

The Sociology community are mourning our friend, mentor and colleague, Gary Bouma, who died unexpectedly on 19 August, 2021.

Gary's massive academic legacy includes over 30 books and 360 articles—with many still forthcoming. His most recent book, authored by Andrew Singleton, Anna Halafoff, Mary Lou Rasmussen and Gary, on *Freedoms, Faiths and Futures: Teenage Australians on Religion, Sexuality and Diversity*, arising from an ARC Discovery Project, was published in April this year. As well as landmark works on the sociology of Australian religion, including *Australian Soul*, he reshaped Australian understanding of religion in numerous areas including interreligious understanding, human rights, religion and youth, education and public policy. His work reached far beyond the academy, with notable policy work including the Human Rights Commission's 2011 inquiry into Freedom of Religion and Belief in 21st Century Australia; chairing the Board of Directors for The Parliament of the World's Religions in 2009; and numerous interventions in public debate in areas such as religious diversity, gender and sexuality, Islamophobia and the place of religion in schools.

Gary was a member of a number of international and national associations of sociology as well as the study of religion. Gary's generosity to the discipline of sociology, to TASA and associations such as the Australian Association for the Study of Religion was reflected in his boundless support for younger scholars, and perennial enthusiasm to make new discoveries and engage with new perspectives. TASA recognized his significant contributions by awarding him with the Distinguished Service to Australian Sociology Award in 2013. Gary's acceptance speech can be viewed [here](#).

Gary came to Australia in 1979, joining Monash University, where he remained for the next 42 years, becoming Emeritus Professor in 2008, after serving in numerous roles including Professor of Sociology, DVC Research, and Head of School. In 2005, he was appointed UNESCO Chair in Inter-Cultural and Inter-Religious Relations. He led the Australian node of the University of Ottawa-based Religion and Diversity Project, and was a leading figure in other distinguished national and international research collaborations. In 2013, he was awarded AM for services to Sociology, to interreligious relations and to the Anglican Church of Australia.

Alongside his towering profile in the sociology of religion, Gary was an ordained minister in the Anglican church, and at the time of his death was Honorary Assistant Priest at St Johns, East Malvern.

Gary was an active supporter to TASA through the journal and conferences, and a number of TASA members were very close colleagues and friends. He will be deeply missed and warmly remembered.

*I would like to thank the below Executive of the AASR who shared a version of this tribute with TASA so that we could share it with our members.*

*With thanks to*

*Marion Maddox, AASR Past President*

*Anna Halafoff, AASR President*

*Kath McPhillips, AASR Vice-President*

A requiem eucharist for Gary will be held on Thursday 26 August at 11 am, livestreamed through [this link](#).

Alphia Possamai-Inesedy, President TASA