.) *Caring for Children with Complex Needs in Community Settings,* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. Chapter 9, pp 149-166. [R, P, *** with Juliet Taylor]

Art19: 'The Common Assessment Framework: Does the Reality match the Rhetoric?', *Child and Family Social Work*, **13** (2), pp 177-187. [R, P, *** with Martin Manby]

2004

Art20: 'Fit for Purpose: issues from practice placements, practice teaching and the assessment of students practice', *Social Work Education,* 23, pp 465 – 479. [R, P, *** with Sheila Furness]