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Religion, Cultural Diversity and Conflict: Challenging Education in Northern Ireland

by

Norman L. Richardson

Student Number: 1165577

In two volumes

Volume 1: Covering Document

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
by Submission of Previously Published Work

University of Warwick Institute of Education

September 2012

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Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to my supervisor, Professor Robert Jackson, for the encouragement that led me to present my published work in this way and also for his support at all times during the process of preparing the material for submission.

My deep appreciation is also due to Sylvia, my wife, for her constant support, encouragement and tolerance throughout this process.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to the memory of the late Dr. John Greer of the University Ulster, whose inspiration, encouragement and guidance at an earlier period in my career has remained with me over many years.

Declaration

I declare that the submitted material as a whole is not the same as any previously submitted or currently being submitted in published or unpublished form, for a degree, diploma or similar qualification at any university or similar institution.

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List of Submitted Publications

Arranged in categories – most recent first in each category.

(The dating system used throughout [e.g. 2001a; 2001b, etc.]
corresponds to that used in the complete list of publications in Appendix 1.)

Books

Richardson, N. & Gallagher, T. (editors) (2011a), *Education for Diversity and Mutual Understanding: the Experience of Northern Ireland.* Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang AG [includes 7 personal chapters]

Richardson, N. (editor) (1998) *A Tapestry of Beliefs: Christian Traditions in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press [includes editor's preface and two personal chapters]

Research Report

Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., **Richardson, N.** & Chiba, Y. (2010) *Opting Out of Religious Education – the views of young people from minority belief backgrounds*. Queen's University Belfast [Co-authored Research Report]

Articles in Refereed Journals

Richardson, N. (2008a) 'Faith Schooling: Implications for Teacher Educators – a Perspective from Northern Ireland'. In *Journal of Beliefs & Values 29:1*, April 2008, 1-10

Richardson, N. (2008c) 'Education for Religious Tolerance: the Impossible Dream?' In Patalon, M. (ed.), *Tolerance and Education – Studia Kulturowe 2/2008: 39-53*. Pedagogical Institute, University of Gdansk, Poland [web journal: http://studia.kulturowe.ug.gda.pl/sk-2.pdf]

Nelson, J. & **Richardson, N.** (2004), 'Studying Religion in a Divided Society'. In *Academic Exchange Quarterly 8 (2)*, 96-100.

Richardson, N. (2001d) 'Religions, Divisions, Values and Visions in Education'. In *Dharma World*, *vol.28,* July/August 2001, 8-11 [international Japanese Buddhist journal]

Chapters in Books

Mawhinney A. & Niens U., **Richardson, N.**, Chiba Y. (2012) 'Religion, Human Rights Law, and 'Opting Out' of Religious Education'. In Woodhead, L. & Catto, R. (eds.), *Religion and Change in Modern Britain.* London: Routledge

Mawhinney A. & Niens U., **Richardson, N.**, Chiba Y. (2011) 'Religious Education and Religious Liberty: Opt-outs and Young People's Sense of Belonging'. In Henin-Hunter, M. (ed.), *Law, Religious Freedoms and Education in Europe*. London: Ashgate

Richardson, N. (2011b) 'Media and Religious Conflict in Northern Ireland: An Educational Perspective'. In Pirner, M., Lähnemann, J. & Haußmann, W. (eds.) *Medien-Macht und Religionen: Herausforderung für interkulturelle.* Berlin: EB-Verlag

Richardson, N. (2010b) 'Division, Diversity and Vision: Religious Education and Community Cohesion in Northern Ireland'. In Grimmitt, M. (ed.), *Religious Education and Social and Community Cohesion*. Great Wakering: McCrimmons

Richardson, N. (2010a) 'Rights and Religious Education in a Plural Northern Ireland'. In Tombs, D. (ed.), *Rights and Righteousness – Perspectives on religious pluralism and human rights*. Belfast: Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in association with the Irish School of Ecumenics

Richardson, N. (2008d) 'Laying the Foundations: Citizenship in the Primary School'. In Jeffers, G. & O'Connor, U., *Education for Citizenship and Diversity in Irish Contexts*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration

Richardson, N. (2008b) 'The Challenge of the New: Education, Religion and Citizenship in a Traditional and Conflicted Society – a case study of Northern Ireland'. In Lähnemann, J. & Schreiner, P. (eds.), *Interreligious and Values Education in Europe*. Münster, Germany: Comenius-Institut & Peace Education Standing Commission of Religions for Peace

Richardson, N. (2005c) 'Interfaith Education in Northern Ireland: Obstacles and Opportunities'. In Lähnemann, J. (ed.), *Preservation, Development, Reconciliation: Religious Education and Global Responsibility*. Nürnberg: Peace Education Standing Commission / Verlag Peter Athmann

[*Translated and previously published in German as:*
Richardson, N. (2005a) 'Interreligiöse Erziehung in Nordirland: Hindernisse und Chancen – Hürden und Hoffnungen'. In Lähnemann, J. (ed.) *Bewahrung – Entwicklung – Versöhnung: Religiöse Erziehung in globaler Verantwortung*, Hamburg: EB-Verlag]

Richardson, N. (2001b) 'Religion, Pluralism and Education'. In Gardner, J. & Leitch, R. (eds.) *Education 20-20: A Millennium Vision*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press

Religion, Cultural Diversity and Conflict:
Challenging Education in Northern Ireland

In the following sections dates and titles in **bold** refer to the personal publications submitted; any non-bold personal dates refer to publications not included in the submission but listed in Appendix 1.

Introduction

By way of introduction to the publications selected for examination for the degree of PhD in Education at the University of Warwick I will outline the various factors that have shaped this body of work. The chosen themes reflect the complex social, political and religious issues that have impacted on all aspects of life in recent decades in Northern Ireland and in particular on education. Reflecting my career as an educator in various contexts, the principal areas covered in these writings relate to educational separateness in Northern Ireland and options for improved contact and cohesion, the particular role of Religious Education (RE) in cross-community and cross-cultural relationships and the process of reforming and re-shaping RE and other aspects of education in values as a contribution to building a more plural and peaceful future.

Over the past three decades my writing has developed through the creation of curriculum resources and the provision of pedagogical rationales and strategies in these areas towards an increased focus on research and scholarly articles. It is this more recent period of research and scholarship, covering some fifteen years, that forms the basis for the sample of academic work presented here.

A Regional Context

Education has been a significant marker of division over several centuries in Ireland, a characteristic which was inherited particularly by Northern Ireland after partition in 1921 (Akenson, 1973; Wright, 1987; Farren, 1995), and one of the strongest factors in

that division has been religion. This symbiotic relationship could with equal confidence be expressed in reverse.

It is often argued that the Northern Ireland conflict is not about religion but it is hard to escape the many religious elements and factors that have supported and reinforced that conflict in its various manifestations since the sixteenth century (Morrow, 1995:151f; Murray, 1995:215ff*)*. Indeed, the key factors in that conflict continue to be significantly related to group, political and cultural perceptions of identity and to territorial and national aspirations, but religious terminology and symbolism are never far away. While the conflict is still often over-simplistically described as one between Catholics and Protestants, Morrow's (1991:121) observation remains accurate: "Churches are crucial markers of identity in Northern Ireland".

Even in times of relative peace and co-operation in Northern Ireland, these conflicts – real or potential – continue to be nurtured by social separateness in which religious identity and the policies and practices of the Churches can be seen to play a significant part (Liechty & Clegg, 2001:194f). Nowhere is that separateness more marked than in schooling (Murray, 1995: 142ff). Official figures confirm that about ninety per-cent of children still attend schools that are largely or wholly attended by children from the same religious and cultural background (Department of Education, 2012). While the argument continues over whether educational separateness is the cause or merely a symptom of wider sectarian conflicts, a great deal of attention has been focused on attempts to mitigate that separateness through contact schemes, curriculum initiatives and integrated or shared models of schooling.

It is this intensely interrelated scenario that has provided and shaped the focal points not only of the publications that are found in Volume 2 but also of the working experience and career from which they are drawn.

A Personal Context

After three years as a teacher of Religious Education (RE) in very racially diverse schools in London I took up a teaching post at the end of 1972 in Northern Ireland, where, inspired by my membership of the ecumenical Corrymeela Community, I quickly became involved in cross-community educational initiatives. Over the next few years I became aware of, and much influenced by, some of the early local pioneers of what today might be termed citizenship education, intercultural education and inclusive approaches to RE. The work of John Greer and colleagues at the University of Ulster from the early 1970s on "Irish Christianity" and related ecumenical projects with teachers and schools (Greer and McElhinney, 1984; 1985a; 1985b) was particularly significant in this process and has remained so over many years.

Having moved in the early 1980s from classroom teaching in primary and post-primary schools into curriculum development work as a Peace Education Officer in an ecumenical project (the Churches' Peace Education Programme – see Hall, 2005; Richardson, **2011**) my initial publications took the form of curriculum resources for pupils and teachers, particularly for religious education and social and cultural studies. Recognition of the lack of experience and training among teachers in relation to these areas gradually shifted my focus from the provision of resources to the development of background materials and pedagogy and from there into formal teacher education

and professional development. This process, from the early 1980s into the mid-1990s, paralleled the emergence of integrated (religiously and culturally shared) schooling and also the development of *Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU)*, which eventually became one of several statutory Educational (Cross-Curricular) Themes within the Northern Ireland Curriculum (NICED, 1988; DENI 1992). At one level intensely local in its perception and conception, EMU was also much inspired by developments elsewhere in multicultural, intercultural and peace education. It was my privilege to be closely associated with this initiative from the outset and thereby much involved with others in the establishment of a rationale and the working out of principles of effective practice (NICED, 1988; CCEA, 1997). Following the writing of a Master's Thesis on teaching controversial issues in Religious Education (MA[Ed], Queen's University Belfast, 1992), a move in 1994 into the School of Education at Queen's University as a Research Associate and tutor on in-service courses in EMU provided the opportunity for more systematic research and academic writing over a period of three years.

