

## SWRC Newsletter No 31 - November 1988

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# SWRC Newsletter

No 31 November 1988 Editor: Adam Jamrozik

## CONTENTS

FROM THE DIRECTOR	1
EDITOR'S NOTES	5
SEMINARS, CONFERENCES	7
NEWS FROM OVERSEAS	14
PUBLICATIONS LIST AND ORDER FORM	17
BOOK REVIEWS	27

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## Social Welfare Research Centre

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
P.O. BOX 1 • KENSINGTON • NEW SOUTH WALES • AUSTRALIA • 2033



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The Social Welfare Research Centre was established in January 1980 under an agreement between the University of New South Wales and the Commonwealth Government. The initial agreement was for a period of five years and in 1984 the agreement was renewed for another five years, until the end of 1989. In accordance with the agreement the Centre is operated by the University as a unit of the University. The Director of the Centre is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor and receives assistance in formulating the Centre's research agenda from an Advisory Committee and a Research Management Committee.

The Centre undertakes and sponsors research on important aspects of social policy and social welfare; it arranges seminars and conferences; it publishes the results of its research in reports, journal articles and books; and it provides opportunities for post-graduate studies in social welfare. Current research areas cover child and family welfare, employment/unemployment, social security, housing, compensation and occupational issues, services for people with disabilities, the aged and other areas of social policy.

The views expressed in this Newsletter, as in any of the Centre's publications, do not represent any official position of the Centre. The Newsletter and all other SWRC Publications present the views and research findings of the individual authors with the aim of promoting the development of ideas and discussion about major concerns in social policy and social welfare.

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR ....

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I have just returned from a brief trip to Europe. The main purpose for my visit was to attend a research meeting of the Luxembourg Income Study in Luxembourg, but I took the opportunity to visit several research institutions and individual researchers in France and England. I came back to Australia with one very strong impression from the discussions I had there. This was that poverty is very much back onto the research and political agenda in Europe, particularly on the Continent. There were several important research conferences on the topic over the last Northern Summer and the political support for new policy initiatives is growing. In France, for example, a seminar in Lille in early October was devoted to consideration of a guaranteed minimum income scheme, and just before my departure the French Prime Minister, Michel Rocard announced a major new policy initiative in this area.

The reason for this renewed interest in poverty is not difficult to ascertain. It relates to the continued high levels of unemployment in Europe, despite the relatively good economic performance in the last five years. The persistence of unemployment has hit certain groups particularly hard and has been associated with increased long-term unemployment. This has led in turn to the emergence of the so-called 'new poor' and of an 'underclass', whose poverty is so entrenched that they are excluded entirely from social functioning and have little prospect of improving their situation.

There is of course, considerable debate about the extent to which the emergence of the new poor actually is a new phenomenon, as opposed to simply an increase in the all too familiar forms of poverty that have always existed. What is apparent however (except perhaps in the United Kingdom, where the government no longer recognises the use of the term poverty, preferring to make reference only to low incomes) is that unemployment is now a much more important determinant of poverty in general, and entrenched poverty in particular. And this in turn implies that many more of the poor are now families with children to care for. The ultimate goal for such families must be expanded opportunities for employment and for training, but there is also a need to ensure that income support provides a decent and dignified standard of living in the meantime.

As David Piachaud wrote at the end of his inaugural lecture given at the London School of Economics in May this year:

*... poverty and inequality as they exist in Britain and the world are not inevitable. Few can see the*

*numbers sleeping in cardboard boxes or see affluence and starvation on the same small planet and think this is the best we can do ... Should we then merely accept the world as it is? Should we merely analyse and ask why? Or should we take up the challenge of ending poverty? My answer is that because we can, we must.*

These sentiments, so eloquently and forcefully expressed, have as much relevance to Australia as to Britain. They are, of course, a motivating force behind much of what we have done, and will continue to do, in the Centre.

### Seminars/Conferences

Our seminar on **Support and Services for People with Disabilities** attracted a large audience and produced a lively debate in response to a collection of extremely good papers (see pp 7-8). One issue that emerged during the course of the day concerned the relationship between research, policy and action. Some participants felt that the researchers were too far removed from those on whom their research was focused. Others saw this as to some extent inevitable, but nonetheless acknowledged the crucial role of such research in improving policy design and implementation. The proceedings of the seminar will be published shortly in the **SWRC Reports and Proceedings** series.

As I mentioned in the August **Newsletter** some of us will be travelling to Wellington, New Zealand for a two day seminar organised with the New Zealand Planning Council on the topic **Social Policy and Inequality in Australia and New Zealand**. Again, we are proposing to publish the proceedings of what promises to be a very interesting seminar in the **SWRC Reports and Proceedings** series early in the new year. Plans are well in train for our next inter-state seminar, focusing on aspects of poverty, to take place in Adelaide early next year.

I would like to remind all of you of our National Conference on **Social Policy in Australia. What Future for the Welfare State**, to take place at the University of New South Wales on 5 - 7 July 1989. We are still advertising a call for papers (see page 3) and I hope to provide more information on the invited speakers in the next issue of the **Newsletter**.

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR ....

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### Publications

We recently released the first four papers in the new **SWRC Discussion Papers** series. The four papers, released in August, were:

- No. 1     Russell Ross, **The Labour Market Position of Aboriginal People in Non Metropolitan New South Wales**
- No. 2     Bruce Bradbury, **Welfare Fraud, Work Incentives and Income Support for the Unemployed**
- No. 3     Peter Whiteford, **Taxation and Social Security: An Overview**
- No. 4     Peter Saunders and Garry Hobbes, **Income Inequality in Australia in an International Comparative Perspective**

Limited numbers of each Discussion Paper are available free of charge either by contacting our Publications Officer, Jennifer Young, or from the authors themselves.

### Staff

Sadly, the recent weeks have seen a number of colleagues leaving the Centre. Enza Santangelo resigned in August and Tania Sweeney also resigned in September to take up another research position in the

University. Tania has had a long association with the Centre and will be missed by us all. My secretary, Maria Farrugia also left in September to accept a position in the School of Social Work. As with everyone else in the Centre, I will miss her very much and wish her on behalf of all of us, the very best for the future. Marea Godthelp left the general office secretarial staff in October to pursue another career, in which we all wish her the very best. On a more positive note, Clare Stapleton has returned to the Centre from maternity leave, and Marilyn McHugh returned from extended leave in October. It is good to welcome both of them back.

With these changes, the current total staffing level of the Centre, including research scholars, is 23. Of these, just over half were here prior to my arrival in February 1987 and about three quarters have been at the Centre for a year or more. Maintaining a reasonable level in our staffing is, of course, crucial to the success of our research efforts. It is a matter which I believe should be given a high priority.

Peter Saunders  
Director

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## Season's Greetings

*The staff at the SWRC would like to wish Newsletter readers a Happy Christmas and New Year Season 1988.*

*Your continued support and effective promotion of our work has maintained the community interest in SWRC research.*

*And last, very special thanks to our Printers.*

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## **REMINDER: CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **SOCIAL WELFARE RESEARCH CENTRE**

#### **National Conference**

## **Social Policy in Australia: What Future for the Welfare State?**

**5 - 7 July 1989  
at the University of New South Wales**

The Conference will be a forum for public discussion of social policy issues facing Australian society in the forthcoming decade. Participation is expected from academic researchers, policy-makers, administrators, professionals in service delivery, and other people concerned with social policy and social welfare issues.

#### **The Major Themes of the Conference will be:**

1. **Ideology, Philosophy and Political Environment of Social Policy**  
Issues of equality, equity, social justice, social theory/theories of welfare, class, gender, multiculturalism, Aboriginal society.
2. **Economic Environment of Social Policy**  
Issues of employment/unemployment, private/public mix, demographic trends, welfare finance, the public sector, the private market.
3. **Income Maintenance/Income Security**  
Issues of income support, taxation, income and wealth, the social wage, fiscal and occupational welfare.
4. **Community Resources and Services**  
Issues of health, education, child care, housing, aged care, care of disabled, formal and informal care, professions, community development, self-help groups.
5. **From Policy to Practice**  
Issues of Commonwealth/State relations, the non-government sector, administration and legislation, service delivery, rights and interests of clients-consumers.

**CALL FOR PAPERS:** Abstracts (100-200 words) of papers on any of the above topics are invited for consideration. To facilitate Conference planning, abstracts are to be submitted by 30 November 1988, to:

**Adam Jamrozik  
Social Welfare Research Centre  
University of New South Wales  
P.O. Box 1, Kensington, NSW, 2033  
Telephone: (02) 697 5149, 697 5150  
Facsimile: (02) 398 9903**

**For general information about the Conference: Jennifer Young  
- Conference Secretary (02) 697 5150**

Further details of the conference will be given in the forthcoming issues of the SWRC Newsletter.

## New Publication Series

### SOCIAL WELFARE RESEARCH CENTRE DISCUSSION PAPERS

This series is primarily intended as a forum for SWRC staff to publish selected research papers for discussion and comment in the research community and/or welfare sector prior to submission to academic journals for more formal publication. **Social Welfare Research Centre Discussion Papers** will also serve as an outlet for research reports that may be too short for the **SWRC Reports and Proceedings Series** and for preliminary research results which may eventually be explored more fully in that series.

Limited numbers of each Discussion Paper are printed. There will be a small core distribution list and the remaining copies will be available free on a first-come, first-served basis from the SWRC's Publications and Information Officer, Jennifer Young, by completing Section 5 of the Order Form (page 23) marked OTHER PUBLICATIONS, with your forwarding details on the reverse side. Eight **Social Welfare Research Centre Discussion Papers** are listed below. Further Papers will be released as they become available and their titles will be advertised in the **SWRC Newsletter**.

#### Social Welfare Research Centre Discussion Papers

No	Title	Author(s)
1. ♦	The Labour Market Position of Aboriginal People in Non-metropolitan New South Wales	Russell Ross
2. ♦	Welfare Fraud, Work Incentives and Income Support for the Unemployed	Bruce Bradbury
3. ♦	Taxation and Social Security: An Overview	Peter Whiteford
4. ♦	Income Inequality in Australia in an International Comparative Perspective	Peter Saunders and Garry Hobbes
5. ◇	Family Size Equivalence Scales and Survey Evaluations of Income and Well-Being	Bruce Bradbury
6. ◇	Income Testing the Tax Threshold	Peter Whiteford
7. ◇	Workers' Compensation and Social Security Expenditure in Australia: Anti-social Aspects of the 'Social' Wage	Don Stewart and Jenny Doyle
8. ◇	Teenagers in the Labour Market; 1983-1988	Russell Ross
♦	Available now	
◇	Available in mid-December	

Further information about this series can be obtained from the Publications and Information Officer, Jennifer Young (02) 697 5150, or from the Editor of the **Social Welfare Research Centre Discussion Papers Series**, Russell Ross (02) 697 5147.

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# EDITOR'S NOTES

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The readers will probably find the content of this Newsletter a little 'thin': not much seems to have happened at the Centre over the past three months. Do not despair! There are many things 'in the pipeline' and they will eventually come to light. In the meantime, as you would have seen in the Director's report, we have had a successful one-day seminar on issues related to disabilities, and we have participated in other important activities. We have also started Discussion Papers as a new form of SWRC publication.

## Apology

Some readers will have noticed an error in our previous Newsletter (August 1988). The date of our conference on Support and Services for People with Disabilities was incorrectly given as November instead of September on page 2, although it was correctly stated on the registration form on page 41. We apologise for any inconvenience or confusion this may have caused.

## Book Reviews

There are nine book reviews in this Newsletter, each dealing with a book or a report on an issue related to social policy. Please note that we review books and other publications relevant to social policy and social welfare but these publications are not available from the Centre. The name of the publisher is always mentioned in each review; any good bookshops will order these publications for you.

