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SWRC Newsletter

No 29 May 1988

Editor Adam Jamrozik

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Social Welfare Research Centre
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
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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 the handicapped, 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 Reports and Proceedings are published to make available the views and research findings of the individual authors, and thus to promote the development of ideas and discussion about major concerns in social policy and social welfare.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

In addition to undertaking and sponsoring research on important aspects of social welfare in Australia, the Centre engages in many activities designed to publicise the results of such research. These efforts contribute to progress in furthering understanding of social welfare issues, in developing conceptual and theoretical framework for their analysis, in assessing existing social welfare policies, and in identifying the ingredients of more effective social policies. Such activity proceeds at various levels reflecting the important national coverage and focus of the Centre's work. In addition to publishing the results of its research through its own publications and in other journals, and through organising and contributing to specialised research seminars, conferences and workshops, the Centre is cognisant of the need to inform both the welfare sector and the community generally of its work. In relation to these latter aspects this **Newsletter** remains our main vehicle for informing the public at large of the range of research and other activities we undertake. Its success in achieving this is obvious from the many readers, both in Australia and overseas, who comment favourably on the role of the **Newsletter** and the information it contains. Our commitment to its continuation as a key element in our strategy to publicise the work of the Centre is evidenced by the fact that its length and the diversity of material it covers continue to expand.

In relation to other aspects of this strategy we will, over the course of the coming months be changing the nature of some of our other efforts. Readers will recall that we introduced a new **SWRC Research Resource Series** in 1987. The publications released in this series have proved to be of considerable

interest and value, and several new reports will appear in the series later this year. Following discussions in the Centre and at our Research Management Committee, a new **SWRC Discussion Paper Series** will be released in the near future. This series will contain research studies and results that are shorter in length than those published in the **SWRC Reports and Proceedings** series, although the latter series will remain the main vehicle for releasing the results of our research. I believe there is a role for both series, but will be interested in readers' views once they have had an opportunity to read some of the new Discussion Papers. I envisage providing more information on the new series in the next issue of the **Newsletter**.

We have also decided to introduce some structural changes to the seminars and conferences organised by the Centre. Attendance at the external SWRC seminars held on campus has been somewhat disappointing for some time and they will be discontinued as from June this year. In their place, we will continue to sponsor and organise the very successful inter-State seminars that have been in operation since 1986. We also intend continuing to run small specialised workshops on specific social welfare topics. Finally, we are proposing to organise a series of one- or two-day conferences designed to attract a larger audience to come together to discuss and debate social welfare issues. All of these changes will operate initially on a trial basis, and be reviewed later to assess their success in furthering our efforts to publicise our research findings and encourage public debate of social welfare issues. I will be very interested in readers' views on the proposed changes and on their performance once in place.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

SWRC Publications: The following two reports have been published in the **SWRC Reports and Proceedings** series since the last **Newsletter** appeared.

No 71 **Migrant Workers and Workers' Compensation in New South Wales**, by Caroline Alcorso.

No 72 **Poverty and the Workforce**, by Bruce Bradbury, Diana Encel, Jenny James and Joan Vipond.

While the work on both projects commenced some time ago, their release is now particularly timely in view of the contemporary importance of understanding the links between social policies and the labour market.

Seminars: The Centre organised a Workshop at the University on 18 March on Reform of the Unemployment Benefit System in Australia. The main speaker was Dr Bettina Cass, Director of the Social Security Review, who presented the main elements in the Review's recent issues paper 'Income Support for the Unemployed in Australia: Towards a More Active System'.

Following introductory comments on her paper by Professor Bob Gregory and Alison McClelland, a roundtable discussion took place which produced a very stimulating and lively debate. The success of the workshop was due in no small measure to the organisational efforts of Marilyn McHugh, who provides a more detailed summary of the proceedings on pages 7-9.

As indicated in the previous **Newsletter** our fourth inter-State Conference will take place in Hobart on 27 May. The conference has been organised jointly with the Department of Welfare Studies at Hobart Technical College and the Tasmanian Branch of the Australian Association

of Social Workers. The theme of the conference is **Community Services Policy: Economic and Social Implications**. The Conference programme is provided on page 4.

The Centre has also been involved with the Centre for Multicultural Studies at the University of Wollongong in the organisation of a one-day seminar on **The Social Dimensions of Workers' Compensation**. The seminar will take place at 9 June in Wollongong; further details are provided on page 6.

New Research Projects: The following research projects were approved by the Research Management Committee in March 1988:

- (1) Employment and Unemployment Patterns of Aborigines in New South Wales (Russell Ross).
- (2) Unemployment and Underemployment: Analysis of Labour Underutilisation Rates (Russell Ross).
- (3) The Scope and Impact of Occupational Welfare in Australia (Donald Stewart and Adam Jamrozik).
- (4) Provision and Utilisation of Human Resources in Community Services (Adam Jamrozik).

The Centre has also agreed to provide funds to allow Dr Elim Papadakis, Department of Sociology, University of New England to undertake the following commissioned project:

A Study of Attitudes to State and Private Welfare.

Descriptions of these projects are provided on pages 38-44, and more information can be obtained from the relevant persons responsible for each project.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

SWRC Staff: I am pleased to announce that two new Senior Research Fellows have joined the Centre. Dr Russell Ross arrived in February on two years leave from the Economics Department at Sydney University. Dr Sara Graham arrived in May, having previously been employed as a Principal Research Officer at the Department of Health and Social Security in London. Their arrival will see the work of the Centre strengthened in two important areas, the labour market and the provision and evaluation of community services. Both have had previous associations with the Centre and I hope that their return will prove as productive and enjoyable for them both as were their earlier involvements. Lisa Coleman began work at the Centre as a research assistant in February; she will add depth to our work on women's issues and on housing policies.