Alongside these developments a new initiative was taking place following a government-encouraged agreement between the four numerically largest Christian denominations to prepare a joint Core Syllabus for Religious Education. I was invited to be a member of the working group during the period 1990-2, but this proved to be a far less satisfactory involvement due to the early decision that the Syllabus would be exclusively Christian in content (Churches' Drafting Group, 1991:2.4). My uncomfortable relationship with this process was to lead to renewed thinking – and ultimately writing – about the nature of RE in a diverse and divided society. I was able

to articulate this in a more positive context when I was given the opportunity to lead staff and parent seminars in some of Northern Ireland's first integrated primary schools on the theme of developing shared models of RE – whereby Catholics, Protestants and people from other religions or non-religious backgrounds would learn together.

There were already significant links between these two strands of involvement and the relationship was continuing to develop, though most of this did not come to published fruition (with only a few exceptions) until the late 1990s onwards, by which time I had been appointed as a lecturer in Religious Studies in Stranmillis University College, working with both specialist and non-specialist student teachers and with serving teachers.

It seems important to make clear that throughout most of this period I have not been working as a purely neutral observer of education; indeed I believe that neutrality is neither possible nor desirable. I have a position, a view of the kind of society I would like to see, an agenda for an intercultural approach to education in general and RE in particular. If there is such a thing as a "pure academic", I am not that person. Perhaps it would be more accurate to describe myself as an *academic practitioner*; often, indeed, I have been an overt *campaigner* for the positions that I have taken. So long as this is openly admitted it does not seem to me to contradict the importance of fairness, balance and procedural impartiality that must also have a place in the work of any academic.

A Research Context

Compared with other parts of the United Kingdom, relatively few people have been engaged in research and academic writing on RE in Northern Ireland. Some early personal research and scholarly writing projects were not submitted for publication, for a variety of reasons. Gradually, however, this situation changed through opportunities to organise several academic conferences (ENCORE 1999; AULRE 2006; EFTRE Belfast Seminar 2012[*]), to present papers and lead workshops at local, national and international conferences, to contribute book chapters and, more recently, to take part in funded research projects with colleagues. Some of the resulting publications have also now provided opportunities to make brief reference to my unpublished research (for example, **2005c, 2008c, 2008d, 2010b**) and plans are in hand to develop further some of these early (and from a publishing perspective, incomplete) ventures. The significant increase in the number of my published works in recent years is now reflected in the intention by Stranmillis University College to include some of them in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework.

Academic Themes

Notwithstanding the chronological outline presented in the sections above, the interconnectedness of various aspects of my work and publications can probably best be represented thematically and so this is the approach that I have taken in this analysis. The chosen themes, under which relevant publications will be discussed, are therefore as follows:

[*] ENCORE was the European Network for Conflict Resolution in Education (operating between 1990 and 2001); AULRE is the (UK) Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education; EFTRE is the European Forum for Teachers of Religious Education.

1. **Raising Religious Awareness in a Religiously Conflicted Society**
2. **Intercultural Education: Towards Mutual Understanding**
3. **Challenging Religious Division in Education**
4. **A Rationale for Shared and Inclusive Religious Education**
5. **Religious Education as a Contributor to Community Relations/Cohesion**
6. **Religious Education and Human Rights.**

There is inevitably considerable overlap in the themes selected, however, and so it will be important to continue to emphasise cross-thematic links and patterns.

A Theoretical Framework

As I considered how to reflect this work within an overall theoretical framework it became increasingly evident that this was a difficult and possibly unhelpful task. I recognised that other academic practitioners who have attempted to find constructive ways of approaching the challenges of education in a context of division and conflict have found it more helpful to draw on a number of different theoretical perspectives. In their study of comparative approaches to shared or integrated education in Northern Ireland and Israel, McGlynn and Beckerman (2007:700f) have endorsed this multi-theoretical position, suggesting that:

> "If we restrict ourselves to singular theoretical approaches we run the risk of oversimplifying the complexity of human identity and interaction and may miss the very possibilities that would give hope".

This approach also rings true when considering some of the debates within religious education – the advocacy of, or opposition to, phenomenology, for instance, or a

critical realist approach to religious literacy, or human-development-based, constructivist or ethnographic approaches. Relatively few advocates of these theoretical and pedagogical approaches suggest that they are mutually exclusive and undoubtedly many teachers and academics at different levels take something from several of them according to the varying circumstances of their class and the topic being studied.

In one of the published pieces discussed below (**2011a**: especially Chapters 1 and 10) my thinking to date on this point was summarised in the form of a rationale that, in retrospect, seems something like a manifesto for the educational ideals that I have accrued over many years. While this was in the context of writing about the more general intercultural dimensions of my work, most if not all of the key points are equally relevant to my work on religious education. It is clear in that article, and in other places throughout my publications, that there are several prominent theoretical approaches that have been particularly influential on my thinking and approach, gathered variously from experience within the specific circumstances of education in Northern Ireland and from a distillation of a range of theories and tried strategies.

Prominent among these positions is a *social reconstructionist* position similar to that adapted in the Northern Ireland context by John Malone, Malcolm Skilbeck and John Greer (as discussed in Richardson & Gallagher, **2011a**). It would have been impossible to be engaged in the various educational enterprises that have characterised my career without a belief in the capacity of education to challenge attitudes and contribute to the creation of an improving and more peaceful society. Skilbeck (1976) in particular focused educational minds in Northern Ireland when he challenged

teachers not to be “naïve bearers of [sectarian] culture” (the word “sectarian” being used in the oral delivery of his paper but over-cautiously omitted by the publishers of the journal in which it later appeared) and on this basis he promoted and developed pedagogical and curricular approaches aimed at enabling teachers and learners to engage critically with their social, cultural and political context.

The educational dynamic that is integral to a reconstructionist approach is also significant in what has been called *critical multiculturalism* (Nieto, 2000) in which a simplistic multiculturalism that focuses on cultural similarities but avoids serious engagement with cultural differences is rejected in favour of urging critical reflection on social inequality and power imbalances. In a Religious Education context this seems close to what Grimmitt (2000) and others have described as *emancipatory constructivism*, seeking to question and challenge cultural assumptions and social structures such as racism and sectarianism.

Emerging initially from other divided contexts such as racial segregation in the United States, the *contact hypothesis* (as developed by Allport [1954], Amir [1969] and others) has not surprisingly been influential in Northern Ireland and has played a major role in community relations work of all kinds. There has, however, been much criticism of the ineffectiveness of low-level and poor quality contact programmes in education and especially of the emphasis on inter-personal contact to the neglect of encounter that takes into account the often far more powerful inter-group identity. Tajfel’s work on Social Identity Theory (1978; Cairns, 1987) has been usefully applied in this discussion to reset the balance towards greater focus on social or community identity and various writers and researchers have emphasised the importance of applying clear criteria for

the effectiveness of contact and of utilising it as part of a broader range of strategies. Despite the limitations in the application of contact theory, I nevertheless believe that any cross-cultural and inter-religious work must involve a reasonable level of *human encounter*, particularly in a situation where separate schooling is such a significant factor.

These theoretical positions, very briefly identified above, appear to me to meet together to some degree in the concept of *intercultural education* which by definition is about movement, interaction and exchange and which has become an increasingly important context for dealing with issues of religious and cultural diversity in education. I believe that these theories and the pedagogical approaches that follow from them are evident in various ways – sometimes embryonically, sometimes more developed – in the publications discussed in the following sections.

The Publications by Theme

The overall focus of the publications discussed in these pages is on education for religious and cultural diversity in the context of the conflicted social environment of Northern Ireland. As indicated in the introduction, the several overlapping key areas relate to the challenges for schools and teacher education of teaching for mutual understanding in a divided and a largely educationally separate society, especially on issues of religion, culture and identity. There are regular references to human rights principles, to pedagogical issues and to research on the attitudes of teachers, parents and others.

1. Raising Religious Awareness in a Religiously Conflicted Society

According to Jacobsen (2011:362) Northern Ireland is an example of a society in which violence has "continued to flare up at *the boundary lines where different religions touched*" (my emphasis). In this regard it is by no means unique, sharing certain characteristics with other conflicted societies in which religion is a significant factor. While wishing to avoid simplistic comparisons, one of the frequently shared characteristics on such boundary lines would appear to be a lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding between different religious traditions (or between groups defined by religious categories), often leading to exaggeration, stereotyping, prejudice and sometimes discrimination. Inter-religious discussion in Northern Ireland – which until recently tended to refer primarily or exclusively to Catholic/Protestant discussion – has all too often appeared to be at this level.

Greer, writing during the intense years of "the Troubles", reviewed several surveys of young people's attitudes and observed that: "Taken together, the overall picture of Catholic/Protestant relations is one of ignorance and prejudice" (Greer, 1985:277). Even still today religious discussion can be little more than an exchange of mutual ignorance reinforced by lack of communication and separation in many social contexts, not least education.

In recognition of this several attempts were made in the 1970s and 1980s to provide resources and strategies for schools that would help to improve the levels of Catholic/Protestant awareness. Many of these initiatives, targeted variously at primary and post-primary schools, are recorded in my publications (particularly **2011a**), and include the important pioneering work of Greer and McElhinney (1984; 1985a; 1985b) on "Irish Christianity", as indicated in the Introduction. I was closely involved as a writer with a similar initiative aimed at primary pupils, "Looking At Churches and Worship in Ireland" (CPEP, 1985; revised 1992), and it became very evident through a detailed piloting process that one of the key obstacles for teachers contemplating its use was their consciousness of lack of knowledge of the various Christian traditions, often including those with which they were personally associated. Despite considerable cynicism and some opposition these initiatives nevertheless caught the interest of teachers and were used in some schools, but the lack of denominational awareness remained a significant issue, and it was this that led to the concept for my first book project.

(1998) *A Tapestry of Beliefs: Christian Traditions in Northern Ireland*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press

Commissioned by the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, it was intended that this book would provide an adult audience with clear and accurate information on each of the Christian denominations present in Northern Ireland (Part 1) along with other articles dealing with cross-denominational issues (Part 2). Supported by a reference group of Catholic and Protestant academics, educationists and ecumenical leaders, I developed a pattern for the denominational contributions which was intended to enable readers to approach the book either by individual denomination or by a parallel following of themes. These themes (listed in full on pages xiii-xiv) included origins, statistical information, key beliefs, worship and other practices, church government and attitudes towards / relationships with other Christian traditions. It was intended that the book would serve different audiences at different levels, including students (from 6th Form through university), academics, teachers seeking background information and a general adult readership.