## Readers' Contributions

Having established a Readers' Contributions corner in the Newsletter and inviting our readers to write to us on any issues on which they would like to comment - our research, publications, seminars, etc - the response has been very disappointing indeed. Either we are doing very well or very badly, and our readers do not think that it is worth telling us about it. One-way communication is not very satisfactory. Some feedback from you would be very much appreciated.

## Information Wanted

We are currently engaged in a survey of research literature concerned with the **health of young people and health services for young people**. If you are conducting research on these issues we would be

grateful if you let us know. Please contact Cathy Boland ([02] 697 5158) or myself ([02] 697 5149).

## Personal Note

As you would have seen in the Director's report, quite a few people left the Centre in the last few months. It is always sad to see people leave, especially if one has worked with them for some time. I would like to record here my particular appreciation to Tania Sweeney with whom I have worked for some years and who has made such a significant contribution to research in child and family welfare. Tania's research reports, journal articles and chapters in books have been widely read and, I am sure, will stay on recommended reading lists in many tertiary courses of study. Her departure is a great loss to the Centre and to the research in this important field of social policy and social welfare. Tania has taken up a position in the Industrial Relations Research Centre at this University, and I wish her well in this new endeavour.

## Good Bye the Bicentennial

As this year comes to an end, I would like to thank our readers for their interest in our work. Editing the Newsletter has been an interesting experience, and I hope to continue doing it next year. Season's Greetings to everyone!

Adam Jamrozik  
Editor



# **SOCIAL WELFARE RESEARCH CENTRE**

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

### **POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP**

Applications are invited from graduates or those who are about to graduate with a Bachelors Degree with at least Honours Class II Division I in the Social Sciences or a related discipline and who wish to undertake research for a higher degree at the University of New South Wales. The scholar will be located in the University's Social Welfare Research Centre and will pursue postgraduate research into an aspect of Australian social welfare.

The Award provides a living allowance of \$9 000 per annum plus \$2 000 per annum for a dependent spouse. Special allowances may be paid to assist with travel, setting up residence and the preparation of a thesis. These allowances are not subject to income tax.

The opportunity exists to undertake a small amount of paid research work in the Centre, up to the limits specified under the scholarship.

Further information may be obtained from the Director of the Centre, Dr Peter Saunders on (02) 697 5151.

Application forms are available from the Secretary, Social Welfare Research Centre who can be contacted on the above number.

Applications should be submitted in writing to: The Registrar, University of New South Wales, P O Box 1, Kensington, New South Wales 2033, no later than 1 February 1989.

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# SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

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## SWRC CONFERENCE

### SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

by Sara Graham  
and Peter Whiteford

This one day conference on disability, which was organised by the SWRC, took place at the YWCA in Sydney on 23 September 1988.

Nearly 120 people, most from NSW and the ACT, attended the Conference. The audience included representatives of user, lobby and advocacy groups, people responsible for the planning, organisation and delivery of a wide range of services, and professionals working in both hospital and community settings. Also amongst the audience were representatives of local, State and Commonwealth governments, as well as members of the research community. People who themselves had a disability played a prominent part in the discussion sessions.

In his welcoming address Peter Saunders, Director of the SWRC, explained that the Conference was timely as the Centre was about to embark on a new program of research on community care and services for people with disabilities. Since the aim was to make this research program as relevant as possible to the interests of people with disabilities and carers it was hoped that those present would use the opportunity provided by the Conference to air issues of pressing concern.

There were five papers presented at the Conference and, like the audience, these represented a range of issues and interests. The opening address was given by Mr David Richmond, Chairman of the Disability Council of New South Wales. Mr Richmond talked about trends in support services over the past five to ten years, current philosophies and what he saw as issues of concern for the future. Amongst the trends he highlighted were the increased use of generic services (noting in particular, recent developments in the State's environmental planning program), the trend for specialist services to move towards a community care model and the growth in the importance of corporate and individual advocacy. In terms both of current philosophies and future issues, Mr Richmond spoke of the importance of economic efficiency and

administrative effectiveness of programs. Notwithstanding the importance of resource considerations, he emphasised that services are services for clients and it is in terms of meeting the needs of clients that they must ultimately be judged. In concluding, Mr Richmond spoke of the essential role of employment and income policies in enabling people with disabilities to be full and active members of the community.

Mr Richmond was followed by two presentations both concerned with people with developmental disabilities. Sara Graham of the SWRC, presented a paper which reported on some findings of research funded by the Department of Health and Social Security in the UK. Her paper focused primarily on the residential and other needs of people who move from an institution to the community. She explained that much of the DHSS research program was concerned with people with a severe level of disability and people with multiple disabilities. She noted that there was some controversy in Britain as to the most appropriate type of living arrangement in the community for people with special and additional needs. She cautioned that research findings had indicated that if community care is to be appropriate and life enhancing it is unlikely to be a cheap option, especially for people with additional needs.

The next speaker was Dr Helen Moloney of the Department of Community Health at the Prince of Wales Hospital. Dr Moloney's paper described the results of research she had undertaken which had examined the effect on individual residents of a move from a long stay institution to a smaller residential setting in the community. She concluded that people with severe and profound disabilities can enhance their abilities in settings other than large institutions and that improving institutions has less effect on residents than a move to a community home. Dr Moloney said that she hoped that the research could be continued so that it would be possible to assess whether the improvements were sustained over time.

In the afternoon sessions the focus of the papers was more directly on community care. Mr Garth Nowland Forman who is a member of the NSW Department of Family and Community Services and Assistant Director of its Home and Community Care Program, described how, in effect, community care often means family care. He said that despite the evidence that most families willingly assume a caregiving responsibility for their elderly or disabled member, this was not done without considerable costs; social, emotional, physical and financial. Families often need a great deal of

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# SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

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support in their caregiving role and he described the contribution of the various services provided through HACC in addressing the needs of people with disabilities and their families.

Dr Anna Howe of the Lincoln School of Health Services at La Trobe University spoke about long and short term policy perspectives. She drew attention to the way in which perceptions of service development vary according to the position from which people are viewing these. For those who have had a long association with the services, changes in recent years have appeared quite rapid. To those who have become more recently involved, the changes have seemed to be far too slow. As an example of the speed of change in this area, Dr Howe pointed out that the rate of spending on institutional care compared to community care had already declined from around 11 to 1 to 8 to 1 and could be expected to continue to fall quite rapidly. She noted that the rapid growth on spending on home and community care was even more pronounced once account was taken of State government expenditure.

During the Conference there were several periods of discussion of the issues raised by the speakers. The final discussion began with an overview of the Conference presented by Jane Woodruff, Executive Officer of the Disability Council of New South Wales. Amongst the issues she raised was the discrepancy between policy preoccupations (for example, with institutionalisation, de-institutionalisation and integration) and the actual important policy issues. She saw the key policy issue as the empowerment of people with disabilities and their families. Empowerment, she maintained, was achieved by quality education, by a move away from the notion of welfare, by income security and, perhaps of greatest importance, by access to information and services and the possibility of exercising a choice of these.

A wide range of issues was raised during the discussion periods. There was some expression of anxiety that the second and third papers had placed too much emphasis on institutions and there was a plea for the recognition that in all circumstances an institution was a completely inappropriate place for anyone to live. Also in response to these papers a number of speakers emphasised the importance of recognising that people with disabilities are people first, who want the same things as everyone else and to be able to exercise choice. Another issue raised in the discussion concerned the role and purpose of research and particularly of government sponsored research. Whilst some members of the audience expressed considerable scepticism about the value of research and had observed the low level of interest

shown by government in research findings and others were concerned about the use of government sponsored research undertaken by outside bodies as a tool of management, some members of the audience felt that research findings were both necessary and often made a very useful contribution to the rational planning and delivery of appropriate services. Specific policy issues were raised in the discussion. The inadequacy of service provision for people from non-English speaking backgrounds, the inadequacy and inflexibility of transport services and the dismantlement of the Department of Housing's special unit for housing for people with disabilities were identified as particular problems. However, time ran out before all those who wished to raise issues had had a chance to do so and it was quite clear from the amount of interest shown by the audience that disability continues to be an extremely significant area of social policy.

The Public Health Association of Australia and  
New Zealand 20th Annual Scientific Conference  
Griffith University, 28-31 August 1988

**HEALTH LEISURE AND TECHNOLOGY:  
BEYOND JUST HEALTH**

by Cathy Boland.

This conference covered a wide range of health and welfare issues. Epidemiologists produced some interesting data on the relationship between class and health, and the effectiveness of, for example, health promotion in reducing coronary artery disease. Topics included research on why pregnant women smoke; the effects of class on school children's interpretation of AIDS education material; and for the statistically minded meta analysis of the effectiveness of a range of studies in improving health with exercise. Poor nutrition in Australia accounts for \$6 billion worth of direct and indirect costs associated with preventable illness per annum.

This type of research has implication for public policy. The outgoing President, Professor Stephen Leeder commented in his presidential address 'healthy public policy represents an alternative view of the future of health and health care' which is away from 'high technology, labour intensive rescue and the preservation of traditional professional kingdoms', whose occupants

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# SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

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defend their tutelages not with ill-will but with ideology.

The strength of the Public Health Association is its diversity, and the ability to provide a focus for a wide range of professionals and public health practitioners.

My contribution to the Conference was a paper concerned with some aspects of technology and birth services and was based on data extracted from the NSW Maternal/Perinatal Statistics Collection in 1984. The title of the paper was **A Comparative Study of Home and Hospital Births: Scientific and Normative Variables and their Effects**. The following are some excerpts from it.

The paper commenced with some historical aspects related to place of birth and concluded with some hypothesis-generating questions related to the data. The common use of forceps and anaesthesia in the decade 1920 - 1930, when there was a rapid shift in the place of birth from home to hospital, predated the use of randomised control trials to evaluate the effectiveness of such procedures. It may well be that what was considered science in those times was really a reflection of commonly held beliefs and values (normative variables) rather than scientific variables which would require testing and validation.

The question arises how does the hospitalisation of birth relate to infant mortality (deaths occurring under one year of age)? The vital statistics collections indicate there were considerable improvements in infant mortality from prior to the turn of the century, when most infant deaths occurred under one year of age were due to infectious diseases and poor nutrition rather than birth injuries. Improved nutrition and public health measures are considered to have added considerably to the lowering of infant mortality. They included slum clearance programs, clean water and sewage disposal and public clinics to promote breast feeding. Other social changes included increases in wages and the standard of living.

It was not until the mid 1940s that the death rate for newborn children, (those under 28 days of age) began to decline noticeably. This had not happened when the place of birth changed from home to hospital, but rather when antibiotics became available. It is possible that the debate about safety of birth place has been clouded in the mind of the general public, as the deaths of newborn children and children under one year of age have not been adequately distinguished.

The transition from home to hospital births in the United Kingdom was accompanied by unanticipated increases in perinatal deaths due to anoxia and birth injury, and there has been growing concern in Australia about the number of interventions in normal births. The aim of this study was to compare the outcome of home and hospital births. A null hypothesis was assumed, that is, there was no difference in morbidity or mortality for a cohort of women of matched risk status giving birth at hospital and at home. The hospital and home birth samples were drawn primarily from the Southern and Northern metropolitan health regions in Sydney. There were 51 homebirths and 509 hospital births in this study. The hospital births were drawn from a sample of 16 hospitals in the Sydney metropolitan area. The data was obtained from the NSW Maternal/Perinatal Statistics Collection for the three months January to March, 1984.

Homebirth transfers were identified by contacting the midwives involved in the deliveries. Transfers were excluded from the hospital comparison group.

