

MEDIA, FAITH AND BELONGING

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**The
Faith
& Belief
Forum**

Formerly 3FF (Three Faiths Forum)



About the series

This briefing paper is one of a series on faith, belief and belonging in London. The papers are published jointly by The Faith & Belief Forum (formerly 3FF) and the Department of Psychosocial Studies, Birkbeck, University of London. Our thanks to all the roundtable participants whose input enriched these papers, and to Dangoor Education for the grant which makes this series possible.

About the authors

The Faith & Belief Forum (formerly 3FF) has worked tirelessly for over 20 years to build good relations between people of all faiths and beliefs, and to create a society where difference is celebrated. We create spaces in schools, universities, workplaces and the wider community where people can engage with questions of belief and identity and meet people different from themselves. Enabling people to learn from each other in this way is often the most effective way to tackle ignorance and challenge stereotypes – and create understanding and trust between people. For more information, see faithbeliefforum.org.

The Department of Psychosocial Studies, Birkbeck, University of London (BDPS) was founded in 2000 and aims to investigate a wide range of contemporary social, political and personal concerns. The Department is unique in its interdisciplinary focus and draws together academics and clinicians from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds to think together about the relation between social and psychic life. For more information, see www.bbk.ac.uk/psychosocial/about-us. Briefings on Faith, Belief and Belonging are supported by a grant from Dangoor Education (dangooreducation.com).

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INTRODUCTION

A thick, hand-drawn style orange line starts from the top left, curves down and to the right, then loops back to the left, forming a large, open circle-like shape that partially frames the title.

This briefing paper is one of a series on faith, belief and belonging in London. In May and June 2018, The Faith & Belief Forum and the Department of Psychosocial Studies, Birkbeck, University of London hosted a series of roundtables about barriers to belonging for Londoners from different faiths and beliefs. The roundtables brought together local organisations, academics and policy experts 1) to understand better the issues and their impact on local communities, and 2) to share good practice for local initiatives working for social inclusion and belonging. The presentations in the roundtables were shared as podcasts on the Faith & Belief Forum website.¹ The comments and discussion of the roundtables have informed this series.

On 26 June 2018, 28 local organisations, academics and policy experts gathered to discuss how the media creates barriers for Londoners with different faiths and beliefs, and to share examples of religious groups which engage creatively and effectively with media. The discussion on the day addressed important questions about the role of both traditional and social media in belonging hate crime, faith and belonging:

- What are dominant media representations of religion and faith groups in traditional and social media?
- What impact do media representations of religion have on belonging for local communities, especially for marginalised groups?
- How do faith groups and local communities engage with media as consumers and creators of media content?
- Which local projects and initiatives are engaging positively with media?
- How do local projects represent themselves using traditional and social media? How do they share and promote their own story?

The roundtable included presentations from academics and community organisations. In this paper, their comments will be referenced by mentioning their full names. Audio of the presentations from the roundtable can be accessed on the Faith & Belief Forum website.¹

Presenters and respondents from the roundtable who are mentioned in this paper include:

- Abby Day, Professor of Race, Faith and Culture, Department of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London
- Alex Fenton, Director of Public Affairs to Rabbi Janner-Klausner, Reform Judaism
- Anwar Akhtar, Founder and Director, The Samosa
- Emily Kasriel, Head of Editorial Partnerships and Special Projects, BBC World Service Group
- Jagbir Jhutti-Johal, Senior Lecturer in Sikh Studies, University of Birmingham
- Jasveer Singh and Sukhvinder Singh, Sikh Press Association
- Keith Kahn-Harris, Senior Lecturer, Leo Baeck College
- Remona Aly, Journalist and Commentator

In this paper we discuss the concept of belonging (see ***what is belonging?***) and how it relates to media coverage of religion. Traditional and social media play a crucial role in giving people from different faiths and beliefs a sense of belonging in London. This paper highlights examples of media coverage which increase social tension and dampen a sense of belonging, and it shares case studies of positive engagement between local faith communities and traditional and social media.



What is belonging?²



Belonging is where 'being' meets 'longing'. We want to be fully ourselves and we want to be accepted by others around us.