The past few months have also, sadly, seen the departure of several members of staff. Vickie Le Plastrier left in March to take up a tutorship in the Economics Department at Macquarie University. Jenepher Burton left in February to pursue an alternative career. Lastly, but by no means least, Jane O'Brien left in April to take an extended vacation. Jane has been an enormous asset to the Centre and will be a great loss. Her ability to continue typing reports amid surrounding and mounting panic and chaos as deadlines approached never ceased to amaze all of us. She goes with the best wishes of everyone in the Centre, and with the hope that her departure will not be permanent.

Following these departures, Jenny Young has been appointed our new Publications and Information Officer. She will bring a range of experience to this position, having been at the Centre now for over five years. I have noted before how important this position is, and I have every

confidence Jenny will continue to advance and improve our efforts in this area. We now have two new secretaries, Jackie Comer and Marea Godthelp. They have already shown their abilities in helping us through what could have been a very difficult and disruptive transition period. I hope that they, along with all our other new staff, will enjoy their time at the Centre and make their contribution to our informal and enjoyable work environment.

Peter Saunders
Director
SWRC.

AVAILABLE NOW:

SWRC REPORTS AND PROCEEDINGS

No 71 *Migrant Workers and Workers' Compensation in New South Wales*,
by Caroline Alcorso.

No 72 *Poverty and the Workforce*,
by Bruce Bradbury, Diana Encel, Jenny James and Joan Vipond.



Caroline Alcorso
(by Courtesy of Public Affairs Unit,
UNSW)

COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICY: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Hobart, 27th May 1988 - Organised by:

**THE SOCIAL WELFARE RESEARCH CENTRE THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
and
THE DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE STUDIES HOBART TECHNICAL COLLEGE
and
THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS TASMANIAN BRANCH**

PROGRAMME

8.45 - 9.15	Registration
9.15 - 9.30	Welcome - Introductory Remarks Mrs Veronica Coulshed Head, School of Social Work Tasmanian State Institute of Technology
9.30 - 10.00	Opening Address The Hon. Fran Bladel, MHA State Member for Franklin
10.00 - 10.45	Dr. Peter Saunders, Director Social Welfare Research Centre Research in Community Services - An Overview Chair: Peta Fitzgibbon Assistant Director (Welfare), DSS
10.45 - 11.15	Morning Tea/Coffee
11.15 - 12.00	Adam Jamrozik, Senior Research Fellow Social Welfare Research Centre Human Resources in Community Services: Inadequate Investment or Welfare Overload? Chair: Michael Foley Executive Officer, TASCOS
12.00 - 12.45	Donald Stewart, Research Assistant Social Welfare Research Centre Community Services and Occupational Welfare: Who Benefits? Who Pays? Chair: Michael Cummins, Teacher Welfare Studies Department Hobart Technical College
12.45 - 2.00	Lunch
2.00 - 2.45	Dr. Ralph Chapman, Senior Lecturer, Administration Political Science Department, University of Tasmania Opportunities for Innovation: The Example of HACC Tasmania Chair: Barbara Lypka, Manager Community Services, Department for Community Welfare
2.45 - 3.30	Lyndal Scott, Director Community Services, Glenorchy City Council Redefining Roles - The Dilemma for Local Government Chair: The Hon. Duncan Kerr, MP Member of the House of Representatives (Denison)
3.30 - 4.00	Afternoon Tea/Coffee
4.00 - 5.00	Open Forum - Seminar Presenters Chair: David Owen, Research Officer Department for Community Welfare

The proceedings of the Seminar will be published by the Social Welfare
Research Centre in the SWRC Reports and Proceedings Series.
Further Information: Jenny Young - Phone - (02) 697 5150

EDITOR'S NOTES

This issue of the Newsletter has grown in volume, thanks to the people who have contributed to it. I hope the readers will find the content and quality of contributions to be of interest. It is appropriate to mention again here that the views expressed in the Newsletter - as in all of the Centre's publications - are those of the authors and in no way do they represent any policy of the Centre. As a university-based research unit, the Centre does not have a policy and is, in fact, explicitly precluded from making policy statements. The Newsletter is our main instrument of communicating to the public what the Centre is doing. It also serves as a forum for publishing views presented at seminars and conferences, or in other publications (see, for example, book reviews, pp 45-60) and the views of our readers as well. On issues of social policy and social welfare we aim to publish 'without fear or favour'.

Readers' Contributions: In the previous issue of the Newsletter I invited our readers to write and give us their comments about our work and our publications as well as any suggestions they wished to make. We have received two contributions (pp 35-37), both offering criticisms, one about the reliability of reporting on a seminar by Robert Nittolo, and the other about our use of the term 'the handicapped'. Robert's explanation is included and the correction of the term has been made.

Social Work Education: The two students in social work, Susan Ducie and David Allan, who spent 10 weeks at the Centre as part of their field education have written about their experience (pp 25-26). We thank them for their contributions and we hope to have other social work students in the future.

Subscriptions: There still seems to be some confusion about subscriptions to SWRC publications. Please note that subscription to Series No 4 began with Reports and Proceedings No 69 and includes 15 publications. Most of these will be Reports and Proceedings but there will be at least one or possibly two publications in the Research Resource Series (see pp 27-34).

Thanks and Appreciation: I want to thank all the people who have contributed to this Newsletter. My special thanks go to Jenny Young who has recently taken over the job of Publications and Information Officer, and Jackie Comer who came to the Centre only a few weeks ago but has already mastered the tricky M24 computer and even more tricky our new laser printer. I am sure, our readers will notice the result and approve.