There was significantly more morbidity ( $p < 0.01$ ) in the hospital births when the Level 3 teaching hospitals were included in the analysis. The complication rate was 46.1% for women having their first birth at home, and 74.5% for hospital births. When the teaching hospitals were excluded, the complication rate was 68.3% ( $p < 0.05$ ). There was no significant difference in the complication rate for women experiencing a subsequent birth.

Data limitation: the original hospital records have not been checked with the computerised records to confirm the reliability of the data, so these results need to be treated with some caution. The teaching hospitals may be providing more data. Also, the homebirth clients were self-selected and they may have different characteristics from the rest of the population because of this.

A further analysis was also undertaken. The characteristics of the lowest risk women were identified for three major teaching hospitals and three Level 2 hospitals within the Sydney metropolitan area. Three Level 2 hospitals in country areas were also included. There was a wide range in morbidity that varied from 33.9% to 84.6%. A more recent analysis of the data for 1986 shows the complication rate has decreased somewhat, particularly at two of the three teaching hospitals used in this analysis, one of which appears to have changed its coding procedures in the interim. The area of most concern was the incidence of foetal distress, particularly at one teaching hospital.

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# SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

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Are the interventions 'causing' the complications? The cause of these complications, whether they be interventions or hospital procedures could not be identified from this data.

The data does have a number of social implications, concerned with gender relations in the labour ward, the birth process and its impact on the family, birth services in the context of social policy, and the wider issue of the relationship between morbidity and socio-economic status.

This data suggests a paradox within the hospital data, as there were fewer complications in the least affluent health region in the Sydney area. Yet, the historical analysis of the mortality data equated improved socio-economic status with declining infant and perinatal mortality. This raises a number of questions about what is the most effective method of prevention of complications as well as care for women giving birth. Increasing health expenditure on technology alone may not be appropriate without a further assessment of its safety. It is a comment on the ideological underpinnings of the Welfare State that medical technology is considered an appropriate source of government expenditure, whereas increase in income maintenance is contentious. It is in areas such as this that the ideological construction of reality has considerable implications for who receives not only access to scarce financial resources, but also for the providers' status and community sanction, and for the community an unchallenged acceptance of the values that maintain this scenario. It may be timely to ask the questions what is the difference between scientific and normative variables and what cost do we incur if we do not differentiate between them?

The paper is being submitted for publication to one of the journals dealing with social issues in Australia.



## AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

by Adam Jamrozik

The 1988 National Conference of AASWE was held in Melbourne on 30 August - 2 September, with the theme, **Education for Practice in the 1990s: Education for Whom, by Whom, and for What?** This was the first AASWE Conference I attended since I left social work education in 1980, so I was interested to see whether things had changed much since then. I was not able to attend all sessions (some were concurrent) but from those that I did attend I came out with an impression that there might have been some changes but only some. The rhetoric of change is there, certainly in much milder form than it was in the 1970s, but what sort of change? Some people appear to have developed a corporatist view of social reform; others continue with the remedial/ameliorist model of social work (counselling for all occasions). There seems to be anxiety and concern about the 'non-social-workers' doing things that social workers think they themselves should do. Much concern with the issues of practice, competence, teaching methods. Not so much social theory, critical analysis of social, economic and political issues - in fact the 'social' seems to be as far away from the social work as it ever was. Some students seem to be aware of the problem: one student (T Scanlon) presented a paper on **Educational Priorities: Social Sciences left out in the cold**. The paper I enjoyed most was Peter McDonald's (Curtin) **Social Work Education in the 1990s: what will the Lefties be doing?** A good question!

I was invited to the conference to present a paper on **Professional Education in the Social and Community Sector: The Future**. I think, the paper had a mixed reception; some people, namely the students liked it, others seemed to think that my analysis was perhaps a bit too critical. The proceedings of the conference will be published by AASWE, so the readers can judge. Let me quote here a few excerpts from the paper.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s there was much talk about the need to get away from casework orientation and medical model, and about putting the 'social' into

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# SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

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social work. These attitudes were fairly short-lived, and while the rhetoric of intervention at societal level and of the need for change in the system might have continued, the practice of intervention went back to the remedial, therapeutic mode. What had occurred, however, was the birth of a range of interest groups among the middle classes, which became very competent in pursuing self-interest and gaining advantages, in the name of participation, rights or special needs; often to the detriment of less competent, less informed, people in the working-class areas who were not able to articulate their needs and pursue their claims successfully.

The difficult problems such as those which would have required intervention at societal levels, eg child and family welfare, unemployment, have been reconceptualised and shifted from the social sphere into the private domain. As the issues are re-defined as 'private problems', that is, problems of individual pathology, the methods of intervention follow suit. There might be much public concern, but much of it is directed at 'those people out there' who are thought that they might need professional assistance in the form of therapeutic counselling, advice on budgeting, or a threat of more coercive measures such as taking the child away from the family or a withdrawal of a benefit.

Since the Labor party came to power in 1983 a new form of depoliticisation of issues has developed quite successfully. That is, much of the welfare lobby, non-government welfare organisations and even some policy-relevant research have been drawn into government constituency. The government sets the agenda for debate and research; the government decides what the issues are and then seeks to validate the policy in the eyes of the public through social research. This is, of course, nothing new, as governments always look to the social sciences to provide the rhetoric for policies (as Gouldner has observed, 1971), but now the seeking of alliances and support from researchers and organisations which depend on government funds has reached new heights and sophistication. Research reports which are regarded as critical of government policy do not always get published, and withdrawal of funds can be used as an ever-present threat, thus encouraging discretion and self-censorship.

What implications do these developments hold for the people who work in community services? It is clear that governments expect these services to be effective instruments of policies, and some would argue that the maintenance of the system is the function of the professions who play the key roles in these services.

Furthermore, evidence certainly indicates that the professions, especially the 'helping professions', have been successful in discharging this function. Whether this is the best that community services can, or should, achieve is the issue for the professionals - practitioners, administrators and educators alike - to consider. The issue is of relevance to all professions in community services but especially so to those who work in that large and diverse field of welfare services.

What do the professionals in welfare services do? What functions do they perform? Undoubtedly, a wide diversity of tasks and functions is performed by welfare organisations but it is difficult to get away from the fact that their main function is to assist people to adjust themselves to the power structure of society and to accept that structure and their place in it willingly, peacefully and regard it as morally right. In other words, whatever is done for them, or to them, the endeavours are made to make the recipients believe that it is done in their interest, and out of concern and care. 'In the best interest of the child' is, for example, an umbrella criterion that does not call for explanation, and 'care' has become another umbrella term which includes corrective lock-up institutions now referred to as 'secure care'.

It would be an overstatement to argue that all professional activities in community services are mainly social control activities, although to a varied degree all of them perform, and are sanctioned to perform, this function. Viewed in the societal context, community services constitute a link between the macro-structure of society and government, and the micro-structure of service delivery, that is, the level where the policy is applied in practice. The application might have a facilitating or constraining effect on the recipients - depending on the function the service performs. The overall effect is the maintenance of the social order and the market economy. Neither the professional practitioners in community services nor the professionals who educate and train the future professionals can ignore this social reality.

The feature of recent and current trends in Australian society, which are relevant to professional education in community services, is the division between the growing affluence of some sections of the population and the impoverishment of those at the lower levels of the socio-economic stratification. The latter include those who depend on the state for income support but increasingly also those who are employed but their wages are too low to maintain a modest but reasonable standard of living for themselves and their families. This division is likely to become more entrenched in the

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# SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

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future, leading to significant differences in life styles, consumption patterns and modes of social participation. Increasingly, the division will also take place in spatial distribution of population.

These trends - the growing inequality - are legitimised by individualist ideologies which are propagated with increasing frequency and intensity. The appeals to self-interest and opportunity for exploitation seem to be increasingly acceptable as a new social morality, and an integral part of these ideologies is the acceptance of inequality as a feature of a 'good' society. These ideologies are unwittingly supported by the social researchers and welfare professionals who seek explanations for the failures of the economic and political system in the characteristics of the detrimentally affected population.

In the economic sphere, it is now accepted (tacitly perhaps) in Britain, in the United States, and increasingly in Australia that in order to maintain economic growth and affluence for the majority of the population a certain proportion of the population has to be excluded from the mainstream of economic and social life. This 'surplus population' is perceived by some concerned thinkers to be one of the most serious problems that the industrialised societies will have to solve. How to solve this problem will continue to be one of the tasks expected to be carried out by professionals in community services. If the problem cannot be solved, then at least it has to be contained, and indications are that the 'helping professions' can do this quite effectively.

Of course, I expect that many professionals do not see their role to be the maintenance of the status quo but rather the work for social change. Is such a role possible for a profession involved in community services? Is such a role possible for the 'helping professions'?

The history of professions indicates that professions might start with the desire of 'changing the world' but over a period of time evolve, or rather regress, into a remedial mode. By definition, professions are socially sanctioned bodies and thus they are expected to uphold the status quo. The more established a profession becomes, the more it is drawn into the apparatus of social control, and the more it accepts the status quo because its interests become more and more identical with the dominant structure of power. Furthermore, to be accepted as a profession, its members have to fit into an accepted model of professions.

This is a dilemma for professionals who also want to be reformers, for to be a reformer a professional person has to work against what is perceived to be the profession's interest. A professional who wants to be a reformer does not enjoy a pleasant working life. This does not mean that reform does not have a place in the professional rhetoric; on the contrary, the rhetoric of reform seems to obviate the necessity of reform, in a similar fashion as the rhetoric of concern about poverty enables the governments and the society to pursue policies of inequality.

The person responsible for the publication of the conference proceedings is Dr Norman Smith, Department of Social Work, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, 3083, Telephone (03) 479 2570.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN HOUSING

by Lisa Coleman

The NSW Housing Forum held another Seminar on 30th September, 1988. Dick Persson spoke about the *Federal Government's Housing Policy Review*. Julie Nyland of Shelter NSW discussed the *NSW State Government Budget and the implications for housing* (Shelter's housing policy officer is in the process of writing a summary sheet commenting on an overview of the state budget as well as looking at the allocations of the Department of Housing. Soon to be available from Shelter NSW.) Julie also gave a paper addressing the question of *Housing Vouchers: What are they, what do they mean?* Papers from the Housing Industry Association's *Second Housing Finance Workshop 'Equity in Housing Support'* were referred to and some major concerns with Cliff Walsh's proposal outlined. A summary sheet was handed around and available from Shelter. An article by Craig Johnston in last month's Shelter Journal *'The Writing on the Wall'* also addresses Walsh's proposal and was summarised at the forum. (Shelter Housing News, No. 44, September, 1988). In this issue of the newsletter Bruce Bradbury also reviews the Housing Industry Association's *Equity in Housing Report* papers.

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# SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

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The last address at the forum was from a member of the Public Service Association who commented upon the recent meetings concerning the reshuffle/restructure within the NSW Department of Housing. It is expected that many community services will suffer as a result of the restructure.

The Report of the Inquiry into Homelessness went to the Minister on the 14th September, 1988 and is currently under examination by his advisers. It is intended to be made public within the next month. Copies of the report will be sent to all those organisations who made submissions and may be available from the Department on written request. (Executive officer to the Inquiry, NSW Department of Housing, Town Hall House, GPO Box 13, SYDNEY, 2001.)

Shelter Coop NSW has established this year a number of working parties to undertake research and action in a number of housing related areas: Shelter Housing Finance Working Party; Shelter Caravans and Mobile Dwellings Working Party; and Shelter Women's Housing Working Party.

I have started on a project which will be investigating *the lifestyles and housing history of caravan park dwellers*. (With perhaps an emphasis on the situation for women in parks.) The project is only in its formative stages so if any readers feel they have any information or ideas that could assist in the background research please do not hesitate to contact me.