Belonging affects everyone. Whether we were born in London or arrived yesterday, we all struggle to belong.



Our sense of belonging is changing. We as human beings are changing and our world is changing around us. In London neighbourhoods change as many people move in and out, and our society changes as technology and the environment changes.



We belong to many places and groups at once. We belong to locations, like a nation, a city or a neighbourhood and we may belong to many different groups at once in our professional and social lives.



Our sense of belonging works on multiple levels. Feeling welcome in our community can affect how we feel about our city or our country. A message that we are not welcome from one person can affect how we feel accepted in our city.



Our sense of belonging may not match others' ideas about us. We may feel that we belong, but other people may tell us that we do not belong. People may look at us and assume that we belong, but we may feel isolated and unwelcome.



Our sense of belonging is affected by systems as well as people. Deprivation and discrimination have important influences. If we do not have equal access to services and opportunities which others do, our sense of belonging is limited.



We all decide who belongs, but some people have more power to extend belonging than others. Within groups, the power to decide who belongs is shared between members, yet often a few people have the most power to include or exclude.



How do faith and belief relate to belonging?

We use the term ‘faith and belief’ as an aspect of people’s identity, including all religious and non-religious beliefs.³ Most scholars agree that faith and belief may contribute to both belonging and exclusion.⁴ For many Londoners, their faith or belief provides a sense of belonging and is a source of wellbeing. At times local faith and belief groups may contribute to exclusion and social division, yet people motivated by their diverse faiths and beliefs also make important contributions to creating a sense of belonging for their neighbours.

Research by the Faith & Belief Forum has identified four ways that local faith and belief groups extend and enhance a sense of belonging to Londoners of all faiths and beliefs.⁵ These groups improve access for isolated people to life-enhancing services. They alleviate deprivation by opening pathways to employment and housing, and by addressing the causes of poverty. They reduce social tension by connecting neighbours from different backgrounds. They extend a warm welcome to people arriving from other parts of the UK and from other countries.

TELLING THE STORY: HOW OUR MEDIA INFLUENCES RELIGION AND BELONGING

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This section describes how media affects local faith and belief groups and influences our shared sense of belonging. It discusses three themes that emerged from the roundtable. We begin by defining what we mean when we use the concepts ‘media’ and ‘religion’. We then explain how media represents religion through its framing and priorities. Next, we discuss how media affects faith and belief groups and influences our sense of belonging. In the final section, we will focus on how faith and belief groups engage with and use media.

Defining media and religion

Similar to the concept of ‘belonging’ above, media and religion are concepts that are complex and multifaceted. In the roundtable, Abby Day stressed the importance of asking ourselves what we mean when we use concepts such as ‘media’ and ‘religion’. What kind of media are we talking about? What do we mean by religion? Which religious groups are we talking about? Not only are these questions important to get a sense of what and who we are talking about, but they help us to understand the relationship between ‘media’ and ‘religion’, and their influence on our sense of belonging.

While the term ‘media’ is often used to describe traditional forms of media, such as newspapers, television and radio, recent decades have seen the growth of new forms of media and social media. People increasingly access news and information through social media feeds (such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube),

podcasts, TV documentaries and films. The word ‘media’ is plural because it includes many different communication platforms. Traditional and social media are different channels of communication, but they also overlap. For example, traditional media outlets share their stories through social media platforms, and popular items on social media, especially videos, are regularly shared or broadcast by traditional media outlets.

Just as there is not *one* media, nor is there *one* understanding of religion. Both Abby Day and Keith Kahn-Harris emphasised that many of the problems of media coverage about religion come from simplifying religion. There are many different religious groups and much diversity *within* members of the same group. Members of faith communities practice their religions in different ways, and other identities, such as gender, ethnicity, class and sexuality, can also impact their experience of faith and influence the story they want to tell about themselves.⁶ This diversity means that people from faith groups are represented and affected by media coverage in different ways. For more information on faith/belief and multiple identities, see our paper on *Faith, Belief and Inclusion*.⁷

Telling the story: How media represents religion

Our media plays a crucial part in telling the story about religion. For most people in Western countries, the media – particularly newspapers, television and social media – is their primary source of information about religion.⁸ The media also influences how religions change because it shapes how religious ideas, practices and beliefs are communicated and challenged.⁹

For local faith and belief groups, the media provides both opportunities and challenges. The media can make it possible for local groups to communicate directly with their members and others about what they stand for, helping them to spread their ideas and beliefs. In the process, marginal voices within a faith or belief group can be heard and seen where they might otherwise be ignored or silenced by group leaders. The media also offers valuable and creative avenues for people to understand religion by learning about the religious and cultural practices of others.

