

Identities, worldviews and religious education: theoretical and empirical perspectives

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In this second special issue of the Journal of Religious Education, '*Identities, Worldviews and Religious Education: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*', we are again pleased to have a variety of research perspectives, this time from Germany, Finland, Sweden and Australia. All of the authors are religious education teachers and researchers engaged in one or other project concerned with identity formation and the beliefs that form as part of one's worldview as it develops through social context and education, with an emphasis on religious education (RE). As with the first Special Issue, a number of these papers emanated from the Special Interest Group in Religious and Spiritual Education (SIG19) of the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI).

In one paper, Ulrich Riegel from the University of Siegen in Germany examines how RE teachers in Germany deal with truth claims in a pluralist classroom setting. In another paper, Arniika Kuusisto and Arto Kallioniemi from the University of Helsinki in Finland report on their study into the issue of young people's sense of belonging from both a religious and secular perspective, and the consequent role that RE can play. In a third paper, Elina Kuusisto and Kirsi Tirri, also from the University of Helsinki, explore the issue of purpose and how it can be taught, with special reference to RE. A fourth paper is from Kerstin von Bromssen of Karlstad University in Sweden, reporting on ethnic Swedish students' discourses on religion. The fifth paper, from Margaret Ghosn, Youssef Taouk and Jude Butcher from Australian Catholic University is a case study from within a Maronite school exploring how religious education contributes to the development of morally responsible citizenship.

These papers offer a variety of perspectives on the Special Issue's theme and the role that various forms of RE can play in facilitating, forming and evaluating identities and worldviews. We, the Special Issue editors, commend these papers to you.

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