Building on many contacts made during the development of "Looking at Churches and Worship in Ireland" (CPEP, 1985; revised 1992), well-informed writers in good standing with each denomination (not all of whom were clergy or in senior positions) were identified and invited to write a chapter on their tradition and allocated an approximate number of words according to the numerical strength of that denomination. They were also advised that entries would be placed sequentially in order of the number of adherents given in the 1991 Northern Ireland Census, from largest (the Catholic Church in Ireland) to smallest (an overview of the

Orthodox Churches). Almost all contributors seemed to feel confident in their freedom to express for themselves the key features of their own traditions, even when some were invited to make changes at a later editorial stage in relation to the proposed structure or their allocated number of words.[1]

As editor one key task was to attempt to sustain a reasonable standard of writing throughout the very diverse range of authors contributing to Part 1 – about two-thirds of the whole book. Some chapters presented no problems at all, being penned by able and eloquent denominational representatives; others required some careful tweaking. A co-written chapter on one of the larger Protestant denominations proved to be so stylistically "lumpy" that it required significant editorial ghost-writing, though this was never remarked on by the original authors. A pertinent observation by Linney (1999) appeared to refer to the number of small evangelical and only marginally differentiated Protestant denominations appearing in the book: "There is a certain tedium in wading through some of the material which … makes the point that there is very little real difference between many of the denominations represented".

In addition to the extensive editorial process I contributed the "Editor's Preface: An Explanation" (pp. ix-xvii), a substantial Introduction entitled "Mixed Blessings: A

[1] Perhaps the most difficult situation came about as a result of the insistence of the Rev. Ian Paisley, Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster and also an extremely well-known politician, that he would personally write the contribution for his denomination. The editorial process in relation to this chapter, though ultimately acceptable to the denominational author, was drawn-out and at times uncomfortable! (It would not be surprising, however, in the light of the high profile of its author, if this chapter turned out to be the most widely read of all.)

View of Christian Practice in Northern Ireland"[2] (pp. 1-19) and a brief introduction to Part 2 entitled "The Living Tapestry" (pp. 223-4). In the introductory chapter I made a case for overt religious discussion and dialogue as an antidote to the attitude noted by Lady Jean Mayhew (wife of a former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland) in her Foreword to the book (p.vii):

> "… I have often heard people, when speaking of friends across the traditional community divide, add 'but we never discuss religion or politics'".

This point – that people need to learn how to talk about religion and religious difference – has been developed in my writings on many subsequent occasions (for example **2008c** and **2010b**).

The chapters in Part 2, on "Reflections across the Traditions", were much easier to deal with and were in each case written by competent and experienced experts in their fields. In the view of several observers, these chapters lifted the tendency of Part 1 to highlight only the minutiae of differences between many of the Protestant denominations onto a different level where a thoughtful and challenging overview of Christianity in contemporary Northern Ireland could be experienced. Despite the judgement of one Protestant fundamentalist reviewer who described Part 2 as "bland, inclusive and rather superficial" (Donnelly, 1999), my own view (shared by some other reviewers) is that the real strength of the book is actually in this second part. It is likely, however, that without the context and detail of the traditions described in Part 1 the cross-denominational analysis would seem unrelated and incomplete.

[2] At one point in the editorial process "Mixed Blessings" was considered as an overall title for the book, though ultimately rejected on the grounds that it might appear to lack seriousness!

"A Tapestry of Beliefs" has been cited and/or referenced in newspaper articles (at the time of its release) and by a number of academic authors (see, for instance Skuce, 2006; Brewer, Keane & Livingstone, 2006; Power, 2007; Brewer, Higgins & Teeney, 2011). Brady (2001), writing in the only known American review, judged the book to have laid "an essential foundation for any study of Christianity in Northern Ireland".

While the issue of raising religious awareness and dialogue between people from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds in Northern Ireland remains important, broader concerns about inter-religious awareness have become increasingly significant, notably in the years since the Belfast Agreement of 1998. Adherents of various religions other than Christianity have been present in Northern Ireland for many decades, notably Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Bahá'ís, though they had often felt "invisible" due to the domination of (apparent) Christian internecine conflicts. I had already attempted to make a strong case for the inclusion of this wider dimension in RE in Northern Ireland, including in some conference presentations and early articles (**2001b**; 2001e). Under the auspices of the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum I edited a book of introductory chapters on these faith communities (Richardson, 2002), though on a much smaller and more concise scale than the book on Christian traditions (**1998**, above) and targeted for a somewhat more general readership. Shortly after this I embarked with a colleague on a research-based project that resulted in the publication of two text books on world religions for post-primary schools in Northern Ireland (Nelson & Richardson, 2005; 2006). The broadening of this inter-religious perspective has also provided a

basis for several later papers (notably **2005c**, **2008b** and Nelson & Richardson, **2004**).

(2005c) 'Interfaith Education in Northern Ireland: Obstacles and Opportunities'. In Lähnemann, J. (ed.), ***Preservation, Development, Reconciliation: Religious Education and Global Responsibility*****. Nürnberg: Peace Education Standing Commission / Verlag Peter Athmann**

An opportunity to present a paper on religious diversity and religious education in Northern Ireland at a significant German international conference – the 2003 Nürnberger Forum – led to the publication of this paper, initially in a German translation (2005a) and later in the same year in an English-language collection co-published in association with the Nürnberger Forum and the Peace Education Standing Commission of Religions for Peace. It enabled me to draw on the strands of work indicated above and articulate some of the paradoxes of religious life in Northern Ireland, in both a Catholic/Protestant and an inter-faith context, to offer a critique of separate educational provision based on perceived religious identity and to link this to the rationale that I had been developing (for example in **2001b;** 2001e; also Nelson & Richardson, **2004**) for shared and inclusive education (and, in particular, RE) in schools. The article also provided a brief record of the work of the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum in campaigning for the inclusion of world religions in what was at that point in time officially an exclusively Christian RE Syllabus in Northern Ireland.

Reference was made in this article to a personal research project (Richardson, 2003) on the attitudes of student teachers to religious diversity in RE. The survey had

analysed the responses of Catholic and Protestant student teachers from two teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland and revealed a generally positive openness to learning more about diversity in relation to Christianity and other religions, though with a strong awareness by the students that they had had very limited opportunities to develop their own knowledge and understanding up to that point. (A paper based on this research was presented at a conference in Belfast in 2003 but currently remains unpublished. A follow-up survey was conducted in 2011-12 and there are plans to base an article on this material in the near future.)

The German-published paper (**2005c**) also included a statement of several key principles relating to the treatment of awareness of religious diversity in RE, which in summary are:

- the importance of focusing on *both* local and global religious diversity in RE;
- the importance of broad religious partnership, rather than defensiveness, in relation to the development of the Northern Ireland RE Syllabus;
- improved opportunities for student teachers and serving teachers to extend their own awareness of religious diversity;
- more attention on the part of faith communities to teaching programmes within their own memberships, including positive focus on religious diversity;
- the need for an *educational* (as opposed to instructional) approach to RE, taking account of the affective dimensions of religion as well as knowledge;
- the importance of starting work on awareness of religious diversity early (i.e. in the primary school);

- the need for a classroom ethos of “safe space” for the discussion of religious difference.

Over the years since the publication of this paper, these points have been developed in other work, as outlined especially in Sections 4 and 5 below.

(2011b) ‘Media and Religious Conflict in Northern Ireland: An Educational Perspective’. In Pirner, M., Lähnemann, J. & Haußmann, W. (eds.) *Medien-Macht und Religionen: Herausforderung für interkulturelle Bildung*. Berlin: EB-Verlag

A presentation at a later Nürnberger Forum, in 2010, provided the motivation for this paper which also focused on religious and cultural diversity, religious conflict and opportunities for inter-religious awareness and learning. The conference theme on “Media-Power and Religions” required the examination of some different aspects of these issues and led me to propose the question as to whether the media in its various forms might have a specifically educational role, particularly in relation to the development of improved religious literacy.

(Although I have from time to time discussed “religious literacy” in my writing and, probably more frequently, in my teaching, it seems important to clarify that the term is not intended in the more specialist critical realist sense promoted particularly by Wright [2000; 2007, etc.] which has become contentious and disputed in some academic circles. My many concerns about the lack of religious literacy in society generally, including among religiously committed people and even those presenting themselves to train as teachers of RE, are focused on the importance of being able to relate and apply knowledge in a “joined-up” way –

making connections. In this I probably owe much of my thinking to the work of Edwin Cox [1983] in relation to "the religiously educated person" and to that of James Fowler [1981] and others on religious and faith development.)

In order to explore the role and potential of the media in this respect I set up interviews with two local broadcasters specialising in religious affairs and was able to compare their responses to research that had been carried out on the role of the BBC in Northern Ireland during the intensity of the Troubles (Cathcart[3], 1984). While it became clear that the media was in a somewhat different place from that of the educator, the article concluded that it provides many opportunities for public engagement in an important Socratic process with the potential, in a divided and diverse society, for the airing of important issues – including extreme and contentious views – that need to be in the open if there is to be any progress in inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue. This serves to emphasise again the centrality of informed religious awareness especially in the context of a society divided, in part, by religious perceptions and identity.

2. Intercultural Education: Towards Mutual Understanding

Throughout the years when I was working as an ecumenically-based Peace Education Officer (1983-94), and beyond that period into my work as an academic (from 1994 to the present), I have had many opportunities to present conference papers and other talks (at teachers' in-service courses for example) outlining the

[3] The late Rex Cathcart, a Professor in the Queen's University Belfast School of Education, had been the supervisor for my MA(Ed) by thesis in the early 1990s.

importance of intercultural approaches to education. The immediate milieu for this was related to the Northern Ireland conflict and the concern that education should have a role in addressing the issues and relationships involved, but the context was always wider, informed by thinking, practice and experience from other parts of the world.

In Northern Ireland the terminology used for these educational processes has often reflected sensitivities and uncertainties within and between the dominant communities, thus making for variable usage. The most common terms have been *Community Relations Education* and *Education for Mutual Understanding* (widely known as *EMU*), but other familiar variants have included *Social and Cultural Studies*, *Peace Education*, *Diversity Education*, *Good Relations Education*, occasionally *Multicultural Education* and, more recently, *Intercultural Education*. Additionally, work under these various descriptions has often been closely associated with concepts such as *Values Education*, *Citizenship Education* and *Human Rights Education*, although advocates of each of these ideas would almost certainly wish to argue that they reference a much broader set of ideas than community relations alone. While there are slightly different nuances in each term – and even more options for additional or combined terminology[4] – one of my tasks in academic writing has been to attempt to provide a linking rationale for this variably described area of education. This has been a key purpose of the personal publications as submitted or referred to in this section.