There is a growing concern for the conditions, lack of tenancy rights and security of tenure for caravan park dwellers. In NSW caravan park dwellers, along with boarding house tenants, are not adequately covered under the current tenancy legislation and have next to no protection. Caravan park dwellers can be evicted from their premises with only a few hours notice! (The amended tenancy legislation is still under review/dispute in parliament.)

It is evident that some parks, particularly those in the western regions of Sydney, are becoming ghettos for emergency housing relief victims. Are we seeing the re-emergence of the shanty town?

Of late two reports of interest have come from the community housing sector: **'GOING NOWHERE' A Report on permanent caravan park and mobile home dwellers on the Central Coast of N.S.W.** Prepared by *Sandra Heilpern* for the Central Coast Tenants' Advice and Housing Referral Service Inc., July 1988; and

**Report on the Effect of Tourism and Commercial Development on Low Income Tenants in the Manly-Warringah Area.** Prepared by *Linnel Secomb* on behalf of Community Industry Training Services for the Northern Suburbs Tenants Advice and Housing Referral Service, September 1988. (See book reviews.)

The report on the impact of tourism on the low income tenant follows from an increasing concern and debate arising from the community housing sector who are witness to an increasing level of evictions resulting from the conversion of low cost accommodation to tourist accommodation.

The Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Recreation and the Arts, Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia is holding an *Inquiry into the Australian Tourist Industry*. The Senate has referred the following matter to the Committee for Inquiry and report:

1. The role of the Commonwealth Government in the further development of the Australian tourist industry with particular reference to:
  - (a) the environmental impact of tourist development, particularly in coastal regions and national heritage area; and
  - (b) the co-ordination of foreign tourist development strategies between the States.
2. The role of foreign investment in tourist development and the net benefit to Australia of overseas tourism.

The Committee invites any interested persons or organisations wishing to express views on matters relating to this reference to lodge a written submission with:

The Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Environment,  
Recreation and the Arts  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA, ACT, 2600  
(062) 77 3525

by **Friday 30 December 1988**. Further information and notes are available from the Secretary to the Committee.

I would urge any organisations or individuals who have concerns about the future social and environmental impacts of tourism to make a submission to this enquiry.



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# NEWS FROM OVERSEAS

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## PRESS RELEASE

Centre for Policy on Ageing  
25-31 Ironmonger Row,  
London EC1V3QP  
Telephone 01-253 1787

### NEW DESIGN FOR OLD: FUNCTION, STYLE AND OLDER PEOPLE

New Report from the Centre for Policy on Ageing, in conjunction with The Helen Hamlyn Foundation.

'CPA and The Helen Hamlyn Foundation have hymned the virtue of excitement, attractiveness and sheer fun in design for older people, as well as the necessary virtue of functionality', says Dr Eric Midwinter, Director of the Centre for Policy on Ageing and author of *New Design for Old*. 'For example, when the toddler is learning to walk, aids are available which are colourful, bright and cheery. Compare these with the aids offered to older people to enable them to retain this technique, as physical troubles assail them. Whatever their effectiveness, they are irredeemably arid.'

The main thrust of designers' attentions with regard to fashions, furnishings and fitments is aimed at the trends in the younger market. However, since one-third of the adult population is over the age of 50, designers should spend time and effort on this sizeable market, and make such items for older people as attractive as for any other age.

With regard to housing, careful design should not only be applied to sheltered housing and residential homes, states the Report. 96% of older people remain in their own homes - and these need to be made not only easily manageable, but also an enjoyable and aesthetically pleasing environment.

The report grew out of a workshop held jointly by the two organisations in December 1987, at which top designers, manufacturers and retailers met with experts in the field of ageing and related subjects such as housing and ergonomics. The Helen Hamlyn Foundation, dedicated to design for older people, had previously mounted an Exhibition entitled *New Design*

for Old at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1986, exhibiting prototypes of outstanding quality.

Groups at the December 1987 workshop studied a range of topics - bathing, kitchen design, furniture, electrical equipment, clothes, shopping and leisure - as well as looking at the design of housing, the environment and transport.

CPA's Deputy Director, Deirdre Wynne-Harley, led attenders through a typical day in the life of a mythical 'old Mrs Dennis', describing the obstacles a normal living environment can pose. She showed how design affects all aspects of daily living, from the layout of kitchens and bathrooms to items such as furniture, clothing, kettles and switches. A wealth of practical suggestions and ideas to overcome the problems of everyday life were put forward by those present, and are described in detail in the Report, together with photographs and line-drawings.

The Report ends with a call for the establishment of a 'Centre for Easier Living', to promote designs beneficial not only to the older generation, but to all ages, and which would make the gradual evolution within the lifecycle a smoother and far more enjoyable process for all.

*New Design for Old: Function, Style and Older People*, by Eric Midwinter (CPA Reports No 13) is published by the Centre for Policy on Ageing, and available from Booksellers or from CPA's distributors, Bailey Bros & Swinfen Ltd, Warner House, Folkestone, Kent CT19 6PH.

### NEW CHAIRMEN FOR THE CENTRE FOR POLICY ON AGEING

After eight years' sterling service each, the Chairmen of CPA's Governors and Advisory Council have both handed over the baton to their successors.

Professor Margot Jeffreys, B Sc (Econ), has passed over the Chairmanship of the Governors to Professor Robert A Pinker, B Sc (Soc), M Sc (Econ), Pro-Director of the London School of Economics.

The new Chairman of the Centre's Advisory Council is Professor Malcolm Johnson, Director of the Department of Health and Social Welfare of the Open University, who takes over from Professor Robert A B Leaper, CBE.

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# NEWS FROM OVERSEAS

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## JUSTICE FOR OLDER CITIZENS

Today the Criminal Justice Bill is given royal assent, and the Centre for Policy on Ageing welcomes the clause that allows men and women between the ages of 65 and 70 to undertake jury service if they so wish, instead of being barred from doing this when they reach 65.

'This is an important step in the movement to make ours a non-ageist society', said Dr Eric Midwinter, Director of the Centre for Policy on Ageing, which has campaigned vigorously for an alteration in the law that robbed older people of the ancient right of jury service.

'We see this as a practical stage in the removal of age as an automatic disqualifier', continued Eric Midwinter. 'Many people over sixty-five in our society are fit, alert, have plenty of time to give, and have great wisdom and experience of life. It has been wrong to remove from them this historic act of citizenship.'

Further information from Diana Monk, Press and Parliamentary Officer, Centre for Policy on Ageing, on 01 253 1787, ext 39.

### NEWS RELEASE

Family Policy Studies Centre  
231 Baker Street,  
London NW16XE

## A MIXED REPORT ON BRITAIN'S CHILDREN

At a time of renewed public interest in family life, a new review of evidence about Britain's children reveals a mixed picture. There is more stability in family life than is often assumed, but substantial numbers of children have been affected by family breakdown. There have been long-term improvements in health and education. More children have both parents out at work, but one million children live in families where the head is unemployed.

The review brings together evidence from different sources and is presented by the independent Family Policy Studies Centre.

Introducing the **CHILDREN** fact sheet, John Wheatley of the FPSC said:

*Any assessment of Britain's children must lead to a mixed report. On the one hand, there is more stability and continuity than many commentators suggest, with the vast majority of children living with both natural parents. But family breakdown has a significant impact: divorce affects about 160 000 children every year, and 1 in 5 children may have parents who divorce.*

### Children and Families

The great majority of children, especially the youngest, live with both their natural parents. For older children the picture changes somewhat, as divorce - and remarriage - make their impact.

- \* In 1985 about 9 out of 10 children (88%) lived in a family headed by a married couple. 11% lived in a family headed by a lone mother.
- \* Evidence from 1982 (latest available) show that 80% of all children under 18 live with both natural parents - the figure was 90% for under 5 year olds, and 71% for 16-18 year olds.

Divorce however has a major impact on the family life of many children.

- \* In 1986 in Great Britain, over 163 000 children under 16 (152 000 in England and Wales, and over 11 000 in Scotland) experienced their parents' divorce.
- \* Over half of all divorcing couples have children (56% in England and Wales, 53% in Scotland). Many of these children are very young - 33% in England and Wales and 23% in Scotland were under 5.
- \* If present divorce trends continue, it has been estimated that 1 in 5 children will have divorced parents before they reach the age of 16.

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# NEWS FROM OVERSEAS

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## Work and the Family

The new fact sheet on children describes the rise of the 'dual-worker' family and reports on public attitudes towards this.

- \* In 1985 56% of all women with dependent children were in full or part-time work. During 1983-85 28% of married women with children under 5 worked, compared with 65% of those with children over 5.
- \* Evidence from the British Social Attitudes Survey found that most people (76%) believed that, where families contained children under 5, only the father should work outside the home, while the mother stayed at home.
- \* For families with children in their early teens, the majority of people (60%) believe that both parents should work, mothers part-time.

Commenting on the evidence of **Malcolm Wicks**, the Centre's Director, said:

*Working patterns today reveal contradictions between what is happening, and what many think should happen. Over a quarter of mothers with a child under 5 work outside the home, most part-time. Yet most people favour the view that these mothers should stay home. But women's employment will probably increase in the future not least because of mortgage and other financial commitments. More mothers with young children are likely to be in employment.*

Alongside the 'dual-worker' family however, is the **unemployed family**.

- \* In 1987 over 1 million children lived in families where the head was unemployed. Of these, over half a million had been out of work for two or more years.

## Education and Health

The fact sheet shows a steadily improving situation regarding education and health.

- \* The number of boys and girls leaving school with no GCE or CSE qualifications has declined rapidly. For boys, 21% had no such qualifications in 1975/76, but by 1985/86 this was

down to 13%. The respective figures for girls were 19% and 10%.

- \* Infant mortality - death in the first year of life - is continuing to fall. Nearly 8 000 children died before their first birthday in 1977, but by 1987 this number had fallen to a little over 6 000.
- \* In 1985 the UK had an infant mortality rate of 9.4 deaths per 1 000 births. This compared with Portugal at 17.8 (the highest rate in Europe), but was poorer than Germany (9), the Irish Republic (8.9), France (8.3), the Netherlands (8) and Denmark (7.9).

## Children's Work and Pocket Money

The fact sheet also shows evidence of much industry among children. Evidence from 1986 revealed that by the ages of 15-16 about half of all children of both sexes had a regular, paid term-time job. Even among those aged 11-12, 20% of girls and 29% of boys have a job. The amount of pocket money awarded varies according to age, rather than according to sex.

- \* In 1986 at ages 11-12, most boys and girls (80%) received £3 or less (including 11% who received no pocket money). Just 3% received over £10.

For further information, please contact:

John Wheatley 01 486 8211 (o) 01 561 7746 (h)  
Malcolm Wicks 01 486 8211 (o) 01 668 1243 (h)

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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**OCCUPATIONAL CHRONIC PAIN:  
A PRELIMINARY SKETCH  
OF THE PROBLEM**

**by Stephen Campbell,**

Collingwood Community Health Centre,  
Victoria, pp 94

Reviewed by Don Stewart

The aims of this report are given as providing 'an overview of the range of perspectives on the subject of occupational chronic pain, the extent of the problem at the macro level, the range of issues which are revealed by case studies, the problems of choosing an appropriate outcome measure, ...general methodological issues and suggestions for future research' (p 6).

A chronic pain condition, put simply is one which manifests itself as unremitting pain or discomfort which, at best, is only mildly responsive to treatment by conventional medical procedures. In this sense chronic pain is often seen as enigmatic and something which is possibly imagined, caused by a psychiatric condition, or even as something which is feigned by malingerers for their own benefit.