Adam Jamrozik
Editor



CENTRE FOR MULTICULTURAL STUDIES

You and your colleagues are
invited to a one day seminar

THE SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION

DATE: Thursday, June 9th, 1988

TIME: 10.00 am - 3.30 pm

PLACE: The Technology Centre
University of Wollongong

COST: \$10 full registration.
\$5 concession registration
To include a sandwich lunch
and coffee etc

CONTACT PEOPLE:

Caroline Alcorso on
Ph: (042) 27 0780 or
Don Stewart on
Ph: (02) 697 5145

PROPOSED PROGRAM

10.00	Welcome/opening remarks	Mike Morrissey Centre for Multi- Cultural Studies
10.10	Introduction to research projects	Adam Jamrozik Social Welfare Research Centre
10.20	'Workers Compen- sation and Social Welfare Expenditure in Australia'	Don Stewart SWRC
10.45	Questions and discussion	
11.15-	COFFEE BREAK	
11.30		
11.30	'Migrant Workers and Workers Compensation in NSW'	Caroline Alcorso CMS
12.30-	LUNCH BREAK	
1.30		
1.30	Panel discussion and open debate	
	Panel	
	Athena Touriki, Solicitor	
	Paul Matters, Secretary to South Coast Labour Council	
	Graeme Roberts, President Port Kembla Ironworks	
	Illawarra Legal Centre Representative	
	Tenosynovitis Association Representative	
	Ursula Schiappi, State Compensation Board	
3.00	Concluding remarks and suggestions for further work	
3.30	Close	

.....
If you would like to attend, please send this registration form, with payment to:

**Centre for Multicultural Studies
University of Wollongong
P O Box 1144
Wollongong 2500**

NAME(S):

ORGANISATION:

ADDRESS:

FULL FEE(S)(\$10):(CONCESSION FEE(S) (\$5)

SEMINARS, CONFERENCES

Below are the summaries of papers presented earlier this year at SWRC Seminars held at the University of New South Wales

**SWRC Workshop at the
University of New South Wales
Reform of Unemployment
Benefit in Australia**

Friday 18 March 1988

By Marilyn McHugh

The aim of the workshop was to provide a forum for a response to and discussion of the concerns raised in the Social Security Review Issues Paper No 4 **Income Support for the Unemployed in Australia: Towards a More Active System.**

Dr Peter Saunders stated there was a growing need to consider Unemployment Benefit (UB) as actively encouraging training or return to work and the greater need for closer integration between labour market programs and income support more generally.

Dr Bettina Cass, Director, Social Security Review, noted the paper did not constitute the only focus for discussion of the concerns we have to consider in policy terms in relation to unemployment. The reason the Social Security Review (SSR) wrote in the first instance Issues Papers as distinct from final reports is so the SSR could get from interested individuals and organisations a broadening of discussion and an introduction of new ideas, new theories, new materials and new creative thinking. Dr Cass expanded on the labour market changes in the last fifteen years in relation to unemployment and the Social Security system. The most pressing concern in changes in labour force participation rates was now significantly increased durations of unemployment for married workers with dependent children and

older workers, 55 and over. Since 1980 there has been an increase in the numbers of unemployment beneficiaries with dependent children.

There was a need in income support to look at income test arrangements for unemployed beneficiaries and the disincentive effects for the second earner's (the wives of unemployed men) labour force participation. There was increasing recognition that unacceptable levels of poverty were associated with long term unemployment and joblessness, exacerbated when the unemployed had dependants.

The crucial issue overall was a restructured system of income support for the unemployed integrated into national labour market programs and objectives. Under the suggested restructuring four new programs were proposed in the Issues Paper relating to stages of working life and duration of unemployment and associated with labour market programs. They were linked to four main payments

- Job Search Allowance (JSA)
- Short-Term Employment Payment (STEP)
- Long-term Employment Adjustment Payment (LEAP)
- Transition Age Payment (TAP)

Professor Bob Gregory, Australian National University, responded to the Issues Paper. He noted with respect to policy recommendations that the authors addressed the relevant issues. It appeared the paper would serve the public debate well.

His major problem with the document was that it was about spending more within the Social Security portfolio.

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There was no discussion of how to rearrange priorities so less could be spent in some areas. The costs for extra training programs added to the overwhelming spirit of spending more on recipients of UB. He suggested more research was necessary on the evaluation of past and present training programs. In the area of incentives to encourage labour force participation Professor Gregory suggested widening the free area to combine part-time (P/T) work with UB.

The long term unemployed were of concern. Looking at cross-country comparative literature of different schemes the long term unemployment disappeared as their benefits ran out - but where did they go - what happened to them? Did they go to jobs, to other programs or where?

Professor Gregory agreed with Dr Cass that for older workers the UB should be the same as the pension payment, for equity reasons. Accepting the proposed restructuring of the UB system he commented that the system catered to a diverse range of problems to meet the needs of different age groups and stages of labour force participation.

Ms Alison McClelland, Brotherhood of Laurence, responded to the Issues Paper by emphasising the primacy of the poverty alleviation objective. The main objective for reform should be to alleviate poverty by paying adequate income to those with limited resources. Inadequate levels of government income support were a major contributor to the poverty of unemployed people. A strategy for increasing adequacy payments would include achieving parity with pension base rates, fringe benefits and rent assistance as well as a selective liberalisation of the income test. Adequacy issues would be best addressed by removing present differentials in rates and conditions

and applying to people with similar needs not by a further categorisation that would increase differential treatment. Incentive objectives for labour force participation would be most effectively achieved through the labour market rather than income support reform by providing sufficient jobs and establishing sufficient and appropriate programs to assist disadvantaged job seekers obtain employment.

Reforming the system to meet the objective of equity by providing similar support to those with similar needs is an important consideration especially for the young unemployed. There should be policy directions to support married women who wish to apply in their own right for UB to opt for split benefit entitlement and to look at labour market programs that will improve their access to the labour market generally.