[4] The most recent term (with perhaps the ugliest-sounding acronym), now officially adopted by the Department of Education since 2011, is *CRED* – 'Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education'. (The CRED policy document is accessible from http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/20-community-relations-pg.htm.)

Details of earlier articles than those submitted are given in the full bibliography of personal publications at Appendix 1, but significant among these in shaping later work in this general area was a case study document commissioned by the British Council on "Curriculum Examples of Inclusiveness" (Richardson, 1999) and a collection of papers edited by me, including one personal paper, from the 1999 Conference of ENCORE – the European Network for Conflict Resolution in Education (Richardson, 2001). Both of these contributed significantly to the approach and thinking reflected in my co-edited book (Richardson & Gallagher, **2011a**) as discussed below.

(2011a) ***Education for Diversity and Mutual Understanding: the Experience of Northern Ireland.*** **Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang AG**

This book, which I regard as the most significant in my opus to date, was co-edited and co-written with Tony Gallagher, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and former Head of the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast and one of Northern Ireland's leading experts on community relations and shared education. It includes a co-written introduction, seven personal chapters, two chapters by Gallagher and five chapters by other leading Northern Irish practitioners in the field of education for community relations, diversity and mutual understanding. Long in development, the book had originally been conceived in the late 1990s and went through several versions and updates over more than a decade. Despite significant changes in policy and curriculum over that period the publication of the book early in 2011 proved to be fortuitous as there was renewed interest in these issues on the part of government at this time. The book is targeted at academics, policy makers,

teachers and student teachers and intended to provide background on the development of this work, a rationale for its place in educational practice and practical guidance on its implementation in schools and other learning contexts.

In terms of the division of responsibilities in the preparation of this book, the initial planning and designing of content was carried out jointly, as was much of the later negotiation with publishers. Apart from writing my own chapters, the principal role in editing the contributions from other writers was mine, as was the final preparation of the manuscripts, including the preparation of a detailed index. In negotiation with the publishers, who specialise in academic works, there was an initial period of peer review by the submission of sample chapters, and, at the point of pre-publication, a further review of the whole completed book by two anonymous reviewer-editors. A significant number of matters was dealt with during these stages in the process. Additionally the whole completed manuscript was submitted to the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council for their own review as a condition of our request for funding support, resulting in a number of other helpful suggestions. This Community Relations Council support, in negotiation with the publisher, enabled the book to be made available at a reduced price for purchasers in Northern Ireland.

In the remainder of this section I will make some brief observations on my own chapters included in this book.

In Part 1 (The Background) my four chapters focus on the fundamental rationale for education for diversity and mutual understanding in slightly different ways. Chapter

1 (*Context and Rationale*) attempts to provide a basis for understanding these processes that is both local and global. The various terms used to describe this work, as indicated above, are discussed in relation to a wide range of relevant literature and educational concepts, with regular reference to research and experience in Northern Ireland and elsewhere. Chapters 3 and 4 (*Formation …* and *Transformation …*) provide a continuous narrative of the development of this work by means of a brief outline of the historical background and a more detailed overview of the period since the outbreak of the Northern Ireland "Troubles" in the late 1960s. It had seemed to me to be important to continue to record and analyse this process since producing a much earlier article (Richardson, 1992), and I believe this to be a more comprehensive account of community relations education during that forty-year period than has appeared elsewhere. It involved examination of a wide range of early documentation, some of it unpublished, and interviews with some of the key practitioners as well as a review of locally-based research. My own involvement in these processes over most of that period was also helpful, although it was important to try to keep a certain degree of academic distance when offering evaluations of the various initiatives. Chapter 5 (*Critiques and Objections*) draws together some of the principal objections to this work, based variously on political, religious, social and educational critiques, and offers some reflections on the issues raised. In particular the religious objections and opposition recorded here, mostly stemming from Protestant evangelical, fundamentalist and anti-ecumenical sources, are indicative of a context that has no small relevance to my closely related work on religious education.

Of the two personal chapters in Part 2, Chapter 10 on *Teaching Controversial Issues* represents work that I have been developing over a period of some 25 years and which I have applied generally as a writer, teacher and trainer in relation to community relations education in general and Religious Education in particular. A rationale is offered, based on academic literature and personal experience and research, followed by a discussion of classroom application and concluding with an abstraction of general principles which I have continued to develop and to use in current work with students and serving teachers. Chapter 11 (*Snapshots of Effective Practice*) represents examples collected over a significant period using a personally-developed structure based on: curriculum Areas of Learning; teaching and learning styles; pastoral structures; cross-community contact opportunities; and whole-school ethos. Under the first of these categories I was able to take the brief opportunity of highlighting work carried out through Religious Education, which had often been regarded as "too contentious" to contribute effectively to community relations education.

In Part 3 my final chapter in the book (Chapter 13, *Evaluating the Northern Ireland Experience*) offers an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of this area of work to date, including an outline of key research in the area, and suggests some strategic issues towards making future progress.

McCully (2012) has observed that the book "provides valuable insight into the considerable work done over the years to bring change by working largely within the segregated system through curriculum development and the establishment of cross-community contact between schools". In relation to the chapter on

controversial issues (an area in which McCully has considerable expertise) he notes that it "neatly summarises the prevailing principles of effective practice associated with addressing sensitive topics in the emotionally charged environment of a divided society". There was some implied criticism in McCully's review, however, of an over simplistic approach to some aspects of this work, noting the difficulties of achieving societal change through schooling and observing that "the assumption that there is direct progression between resolving conflict and fostering strong relationships at a personal level, and building stronger social cohesion between groups in society … has been challenged … and demands much greater scrutiny". Some of these issues are directly addressed in the book and it is made clear in, for example, the chapter on *Evaluating the Northern Ireland Experience* (Chapter 11) that a simplistic and over-individualistic notion of solving problems by increasing inter-personal and inter-communal contact may be able to contribute to the task but is certainly not the whole educational "solution".

(2008d) 'Laying the Foundations: Citizenship in the Primary School'. In Jeffers, G. & O'Connor, U. (eds.), *Education for Citizenship and Diversity in Irish Contexts*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration

Although appearing in published form chronologically before the book discussed above, this book chapter was written at more or less the same time as the larger work and represents an approach significantly similar to that taken in the book. Its emphasis, however, is on primary-level schooling (ages 4 to 11 in Northern Ireland) – an area not always fully included in discussions of approaches to division, diversity and community relations. This was an attempt – within the context of a book

otherwise almost entirely focused on second-level education – to reset that balance. Drawing on a paper originally given in the context of a Keynote Address to a conference marking the conclusion of an Early Years research project (Richardson, 2004) I adapted and extended the ideas discussed there for application to the primary school in general. I used the terminology of "citizenship" deliberately in the title, in part to relate to the overall title of the book but also to mark out the relationship between curriculum processes in Northern Ireland (where the term is only used at post-primary level[5]) and those in other regions of the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Once again, with some reference to the context of educational development through "The Troubles", my purpose was to provide a clear rationale based on research and collective experience and to encourage engagement with these issues on the part of educational professionals. Citing the studies of Connolly (2001; 2002) and others, on the development of prejudiced attitudes in young children, a case is made for early interventions to prevent the development of prejudice. The chapter concludes with a discussion of several issues relating to future policy and practice with an emphasis on inclusive practice in relation to religious and cultural matters and on the key role of teacher education.

[5] *Local and Global Citizenship* has formed part of 'Learning for Life and Work' in the Northern Ireland post-primary curriculum since 2007. The nearest equivalent in the NI primary curriculum to the English 'Primary Citizenship and PSHE' is *Personal Development and Mutual Understanding*, which became part of the Northern Ireland primary curriculum in 2007.

3. Challenging Religious Division in Education

Educational division in Northern Ireland functions not only at the obvious level of different school management types, normally perceived in religious terms (Catholic schools and *de facto* "Protestant" schools), but also in relation to teacher education and the impact on many of the culturally divergent outcomes of the system – sport, music, language and community relationships in general. Murray (1985), in an influential early study of what he and others have provocatively termed "segregated schools" (with overtones of racial segregation in South Africa and the United States), gave expression to some of the frustration and discomfort of two separate communities living in close proximity to each other. Citing a poem by John Boyd (1969) based on a Protestant's experience of sitting in a Catholic school classroom in which the poet becomes "Conscious of the break and bond between us", Murray notes that few individuals have had the opportunity of experiencing "the ethos of schools which serve a culture other than their own" (1985:8-9).

The contentious issue of a separate or segregated or divided education system – even the choice of terminology can quickly become confrontational – has been rehearsed over many decades in Ireland, including failed government attempts to establish a more unified system in the 1830s and again in the early 1920s. Unsurprisingly, similar educational issues have certainly featured in other countries or regions where communities have been in conflict (for example, Sri Lanka, the Balkans, Israel/Palestine, to name but some). As pointed out in various articles of mine, in Northern Ireland the issue is far more than just a debate about whether or not to have faith schools of one kind or another, although the larger Christian

denominations have certainly played a major role in influencing how the issue plays out (and not only in relation to the teaching of religion). Most former Protestant schools were handed over to state control in the 1930s, but a reading of statements from the larger Protestant denominations often indicates a concern to retain as much influence as possible in public education, locally and regionally. Meanwhile the Catholic Church continues vigorously to defend its right to manage its own schools and to teach religion as "faith nurture" even though almost all Catholic schools are now fully funded by the state[6]. Some advocates of Catholic education have even argued that separate education actually strengthens society because it encourages diversity rather than uniformity (O Connor, 2002: 74; citing an Irish Catholic bishop), though in the context of the intense sectarian divisions and, at times, violence of Northern Ireland this seems a rather perverse position.

