

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The ordinariness of Australian Muslims

Professor Kevin Dunn, Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, in partnership with the Islamic Sciences, and Research Academy of Australia, has been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to determine a sense of the broader Muslim community attitudes and experiences.

'There are two dominant branches of scholarship on experiences of Muslims within western countries,' explains Professor Dunn. 'One branch examines Muslims' experiences of racism, and its negative consequences. A second branch assumes Muslim incompatibility with "Western values", focussing on radicalisation. That research samples at the deeper end of disaffection, reproducing discourses of non-integration. But there is no empirical evidence for widespread radicalisation or alienation. This project is conceptually anchored within the idea of "everyday multiculturalism", which has been championed by UWS researchers (Noble & Watkins et al). This approach emphasises the unproblematic nature of most cross-cultural encounters. We will analyse the attitudes and experiences of a wide array of Australian Muslims, explicitly moving beyond the marginalised or radicalised of these members of our community.'

A survey will be used to collect data from a broad representation of the Muslim community. The survey will cover experiences of racism, participation in the labour force, civics and the voluntary sector, religiosity and cross-cultural contact (including inter-faith contact). The survey will also collect data on attitudes, including senses of belonging and disaffection, cultural (and religious) tolerance, and views on relations between Muslims and non-Muslims.



The research will empirically test the contention of normal, integrated, ordinariness of Australian Muslims. The data is likely to be a counterweight to those discourses of disaffection and radicalisation that swirl in public commentaries, and which undermine trust and comfort among non-Muslims.

Project Title: The ordinariness of Australian Muslims: attitudes and experiences of Muslims
Funding has been set at: \$10,000
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