The media also poses problems for local faith and belief groups. Roundtable participants discussed at length three problems about media representations of religion: simplistic, sensationalist and inaccurate stories.

The formats of most media content – news reports, newspaper articles and tweets – lend themselves to telling a story quickly and simply. This often reduces complex people and groups to simplistic characters and common tropes. The nuance and complexity of lived faith thus becomes reduced to good or bad religion, with characters as heroes or villains. In the roundtable, Keith Kahn-Harris raised questions about what kind of media stories about Jews are being told. While many stories focus on anti-Semitism, Israel and questions about Jewish identity, very few items discuss cultural production and rituals of Jewish life. Others shared similar experiences of media stories about their faith or belief groups.



Most traditional media channels are driven by consumers who buy, watch or click, and by advertisers who measure success by the number of views. Sensationalist and negative stories are prioritised by this model of media, as exemplified by the maxim, ‘if it bleeds, it leads.’ This focus on the extraordinary makes it easy to overlook the everyday lives of religious people in favour of stories of scandal, extremism, violence or unusual behaviour. Taken together, these stories promote and reinforce negative stereotypes of religious groups. It is not surprising that studies have found rising negative attitudes toward religion (and particularly towards Muslims) as a result of this negative and sensationalist coverage.¹⁰

Many stories about religion are factually inaccurate, as demonstrated by the many retractions that newspapers and TV news shows have been forced to make after complaints.¹¹ Due to time constraints and limited resources, journalists often select

images to accompany news stories which are inaccurate. For example, a Times article in 2018 used the image of a Muslim young person reading religious texts to illustrate a story about the Head of Ofsted’s claims about extremism in schools. This inaccurate image was changed after a complaint.¹² In the roundtable,

Our media’s focus on the extraordinary overlooks the everyday lives of religious people in favour of stories of scandal, extremism, violence

Keith Kahn-Harris gave another example of how media images affect how Jewish communities are represented by focusing on the most visibly religious (see ***how media images represent religion***).



How media images represent religion

Both traditional and social media rely on images to illustrate stories. Often these images can misrepresent faith or belief groups through simplistic or stereotypical depictions. Keith Kahn-Harris shared an example from his research about media representations in the Jewish community.¹³ He found the same stock image of two Orthodox men taken in North London used in dozens of media article from different newspapers about the Jewish community. The image used was taken from behind, creating an impression of shadowy figures which are not very human. He also found other stock images of the same men taken from the front and smiling which were not used in these articles. These images have two impacts on representation. First, they limit the diverse Jewish community to the most 'visibly' religious. Second, they create an otherness and distance, which emphasises a message that the Jewish community is somehow different and unapproachable. This example illustrates the importance of making and sharing images which show the diversity within faith and belief groups.

One cause of inaccurate media stories is the lack of religious literacy by journalists, an issue raised by the 2015 *Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life*.¹⁴ Several roundtable participants suggested that the lack of diversity amongst journalists contributes to this problem. A 2016 study of British journalists found that less than 10% were ethnic minorities, and most religious groups were underrepresented compared to their share of the population (Christians 31.6%, Hindus 0.4% and Muslims 0.4%).¹⁵ This lack of diversity means that inaccuracies about religious and ethnic minority groups are more likely to go unchallenged. In the

The lack of diversity amongst British journalists means that inaccuracies about religious and ethnic minority groups are more likely to go unchallenged.

roundtable, Jagbir Jhutti-Johal noted that visible religious minority journalists reading the news are rare. For example, when Muslim journalist Fatima Manji read the evening news for Channel 4 whilst wearing a hijab, it sparked complaints to the television regulator OFCOM. These

complaints were notably encouraged by a journalist for the *Sun*, who argued that Muslims should not be allowed to read news about terror attacks.¹⁶ This example demonstrates both the problem of traditional media coverage of religion and how rare it is that religious minorities are the tellers rather than the subjects of media stories.