Pring (2010:33), writing in a much wider context though with great relevance to Northern Ireland, has warned that "Conflict and hatred find their roots in the ignorance of one's own culture and that of others". He supports the principle of "the common school", as advocated in early 20th century USA by John Dewey, suggesting that it is there that "young people will grow through their interactions with others" (ibid:32). As described in my own articles (**2001d**; **2008a**, **2011a** and others) attempts to overcome separation have taken various forms in Northern Ireland, from inter-school contact programmes, through various "sharing" schemes, to the advocacy of a fully integrated education system. Dunn (1993:26) has argued

[6] There are very few independent schools in Northern Ireland. Most grammar schools – including all Catholic grammar schools – are Voluntary schools, which means that they receive most, but not all, of their funding from the state.

wisely that “there is unlikely to be one universal answer”, and that any possible future system “will have to allow for deeply-felt differences and yet aspire towards forms of social coherence”.

A good deal of my own writing has attempted to analyse and interpret this separateness and to offer alternatives appropriate to the ideal of a shared society, focusing on the potential of religion and religious education either to deepen the divisions or to contribute towards reconciliation and renewal.

(2001d) ‘Religions, Divisions, Values and Visions in Education’. In *Dharma World vol. 28*, July/August 2001, 8-11

In this short article, commissioned by an international Japanese Buddhist Journal as part of a special edition on the spirituality of peacemaking, “Religion and Education for Peace”, I drew on theological and Biblical perspectives developed during the period when I worked ecumenically for the Irish Churches as Peace Education Officer. Noting some aspects of a Judeo-Christian approach to a spirituality of peace as it might be applied to education, I outlined a perspective on some of the difficulties and dangers associated with the involvement in education of religious bodies and of the separateness that has resulted in Northern Ireland from the Churches’ control of schools and Religious Education. Suggesting that the more appropriate role of the churches in relation to (public) education should be the exercise of a responsibility rather than a right, I provided a brief overview of some options and initiatives towards greater awareness and acceptance of religious and cultural diversity, especially in relation to RE.

(Nelson, J. & Richardson, N., 2004) 'Studying Religion in a Divided Society'. In *Academic Exchange Quarterly 8 (2)*, 96-100.

Working in close collaboration with my colleague, James Nelson, this article represented an attempt to apply our developing thinking on approaches to Religious Education in schools as well as an opportunity to establish a clear ethos for the shared and open joint study of religion in an inclusive teacher education context. In part this was prompted by the small but steady increase in students from a Catholic background studying at Stranmillis University College[7], some of whom have taken Religious Studies as their main subject. (This trend has been sustained up to the present and seems likely to continue.) Additionally, changes in the structure of the B.Ed degree and significant staff changes occurring at the same time had provided something of a *kairos* moment for re-shaping our overall approach, and this is clearly reflected in the resulting article.

Our article outlined the background to separate teacher education in Northern Ireland and the role of our own institution in this process (a discussion to which I returned in greater detail in my later article, **2008a**, as indicated below). With reference to recent academic literature on approaches to teaching RE in schools, we argued for a methodology that openly encourages and respects diversity and promotes the honest discussion of conflicting truth claims. We elaborated four key values that we wished to underpin our future academic approach in Stranmillis:

[7] Stranmillis has been a non-denominational institution from its establishment in 1923 but due to the existence of a separate Catholic teacher education college it has largely catered for students from a Protestant background.

- *Respect for and equal treatment of persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group;*
- *Appreciation and understanding of difference through balanced investigation, research and critical analysis;*
- *Open exploration of controversial issues and competing truth claims;*
- *Creative approaches to dealing with conflict.*

Since that time these values have been shared and discussed with each new cohort of our student teachers and put forward for consideration as a model of inclusive practice.

The article also described the closely related background to our Small World Project, which had just commenced at the time of writing, in which we recruited student research assistants to support our preparation of two publications on world religions[8] designed for use in Key Stage 3 classrooms, as indicated above (Nelson & Richardson, 2005; 2006). In retrospect this article represents a very formative moment in the development of an inclusive ethos in our own work which continues to be significant right up to the present time.

(2008a) 'Faith Schooling: Implications for Teacher Educators – a Perspective from Northern Ireland'. In *Journal of Beliefs & Values 29:1*, April 2008, 1-10

An invitation to give a paper at a 2006 seminar in London organised by the Standing Conference on the Education and Training of Teachers (SCETT) on Faith Schooling and Teacher Education led to the publication of this article. It was a further

[8] At the time of writing these two books continue to be sold and to be widely used in post-primary schools in Northern Ireland.

opportunity to address the issues around separateness in education, though this time most specifically in relation to teacher education.

Discussion of the issue of faith schools in the British context, while certainly contentious, operates at a different level than in Northern Ireland, though this is not always obvious when the two situations are compared. Issues about parental rights, school ethos and confessional religious teaching may be common to both, but the additional (and in my view, disadvantageous) factor in Northern Ireland is the major impact on community separation/segregation which, as indicated in the Introduction, remains at least 90% effective in schools. To the frustration of many this separation continues into much of teacher education, especially in relation to preparing teachers to teach in primary schools. There have been opportunities for increased contact between student teachers from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds and one of my own responsibilities, as recorded in this paper, relates to the arranging of encounter-based programmes on issues of identity, diversity and prejudice for students from Stranmillis and St. Mary's University Colleges, but these are limited and, regrettably, all too often lacking in sustainable impact precisely because of the existence of the separate institutions.

These issues are discussed in this paper with reference to the historical development of separate schooling and teacher education in which religious issues continue to play a significant part. Recognising the inherent difficulties imposed on separately educated and trained teachers, the paper concludes with suggestions for steps towards challenging educational separateness and establishing a more inclusive structure for teacher education. The tokenism of brief, short-term

encounters, it is suggested, may do little more than create a counter-productive cynicism; much more regular and purposeful interaction between student teachers will be essential if they are to fulfil the expectations laid on them that they will manage diversity effectively and encourage cross-community encounter and engagement between their future pupils.

There can be little doubt that the most significant contemporary factor sustaining separate schooling in Northern Ireland is the insistence of the Catholic Church in Ireland that Catholic parents have a responsibility to send their children to Catholic schools; it is frequently reinforced, however, by a strident anti-Catholicism that is evident among some elements of the Protestant/unionist community, which in turn may lead to inter-community suspicion and conflict that can all to easily confirm the feeling that separation is a necessity. I am conscious that it may be possible to read my various articles on this issue in a way that suggests antagonism towards Catholic schools and even some degree of personal anti-Catholicism, but I wish to emphasise that this is definitely not my position. I have worked with the three main education sectors in Northern Ireland (Controlled, Catholic Maintained and Integrated) and have great respect for many schools, irrespective of management type. No school sector has a monopoly on positive whole-school ethos or on the capacity to promote good community relations and I believe that I have tried to express a balanced view in my writing. My difficulty is not with Catholic or other faith schools *per se*, but rather with the intensified separateness that is a consequence of insistence on discrete religious provision, especially in a context where the great majority of people perceive separate schooling to be normative. For most parents

in Northern Ireland the choice of school is a culturally and religiously pre-determined reality – not really a matter of "choice" at all.

The inevitable consequence, however, of making a strong critique of separation at various levels in the education system is the challenge of being able to offer a viable alternative. It is the attempt to contribute to such an alternative that has largely shaped the articles discussed in the following two (closely related) sections.

4. A Rationale for Shared and Inclusive Religious Education

A concern for articulating a clear rationale for Religious Education in publicly funded schools that is not based on separating learners and teachers has been present in my work over several decades and it remains a central emphasis. As well as the examples highlighted in this section, this key theme of my work has been expressed in many other articles, book chapters and conference papers (e.g. 2001c; 2006; 2007; also **2005c**; **2008b**; **2010a**; **2010b**; and **Nelson & Richardson 2004**) and is also prominent in planned future research and writing projects.

This approach, as developed over time and expressed incrementally in my writing and teaching, proposes an RE that:

- is non-confessional but open to, and respectful of, the religious and other life-stance perspectives of the learners and teachers;
- seeks to develop, over time, inter-related (joined-up) religious awareness and knowledge ("religious literacy", as discussed above) closely linked to attitudinal development (reflection on values);

- enables learners to examine familiar religions and religious cultures but also to explore the unfamiliar;
- is fair and balanced and encouraging of mutual respect for differences;
- uses inclusive terminology in relation to how religion and belief traditions are presented;
- recognises internal diversity within religions as well as differences between religions;
- promotes critical enquiry and does not avoid discussion of controversial issues;
- enables learners to examine prejudiced and stereotypical attitudes and to engage in open, honest discussion of divisive issues such as sectarianism and racism;
- is suitable for teaching to pupils of all backgrounds and all age groups.

Other writers have expressed this in different but not unrelated ways, and I owe much to their influences[9] in formulating an eclectic model that I believe can be particularly relevant to the situation in Northern Ireland. My approach, however, has also been significantly shaped by my concerns about the development and content of the Northern Ireland Core Syllabus for Religious Education in its original and revised formats (DENI,1993; Churches' Working Party, 2003; Department of Education, 2007), which is a Churches-controlled, "Christian-centred" programme that I believe fails to address the important issues of religious diversity (within Christianity and in relation to other world religions) so necessary in a divided and

[9] I note with particular appreciation the work of John Greer, John Hull, Edwin Cox, Michael Grimmitt, Terence Copley, the authors of the Westhill Project, Robert Jackson and others.

increasingly diverse society. My analysis of the weaknesses in this Core Syllabus and my proposals for alternatives can also be found in many of these articles. The two articles discussed in this section (together with those discussed in the following section) give some indication of how this model has been developing in my work over the past decade.

(2001b) 'Religion, Pluralism and Education'. In Gardner, J. & Leitch, R. (eds.) *Education 20-20: A Millennium Vision*. Belfast: Blackstaff Press

To mark the turn of the millennium this collection of articles was commissioned by the Graduate School of Education in Queen's University Belfast to allow what the editors described as "people who have a passion for education" to "counsel, persuade and even harangue us about the challenges for education in the next twenty years" (Gardner & Leitch, 2001:1-2). The intended audience was primarily one based in Northern Ireland, and contributors were invited to express their personal vision for their own area of education in the Province and to indicate how it might be achieved.