Many issues were raised and discussed in the open session, and summarised in the Workshop Overview by Mr John Freeland, University of Sydney. What happened at the Workshop was a coming together of different world views: on the one hand, the rational economists concerned with public sector expenditure levels and particularly work incentives and not too keen to talk about levels of adequacy and issues of equity; on the other hand for those who had worked with or for the unemployed the primary concern has been for adequacy and equity. In the middle were those who were seeking to ensure meaningful reform to a highly complex system with inadequate knowledge, with a concern for adequacy and equity, efficiency and incentive and a concern for restraint.

In relation to the statistics and data we have available, Mr Freeland argued, we needed a much greater array of more detailed statistical

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analysis and breakdowns of the changing patterns of access and participation in full and part time work on the basis of age, gender, industry and occupation. This is essential if we are to understand what is happening with unemployment and the composition of the unemployed population.

There have been important social changes which had implications for labour market and employment/unemployment issues. In 1966 Australia's employed as a proportion of total population was 42% - in 1986 it was 43% with slightly fewer employed F/T, more P/T. However, we had more poverty and more unemployed people. In the breakdown of the 57% of dependent population of those who were privately dependent on intra family transfers and those who were socially dependent ie on pensions and benefits, those socially dependent have moved from 10% in 1969 - one in ten persons in Australia to 1986 25% - one in four.

There had been equally significant changes in labour force participation in the 20 years 1966 to 1986. There has been a squeezing out at both ends of the labour force population, an expulsion particularly of teenagers but also older workers. More work needed to be done on the trends in labour force participation and those reliant on UB as our understanding of the causes of unemployment was important when it came to posing solutions or policy responses.

EDUCATION AND WELFARE

4 March 1988

CHILD POVERTY AND EDUCATION

By R W Connell and V White
Macquarie University

The question of poverty and education has been around as long as there has been a school system, though it has taken a different shape in different periods of history. In the later nineteenth century the issue was framed mainly as one of social discipline. The colonial bourgeoisie feared the potential for disorder among the propertyless masses, and especially feared the dangerous minorities living in what were increasingly seen as slums. Bourgeois reforms attempted to bring the children of the poor under control through schooling. The rigid curricula and the emphasis on uniformity and obedience which were long a feature of Australian schools are in part a legacy of this effort. The schooling that resulted was not particularly welcomed by the poor. The expansion of school systems under compulsory education laws interfered with the domestic economy of working class and family households; and shattered the network of small, cheap private schools which had grown up as a form of educational self-help in working-class communities. A long struggle with reluctant parents followed before 'compulsion' worked. It did work in the end because the resistance was always half-hearted. In colonial education the counterpoint to the theme of social control was an ideal, widely held in the labour movement, of working-class improvement through education. Mechanics' institutes, night classes, libraries and reading rooms, trade union and progressive publications were mainly forms of adult education but the impulse could and did

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transfer to the issue of schooling for the workers' children. So there was a working-class push for the expansion of public education at the same time as working-class resistance to it.

In the half-century ushered in by the depression of the 1890s, as labour became a leading force in politics and the economy floundered between its wool-and-gold history and a nascent industrialisation, it was the radical framing of the issue that became dominant. Working-class politics and first-wave feminism claimed education as a citizen right. Compulsion could be taken for granted, but free education now had to be defended against cost-cutting conservatives. At such times as the 1930s depression, the pressure to cut education costs would be severe. The issue of poverty and education was now framed as debate about providing a universal educational service. In this framing of the issue, 'the poor' were seen as the majority of the society, whose educational rights had to be asserted against a privileged minority. Here the labour movement had common ground with those employers who had an interest in a literate and skilled workforce, principally manufacturers. An important consequence of this alliance was the growth of a system of technical schools and colleges servicing the apprenticeship system, which became the dominant form of postcompulsory working-class education for boys. Girls' educational participation declined, relative to boys, in the first few decades of the century. In counterpoint to the defence of a universal minimum was a complex of social and economic changes which gradually gave an entirely new significance to the mainstream educational system. The growing social weight of professions, the growing economic importance of

science, an intensifying search for credentials, by the mid-century had transformed the ideological context of the issue of poverty and education.

In the period of industrialisation, from the late 1930s to the 1970s, the Australian education system expanded massively. Between 1947 and 1981 secondary enrolments grew five-fold, tertiary enrolments ten-fold. In effect a tertiary tier was added to mass education. The number of credentials on offer multiplied in spectacular fashion, and their importance in selection for jobs and organising the workforce increased in proportion. The workforce was reconstituted with mass labour immigration from Mediterranean countries and the increasing proportion of married women in paid jobs. A gradual decline in political class consciousness (symbolised by the ALP's retreat from the socialisation objective) undermined the commitment to ideas of equal provision in education and to the image of education as a citizen right. The dominant image of the education system was now a long competitive ladder up which students crawled as individuals - or fell off. In this context the issue of poverty could only be framed as an issue of 'unequal access' to this ladder, as 'equality of opportunity' for individuals to reach the top rungs.

When poverty was rediscovered as a political issue in the late 1960s, mainly through the efforts of welfare researchers like Henderson and welfare agencies like The Brotherhood of St Laurence, it was also rediscovered in education. But it was rediscovered as a minority issue, as a contrast between a disadvantaged few and an affluent majority. The poor were seen as lacking the wherewithal to get their kids onto the long ladder - through material

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lack such as run-down schools and no books in the home, or cultural lack such as deficient language and the wrong values. Accordingly the policy response was to remediate these deficiencies through special provision for the children of the poor. The Karmel Committee report of 1973 which has set the terms of debate on this issue for the last two decades, boldly argued that inequalities of family income should not affect the standard of schooling any child received. In practice it proposed the remedial effort should be concentrated upon 15% of urban children and 10% of non-urban, and should amount to one-twelfth increase in the recurrent funding of their schools. Those levels have proved among the most influential ideas in the report. The fact that special-purpose funding has been institutionally available for work with the most disadvantaged minority has powerfully contributed to the intellectual framing of the issue as a problem **about** a minority. A message that the program is outside the mainstream is contained even in the Commonwealth's technical term of the money: 'Supplementary Grants'.