What the story tells us: How media affects belonging

Media coverage provides more than information about religion and faith and belief groups. It tells us who belongs, which deeply affects the image we have of ourselves and others. The issues of simplicity, sensationalism and inaccuracy in media coverage of religion are not simply a barrier to understanding religion in the UK. They have strong negative effects on belonging for people with different faiths and beliefs (see *media language affects how religion is represented*).

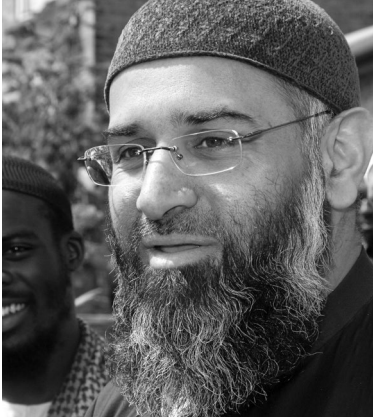


Media language affects how religion is represented

Roundtable participants shared many examples of how media language about religion affects belonging. When religious identity is mentioned in connection with negative news stories, this creates a negative association for all people from that group. For example, the title 'Muslim' is often attached to negative headlines, such as a 2018 headline from ITV News that inaccurately referred to 'Muslim sex gangs' (the headline was later changed after a complaint).²⁷ In other cases, inaccurate language is used about faith or belief groups. Jasveer Singh and Sukhvinder Singh reported that the Sikh holiday of Vaisakhi is often called the 'Sikh New Year', and places of worship are often called 'Sikh Temples' instead of their proper title of gurdwara.²⁸ These subtle differences in language restrict the ability for some groups to speak for themselves by defining them based on the practices of other groups. Both of these problems of language illustrate the wider issue journalists' religious illiteracy. Inaccurate language contribute subtly yet powerfully to the public's stereotypes about faith and belief groups.

The 2015 CORAB report mentioned earlier documented how media coverage of religion has led to negative consequences for local faith and belief groups. Almost everyone who gave testimony to the commission expressed concern about the media's negative coverage of religion. Some also gave evidence of media coverage biased in favour of Christianity.¹⁷ When stories about religion are simplistic, sensationalist and inaccurate, the subjects of those stories may feel personally attacked. Abby Day reported to the roundtable that this has created a sense of anger at being misrepresented, and a sense of helplessness as media is seen as 'a large machine beyond our ability to influence'. The message received by many faith and belief groups is that they are misunderstood, different and problematic.

Another result of poor media representation of religion is increased tension and conflict within local communities. Stories about violence, terrorism and hate crime spread suspicion and fear. They also contain exclusionary messages, which offers new opportunities to repeat and amplify these messages. According to the CORAB report, 'What some media items lack in complexity they make up for in polemical clarity and in the provision of a clear, sometimes demonised portrayal of the other and an idealised depiction of the self'.¹⁸ By associating religion (and particularly Islam) with extreme views and giving a platform to 'representatives' who do not actually speak on behalf of most people in a faith group, the media can reinforce stereotypes and foster division between groups (see ***the media's role in creating Anjem Choudary and Tommy Robinson***).



The media's role in creating Anjem Choudary and Tommy Robinson

At the roundtable, Anwar Akhtar presented a case study illustrating how traditional media has increased tension and division between communities. Anjem Choudary, the founder of the banned extremist group Islam4UK (formerly Al-Muhajiroun), was able to garner huge media coverage for his tiny group of less than 100 members by controversial acts such as demonstrating at the funerals of British army soldiers who were killed in Iraq.¹⁹ His profile was raised through numerous appearances on nightly news programmes, including an interview on BBC's *Newsnight*.²⁰ Tommy Robinson, who founded the English Defence League, said that he was motivated by Anjem Choudary's popularity to start his own demonstrations against Islam in Britain. Robinson was then given his own interview on *Newsnight*, contributing to his celebrity and helping to grow his far-right movement.²¹ This movement in turn directly inspired the 2017 attack on the Finsbury Park mosque.²² This example of 'celebritisation' of extreme voices shows the media's power to promote marginal yet controversial figures who claim to speak on behalf of groups. It also demonstrates the media's power to spread negative messages about religion which affect the sense of belonging of entire communities.