Commencing with a critique of educational separateness, I argued that the attitudes to religion in schools were often divisive and sometimes contributed to cross-community tensions and the "culture of avoidance" that often inhibits progress in establishing a more cohesive society. Along with a brief critique of the Northern Ireland RE Core Syllabus (which at the time of writing was even more exclusively Christian than in its later, slightly revised, format) I warned that current defensive approaches to RE would be likely to lead to the loss of the subject over time and

presented a vision of an alternative, inclusive model that would value and respect diversity, openness and the sharing of perspectives. Reflecting on this over a decade after the publication of this article, there is still clearly some way to go towards the realisation of this vision.

(2008b) 'The Challenge of the New: Education, Religion and Citizenship in a Traditional and Conflicted Society – a case study of Northern Ireland'. In Lähnemann, J. & Schreiner, P. (eds.), ***Interreligious and Values Education in Europe*****. Münster, Germany: Comenius-Institut & Peace Education Standing Commission of Religions for Peace**

Once again it was a paper presented at a Nuremberg Forum in 2006 that formed the basis of this brief article for a book developed by the Peace Education Standing Commission of Religions for Peace and presented as a background document for a European Inter-Religious Encounter at Rovereto, northern Italy, in May 2008. It is included as one of fourteen short overviews and discussions on the interreligious role of Religious Education in different countries or regions around Europe.

I took this opportunity to discuss the problems associated with separate societies in an international context and to present a broadly-based case for inclusive Religious Education as one possible strategy towards greater cohesion. Making some cautious comparisons with other national situations (but wary of over-generalising from one situation to another), I outlined some of the difficulties and negative outcomes associated with educational separation, noting the continuation of sectarian attitudes and their apparent extension into expressions of racism in Northern Ireland. I argued for a new paradigm for such a society – one based on

positive cultural interaction – and, with brief reference to more inclusive models of RE in England and other places, for an education within it that would deal constructively with difference and controversial issues, including those associated with religion.

Overall I believe that this model may appropriately be described as "shared and inclusive RE". I continue to develop it in current and planned work and I offer this approach to my students as worthy of consideration as a way forward for RE in Northern Ireland.

5. Religious Education as a Contributor to Community Relations/Cohesion

The links between the articles included in this section and in the previous one are very close, and the specific focus on RE and community relations/cohesion is clearly an inevitable consequence of the argument for a more inclusive approach to the subject. While the language of *community relations* is familiar to most people in Northern Ireland, the terminology of *community cohesion* has to some degree come alongside it in recent years, reflecting usage within a broader context in other parts of the UK.

There is an extensive academic literature on these terms and the concepts behind them, some of it reflecting the particular circumstances of different global situations, and while the suggestion that RE has a role in promoting respect for diversity is by no means new or novel the attention given to this issue by

international organisations such as the United Nations, UNESCO and the Council of Europe, especially since 9/11, has given new impetus and meaning to the issue. My own opportunities to be involved in and present papers at some of these discussions (United Nations Consultative Conference on "School Education in relation to Freedom of Religion and Belief, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination", Madrid, November 2001; Council of Europe Expert Colloquy: "Dialogue Serving Intercultural and Inter-Religious Communication", Strasbourg, October 2002; Council of Europe Human Rights Commission Seminar on "Religion and Education: the Possibility of Developing Tolerance through the Teaching of Religious Facts", Malta, May 2004; Oslo Coalition Global Meeting on "Teaching Tolerance, Respect and Recognition in relation with Religion and Belief", Oslo, September 2004; and others) were invaluable in broadening out my own international perspective and helping to further shape my key ideas.

In the introduction to his book on social and community cohesion in RE in the UK (which includes a personal chapter, **2010b**, discussed below) Grimmitt has written of the "very different circumstances created by the emergence of … '*globalised and politicised religion*'" (Grimmitt, 2010:10; original author's italics). Suggesting that in the study of religion an informational approach alone – one based on "a purely descriptive phenomenological approach" – is unlikely to contribute to greater cohesion, Grimmitt proposes a critical approach and the development of "a suitable pedagogic framework for the exploration of controversial and divisive issues in RE" (ibid.:17-18). This rings no less true for Northern Ireland where concerns to "avoid offence" or steer away from contentious issues has frequently made bland the

discussion of religion and encouraged forms of RE that rarely step outside the "safety" of familiar traditions. These are issues that I have attempted to deal with in a number of articles, including the two that follow.

(2008c) 'Education for Religious Tolerance: the Impossible Dream?' In Patalon, M. (ed.), ***Tolerance and Education – Studia Kulturowa 2/2008*****: 39-53. Pedagogical Institute, University of Gdansk**
(web published: http://studia.kulturowe.ug.gda.pl/sk-2.pdf)

This article was considerably extended and developed from one commissioned on the same topic by the "Education Today" journal of the College of Teachers (Richardson, 2006). An invitation to take part in an international conference at the Pedagogical Institute of the University of Gdansk in Poland in November 2007 provided a pertinent location for this discussion and the keynote papers were subsequently published in a collection originally intended for a book but eventually appearing in the Institute's web based journal, *Studia Kulturowa* (Cultural Studies).

There are some brief references in this and other articles to *pluralism* as an important basis for applying an intercultural approach to RE. It is important to clarify that my use of the term is in line with Skeie's descriptive term, "plurality" (as discussed in Jackson, 2004:8ff), indicating a plural or culturally diverse society (sometimes described as the "soft" form of pluralism, or pluralism "as a social fact" [Hobson & Edwards, 1999:51]), rather than the meaning taken by some of pluralism as a philosophical position that may regard all religions and beliefs as bearers of "truth" or even of "equal truth" (the "hard" form, sometimes attributed to John Hick and others). The latter does not represent my views or my understanding of

the term, but in retrospect I would have wished to make this clearer in earlier articles, as indeed I do now in my teaching. (There is, nevertheless, much varied and sometimes "loose" use of *pluralism* in educational literature, and it is not always clear which nuance is to be taken in understanding any particular application of the term.)

Relating my argument to the case of Northern Ireland, but with a broadly international perspective, I made a case in the Gdansk paper for an intercultural model of RE that would contribute positively to religious tolerance and mutual respect by the implementation of long-term strategies towards that end. In summary the key points, outlined in greater detail than in most other recent papers, were: the need to distinguish clearly and publicly between religious education and religious instruction; the importance of recognising the affective dimensions of religious learning; the dangers of "avoidance" and the importance of learning how to discuss religion in a context of "safe space"; the importance of engaging constructively with difference as part of an *inter*cultural, rather than *mono*cultural, approach; the need for experiential rather than didactic learning; the importance of human encounter in inter-religious learning; the need to apply the preceding principles equally to teacher education; and the need for inter-religious partnership in the development of RE syllabuses.

I also argued in this paper for the development of core principles for inter-religious learning in RE based on the application of human rights principles and guidelines for inter-faith dialogue, built on my experience of international discussion at the Council of Europe and other organisations (as indicated above). I cited recent

papers by the German religious educator, Friedrich Schweitzer (2005; 2006), who had argued for "a declaration on Religious Education based on the rights of children" (2005:11) and who followed this by devising five standards for RE (2006:149). When this paper was delivered I was unaware that at almost exactly the same time a document was being published through the auspices of yet another international organisation that, consciously or otherwise, seemed to take up Schweitzer's challenge. The "Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools" (OSCE/ODIHR, 2007), about which I learned on return from Poland, appeared to me to provide an extremely important framework with broad international application, including for the situation in Northern Ireland.[10] This document, together with others appearing at around the same time and in subsequent months (Council of Europe, 2008a; 2008b; also Keast, 2007), have become very important points of reference in my writing and teaching since then.

(2010b) 'Division, Diversity and Vision: Religious Education and Community Cohesion in Northern Ireland'. In Grimmitt, M. (ed.) ***Religious Education and Social and Community Cohesion: an exploration of challenges and opportunities*****. Great Wakering: McCrimmons**

Writing on this occasion for a UK-wide readership it was necessary to provide some brief contextual background on Northern Ireland's "division and diversity", along with an outline of educational initiatives, including some in RE, in support of learning to live positively with difference. The chapter provided an opportunity to

[10] I was delighted to be able to articulate this in a very practical way in late 2008 when I was invited to present a case study as part of a seminar in Sarajevo based on the Toledo Guidelines for religious educators from around the Balkans region.

write what I had come to regard as the "missing chapter" from "Education for Diversity and Mutual Understanding …" (**2011a**, above – which, at the time of writing the article for the Grimmitt book, was in an advanced stage of pre-production) and to deal more comprehensively with diversity and mutual understanding in *Religious* Education.

Having outlined some of the obstacles to an inclusive RE in Northern Ireland, I proposed a process towards "a new vision for RE", drawing in part on the principles being promoted via the Toledo Guiding Principles and recent Council of Europe documentation in addition to the approaches expressed in my earlier papers. In this chapter for the first time I adopted the Council of Europe's terminology of developing "intercultural competences" (Council of Europe, 2008a:29), a term I have applied since then in relation to broader issues of education for diversity and mutual understanding as well as RE.

Reflecting now on the writing of the more recent articles discussed above, however, I am aware that the major obstacles to a more inclusive RE and to its contribution to good community relations/cohesion are still very much the same as they were when writing in earlier years – separation in schooling; the guardianship of the RE curriculum on the part of the Churches; and wariness of religious discussion on the part of many people. It also seems very clear that the attempt to distinguish between religious *education* and religious *instruction* has either not been heard or has remained unclear to many people.

6. Religious Education and Human Rights

Some observers might argue that a consideration of human rights ought to be the starting-point for any discussion about teaching religion rather than the end-point. This is a perfectly valid position, although in my own writing the relevance of and focus on human rights has been a gradual development rather than a personal point of embarkation on the issues.

In recent years my conviction regarding the significance of human rights principles in relation to teaching religion in schools has been informed and significantly strengthened by means of the contact with the organisations such as the Council of Europe, as described above, but in the first instance my interest was sparked through implied criticism of my own work by another academic.