Campbell notes that perhaps 'the simplest definition of a chronic pain condition is pain which endures for a specified period and is constantly present over that time. That is, conditions which do not remit with medical intervention or respond to medical treatment or therapy in the normal or expected manner. This includes conditions in which symptoms may be present, but in which there are no objective observable signs of an organic lesion.' Campbell goes on to suggest that chronic pain attributed to an occupational injury is even more contentious; noting that 'Many practitioners encountered in the course of the [study] were of the firm opinion that occupationally related chronic pain conditions have a longer duration than those which are not so related. That is, the pathogenesis of the condition is seen to be different if it is occupationally related. The main reason for this difference is usually attributed to the high fiscal rewards from compensation for work-related injuries. Frequently, malingering is implied although the language used is cautious and the word malingering is not used frequently' (p 5).

It is this apparent scepticism over the validity of occupational chronic pain (OCP) which forms the central focus of this report. However, in the course of discussing this topic the report touches on many related areas in a manner which, while detailed, is not so burdened with technical language as to limit its readership to persons well acquainted with the terminology of this area. In this respect it is a welcome addition to the limited number of publications which examine those many explanations which are offered in the course of the diagnosis and treatment of OCP symptoms (of which RSI and back pain are two examples) in a manner which is accessible to a wide readership.

Apart from having these forms of injury as its primary focus the report also contains empirical and qualitative material. Because much of the report is devoted to the critical evaluation of these occupational injury data bases and other sources of quantitative data on disability, it will be of use to readers with only a general interest in occupational injury and/or other disability issues. As well, the report assesses the merit of psychogenic, legal, medical, and malingering explanations of disability associated with chronic pain conditions.

It is the many deficiencies within these paradigms which, Campbell suggests, indicate the need to develop and introduce social, political and cultural elements into explanations of the genesis of employment-related injuries, chronic pain and OCP particularly and for the development of active prevention mechanisms in these areas.

As well, the report proposes that satisfactory explanations of OCP will not emerge without moving away from traditional organic models (in which the injured individual is often the sole or primary unit of analysis) towards paradigms which include broader socially constructed explanations. It therefore, in part at least, puts a case for a departure from the positivism which underpins so much of the current research into and thinking about (whether ergonomic, psychiatric and medical) OCP and other occupational injuries. Instead Campbell argues in favour of a system of diagnosis, treatment and prevention in which social institutions, cultural factors, and the working environment are also considered as equally legitimate elements in the construction of satisfactory explanations of these conditions.

Consequently readers will find that many parallels exist between this report and related research areas, particularly in the prevention of injuries through the

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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development of participatory industrial relations processes, and in this sense it complements these areas well.<sup>1</sup>

Being an overview, however, the report is necessarily restricted by the obvious need to cover a range of issues without being able to dwell exhaustively on any one point. This brevity, however, is compensated for by the extensive bibliography of Australian and overseas research in this field contained therein. Another useful aspect of this report, for this reader at least, lies in the fact that complex issues (such as the comparative merit of post-injury treatment through medical-scientific processes as opposed to active intervention and subsequent prevention through the application of social and community medicine techniques, for example) are raised.

By examining these sorts of issues, even if not conclusively, the report reflects on the related issue of research funding, asking whether or not funding which is concentrated on medical research is necessarily as fruitful as is often imagined. This reader at least was drawn to the conclusion that improving work environments through the application of pre-existing knowledge (which may or may not be of a medical nature) might be more productive, in terms of reducing incidences of occupational injuries (including OCP), than directing the majority of research funds to diagnostic research and was reminded of the old adage that 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure'.

Campbell concludes the report by pointing to some of the many areas in which techniques will have to be developed and improved if the complex social processes which give rise to occupational injuries and disabilities, especially to OCPs, are to be documented and a level of active prevention, based at least in part on these alternative paradigms, is to be reached, although these areas are not spelled out in great detail. Apart from proofing errors within the report itself which detract from its continuity in certain places, the report, overall, is an interesting and thought provoking work.

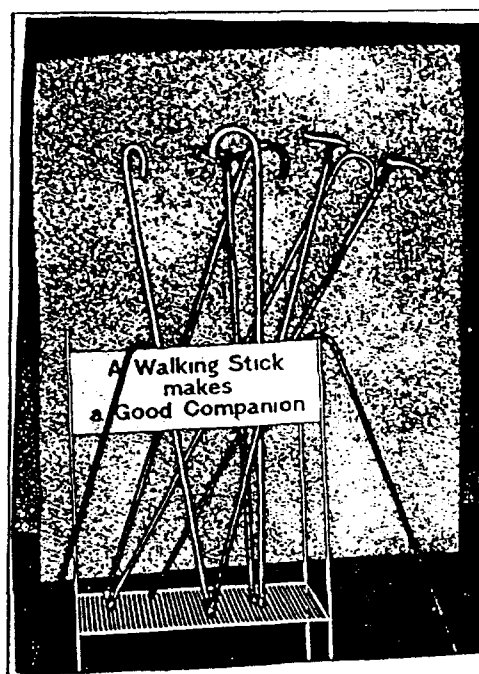
A copy of the report can be obtained by forwarding \$15.00 (cheque or money order) to the Collingwood Community Health Centre, Corner Hoddle and Sackville Streets, Collingwood VIC 3063.

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Navarro, V (1983) 'The Determinants of Social Policy A Case Study: Regulating Health and Safety at the Workplace in Sweden.' *International Journal of Health Services*, 13, 4, pp 517-561.

\* The cover of the report (illustrated), was reproduced with permission from John Brack's work 'A Walking Stick makes a good companion'. (Ed)



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1 See for example Navarro (1983) and Pearse and Refshauge (1987:646).

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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**CANCER HELP: AN AUSTRALIAN  
SOURCE BOOK FOR PATIENTS,  
HELPERS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS**

**Christine Henderson  
and Angela Raymond**

Simon & Schuster Australia, 1988, pp 112  
\$12.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by Jacklyn Comer

This, as will be noted by the title, is a source book compiled to make available as much information as possible on the various forms of help available, not only to cancer patients, but to anyone who lives with or knows someone with cancer. It also has several references - particularly in the Diet and Nutrition Section - on the best forms of prevention of cancer.

Christine Henderson, who is University Librarian at the University of New South Wales, co-wrote the book with Angela Raymond, a social worker, after her (Christine's) mother died from cancer. An occasional observation is made by Christine Henderson, from personal experiences with her mother. This adds a certain depth to the notations, giving a more personal touch to what is, due to the nature of the book, a fairly neutral statement of facts.

One of the problems regarding the availability of information on cancer and its treatment is the fact that this involves a high proportion of medical procedures which cannot be advertised. This is one of the aims of the book, to inform people of where information can be found, and how to go about finding it. It is not a medical book and makes no attempt to give medical, or any other opinions; it is simply a list of services, organisations and resources that are available and how they can best be used.

Several areas are covered in this book: Support Groups; Education; The Australian Cancer Society and State Cancer Councils; Diet and Nutrition; Spiritual Help; Your Rights as a Patient; and a separate section at the very back - Additional Recent References.

Where appropriate, all street addresses, postal addresses, contact names and telephone numbers for organisations are supplied. In the case of some of the hospital-run support groups, even directions to the ward from the main entrance are included. This, I think, is an example of the depth which with the authors are trying to provide this information.

In the case of organisations, for example those mentioned in Support Groups and Spiritual Help, an explanation is given of what the organisation does, what is involved in joining or attending and (in the case of some support groups) any fees that may be incurred by membership.

The authors have tried to cover as many aspects of the help that is available not only for cancer patients, but also for relatives, friends and those working with cancer patients, as possible. In many cases, such things as pamphlets are mentioned (always with a note on where they can be obtained) and in the case of the Prince of Wales Hospital in Randwick, a wig library for those who have hair loss due to operations or treatments.

The section on Your Rights as a Patient, includes a list of your rights within the law. This gives people seeking treatment a list of exactly what they can and should expect from their doctor. A list is also given as to the type of questions that should be asked when going in to see a doctor for treatment.

I believe this book would be extremely helpful to anyone wanting information on the subjects it covers. As I have already said no opinions are given (outside the few personal remarks made by Christine Henderson) and the book is what it claims to be, a source book. I believe it serves this purpose very well.



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# BOOK REVIEWS

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## **NOT ONLY THE POOR: THE MIDDLE CLASSES AND THE WELFARE STATE**

**Robert E Goodin and Julian Le Grand, with  
John Dryzek, D M Gibson, Russell Hanson,  
Robert H Haverman, David Winter**

Allen and Unwin, 1987, pp 251  
\$87.50 (hardcover), \$29.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by Adam Jamrozik

This collective work presents the results of a continued research on the redistributive aspects of services and benefits in the welfare state; issues which Julian Le Grand examined earlier in *The Strategy of Equality* (1982) and since then he and other researchers have further explored in other books, journal articles and research monographs. In this book the issues of redistribution are examined in the context of three countries: Australia, Britain and the United States, thus enabling the authors to arrive at some comparisons and generalisations.

The authors' thesis is that contrary to the commonly held beliefs (or, at least, commonly propagated beliefs) about welfare programs being mainly for the benefit of the poor, the reality is somewhat different: the non-poor play an important role in a range of activities concerning the welfare state, not the least of them being their 'beneficial involvement'. Thus the main value of the book is in the challenge the authors present to the prevalent analyses of the welfare state, which tend to perpetuate the myth of redistribution to the poor. As the authors state (p 4),

*... according to all conventional understandings, the welfare state has as one of its more central aims that of redistribution. It has always been regarded as at least in part a mechanism whereby the distress among the poorer elements of society is relieved at the expense of the better off members of society.*

What, then, if redistribution is not really the true intention of social welfare policies and programs? The authors suggest that this might be the case in some programs, although this would rarely, if ever, be stated. In such situations, they say (p 5),

*At the very best, announcing redistributive aims without having any intention of fulfilling them would, in the circumstances, constitute a clear case of fraud. So, too, would announcing redistributive aims and all the while intending to thwart them as far as you can.*

The authors are well aware that redistribution is not a simple process and may take various forms aimed to achieve various goals. For example, it may be concerned with equality or minimum standards; with policy inputs or policy outcomes; aimed at whole population or at specific categories; and be concerned with access to services or with the amount of service used. None of these are mutually exclusive, but may be considered according to certain priorities. The most that can be aimed at, perhaps, is what has been defined as 'proportional egalitarianism', which in the currently prevalent usage is defined as 'equity' - a very flexible concept indeed.

To put it in simple terms, the findings and observations reported in the book indicate that things are not what they seem to be (or what they are claimed to be). For example, the authors note that three important arguments had been advanced in favour of the welfare state: it was redistributive; it was efficient; and it maintained and/or developed a feeling of a community. Much has been said, the authors note, about the welfare state being a cohesive force. Is this belief substantiated? They point out that cohesive communities existed before the advent of the welfare state, and there is not much evidence that the welfare state has led to more cohesiveness. The opposite is sometimes the case, that is, the needy are kept at a distance from the more prosperous. The roots of universalism were to be found in the time of World War II when a common danger led to feelings of solidarity. Since then, solidarity has been broken; so have the attitudes of altruism and concerns with poverty and inequality. In fact, the authors note that the more affluent middle classes in Britain and the United States are very much in favour of services and benefits which they use and are less in favour of services and beliefs which are used mainly by the poorer sections of the community, such as social assistance. Examining the scene in the UK, they observe (p 93),

*The picture is one that many may find surprising. Of all current expenditure on social services listed here [they give the data], it can be estimated that only about one fifth is directed primarily at the poor. All of the rest is either distributed equally, or more disturbingly, toward the better off.*

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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To examine in detail all the data reported in the book is clearly beyond the scope of this review. To mention the data on the Australian scene, the authors report their findings of the study of some means-tested programs and observe a phenomenon of 'creeping universalism'. This they explain by four factors: the boundary problem (how to arrive at a cut off point); bureaucratic empire building (bureaucrats like to enlarge their constituencies); behavioural responses (people adjust their affairs through various legal and not-so-legal means to fit into the criteria of entitlement); and political pressure (lobby groups, and the importance of the median - middle-class - voter). The overall outcome is that the non-poor infiltrate the programs which were originally introduced to assist the poor.