Media coverage of religion also impacts hate crime, a major barrier to belonging. Spikes in hate crime accompany negative media stories about faith and belief groups. In the weeks following Boris Johnson's 2018 op-ed comparing veiled Muslim women to 'letterboxes' and media coverage of his comments, there was a sharp rise in reported hate crimes against Muslim women. Some people used the actual language of the article in attacks on women the street.²³ In another example, intense media focus on alleged and actual antisemitism in the Labour Party is considered by the Jewish charity Community Security Trust (CST) to be one factor behind the increase in reported anti-Jewish hate crime in 2017.²⁴

Other researchers have found that social media is often used to spread stories about religious hate crimes, which has a negative impact on those who are affected. According to their research, many victims express a fear that the hate they experience online will also happen offline.²⁵ More information about hate crime, faith and belonging is available in our recent report on the subject.²⁶

In this section, we have seen how media coverage of religion can have negative effects on belonging for local faith and belief groups. Through its many channels and forms, the media tells stories about religion. When these stories are inaccurate, sensationalised or simplistic, negative stereotypes about faith and belief groups are reinforced, spreading suspicion, fear and communal violence in our communities. In the next section, we will discuss how people have responded to these challenges by changing the story about religion.



CHANGING THE STORY



Our media tells an influential story about our society, signalling who belongs and who doesn't. This story, communicated through news broadcasts, newspapers and social media feeds, deeply affects the image we have of ourselves and of others. When this powerful story reinforces a message that certain people do not belong, it stokes suspicion and encourages division between people with different faiths and beliefs. We have seen the bad influences of this story in our local communities: increasingly negative attitudes about faith and belief groups and a disturbing rise in religious hate crime.

In the roundtable, participants discussed how different people are working effectively to change the story of division into a story of belonging. This section describes how journalists, academics, community organisations and faith or belief groups are working to change the story by challenging inaccurate stories, telling their own stories and working together to craft a shared story.

Challenging inaccurate and negative stories

As we saw in the previous section, inaccurate and negative stories about religion are common. Roundtable participants shared numerous examples of effective responses. When a story is inaccurate, some have responded by making complaints to media regulator OFCOM or press regulator IPSO.²⁹ Organisation such as the **Centre for Media Monitoring** and the **Sikh Press Association** monitor media coverage, keeping a record of media corrections and

responding to inaccuracies. In the roundtable, Abby Day pointed out that only a few or even one effective complaint is enough to challenge and change an inaccurate story.

As a result of complaints, many corrections of inaccurate coverage have been printed or broadcast. For example, the Daily Star Sunday was forced to print that its headline, 'UK mosques fundraising for terror', was 'significantly misleading' and that UK mosques were in reality 'not involved in any way'. Another inaccurate headline that was acknowledged as misleading was the Sun's infamous headline '1 in 5 Brit Muslims' sympathy for jihadis'.³⁰ Some have also made legal challenges against IPSO when its rulings on press coverage have been inaccurate.³¹ These legal complaints are expensive and time-consuming, but the hope is that they can result in better practices in how traditional media platforms cover religion.



Another way to respond to inaccurate or negative stories is by sharing positive stories. Journalists have at times given nuanced coverage to a negative story, including positive responses by faith groups. For example, after the 2017 attack on the Finsbury Park mosque, there were many positive media stories about how the mosque's imam protected the attacker from harm.³² There were also stories about public displays of solidarity with the mosque by people from different faiths and beliefs.³³ These types of stories challenge the narrative of faith and belief groups as suspicious by demonstrating how they contribute to the betterment of their communities.

Religious groups and individuals telling their own stories

Another effective way to change the story is for religious individuals and groups to tell their own story instead of being represented by others. Abby Day asked, 'instead of just responding, can we be the creators of our story?' Places like the **Religion Media Centre**³⁴ train people to engage with media, including how to build positive relationships with journalists who are interested in stories about religion. Abby Day stressed the importance of knowing those journalists who are interested in the work of faith and belief groups are doing and providing them with the information they need to write good stories. The Religion Media Centre also maintains a list of experts in different aspects of religion so that journalists may find knowledgeable people to contact about a specific subject.