As a founder member of the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum I had for several years led the Forum's campaign for the broadening out of the Northern Ireland Core Syllabus for RE to include world religions, involving meetings with the Department of Education and others. In January 2001 I drafted "A Statement on Religious Education" that was adopted by the Forum and sent to a wide range of organisations, including government ministers, Education and Library Boards and many others. The statement included the following line in which my intention had been to compare RE provision to Section 75 of the recent Northern Ireland Act (1998) requiring public authorities to promote equality of opportunity and good relations in respect of persons of different religious belief and racial groups:

> "We believe that an approach to Religious Education which only focuses on one religious tradition, however numerically dominant, is inadequate in preparing

children for life in a plural society and contrary to the spirit of recent legislation in Northern Ireland relating to Equality and Human Rights …" (NIIFF, 2001)

Barnes, writing in the *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, set out to examine the above claim and what he regarded as "the implied threat of legal proceedings by the Inter-Faith's [sic] Forum to bring about multi-faith religious education in Northern Ireland schools" (2002:22). While not completely dismissing the suggestion that "multi-faith religious education" might have some role in the "Christian society" of Northern Ireland, Barnes concluded that "The appeal to recent legislation in Northern Ireland relating to recent Equality and Human Rights legislation (including European legislation) is without force, certainly legally and probably morally as well" (ibid. 29). (It is worth noting that several of Barnes' arguments in this article were taken up and cited by the Churches' Core Syllabus Review Working Group as a significant plank in their argument in favour of "maintaining the essential Christian character of Religious Education for all grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland" [Churches' Working Group, 2003:4].)

Frustrated by Barnes' analysis, but conscious that my assertions about Human Rights required more thought and substance, I resolved to make a closer study of the issue. An opportunity to present a paper at a conference in Belfast on religious pluralism and human rights in 2007 eventually provided a platform for my developed thinking. This conference took place at the start of November 2007, just before the Gdansk conference as discussed above, but a significant delay in the processing of the compiled papers meant that in the published version (**2010a**, below) I was able to add references to the Toledo Guidelines (op.cit.) and the

Council of Europe White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (op.cit.), to the enrichment of my original paper.

(2010a) 'Rights and Religious Education in a Plural Northern Ireland'. In Tombs, D. (ed.), ***Rights and Righteousness – Perspectives on religious pluralism and human rights*****. Belfast: Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in association with the Irish School of Ecumenics**

My central task here was to examine the possibility that there might be a basis in human rights instruments and discussions that might justify the teaching of religious education in schools in a plural context. It is suggested in the article that in the decades since the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms there is evidence that the human rights basis for emphasising intercultural purposes in education has considerably strengthened. Despite sometimes tortuous terminology designed to avoid direct use of "religious education"[11], many more recent documents from human-rights-focused organisations clearly support the important role of education in promoting mutual understanding and tolerance of diverse religions and beliefs. Strengthened significantly by the appearance of the Toledo Guiding Principles and the various Council of Europe statements and resolutions, and also by post-Belfast Agreement legislation in Northern Ireland promoting equality of opportunity and good relations, this material, taken together, would

[11] Perhaps the clearest example of this is the title of the United Nations 2001 Madrid Consultation: *International Consultative Conference on School Education in relation to Freedom of Religion and Belief, Tolerance and Non-Discrimination.*

appear to provide an effective platform on which to establish programmes of inclusive and intercultural religious education.

I did not write this paper directly as a response to Barnes, but this was certainly an attempt to counter his claim that the appeal to human rights legislation to justify a plural dimension to RE in Northern Ireland was "without force". Furthermore, these are the very principles employed by international bodies to justify learning by students about "religions and beliefs in an environment respectful of human rights, fundamental freedoms and civic values" (OSCE/ODIHR, 2007:16).

My second purpose in this paper was to use the proposed case based on human rights principles to address a number of other contentious issues in the Northern Ireland context. In relation to the faith schools debate (which has resonances on a much wider scale than just Northern Ireland) my suggestion was that the use of the first Protocol (Article 2) of the European Convention to justify separate faith schools is taking the intention of the protection of parental rights to bring up children in their own religion to a place beyond what was originally intended. The 2001 Madrid Declaration makes a very significant distinction not found in earlier statements between a nuanced use of "religious *instruction*", rather than "education", emphasising the right "not to receive religious instruction inconsistent with his or her own convictions" (UN, 2001: Recommendations para.4). This issue deserves much fuller treatment, however, some aspects of which were discussed in my slightly earlier paper on the implications of faith schools for teacher education (**2008a**, above).

Other closely related issues discussed only very briefly in this paper relate to the exclusive nature of most of the content of the Northern Ireland Core Syllabus for RE and also of the narrowly-conceived process by which it was produced by an exclusively Christian Working Party. This in turn raises issues about the rights of minorities with regard to religious education and particularly about the right of withdrawal from RE classes. If there is a reasonable case to be made for religious education with a strong intercultural dimension on the basis of human rights principles, this must surely have implications for the impact of these issues on religious and cultural minorities. As a direct result of my paper for this conference, and of contacts made there, a research project on minority rights and RE was proposed and developed, leading ultimately to the three publications discussed below.

Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N., Chiba, Y. (2010) ***Opting Out of Religious Education – the views of young people from minority belief backgrounds*****. Queen's University Belfast**

With funding successfully applied for under the Religion and Society Research Programme of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)[12] a team was set up to examine the experience of minority belief young people in relation to the right to be opted out of Religious Education as permitted by law in Northern Ireland, other parts of the UK and many other countries. The original team of three was deliberately multidisciplinary: Alison Mawhinney (Human Rights law), Ulrike Niens (educational research) and

[12] Award number AH/G016690/1

myself (Religious Education and teacher education); a fourth member of the team, Yuko Chiba, was then appointed as our post-doctoral researcher.

Earlier research of mine (Richardson, 2003b – unpublished but referred to in various other articles including **2008d** and **2010b**) had revealed some of the concerns of minority faith parents about the lack of awareness and understanding of the needs of their children on the part of teachers in Northern Ireland and had touched on the issue of withdrawal from RE. Studies by Mawhinney (2006; 2007) in the Republic of Ireland had also found serious concerns about the situation faced by minority parents and children in an overwhelmingly Catholic primary school system with a strong focus on confessional teaching and preparation for sacramental and devotional practice. It was in the meeting of these concerns that this project was established.

In addition to the main co-authored research report (**Mawhinney et al, 2010**) several other articles were planned, two of which have been published to date and two others of which have been submitted and accepted for publication. The two already published pieces are indicated below and I will discuss them together with the research report.

Mawhinney A., Niens U., Richardson, N., Chiba Y. (2011) 'Religious Education and Religious Liberty: Opt-outs and Young People's Sense of Belonging'. In Henin-Hunter, M., *Law, Religious Freedoms and Education in Europe*. London: Ashgate

Mawhinney A., Niens U., Richardson, N., Chiba Y. (2012) 'Religion, Human Rights Law, and 'Opting Out' of Religious Education'. In Woodhead, L. & Catto, R., *Religion and Change in Modern Britain.* London: Routledge

The research project and resulting publications benefitted significantly from the multi-disciplinary and international nature of the team; the apportioning of responsibility, decision-making and writing were shared fully and equally throughout the process.

In analysing and interpreting our results – in the original report and in further papers – each member was able to contribute their own perspectives. My own distinctive contribution to the team was to detail the background to the position of RE in Northern Ireland and in an international context and to introduce an awareness of philosophical and pedagogical approaches; none of my other three colleagues had any significant previous experience of these areas. My inter-faith involvements provided good contacts that led to the identification of potential interviewees. I was also able to contribute insights from my own earlier research and particularly from discussions about human rights and RE.

The three closely related articles discussed here, with their slightly different perspectives and emphases, not only raise or reinforce important issues about the preparation, development and practice of religious education in schools in Northern Ireland, but they also highlight the inadequacy of legal measures in ensuring effective consideration of the needs of minorities. Most previous work on opting out provisions had been from the perspective of the legal provision and its interpretation; in our work we set out to consider the particular impact on minority belief young people and came to the conclusion that the provision of a legal option alone was not sufficient in protecting their rights to the freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Many other issues arose from the research, not least

questions about the capacity of schools in Northern Ireland to demonstrate respect for diversity and for minority identities, about the content of RE, the preparation of RE teachers and the readiness of schools for implementing systems in which opt-outs could be administered fairly and without creating unanticipated disadvantage to those taking up the provision.

From the perspective of my other work in the process of attempting to promote change in the way RE is carried out in Northern Ireland, this research project (and its resulting publications) has added a valuable layer of research on the impact of what, in my view, is a structure and practice that is in need of significant reform and revitalisation. It supports the proposal, expressed in many of the other papers discussed here, that a much more inclusive approach is required, based on internationally agreed principles. The focus on the particular needs of minorities now seems to be leading to a further piece of work on the impact of school assemblies for collective worship with some members of the same team.

Concluding Reflections

For part of the title of this retrospective study of my published writing I deliberately highlighted an ambiguity: *Challenging Education in Northern Ireland*. In as much as educational separation is a factor in the complexity of community inter-relationships in the Province, there are indeed many difficult challenges for those who wish, through education, to surmount the divisions and contribute to greater cohesion. But the very process of working against that separation offers a creative and hopeful challenge to the status quo and to the over-cautious separateness that has characterised so many aspects of schooling in the region.

In my writing and related academic work I have attempted to strengthen the case for the positive and forthright role of education as a means towards building a more cohesive, peaceful, fair and shared society. In this process I believe that religious education can play a significant part if it is practised in an open and inclusive manner, though it is not, of course, a panacea any more than is education as a whole.

The focus of my active professional work and my publications has been on Northern Ireland, not because of a fixation on parochial interests but because I believe that this small, still fractured community has much to learn from the experience of intercultural education in the wider world – and also much to give back.

In the introduction I offered a multiple-theoretical framework for the themes that I set out to explore through my published works, suggesting that if they were

employed with care they could help to mitigate against the separateness that has characterised education and so many other aspects of life in this part of the world. These varied theories and approaches seem to me to have a meeting place within the concept of intercultural education and this is why, in my writing, I have continued to propose and explore multicultural or intercultural models in relation to RE and education in general. The rationale for such an educational approach is well summed up by Parekh (2000: 337-8) in his discussion of cultural interaction:

> "A culture cannot appreciate the value of others unless it appreciates the plurality within it; the converse is just as true. … A dialogue between cultures requires that each should open itself up to the influence of and be willing to learn from others, and that in turn requires that it should be self-critical and willing and able to engage in a dialogue with itself."

This perspective seems to me to be particularly pertinent to a conflicted society like Northern Ireland that has struggled to deal constructively with its internal diversity and appears to have similar difficulties with its increasing globally-influenced plurality. My own vision for intercultural education, including a shared approach to RE, is one where that cultural dialogue is employed and valued, and this is what I have tried to represent in the various papers discussed in this study.