Concerning the issue of the Australian Welfare State one can perhaps question the validity of the authors' findings on the grounds of their methodology, selection of services and benefits for the study, and their interpretation of data. While these issues are important, they are less important than the overall issue of the middle-class welfare the authors raise. Australia has departed from the concept of universalism, and selectivity and 'targeting' is the current policy. The concern with 'the poor' is expressed frequently by politicians and researchers. What is not talked about (and indeed discouraged) is the benefits which are used mainly by the more affluent sections of the community. Research on middle-class welfare is practically a taboo in some quarters. As a result, much is said and written about poverty and little about the ever-increasing inequality.

The second issue that the authors raise is the very feasibility of redistribution in a 'free' exploitative capitalist market economy. They conclude that solutions to inequality need to be sought in the primary distribution, that is, in the market economy itself. While they leave this issue for other (future) studies, the Australian experience certainly suggests that policies aimed at secondary redistribution in a market economy might alleviate some cases of extreme poverty but achieve little towards reducing inequalities.

## **A SOCIOLOGY OF AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY: INTRODUCTORY READINGS**

**J M Najman and J S Western (eds)**

St Lucia, University of Queensland, pp 587

\$27.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by Michael Wearing

The formal development of sociological analysis has a fairly brief history in Australia; the discipline being seen as a serious area of study and inquiry perhaps only since the post World War II years and gaining momentum in the tertiary education boom of the late 1960s and 1970s. Whilst previous introductory texts have covered a narrow range of in-depth topics from socialisation and the family, to class analysis and bureaucracy, few have attempted an eighteen chapter review of sociological thinking. Najman and Western's edited text provides the reader with a broad range of issues and topics which go a long way to reviewing in the editor's words 'the current state of the discipline of sociology in Australia'. The depth of analysis in these chapters is reflected in the depth of experience of the contributors, nine senior researchers and lecturers and six professors or directors of research institutions. Each contributor's work diverges in small and sometimes large ways in ideological commitment. This does not, however, detract from the high level of scholarship evident in each chapter.

Divided into three sections, the first, 'Basic Structures and Concerns', covers the areas of social structure and culture, state and polity, class and inequality, patriarchy and gender, legal order, immigration and ethnicity, and Aborigines and Islanders. The first chapter tells us that 'sociology has the capacity to influence individuals by altering their perceptions of themselves' on the basis of 'a willingness to question', receptiveness to ideas and a voice for the underprivileged. In some contrast to the humanism advocated by this first chapter the next three adopt a more critical perspective to their topics. The second, argues that 'State and economy are both socially constructed and situated in particular nations' and that the Australian state has considerable autonomy, in light of its historical development, from market or international pressure. In relation to socio-economic inequality, the third chapter argues that

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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analysis of the Australian class structure can be grounded empirically to establish an 'objective' model derived from both Marxian and Weberian class analysis, especially elements of the former.

Chapter Four reviews some of the history and methods involved in feminist analysis. It concludes that both 'patriarchy' and 'gender' are useful concepts for the development of 'more humanist' feminist approaches which are arguably still in their 'embryonic state'. The last three chapters of this section voice concerns over areas and groupings in Australia who manage to get rather less coverage in Australian sociology. The Australian legal order is grasped in Chapter Five in all its complexities, as an ideological phenomenon which produces popular coherence through legal rule-making, and legislative implementation and reform. Chapter Six is a statistical overview of the transition of a 'white Australia' culture to a multi-cultured environment, and the influences and effects of migration in Australia in recent years. The final chapter of this section is an historical and anthropological view of the relationship between Aboriginal and Islander groups and the development of British and Australian capitalism. In delineating the conflicts and tensions in this relationship the author argues that the fundamental issue for these groups is their political autonomy and self-determination.

The second section of the reader, 'Socially Patterned Behaviour', covers the issues of education, work and technology, health, political behaviour, crime and leisure. The first chapter of this section assesses empirical data from Australia on two competing theses in the sociology of education, whether formal education aids social mobility or whether it reproduces existing inequalities. It concludes, that while mobility studies have a limited validity, the reproduction arguments provide a more accurate explanation for the majority of Australian's educational attainments. Chapter Nine describes the historical detachment of work and technology in Australia from a strong manufacturing base and the way in which this has contributed to a weak manufacturing sector. This detachment has occurred in part because of the marginalisation of much needed research and inventiveness in the area. The recent decline in Australia's relatively small manufacturing sector in relation to other capitalist economies has shifted relations of work towards greater reliance on market controls and self-management by the private sector. The labour forces of the service industries have also benefited from this decline. Chapter Ten gives an interesting account of the social construction of health in Australia with a special interest in Aboriginal health issues. From the empirical

data it suggests that Australians' health is substantially influenced by 'political, economic and cultural processes'. The final three chapters of this section have a specific theme of societal control. Political behaviour is seen by the first as more constrained and controlled in socialist countries governed by relations of authority whereas liberal democracies such as Australia tend to have a market and relations based on exchange. In this focus on individuals' behaviour, the statistical analysis provides clues to why individuals vote for certain parties and their perceptions of freedoms and controls involved in governmental interventions. Unfortunately, little understanding is gained from such analysis of the politics of large scale actors such as capitalist firms or state interventions as they affect Australia's political culture. The last two chapters of this section, on the other hand, take account of such actors in arguments on the political economy of crime and the social control of leisure. Crime control is understood within the historical and social context of hegemonic policing in Australia, while the control of leisure and leisure as control adjust our sense of pleasure under conditions of capitalism and commodified consumer exchange in leisure activities.

The final section of the book, 'current issues and concerns', covers family change, unemployment, welfare issues, urbanisation and the mass media. The fourteenth chapter on the family concentrates on changes to the family environment over the last half century and the structure of need created within this environment. There is the suggestion that the personal control exercised by women has increased and changed the nature of 'family life' in Australia. Multiple forms of 'the family' are able to not only reflect but also resist changing social and economic circumstances. The fifteenth chapter raises questions about the causes and explanations of unemployment as well as the beneficiaries of changes in the structure of employment over the last 20 years. Labour market statistics reflect a decline in the manufacturing jobs and a rapid increase in business and community service professional and managerial jobs. The major losses in this transformation have been young unskilled and untrained workers. Chapter Sixteen highlights the narrow definition of 'welfare' as social welfare in Australia which ignores that impacts on wellbeing can be viewed within a much wider perspective of the distribution of assets arranged by the fiscal and occupational welfare systems as well as the social welfare system. The narrow definition tends to reflect the conservatism with which policy-makers and politicians understand welfare arrangements. The tripartite definition social-occupational-fiscal revises the question who benefits from the welfare state in

## BOOK REVIEWS

Australia. For example, the impact of the current Labor Government's record is a corporatist strategy for business, the state and unions which needs to be critically assessed within this framework as to 'who benefits and who is paying for the welfare state?' The final two chapters broaden the debate in their location of Australia's 'urbanisation' and the growth of media barons in the wider international scene. The Australian urban environment reflects the urbanisation of all 'western (or capitalist)' countries. Urban development does, however, reflect particular social forces of class, the state, households, resident organisations and social movement whose content is peculiar to Australia. The last chapter on the media gives a succinct and critical summary of the development of newspaper and television industries in Australia. Large-scale capitalists being able to find a steady cash-flow in the financial returns from media ownership which allows them to finance more risky yet profitable capital ventures.

This brief sketch does not do justice to what is a valuable (relatively cheap) and highly readable contribution to introductory texts on sociology in Australia. It certainly reflects the state of the art. Where else can the reader begin to understand within one reading that amongst a multitude of other things 'strong social networks appear to offer some health benefits', leisure as an 'historical development of capitalist society', structural explanations for phenomena such as the family, culture, class, gender or symbolic explanations for the legal order. All of these things, plus the fact that we discover 'Holden, "Australia's car"', was designed by American engineers according to American automotive thinking, and produced for American profits' provide substantial insights into Australians lives and their thinking. This is sociology at its best, skeptical and irreverent, undermining a reader's taken for granted truths through reasoned debate on the processes that produce or allude to such rigidity.

The contributors (in alphabetic order) are: Don S Anderson, John Braithwaite, Lois Bryson, Don Edgar, Stephen Hill, David Ip, Ian Keen, David Kemp, Adam Jamrozik, James Jupp, Patrick Mullins, Jake M Najman, Michael Pusey, Roman Tomasic, Mark C Western, John S Western and Claire Williams.

### ISSUES AFFECTING OLDER ABORIGINAL PEOPLE A DISCUSSION PAPER

Dr Roberta Sykes

Commonwealth Office for The Aged,  
June 1988, pp 46

Reviewed by Marilyn McHugh

In exploring the circumstances of older Aboriginal people Dr Sykes has written a powerful yet depressing account of their situation and the often inappropriate facilities and services that currently attempt to meet their needs.

In collecting information on the subject of older Aborigines the author held discussions with various organisations and departments such as the Aboriginal Medical and Health Services, Homecare and Aboriginal Hostels Limited, as well as Aboriginal specialists in education, health and arts. Contributions from older Aborigines and those associated with their care pointed to the lack of resources and options presently available when varying needs arise. The tradition of information sharing in the Aboriginal community greatly enhanced the author's knowledge.

Some problems discussed in the paper are common experiences for many poor aged members of Australian society - deteriorating health, lack of family support, unsatisfactory living conditions and inadequate income. However as the author points out it is the specific experience of being relegated to the margins of Australian society, denied access to resources such as ownership of land, education and employment opportunities as well as being denied citizenship to their own country till 1967 that leaves aged Aborigines impoverished members of their own society.

Government policies and practices often negate the right of Aboriginal people to an equal share in Australian society. Aborigines experience by any social indicator a degree of poverty unique to their society, poverty which over generations has decimated them both physiologically and psychologically.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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The author found the reality of being an older Aborigine was often one of overwhelming impoverishment. Gross inequalities in standards of living combined with the impact of racism, health and environmental factors has in recent times lead to premature old age and a disturbingly low life expectancy of about 49 years for males and 57 years for females; life expectancies more than 20 YEARS LESS than those of the non Aboriginal population.

Due to a greater lack of resources than other Australians, aged Aboriginal people have a need for government support and assistance far higher than any other ethnic or immigrant group. The attempted integration and assimilation policies of the recent past strongly influenced (often to their detriment) the lifestyles of younger Aborigines towards white institutions and practices. As a consequence older members have been dispossessed of in their role as highly respected Elders in their traditional culture and have been left behind.

The 'mainstreaming' of services, especially for aged Aborigines has exacerbated their vulnerable position. Most services and facilities (when available) are shown by the author to be predominantly insensitive to their cultural differences and values. Chapter 3 of the Discussion Paper most graphically describes the disturbing and distressing results of inappropriate services and culturally inappropriate people (non Aborigines) who run the services.

Action in the form of a comprehensive community development approach with Aborigines fully involved in the determination of culturally appropriate facilities to serve the needs of older members is highly recommended by the author.

Dr Sykes has written a paper that is not only informative but provocative, concise and clearly presented. For those concerned with the crucial and complex issues confronting policy makers concerning aged Aborigines the paper is essential reading.