An important avenue for telling stories is social media, and many groups have taken the opportunity to share stories of their community work. Faith and belief groups have shared numerous positive stories on social media, such as demonstrating the work of local groups in raising money for charity and offering hospitality. Groups like the **Sikh Press Association**, **Near Neighbours**, **Mitzvah Day**³⁵, **Buddhist Action Month**³⁶, Islamic Societies' **Charity Week**³⁷ and **Open Iftar**³⁸ share examples of local groups helping out their communities.

Another avenue for changing the story is through telling nuanced and engaging stories about faith and belief groups. Both Abby Day and Keith Kahn-Harris mentioned the importance of looking beyond the evening news to other forms of media that can be used to express everyday stories of religious life. Social media has created new opportunities to tell complex stories to wider

audiences. In the roundtable, Anwar Akhtar shared how *The Samosa* has created nuanced depictions of the Muslim community through arts and media engagement training for young people.³⁹ For example, the Samosa worked with journalism students at the University of East London

Social media has created new opportunities to tell engaging and nuanced stories about faith groups to wider audiences

to develop a YouTube film sharing diverse perspectives within the Muslim community about Prevent, the government's controversial counter-radicalisation strategy.⁴⁰

Increasing the number of journalists from religious and ethnic minorities also helps to change the story. In the roundtable, journalist Remona Aly described her experience that whenever she writes or gives interviews about the everyday aspects of British Muslims lives – such as relationships, food, literature and music – she tells a human story about religion which shows how Muslims fit into British society. More initiatives which mentor and encourage young journalists from different faith backgrounds are needed. For example, 17-year-old British Muslim Bushra Dunne responded proactively to negative coverage of minority groups (in particular Muslim women) by starting an effective youth-led campaign called *Stand Up Stand Out*⁴¹ to ensure fairer representation.

Deepening solidarity through shared stories

Another way to change the story is to challenge dominant media narratives of groups locked in conflict with each other. Emily Kasriel shared about solutions-focused journalism, where journalists focus not only on conflicts in society, but on how local communities are addressing these problems effectively. The BBC project **Crossing Divides** shines a light on community solutions with engaging content created for both traditional and social media.⁴² For example, visual and written stories of local people from Lincoln supporting the construction of a mosque⁴³ and neighbours having productive conversations about Brexit⁴⁴ show how people from different backgrounds are working together.

Roundtable participants shared numerous examples of how faith and belief groups working together can tell a better story about belonging. Alex Fenton shared how his Reform Jewish organisation has submitted complaints about inaccurate media coverage of other faith groups. Remona Aly gave the example of a campaign she ran with university students called **Missing Page** to highlight examples of Jewish-Muslim solidarity.⁴⁵ The **Muju Crew** has created catchy Facebook videos about Jewish-Muslim relations using humour and creativity⁴⁶. Everyday people also participate in this solidarity through social media campaigns such as **I'll Ride with You** in response to attacks against Muslims.⁴⁷ These public displays of solidarity spread messages of belonging far and wide.





CONCLUSION



In this paper, we have seen how our media has been used both to dampen and to increase belonging in local communities. Roundtable participants stressed that different people have different responsibilities in creating a better story about religion. Journalists and editors need to improve their religious literacy and engagement with local faith and belief groups to develop accurate and nuanced stories. Newsrooms and media companies need to provide better access to religious and ethnic minority journalists, and more spaces for faith and belief groups to represent themselves. Government regulators need to improve their regulation and enforcement for media companies which regularly print false stories. Organisations need to train more local faith and belief groups and individuals to share their own stories and understand better how the media works. On an individual level, all of us have the opportunity to change the media story about religion. We can make complaints about inaccurate stories. We can use our own social media feeds to share stories of understanding, solidarity and belonging.

Media both reflects and shapes religion in our rapidly-changing world. Working together, we can ensure that our media more accurately reflects the reality of the everyday lives of religious people, challenges negative and inaccurate stereotypes, promotes curiosity and builds empathy and connection in our communities.