Both state and federal governments have programs to relieve the effects of poverty on education. In the main they fall into two categories: those that come in the form of grants to families on behalf of children and those that form part of a grant or a staff allocation at the school level.

The Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) is the centrepiece of Australian policy on poverty in education. It began in 1974, following recommendations by the Karmel Committee, and has been supported by all federal governments since. It has claims to be one of the most experienced and innovative anti-poverty programs in the OECD countries. In the current year it is

funded at \$41 million and reaches a little over 1400 schools and 420,000 children. There are no exact figures on the point but we would estimate there are about 24,000 teachers working in these schools who are in one way or another reached by the program.

The site of action of the DSP is the school not the individual child. The Commonwealth allocates money to the States and to the Catholic school system on the basis of an Index of Disadvantage, compiled from national census data, which identifies areas with concentrations of people with low socio-economic status. The systems allocate money to 'declared' schools on the basis of submissions describing programs which the schools wish to undertake. These may be of any kind, but the distribution is influenced by priorities being pursued by Commonwealth or the systems. Most of the money is distributed to schools by elected committees consisting of parents, teachers and administrators, which offer support to the schools in the program as well as deciding on submissions for funding. Each system and state has a different administrative structure, but most declared schools have a DSP Committee which is responsible for developing submissions and administering programs for the children in its school.

There are severe limits to what an individual school can accomplish without change in the education system around it. Locally-based curriculum reform, for instance, may be sharply constrained by an assessment structure like the HSC. (This point has dramatically increased significance in NSW, where the new state government's policy is to reintroduce a School Certificate and introduce external testing at other levels.) Accordingly we need

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to consider what there is by way of wider policy that bears on class inequality in schooling.

Some school systems have generalised declarations in favour of equity. An example is the NSW Department of Education's **Statement of Corporate Purposes and Goals** which recognises the need to allocate resources on the basis of equity and to encourage equitable practices in the school and in the development of its curriculum. The Tasmanian policy statement on secondary education is more sharply focussed, including an analysis of changing economic structures and the effects of unemployment on the life chances of the children in the schools. Tasmania, though the smallest of the state systems, has an impressive record in the anti-poverty field.

The new development in this area is the emergence of 'social justice' policies in education. The Commonwealth Government has recently established a Social Justice Secretariat whose brief presumably extends to education though as yet the policy has not been developed. Two State governments, Victoria and South Australia are in the process of refining a social justice policy for education. Other states have set up 'Equity' terms which have the brief of developing policies on Aborigines, girls, non-English speaking background and the disabled. It appears that in some cases poverty is not seen as an 'equity' area.

Within these frameworks, schools undertake a considerable range of initiatives. The DSP is designed to make sure action is adapted to local circumstances and this means considerable diversity in the school level projects funded through it. the schools continue to teach mainstream subjects like reading, writing, maths, science, the arts.

Program funding for the most part goes into a search for new and better ways of teaching and learning them. Some funding goes into work on the organisation of the schools, with a view to creating an environment which will assist rather than hinder learning.

The DSP has pioneered the publication of students' work. Examples of 'talking books', locally produced reading schemes and school newsletters, all written, managed and distributed by children, abound. Many amateur radio stations and video-production teams which have encouraged students to do script-writing, production and presentation are further examples of the sophistication that has emerged in the teaching of literacy.

The fact that these resources are developed by the children provides them with opportunities to control the outcome, in ways not possible with commercially produced material. This process is potentially very empowering and gives children a chance to learn organisational and technological skills in the local context.

The federal government's initiative on child poverty could have a multiplier effect beyond the specific benefits proposed, if it stimulates a rethinking of all programs related to these children. To people in the welfare sector we wish to signal the scale and diversity of educational work currently going on in this area, and the potential it has. There is a divide between teachers and welfare workers, and perhaps even more a divide between educational and welfare policy makers. It will be important for each to learn more about the other's work.

People on the education side of the divide also need to rethink, to be

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dangers of the situation we have reached. Given that the scale of child poverty has greatly increased over the lifetime of the school-based anti-poverty programs, the evidence suggests that those programs have conducted an impressive holding operation but have not been on a large enough scale to change the basic educational relationships and turn the trend around.

For a number of reasons political strategy in the public sector is at a moment of crisis, sharpened by the recent election results. A creative policy approach could develop existing programs such as the DSP into something larger, better resourced and harder-edged; which would build on the assets we now have, connect with the social justice initiatives, and connect with the economic reforms that require a better-educated workforce. An effort of that kind should make fundamental changes in the educational circumstances of children in poverty.

THE WELFARE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION AND HEALTH

By Tania Sweeney, SWRC

The issue of the relationship between health and welfare (and indeed education) has been an area of concern for a number of years.

Although health and welfare services have developed under different auspices, in their manifest objectives they seem to be providing the same thing, especially in the realm of preventive services. That is, they - all three - seem to be providing supports for families with young children to cope with the tasks of child rearing.

It would appear on the surface that this need for resources and supports is universally recognised and that assistance is available to anyone who needs it in a non-stigmatised, non-coercive way.

Research evidence suggests that this is not the case and that both health and welfare assist middle class families and poor families in very different ways.

In welfare, we provide child care for the middle class and family support (and child welfare) for the poor. In health, we provide parent support for the middle class and parental surveillance and monitoring under the guise of parent support for the poor.