## **EQUITY IN HOUSING SUPPORT**

**Edited by Rob Campbell and Cliff Walsh,  
Housing Industry Association, 1988, pp 73**

**Reviewed by Bruce Bradbury**

This publication is a collection of papers and commentaries from the second Housing Finance Workshop organised by the Housing Industry Association in early 1988. The goal of this workshop was to examine the issues of equity, the role of government, and that of public housing, in the context of continuing fiscal constraints. As such, the workshop papers provide an excellent introduction to some of the key debates currently under way in housing policy.

There are three main papers in the volume. Judith Yates describes the current state of housing policy in Australia, arguing that there are substantial inequities in government support. Delia Hendrie discusses the overseas experience of housing allowances, and Cliff Walsh argues that the replacement of the current public housing system in Australia with such schemes could lead to a system that is both more equitable and more efficient. These papers are accompanied by commentaries by Fred Gruen, Joan Vipond and Paul Edwards respectively.

Government support for housing in Australia can be categorised into three areas, direct expenditures, indirect tax expenditures and intervention in the finance markets (the last factor being of diminishing importance). The first of these areas reflects what is usually described as 'housing policy' with programs such as public housing, supplementary rent assistance and the first home owners scheme. Drawing on her earlier **Housing Subsidies Study** (see issue 28 of this **Newsletter** for a review) Yates argues that more important however are the tax expenditures that governments make in housing. The most important of these arises from the non-taxation of the imputed rental of owner-occupiers. This means that house owners thus obtain the services of their dwelling without paying the tax (on rent income and real capital gains) that would be paid by landlords. The net effect of this is to subsidise investment in owner-occupied housing at the expense of other investments, and to subsidise the

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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housing costs of owners (particularly those on high incomes) relative to those of private sector tenants.

In 1984-85, the combination of the direct expenditure and indirect tax expenditure policies of government yielded an average annual subsidy of \$1750 to public tenants, \$1120 to owner-purchasers, \$1300 to outright owners but only \$200 to private sector tenants.

One proposal which has been suggested to remedy these equity problems has been to replace (some of) these disparate housing subsidies with a cash housing allowance directed towards households in need. Whilst in principle such schemes could replace some of the tax concessions given to owner-occupiers, this has generally been considered administratively or politically impossible. Rather the discussion has focused on replacing direct government expenditures on public housing with cash grants to poor tenants, who would then pay market rents to their landlords (public or private). The increased equity that this would ensure between private and public sector tenants (though owners would still remain privileged) is used by Cliff Walsh as an important justification for the introduction of some form of cash housing allowances in Australia.

His scheme basically involves the abolition of Commonwealth Government involvement in public housing (except for a residual 'welfare housing' component), with the funds saved being directed towards a cash benefit similar to, but more extensive than, the current Supplementary Benefit for pensioners and beneficiaries. This would involve an increase in the housing costs of those currently in public housing, but a decrease in the costs of the many low income families that have been unable to leave the private rental market.

With such a switch in policy, there are a number of important questions that need to be addressed, particularly of the effect on housing markets. Will such an increase in tenants' incomes lead to a consequent increase in housing prices? What effect will the policy have on the supply of housing? How expensive will it be to administer? Delia Hendrie's paper examines the experience of similar schemes in the US and UK in order to answer these questions. In general, the answers are favourable. Housing allowances lead to relatively little additional demand for housing. Instead, tenants usually chose to reduce their rent burden (rent as a proportion of income) rather than consume more housing. Also, the supply of rental housing is relatively flexible in both the short and long run, and so little of the increased demand is translated into higher prices. Joan Vipond notes that, if paid through the income

support system, the administrative costs of such a scheme in Australia could be very low (though the question of poverty traps may be particularly important here).

What is recognised by the participants of this workshop, and deserves emphasis, is that housing allowances are essentially an **income support** rather than a housing program. None of the participants spell out why one might want to target such income support via housing costs, but it is not hard to do so. Of the low income population, those with the highest housing costs are either those with low levels of wealth (ie not house owners) and/or those living in high rent regions. The former, and possibly the latter, of these factors may be considered relevant grounds for targeting assistance.

Given the income support nature of housing allowances, the question which follows is whether or not Australia needs a **housing policy** as such, as opposed to an income support policy which takes account of housing wealth. Cliff Walsh clearly believes that we do not, except possibly for some 'special needs' categories such as the homeless, crisis cases and the disabled. Whilst there may have been some reason to implement housing policies in the context of post-war reconstruction, there is no longer any particular need for government involvement other than in the laying down the ground rules of land use and building standards.

A contrary view is taken by Paul Edwards of the South Australian Housing Trust. He argues that the housing market contains serious imperfections, such as access costs and discrimination, which only public housing can remedy. Further, there are important **qualitative** aspects of housing which cannot be attained in the private market. Chief of these is security of tenure, but maintenance standards and dwelling quality are also important.

For this reader there are three key questions posed, though largely unanswered, by this volume. First - is there a way of reducing the subsidies to owner-occupied housing that is politically feasible. Policies which seek to equalise the burden of housing costs across the lifecycle of owner-purchasers may provide a politically acceptable way into this problem, though realistically, progress is unlikely.

Second - is housing still a merit good, and if so how should adequate housing be maintained? The belief that housing is a special commodity, for which adequate minimum standards provide both an individual and social benefit was the primary reason why government first became involved in housing policy, and more

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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specifically in the construction and ownership of dwellings. Is this still valid in the more affluent society of 40 years later?

Edwards argues that the replacement of public housing with cash grants to tenants would lead to a diminished housing industry and to poorer quality housing. This is probably true - tenants would prefer to spend their money elsewhere. But is this good or bad?

The third key question is the question of the **qualitative** aspects of different housing tenures. Public perceptions clearly rate home ownership as the most favourable tenure, followed by public tenancy, and finally private rental. Is this just because of the different costs, or because of other factors such as security of tenure? Probably the strongest justification for public housing, as opposed to subsidised private rental housing, lies in such qualitative aspects. What is needed, though, is a careful examination of the extent and importance of such differences and an examination of whether institutions cannot be devised which can take the best elements from each housing form. Indeed, in some aspects, such as labour market mobility, public tenancy (and private ownership) may be considered inferior to private tenancy, though such differences may be alleviated by appropriate administrative policies.

It will be interesting to see how the Commonwealth Government's current Housing Review deals with these issues.

**REPORT ON THE EFFECT OF TOURISM  
AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ON  
LOW INCOME TENANTS IN THE  
MANLY WARRINGAH AREA**

**Prepared by Linnel Secomb on behalf of  
the Community Industry Training Services  
for the Northern Suburbs Tenants Advice and  
Housing Referral Service, September 1988**

**Reviewed by Lisa Coleman**

This report comes at a time when there is an increasing concern about the displacement of the low income earner from accommodation and locations that are now being targeted for tourism.

In recent years, particularly this bicentennial year, there has been increased promotion of the tourist industry with little consideration of the social or environmental impact. Indeed on the contrary, as other recent reports have, this report points out the NSW Tourism Strategy proposal of liaison with the NSW Department of Environment and Planning to alleviate delays and promote 'fast tracking' procedures for tourist developments.

Manly/Warringah has always had a fairly high profile for the tourist and holiday maker. This report outlines tourism in these areas in an historical context and shows the dramatic increase in the last year.

Highlighting the council's expenditure on tourism and questioning the benefits to the ratepayer, a study in 1976 **Tourism in Manly** estimated that 'Manly Council spent approximately 15% of rate revenue on tourist related expenditure'. The report goes on to show that the council since then has made attempts to rebalance this with a differential rate levied on tourist areas but the report still remains critical of the final cost/benefits.

The main aim of the report is to examine the housing situation for low-income tenants in the Manly Warringah shires, in particular, to evaluate the impact of tourist and commercial development on housing supply and demand, and the costs in the rental housing market. The report describes the process of conversion of residential housing into tourist accommodation which is consequently displacing a significant number of residents and increasing housing stress. It also points toward a similar outcome of increased housing stress with the priority given to commercial development, arguing that proposed developments will in fact require an immigration of workers thus adding to the housing demand.

Six sections frame the structure of the report. The first section provides the summary and recommendations. The recommendations are directed toward both local and state governments, and local community organisations such as the local Tenancy Advice and Housing Referral Service and the Community Tenancy Scheme. Some of the recommendations demand a greater continued commitment from local council toward housing and include proposals for joint ventures between the different state, local and community sector organisations and commitment from the business sector by way of differential rates levy.

Section 2 is the introductory chapter outlining the aims, methodology and structure. Sections 3 and 4 furnish the reader with the population and housing profiles

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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which provide the background for the main focus of the report which follows in the final two sections.

The history of tourism development in Manly and Warringah is described in Section 5. The promotion of tourism and the financial costs to council and ratepayers are outlined. The consequences of the promotion of tourism by council and local business on the housing market and the low income earner is debated, followed with recommendations to combat the situation.

The conversion of boarding houses and the increase in the 'holiday accommodation' market is illustrated clearly. It is evident that since 1975 there has been a significant swing toward the development of tourist accommodation contributing to the dramatic loss of boarding house accommodation. Tables based on data from Manly Council show that since 1982 516 boarding house beds have been lost due to conversions, and of those 230, almost half, can be attributed to conversion for tourist accommodation.

A similar swing is seen in the conversion of permanent rental accommodation to short term holiday accommodation or dual purpose property. Dual purpose property basically means that the permanent tenant can face eviction prior to the holiday season when higher rents can be achieved. Rents can escalate from \$180/\$200 to up to \$700 for a two-bedroom unit in the holiday season. This then would make the average weekly rental \$582. Survey work by S Roswarne, Sydney University, (forthcoming report: *The Effects of Tourism on Regional Economies*) shows a similar increase over the last few years of this type of conversion as found with the boarding house conversions.

'In the one year period from 1986/87 to 1987/88 there had been a 33% increase in the number of holiday rentals and a 29% increase in the number of "dual" purpose rental properties.' The implications for displacing private tenants in a tight rental market is obvious. For Manly 'up to 115 households are displaced each summer as their units are used for holiday accommodation during peak holiday seasons'.

The final section of the report examines the consequences of commercial development in Warringah. It concludes that 'prioritising commercial development over residential development will exacerbate the situation in an already constrained housing market and will force up costs which will displace low income tenants, in particular, and increase after-housing poverty and rental and mortgage stress'.

**GOING NOWHERE: A REPORT ON  
PERMANENT CARAVAN PARK AND  
MOBILE HOME DWELLERS ON THE  
CENTRAL COAST OF NSW**

**by Sandra Heilpern**

Commissioned by the Central Coast Tenants'  
Advice and Housing Referral Service Inc,  
July 1988

Reviewed by Lisa Coleman

Since the 1986 legislation (Local Government [Movable Dwellings] Amendment Act, and The Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Ordinance supplement to Ordinance 71) which granted legality to permanent caravan and mobile home dwellers, it is apparent that caravan dwelling as a form of housing tenure is on the increase. Growth in the mobile home estate industry is especially notable. Whether this form of housing tenure is selected by choice or as a matter of affordability/availability is another question.

The Central Coast of NSW has a particularly high representation of caravan parks and permanent caravan dwellers. This report maintains that *one in fifty people* on the Central Coast live permanently in caravan parks and that this is *two to three times the state average*.

It is this high proportion of caravan dwellers, raised concern of the conditions and quality of life in these parks, security of tenure, and the effects of the high seasonal tourist influx that prompted the Central Coast Tenancy Advice and Housing Referral Service to commission this report.

The report is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter provides a summary and recommendations. Chapter 2 gives a brief background to the recent responses from the NSW government concerning caravan parks. Chapter 3 outlines the methodology for the study.