Endnotes

- ¹ For the roundtable podcast, see <https://faithbeliefforum.org/podcast-roundtable-on-the-role-of-the-media-in-faith-belief-and-belonging-in-london/>.
- ² These concepts are drawn from academic research on belonging. See **Antonsich, M.** (2010), Searching for belonging – an analytical framework. *Geography Compass*, 4(6), 644–659, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2009.00317.x>; **Nyhagen, L.** (2018). Citizenship, Religion, Gender and the Politics of Belonging: A Case Study of White, Middle-class Christian Men in the East Midlands, United Kingdom. *Culture and Religion*, 19(3): pp. 253–272; **Probyn, E.** (1996), *Outside Belongings*. London and New York: Routledge; Taylor, H. (2015). *Refugees and the Meaning of Home: Longing and Daily Life in London*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK; and **Yuval-Davis, N.** (2015). Power, Intersectionality and the Politics of Belonging. Aalborg: FREIA - Center for Gender Research, <https://doi.org/10.5278/freia.58024502>.
- ³ We use the term ‘faith and belief’ to refer to the protected characteristic of ‘religion and belief’ in the Equality Act 2010. For a list of protected characteristics, see **UK Government** (2017), *The Equality Act 2010*: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
- ⁴ See findings of the **Religion and Society Research Programme**, including the 2013 report ‘Religious discrimination in Britain: What difference does a decade make?’: www.religionandsociety.org.uk/research_findings/featured_findings/religious_discrimination_in_britain_what_difference_does_a_decade_make. For the role of religion in violence and peace, see **Mira** (2015), ‘The Paradoxical Role of Religion and Spirituality in Conflict, Peacebuilding and Governance’: www.politics.ox.ac.uk/cis/cis-research-the-paradoxical-role-of-religion-and-spirituality-in-conflict-peacebuilding-and-governance.html
- ⁵ This research can be found in the 2017 **Faith & Belief Forum** report on ‘Faith, Belief and Belonging’, <https://faithbeliefforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Faith-Belief-and-Belonging-Briefing-Paper.pdf>
- ⁶ **Lövheim, M.** (2011). The Mediatization of Religion – A Critical Appraisal. *Culture and Religion*, 12:02, 153–166.
- ⁷ The paper on ‘Faith, Belief and Inclusion’ can be found at faithbeliefforum.org/report.
- ⁸ **Hjarvard, S.** (2008). The Mediatization of Religion: a Theory of the Media as Agents of Religious Change. *Northern Lights*, 6(1), p. 9–26; **Poole, E.** (2002). *Reporting Islam: Media Representations of British Muslims*. London: IB Taurus.
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- ¹⁰ See **University of Cambridge** (2016). Media Fuelling Rising Hostility towards Muslims in Britain, <https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/media-fuelling-rising-hostility-towards-muslims-in-britain>; **Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK, Cardiff University** (2019), *The Role of the Media*, <https://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/islamukcentre/rera/online-teaching-resources/muslims-in-britain-online-course/module-4-contemporary-debates/the-role-of-the-media/>; special issue of the journal *Religions* on ‘Anti Muslim Racism and the Media’, https://www.mdpi.com/journal/religions/special_issues/-media.
- ¹¹ The **Centre for Media Monitoring** has documented over 100 corrections of stories about Muslims by mainstream media, cfmm.org.uk.
- ¹² **Centre for Media Monitoring** (2018), cfmm.org.uk/corrections/the-times-swaps-image-of-religious-texts
- ¹³ **Kahn-Harris, K.** (2018). Searching for the Real Jews, *Boundless*, <https://unbound.com/boundless/2018/05/09/searching-for-the-real-jews/>
- ¹⁴ **Butler-Sloss, E.** et al. (2015). Report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life’, p.46, <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/publications/reports/report-of-the-commission-on-religion-and-belief-in-british-public-life>
- ¹⁵ **Thurman, N.** (2016), *Does British Journalism Have a Diversity Problem?* City University, London; Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4lqRx4A4qQpjakl1UEd5WEFIRGc/view?pref=2&pli=1>

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