Concepts and definitions of health and welfare share a remarkable similarity in that they focus on the vague notion of 'well-being'. Government provisions and objectives at the Commonwealth and State levels in terms of what is provided at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of prevention, present a complex array of services. Family support, in health is provided by services such as Family Care Centres and in welfare, under the auspice of the Family Support Program. These programs and the services they provide and the views of providers about the services and their clients present some interesting contrasts.

The following conclusions were drawn from the research completed at the Centre:

1. while services may be provided under health and welfare and one would assume they meet different needs of young children and their families, there seems to be some indication that this is not the case.

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2. in workers' views, families need support and resources to assist with the rearing of children in the very early stages of family formation.
3. accordingly, to compartmentalise 'need' into health and welfare and indeed into Commonwealth/State responsibility, becomes counter-productive in trying to meet the needs of families with young children.
4. despite the 'manifest' objectives of family support being to enhance well-being, and the image one of universal availability, it seems clear that poor families remain subject to surveillance and coercive intervention. This occurs in both the health and welfare systems.

In effect, all families need access to a range of support services and resources that can be provided in a non-stigmatised, non-coercive way and that in providing this range of services, we need to start by asking, not what each system can and can't do within its defined boundaries, but rather what resources and supports do families need in raising young children.

In the 'apparent' move in both health and welfare systems from tertiary to secondary and primary levels of service provision and thus the shift from maintenance functions to enabling functions, it is not surprising that the issue of the overlap between health and welfare services, and the need to reinforce the concept of prevention has been an issue in social policy over the last 10 - 15 years. A number of inquiries during the 1970s such as the Royal Commission into the Administration of the Australian Government (1976) and the report of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare (Baume

Report) **Through a Glass Darkly: Evaluation in Australian Health and Welfare Services** (1979) identified such concerns. The former recommended a number of structural changes including

- (a) the consolidation of Commonwealth Departments into a Health and Welfare Commission;
- (b) simplification of funding by way of block grants to the State;
- (c) facilitate federal-state decision-making mechanisms.

Some structural changes, such as the amalgamation of departments have occurred at the Commonwealth and State level, although funding arrangements, specific purpose grants (with tied conditions) and tax reimbursements to the States seem to have been preferred to block funding in recent years (at least in health and welfare).

None of the changes suggested or implemented seem to have come to grips with some very fundamental problems, especially those regarding who the clients of each of the systems are and under what conditions they receive services.

Althuizen (1986) has suggested that a fundamental problem in welfare practice is that it targets its intervention at the poor while health has the framework to respond across the socio-economic spectrum. He argues that this factor has been a major obstacle in

- (a) amalgamating health and welfare departments
- (b) developing policy and planning which responds to clients needs rather than to departmental boundaries.

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The paper presented forms part of a larger SWRC project examining the relationships between health, education and welfare.

THE WELFARE OF THE WORKPLACE

15 April 1988

THE POSITION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LABOUR MARKET

By Russell Ross, SWRC

The issue raised in this paper was: how have young people fared in the labour market during the period since 1983? This period has been characterised by a generally improved labour market. Comparison of statistics published in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) **The Labour Force, Australia, March 1983** (Catalogue 6203.0) and **The Labour Force, Australia, March 1988 Preliminary** (Catalogue 6202.0), indicates that there were over one million more employed persons in March 1988 than was the case in March 1983. This represents an increase of 16% in the number of people in employment since March 1983; by contrast the working age population has increased around 10%. Growth in part-time employment was greater, at 32%, than that in full-time employment (14%). Although both sexes have shared equally in the growth in part-time employment with both female and male part-time employment growing by around 30%, overall female employment has grown more rapidly than male employment; 26% compared to 11%.

The position for teenagers has been quite different. Figures presented in the same two ABS publications indicate that full-time employment among males aged 15 - 19 years has been static at around 250,000 jobs

during this period. Full-time employment among females aged 15 - 19 declined over the period; 183,000 in March 1983 and 175,000 in March 1988. By contrast, the growth in part-time employment among teenagers has been dramatic. Part-time employment among the 15 - 19 age group grew 60.5% for males. The major change over this period has been in the labour force participation of secondary school students. In March 1983, 20% of males and 23% of females aged 15 - 19 and attending school were in the labour force. In March 1988, these figures had risen to 26% and 34% respectively. Consequently, in 1988, 21% of all males aged 15 - 19 who were attending school were also in paid employment, while 27% of all females aged 15 - 19 and attending school were in the labour force. In March 1988, these figures had risen to 26% and 34% respectively. Over the same period, the unemployment rate for these groups had fallen, especially for males. In 1983, the unemployment rates were 28.7% (males) and 24.9% (females); by 1988 the rates had fallen to 20.8% and 21.4% respectively. Consequently, in 1988, 21% of all males aged 15 - 19 who were attending school were also in paid employment, while 27% of all females aged 15 - 19 who were attending school were also in paid employment. Although the statistics contained in the above ABS publication do not indicate the pattern of hours of work among school students, it is believed that the vast majority of this employment is in 'short hours, part-time jobs' with most students working less than eight hours per week. The conclusion was reached that there is a clear trend towards school students increasingly supplementing their own - or their family's - income while undertaking study.

Attention was also devoted in the seminar to two other labour market

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problems; unemployment and discouraged workers. ABS figures from **Persons not in the Labour Force Australia** for the period 1983 to 1987 (months of March and September only) indicate that there are only very small numbers of discouraged jobseekers among young people. The number of discouraged jobseekers aged 15 - 19 has remained steady at less than 1% of the teenage labour force throughout the period.

