Unsafe Gods
Security, secularism and schooling
by Lynn Davies


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"Lynn Davies has written an important book that is filled with crucial theoretical insights and very real examples that can help us find our way in these troubled times. It gives us hope for a better future." Michael W. Apple, John Bascom Professor of Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Unsafe Gods makes the compelling argument that religion can be complicit in conflict and that a new secularism is vital to foster security. Using insights from complexity science, it shows how dynamic secularism can be used to accommodate diverse faiths and beliefs within worldly politics.

Exploration of the interplay of religion and education in the context of security and notions of safe schools offers new understandings of how religions learn – or instead remain frozen accidents that hinder societies from adapting to change. The book shows how turbulence and amplification underscore the necessity for an education that is critical even of patriarchal religious texts and that recognizes the power of satire and humour.

Lynn Davies follows her groundbreaking work on education and extremism to draw on work in mentoring those at risk of radicalization and consider how the radicalized learn and unlearn their behaviours. She presents international examples to show how a foundation in secular rights and freedoms can enable young people to develop the skills and networks to create change without turning to violence.

Lynn Davies is Emeritus Professor of International Education in the Centre for International Education and Research of the School of Education at the University of Birmingham

"...conveys the turbulence, bursts of hope, historical turns, and technical revolutions of our times."
Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, newspaper columnist

"Equipped with an armada of cases (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, Palestine-Israel, Kosovo, Angola and many more), Lynn Davies takes the reader on a near-dizzying postmodern/postcolonial journey ... in which she searches for the nexus of conflict, security, religion, secularism and education... the work is invaluable: a tour de force." Professor Emerita Sondra Hale, Anthropology and Gender Studies, UCLA

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