The main body of the research is based on a survey carried out specifically for the study. Following initial investigations through local governments in the area (Gosford and Wyong Shires) it was found that there are 50 parks which accommodate permanent residents. Within these parks there are 2 545 permanent sites. In



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# BOOK REVIEWS

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all parks, including tourist/mixed parks, there are 7 162 sites registered. 49 out of 50 park managers were interviewed and 200 households/sites examined. Although it was found that almost three quarters of permanent sites were occupied by the aged (72%) the researcher decided to select a bias sample. Of the 200 sites selected for interview, half of them were families, almost one third aged and about 20% others (eg singles, groups). The sample represented about 8% of people living permanently in caravan/mobile home parks on the Central Coast.

Chapter 4 gives an overview and a more detailed breakdown of the range and history of caravan parks on the Central Coast.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 detail the results of the survey work. Chapter 5 outlines the responses from the managers, Chapter 6 from the residents and Chapter 7 summarises the costs, illustrating many hidden costs and inconsistency between parks and in some cases between sites in the same park.

The final chapter outlines the legal situation and draws some response to survey questions which asked managers and residents about the current, the new, and proposed legislation.

In my opinion this report has been successful in meeting its criteria and has highlighted many of the problems for caravan dwellers and managers from a sound qualitative view point. Qualitative research of this nature should be encouraged and supported. However, some criticisms remain.

My main criticism of the report concerns the structure and sources of data rather than the approach. Whilst the main body of the report revolves around survey work undertaken specifically for the study, which is admirable, some reference to legislation and overall statistics could have been more clear, referenced, and in some instances may have been better placed earlier in the report.

For instance, a more detailed description of the current legislation and regulations covering caravan parks placed earlier in the report, particularly before the responses from the managers and residents of the parks interviewed, would have assisted the reader in assessing the responses.

For the most part all the statistics discussed reflect data gathered in the survey, and are well elaborated in the tables at the back of the report. My only query is with the statistic that tells us that 'one in every 50 people on

the central coast lives in a caravan park. This is two to three times the state average'. Whilst this is more than likely, considering that there are 50 caravan/mobile home parks with permanent caravan dwellers in the two shires referred to, it is not clear how this was determined. If it was derived from ABS Census or Council records it should have been noted.

Aside from these relatively minor criticisms, I would recommend this report for those interested in gaining an insight into the lifestyles and the varied experiences of permanent caravan dwellers, and an understanding of the role of park managers.

## CREATIVE DAY-CARE FOR MENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE

Jan Carter

Allen and Unwin Australia, pp 157  
\$29.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by Marea Godthelp

Jan Carter, Director of Social Policy and Research at the Brotherhood of St. Laurence in Melbourne, Australia, is a well known author on social issues. Her book, *Creative Day Care For Mentally Handicapped People*, is directed at those involved with the day to day care of the handicapped, and those concerned with the ongoing social and psychological well-being of these handicapped people. The setting for this book is a day care centre in North London, the Highbury Grove Centre in the London Borough of Islington. Chosen because the staff worked to break away from the traditional carer 'norms' in operation throughout the majority of the day care centres in the area and established a different way of caring, of teaching, of understanding and above all of helping the handicapped lead a more interesting and challenging lifestyle.

Carter makes the point that because there are more handicapped persons known to official agencies than if we compare other groups of disadvantaged, the elderly and racial minorities, handicapped persons are readily visible and consequently make an ideal group with

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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whom to pose the question: How do they spend their time?

To gather the necessary information with which to investigate this question, the author spent a month at the centre, questioning, observing and tape-recording the views of the staff and handicapped people. The results gained formed the basis of this book. How they organise their time, what activities occupy their day, each hour, each day. The five chapters of the book are divided into the days of the week, Monday to Friday. The book forms a diary of the daily lives of these people and we are shown how they spend their 'working' week.

This book is then a descriptive study of the temporal organisation of day care services and activities arranged to specifically cater both for the individuals as individuals (their special abilities and needs) and the handicapped at the centre collectively. It tells the story of a group of dedicated professionals who have sought to change the stereotype activities provided for these people in such a way as to equip each handicapped person in the centre with a unique group of activities which draw on their individual capabilities and in so doing this centre goes beyond the definition of 'day care centre' where people are just cared for, looked after, into the educational and stimulating realm of caring.

Jan Carter endeavours to show that these people have a need for organised 'time' activities. She suggests that due to the rise in unemployment and the increasing demand for trained technical staff, more and more handicapped people are finding themselves spending a life just 'doin time'. This raises the issue of an increased time availability and what to do with it. For many years their time has been spent engaged in futile, repetitive jobs day-in-day-out. However, this is where the activities at this centre differ, the handicapped at the Highbury Grove Centre are lead through a series of well planned, timed projects. Jan Carter sees this centre as different from most in this respect. There are individually prepared programs, most of the work involving the handicapped is done in small groups. She points to the norms as centres of handicapped people tucked away behind rooms, sorting screws, packing envelopes, or labelling toy boxes.

Carter uses the various staff responsible for the day's tasks to describe what is involved, why these tasks were chosen, and of what benefit they are to certain members of the handicapped classes. Through the carers she is able to communicate the diversity of ways in which these people responsible for the care of the handicapped

are able to assist them gain a more worthwhile life under a 'creative' program of institutional care. In so doing Carter attempts to dispel the antiquated notion that stifles so much of the development proposed for the handicapped; that creativity has no place in the lives of the handicapped people.

Chapter One entitled Who's Who on Monday begins by describing the people and environment who make up the care centre. The author gives a brief description of the handicap and personality of each as well as an outline of the history and qualifications of the carers who perform the various carer activities. The 'Special Needs' Care Group is examined. This group is responsible for the organisation of time for those handicapped people with two or more disabilities; for example blindness, deafness or immobility. They each have one handicap in common - mental retardation. For each day we are given a detailed summary of one individual, what they are capable of, what their requirements are and how they use their time. We are introduced to Leanne, a severely mentally handicapped young woman - late teens, we explore her special abilities and are made aware of the processes by which the carers formulate a program of creative care for each handicapped person attending the centre. Activities such as crafts, music, sports and cooking as well as various group outings.

Tuesdays person is Clive, a Down's Syndrome victim who has been in a centre for most of his adult life - Olive is his carer. Clive is interviewed. We learn of his likes, dislikes and what he thinks of the centre. Carter explores what the centre is doing for Clive and gives Olive's point of view concerning Clive; '... he has great difficulty in expressing himself. One priority in his program is to develop his speech.' We are told of his elderly mother's restrictive habits, which, Olive suggests, are not allowing Clive to develop his independence fully. 'It's an example of the way handicap is reinforced by social circumstances and family attitudes which are, in the end, more 'fixed' than the handicap itself.' Olive talks about the deterioration of people in a day care centre. She accepts that handicapped people are slow learners but argues that society feels obliged to help these people. 'Some families encourage independence only to a limited degree', after all isn't it much quicker and easier for a parent to dress, or bath or feed them. They (the parents) feel responsible. But it is this 'responsible behaviour' that is negating any motivation by these people to gain added feats of autonomy - reading enough to sign one's name on for Social Security, being able to talk to the bus driver, to wash your own hair, to buy a loaf of bread.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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The Arts and Crafts section is another department in the centre. Carter suggests the importance of systematic teaching of crafts for the mentally handicapped. John, a full time arts and crafts instructor at the Centre discusses what he believes to be the aims of teaching handicapped students about Craft. John summarises the uniqueness of the centre when he talks about individual needs. Here we try to draw out each individual's character and we ask ourselves what they are capable of and how best we can fulfill these needs, what program works best for them. 'What's good for one isn't good for the other and vice versa.' We are introduced to Wednesday's person, Paul. Paul is twenty-one and has attended the Centre for five years, coming straight from school. We are told of Paul's behavioural problems and the care program devised by the workers to assist Paul with his disabilities and problems. The plan consisted of a lot of fine motor skills to allow him to develop his artistic flair, cooking, printing, pottery, and certain social education classes.

Dee, Thursday's person, is an outgoing young woman who has been able to lessen her reliance on the centre over the past few years and has an unpaid volunteer job in a day nursery for half a day a week. She has been the centre of attention at home and the staff find it hard to accept her behaviour at times. An added problem the staff must contend with is her mother's disapproval of the centre and its activities for her daughter. Dee's program is aiming to develop and increase her interpersonal skills, and involves a lot of group contact projects.

Chapter Five introduces the reader to Samantha, a 20 year old Down's Syndrome victim, with a friendly and unassuming attitude towards life. Samantha also has a part-time volunteer job outside the centre. Sam says 'I'm very independent now. I'd like to get a full-time job. I'd like to live in a flat. I can travel alone, I go to work by myself ...'. Samantha enjoys gardening, cooking and looking after the babies in the nursery. Her program consists of certain aspects of these pursuits arranged around an individual timetable in order to cater for her special interests and capabilities.

The chapters described above have given us, the readers, some idea of the different characters and degree of handicap of five people, Leanne, Clive, Paul, Dee and Samantha. Carter attempts to show in this detailed analysis of the 'creative' use of time, that if the carers and indeed all those involved with the care of handicapped persons are able to transform their thinking from one of standards, norms and repetitive daily grinds into a more satisfying, enterprising and imaginative lifestyle ie, 'from a future of wasted time

into a future of prospects and anticipation' we will be heading in the right direction as far as *care* for the mentally handicapped person is concerned.

This book, bases its issues around time, how it can be better used to suit the needs of handicapped persons; which programs should be devised, how often should they be implemented, and what final achievements are sought by both the carer and the user. Carter summarises, 'A timetable which allows for the expression of the unexpected, the dynamic and the unpredictable by mentally handicapped people will help them become the masters, not the victims of time and assist them in the quest for competence, creativity and community. Apathetic staff and bored users stagnate together. This book has tried to explain that this is not inevitable. In describing the conscious pursuit of time, if only from Monday to Friday, this book has shown that time can be an ally, that the clock can enlarge the boundaries of routine; that competence, creativity and community can master time and not the reverse.'

## POST NATAL DEPRESSION

*Video Production with  
Documentary Support Material*

The Video Kit was commissioned by the Sisters of St Joseph at St Margaret's Hospital Complex.

The Production provides an awareness and insight into how Post Natal Depression affects the lives of the sufferer and her family.

The 30 minute video includes discussions with post natal depression sufferers, a husband, obstetrician, psychiatrist and general practitioner.

The Video Kit also includes a booklet for health professionals and a booklet for women and a Directory of Post Natal Services.

Cost is \$150.00 per kit (postage & handling \$5.00), booklets and directory available separately.

For information about the Kit please contact Trisha Jefferies, Social Impacts Publications on (02) 327 6953.

## **1989 SOCIAL POLICY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE, UNIVERSITY OF BATH, 10-12 JULY**

Planning for the 1989 Annual Conference is now well underway. Since the last newsletter the EC has agreed the title for the Conference is:

### ***NEW AGENDAS FOR SOCIAL POLICY: FROM THE 1980S TO THE 1990S***

Possible themes for papers include the following:

- Innovations in social planning and service delivery.
- Demographic change: new challenges for social policy.
- Comparative perspectives on social policy.
- Gender and social policy: new issues for theory and practice.
- Evaluation of the social policies under Thatcherism.
- Social policy and the labour markets of the 1990s.
- Emerging agendas: professional ethics, professional practice.
- New patterns in social relations: issues of dependency and desert.
- Teaching social policy in the 1990s: readjustments or radical re-appraisal.
- Values, attitudes, ideology - setting a new agenda for social policy.

Suggestions for other 'new agendas' and offers to give papers are welcome.

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