Underemployment, however, is an important problem among this age group. Figures from the ABS monthly publication **The Labour Force Australia** for the period March 1983 to September 1987 suggest that underemployment rate (ie the proportion of the labour force which is underemployed) has been around 8% for females and 15 - 19 and 5-6% for males in the same age group throughout the entire period.

It is planned to undertake a detailed analysis of the factors underlying the labour market position of teenagers during the next few months.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE LOW PAID WORKER

By Flora Gill,
Department of Economics,
The University of Sydney

In the past many Australians have expressed considerable pride in having a system of wage fixing which pays heed to egalitarian dictates. But recently demands have been mounting for wage flexibility and the introduction of a larger dispersion in wages. Unless these demands are accompanied by increases in the average level of wages, this can only mean a cut in the real value of lower wages.

These demands are not confined to a small well-defined group guided by self-interest. They appear to have gained currency even among those who in the past prided themselves on the protection that the wage-fixing system was believed to offer the lower paid. These former advocates of the system appear to have become embarrassed into feeling that we have gone too far, and that sheltering the lower paid from unfettered market forces is perhaps no longer necessary.

This raises an important question. If these demands for greater flexibility and wage dispersion are granted, will we be dismantling a system which indulged in excessive egalitarian generosity towards the lowest paid members of the workforce, or will we eliminate what is in fact a rather minimal level of protection? This raises a further question.

What criterion can be used to distinguish between egalitarian elements in wage determination and the more limited wish to provide protection against unfettered market forces? In proposing this dichotomy it is necessary to set apart two distinct notions of social justice. The first is a notion of social justice that requires as a minimum condition that all members of the community share in the fruits of economic growth or even that the poor sections should even share disproportionately in the fruits of growth. In other words, the standard of living of the poor, both working and non-working, must not stagnate when the community at large is enjoying a rising standard of living; and, indeed, economic growth should perhaps be tapped to narrow the gap between the lower income groups and the remainder of the community. Such a principle must be satisfied by any system which purports to be egalitarian. In contrast, a second

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notion of social justice can be identified which aims to ensure a given minimum standard of living for all. This is founded on the traditional (Victorian) notion of charity and does not satisfy the minimum requirement needed to qualify as a member of the class of egalitarian principles.

The historical record of wage determination reveals a pattern more consistent with the 'minimum standard of living' notion of social justice than with a concept that all should share the fruits of economic growth. This runs against the conventional wisdom, which maintains that the system of wage fixation rigidly maintains pay relativities across and within industries over time. If that was so, all pay rates would move up at a uniform percentage rate, automatically guaranteeing that the fruits of growth were shared (although without contributing to any narrowing of the gap between the better off and the lowest paid). But, contrary to widely held beliefs, this has not been the case.

Without doubt the system has provided protection against the eroding effect of inflation to the lower paid workers more than to those higher up the wage ladder. This has been the case since the inception of the arbitration system and through the plateau-indexation decisions of more recent times.

However, the same system has granted very little increase in the real value of wages for the lowest-paid jobs. Almost as a rule, whenever award wages have been allowed to increase over and above the rate needed to compensate for inflation, the bulk of the percentage increase has accrued to those higher in the wage hierarchy. Indeed, the lower-paid workers have seldom received any increase in real terms. This

contravenes the myth that relativities are constant (and its corollary, that the percentage increase in the average value of real wages also describes the rate of increase in the real value of the wages of the lower paid).

Two distinct, and largely independent, arguments can be offered in support of regulating the minimum wage. The first rests on the notion of social justice which demands that no member of the society will be expected to sell his/her labour for a price which fails to reach a specified minimum level. This is an extension of the idea of a guaranteed minimum standard of living. The second argument involves the structure of the economic system and the inequality of bargaining power between the individual worker and the employer in a totally 'free market', or even the situation where organised labour is too weak to overcome the underlying asymmetry of bargaining power.

Both of the above arguments are vulnerable to the proposition that justice is bought at the cost of unemployment. This criticism has certainly occupied a central position in the free trade agenda. Indeed, the possibility that minimum wages are set at a level which will generate adverse employment effects cannot be denied. However, the ancillary claim at the core of the free-trade agenda, that unfettered market forces of their level are at their maximum possible level, has little foundation.

In this paper attention has focused on the popular conception of wage arbitration, which plays a crucial role in the mounting agitation for so called 'labour market deregulation'. Whatever may be the hypothetical world which, it is envisaged, will emerge from such a reform, the

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agitation appears to have gathered a substantial momentum on the strength of the idea that an excessive egalitarian bias has dominated award wage fixing in Australia. The arguments in this paper lead to the conclusion that this conception does not tally with the historical record of the results generated by the arbitration system.

These results also bear on the long-standing debate about the degree of dispersion in the distribution of wages in Australia vis a vis the distribution observed in other Western countries. It has not been categorically established that significant statistical differences exist over time. 'Snapshot' comparisons between Australia and other countries have also yielded ambivalent results. However, the central conclusion of the present analysis is that the minimum award wage has achieved such poor growth in real terms over the current century that, even if it could be established persuasively that overall the wage dispersion in Australia is smaller than in other countries, the cause could not be construed as excessive generosity to those on the minimum wage.

The fact that the real value of the (male) basic wage in 1967 was only modestly above its value in 1907 not only undermines popular conceptions about the exceptionally egalitarian nature of wage arbitration in Australia but also has very direct implications regarding the **poverty line**, since the latter has adopted the numerical value of the Federal basic wage as representative of the minimum income needed for a family of four. In addition, the rate of increase in the real value of the basic wage during the 60 years in which the two-tiered wage system operated (1907-1967) not only fell short of the average rate of growth

of national income per capita but, particularly in the growth era of the 50s and 60s, it also grew at a rate substantially lower than the average award-wage. In light of this empirical picture, a reassessment of the poverty line should perhaps be considered.