There is much more to be done, and this collection of work published so far represents only a comma in the process, not a full stop. Apart from articles accepted but awaiting publication dates, other planned work includes the continuation and completion of quantitative and qualitative research projects on student teachers' engagement with religious and cultural diversity, primary school

teachers' views on diversity in the teaching of RE and a UK-wide project on collective worship in schools. I have also been invited to write an extended article on RE in Northern Ireland as part of a Europe-wide project and I have already commenced work on a book proposing and outlining a shared and inclusive model of RE in the Northern Ireland context which I hope will represent a genuine and practical option for educators in all kinds of schools.

The opportunity of reviewing past work in this study has been an interesting process, enabling me to reflect back on many issues and reinvigorating my commitment to develop these ideas and visions into what I hope will be an education that continues to challenge teachers and learners alike into the future.

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Wright, A. (2007) *Critical Religious Education, Multiculturalism and the Pursuit of Truth*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press

Wright, F. (1987) *Northern Ireland: A Comparative Analysis*, Dublin: Gill & Macmillan

Appendix 1

FULL LIST OF PERSONAL PUBLICATIONS

Arranged chronologically from earliest to most recent.

*Entries in **bold** are included in the submission.*

Richardson, N. (1986) 'Teaching Peace'. In *Search, Vol.9:2 (Winter 1986)*, 6-15

Richardson, N. (1990a) *Religious Education as if E.M.U. Really Mattered: Reflections and Proposals for Northern Ireland's Teachers in the light of a Common Curriculum*. Lisburn: Christian Education Movement (Northern Ireland)

Richardson, N. (1990b) 'Handling the Conflict in Northern Ireland: Education for Peace and Irish Churches'. In *Frieden als Aufgabe der Kirchen III – Loccumer Protokolle 33/90 (June 1990)*, 79-93

Richardson, N. (1992) *Roots, If Not Wings! Where Did EMU Come From?* Coleraine: Centre for the Study of Conflict, University of Ulster

Richardson, N. (1995) *People Who Need People.* Belfast & Dublin: The Churches' Peace Education Programme [School Text]

Richardson, N. & Naylor, Y. (1997) *The Pilgrim, The Island And The Dove: A Story of Saint Columba*. Belfast: The Corrymeela Press [Children's/School Text]

Richardson, N. (ed.) (1998) *A Tapestry of Beliefs: Christian Traditions in Northern Ireland.* Belfast: The Blackstaff Press

Reynolds, M., Richardson, N. & Wylie, K. (1999a) *Guidance on the Content of Personal and Social Education.* Belfast: Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Richardson, N. (1999b) 'Curriculum Examples of Inclusiveness – A Case Study of Education for Mutual Understanding and Cultural Heritage'. In *School Improvement in the UK*. London: The British Council

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Richardson, N. (2005b) *People Who Need People: all kinds of people in all kinds of places* (2nd Edition). Belfast: Churches' Peace Education Programme and Stranmillis University College [school text]

Richardson, N. (2005c) 'Interfaith Education in Northern Ireland: Obstacles and Opportunities'. In Lähnemann, J. (ed.), *Preservation, Development, Reconciliation: Religious Education and Global Responsibility*. Nürnberg: Peace Education Standing Commission / Verlag Peter Athmann

Nelson, J. & Richardson, N. (2005) *Local People, Global Faiths, Book 1: Sikhs, Jews & Hindus in Northern Ireland*. Newtownards: Colourpoint Educational [school text]

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Richardson, N. (2008a) 'Faith Schooling: Implications for Teacher Educators – a Perspective from Northern Ireland'. In *Journal of Beliefs & Values 29:1*, April 2008, 1-10

Richardson, N. (2008b) 'The Challenge of the New: Education, Religion and Citizenship in a Traditional and Conflicted Society – a case study of Northern Ireland'. In Lähnemann, J. & Schreiner, P. (eds.), ***Interreligious and Values Education in Europe*****. Münster, Germany: Comenius-Institut & Peace Education Standing Commission of Religions for Peace**

Richardson, N. (2008c) 'Education for Religious Tolerance: the Impossible Dream?' In Patalon, M. (ed.), ***Tolerance and Education – Studia Kulturowa 2/2008*****: 39-53. Pedagogical Institute, University of Gdansk, Poland. [web published: http://studia.kulturowe.ug.gda.pl/sk-2.pdf]**

Richardson, N. (2008d*) '*Laying the Foundations: Citizenship in the Primary School'. In Jeffers, G. & O'Connor, U., ***Education for Citizenship and Diversity in Irish Contexts*****. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration**

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Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N., Chiba, Y. (2010) ***Opting Out of Religious Education – the views of young people from minority belief backgrounds*****. Queen's University Belfast [co-authored research report]**

Richardson, N. & Gallagher, T. (eds.) (2011a) ***Education for Diversity and Mutual Understanding: the Experience of Northern Ireland.*** **Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang AG**

Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N., Chiba, Y. (2011) 'Religious Education and Religious Liberty: Opt-outs and Young People's Sense of Belonging'. In Henin-Hunter, M. (ed.), ***Law, Religious Freedoms and Education in Europe*****. London: Ashgate**

Richardson, N. (2011b) 'Media and Religious Conflict in Northern Ireland: An Educational Perspective'. In Pirner, M., Lähnemann, J. & Haußmann, W. (eds.) ***Medien-Macht und Religionen: Herausforderung für interkulturelle.*** **Berlin: EB-Verlag**

Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N., Chiba, Y. (2012) 'Religion, Human Rights Law, and "Opting Out" of Religious Education'. In Woodhead, L. & Catto, R. (eds.), ***Religion and Change in Modern Britain.*** **London: Routledge**

Niens, U., Mawhinney, A., Richardson, N., Chiba, Y. (forthcoming) 'Acculturation and religion in schools: The Views of Young People from Minority Belief Backgrounds'. In *British Educational Research Journal* (at press)

Richardson, N., Niens, U., Mawhinney, A., Chiba, Y. (forthcoming) 'Opting out or opting in? Conscience clauses, minority belief communities and the possibility of inclusive Religious Education in Northern Ireland'. In *British Journal of Religious Education*

Appendix 2

STATEMENTS FROM COLLABORATING AUTHORS

On the following pages in the order below, according to the date of publication.

James Nelson, Stranmillis University College, Belfast

Dr. Alison Mawhinney, University of Bangor, North Wales

Dr. Ulrike Niens, Queen's University Belfast

Dr. Yuko Chiba, Tokyo, Japan (formerly Queen's University Belfast)

Professor Tony Gallagher, Queen's University Belfast

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21 August 2012

To whom it may concern:

As a co-author with Norman Richardson for the book entitled 'Education for Diversity and Mutual Understanding' (Peter Lang, 2011), I am writing to verify my role in the collaboration.

Norman and I worked together to develop the plan for the volume, but Norman was largely responsible for follow up discussions with prospective chapter authors and in dealing with the draft chapters as they were submitted. In addition, Norman wrote half the chapters in the volume himself.

Although this was a co-authored book, I am happy to confirm that Norman undertook most of the work associated with the volume. My estimate would be that the division of work between us was approximately as follows:

- Norman Richardson: 85%
- Tony Gallagher: 15%

Yours sincerely

Professor Tony Gallagher
Pro-Vice-Chancellor
Academic Planning, Staffing and External Relations

STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

Friday, 17 August 2012

To whom it may concern:

As co-author with Norman Richardson for the article entitled "Studying Religion in a Divided Society" published in *Academic Exchange Quarterly* vol 8:2 p96-100, I am writing to verify my role in this collaboration.

The article was jointly written and the division of work was roughly as follows:

James Nelson (co-author) approximately 50%

Norman Richardson (co-author) approximately 50%

Yours sincerely,

James H Nelson

Lecturer in Religious Education, Stranmillis University College, Belfast

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E-mail: a.mawhinney@bangor.ac.uk

To whom it may concern

I am writing to verify my role as a co-author with Norman Richardson for the following report:

Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N. & Chiba, Y. (2010) *Opting Out of Religious Education – the views of young people from minority belief backgrounds*. Queen's University Belfast

The report was jointly written and the division of work was roughly as follows:

Alison Mawhinney (co-author) approximately 25%
Ulrike Niens (co-author) approximately 25%
Yuko Chiba (co-author) approximately 25%
Norman Richardson (co-author) approximately 25%

I am also writing to verify my role as a co-author with Norman Richardson for the following articles:

Mawhinney A. & Niens U., Richardson N., Chiba Y. (2011) 'Religious Education and Religious Liberty: Opt-outs and Young People's Sense of Belonging'. In Henin-Hunter, M., Law, *Religious Freedoms and Education in Europe*. London: Ashgate

Mawhinney A. & Niens U., Richardson N., Chiba Y. (2012) 'Religion, Human Rights Law, and 'Opting Out' of Religious Education'. In Woodhead, L. & Catto, R. *Religion and Change in Modern Britain*. London: Routledge.

These articles were jointly written and the division of work was roughly as follows:

Alison Mawhinney (co-author) approximately 25%
Ulrike Niens (co-author) approximately 25%
Yuko Chiba (co-author) approximately 25%
Norman Richardson (co-author) approximately 25%

Yours sincerely,

Dr Alison Mawhinney

Lecturer in Law

Bangor Law School

Bangor University

Queen's University Belfast

22 August 2012

To whom it may concern

I am writing to verify my role as a co-author with Norman Richardson for the following report:

Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N. & Chiba, Y. (2010) *Opting Out of Religious Education – the views of young people from minority belief backgrounds*. Queen's University Belfast

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Yuko Chiba (co-author) approximately 25%
Norman Richardson (co-author) approximately 25%

Yours sincerely,

U. Niens

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17 August 2012

To whom it may concern

I am writing to verify my role as a co-author with Norman Richardson for the following report:

> Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N. & Chiba, Y. (2010) *Opting Out of Religious Education – the views of young people from minority belief backgrounds*. Queen's University Belfast

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Ulrike Niens (co-author) approximately 25%
Yuko Chiba (co-author) approximately 25%
Norman Richardson (co-author) approximately 25%

Yours sincerely,

Yuko Chiba