Workers who are locked into low-paid jobs for a significant part of their working life are at the mercy of the institutionally set minimum wage, especially in the economic climate prevailing in recent years. If we resign ourselves to a prolonged period of substantial unemployment, an increasing number will find themselves locked into low-paid jobs, the scope for occupational mobility being severely diminished. The bargaining power of such workers in a 'deregulated market' is bound to be very poor indeed, and the wage rates earned by such workers are likely to drift downward.

If our goal is to pursue the more radical concept of social justice described at the start of this paper, where even the lowest-paid share in the fruits of prosperity, it is clearly not sufficient to regulate wages. Fiscal policies involving increased public expenditure, both direct and indirect, are needed. These must go beyond social security payments, which tend to provide only a minimum standard of living. Rather, the aim must be a radical improvement in the equality of access to opportunities for gainful employment.

OTHER SEMINARS, LECTURES, CONFERENCES

On 31 March, Tania Sweeney provided the introductory lecture for the University of New South Wales School of Social Work's final year program

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Child and Family Welfare. The aim of her lecture 'Child Welfare: Issues, Concerns, Concepts' was to provide students with an overview of the systems of service provisions available to families with young children and to identify critical issues in welfare policy and practice which will affect their work as practitioners. The lecture examined child welfare, family support and child care and examined the similarities and differences between them in terms of the value and assumptions on which they are based, their use and their outcomes.

On 19 April, Tania Sweeney presented a paper 'Inequality in Provisions for Children' to the post-graduate seminar in the School of Sociology, University of New South Wales. The paper examined issues of access, use and treatment of children in the child welfare and child care systems. Using data from the Bureau of Statistics survey, **Child Care Arrangements, Australia, November, 1984**, the Office of Child Care (1986) **Census of Child Care Centres and Family Day Care Schemes** and qualitative surveys, the paper outlined how low-income families, disabled children, children at risk and Aboriginal children were considerably over-represented in child welfare and substantially underrepresented in their use of child care. The representation of these disadvantaged groups in child care had not altered substantially since 1979, and in some cases, had declined. The paper explored these trends in the context of past and current Commonwealth and State child and family welfare policies and broader theoretical issues about the position of children and families in our society.

SOCIAL RESEARCH:

AN INAUGURAL CONFERENCE - 1988

The Inaugural Social Research Conference is designed to encourage liaison between Australasian researchers involved in social research in tertiary institutions and the public and private sectors. It will provide a forum for discussing recent research and strategies associated with the research process. It is anticipated that this inaugural conference will provide the basis for a regular annual or biennial event.

The 1988 conference on Social Research is sponsored by the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Queensland and the Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated (ACSPRI).

Australian Airlines and SAS statistical software are providing considerable assistance in the preparation of conference material.

CONFERENCE THEMES

The twin themes of the conference are:

- Developments in social science methodology.
- Substantive research findings.

Papers are invited from anyone involved in social research. Sessions have already been organised around the following themes:

- Data Collection
- Measurement
- Multivariate methods
- Analysis of longitudinal data
- Attitudes and attitude measurement
- Public policy research
- Political sociology
- Mobility and status attainment
- Class
- Teaching research methods

However, papers are also invited from social researchers in all fields and need not specifically address any of the themes outlined.

VENUE

The Department of Anthropology and Sociology,
8th Floor, Michie Building,
University of Queensland,
St. Lucia, 4067
Telephone (07) 377 3152.

Please direct any correspondence including offers of papers to:

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NEW SWRC PUBLICATIONS

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND MIGRANT WORKERS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

**SWRC Reports and Proceedings
No 71**

By Caroline Alcorso

This report is the second in the SWRC research program on Workers' Compensation and Social Security. A final report which examines the issues of cost, including personal cost, of work injuries is expected to be published in the near future.

As readers may be aware, the first report in this series (R & P 63. **Workers' Compensation and Social Security**) presented an introductory discussion and overview of the area. The second, **Migrant Workers and Workers' Compensation in New South Wales**, by Caroline Alcorso from the Centre for Multicultural Studies, University of Wollongong, and recently released as SWRC Reports and Proceedings No 71 provides a detailed description of the role of workers' compensation in the lives of migrant workers. The specific objectives of this study were as follows:

- * establishing whether or not there are systematic differences in the compensation experiences of migrant and Anglo-Australian workers in New South Wales
- * identifying the nature of such differences where they exist
- * explaining these differences.

While identifying possible problems regarding accessibility to, and use of, compensation and rehabilitation services was a subsidiary aim of the project, the report does not focus on the formal legislative and bureaucratic arrangements within New South Wales. Instead, the author explains the research findings 'by

reference to social structures and processes beyond the compensation system [making them] likely to apply to other States where the social context of compensation is similar'.

The report contains a comprehensive review of pre-existing research in this area, and notes that while much of this research has 'produced provocative findings with implications for legal reform and government social service provision' a general lack of ethnicity-related data has prevented the formation of conclusive results. Other data on the topic have been obtained from a diversity of related primary sources including the 1981 ABS survey of handicapped persons, NSW hospital system records, accident records from the BHP mills at Port Kembla, a survey of Building Workers' Industrial Union compensation case-files, Key Informant interviews and finally a survey of compensation claimants undertaken by the researchers themselves.

Migrant workers emerge from the study as being a group facing greater risk of injury while at work, having a greater chance of a compensation claim contested, more likely to have their claims redeemed than workers from English speaking backgrounds, obtaining smaller redemptions, disadvantages with respect to the networks and general social processes necessary for obtaining compensation, and having less access to rehabilitation and compensation within the injury-redeployment nexus.

Access to compensation clearly emerges as a manifestation of lower labour market power and general social status, and migrant workers themselves appear in the study as strongly affected by the negative social stereotypes of, and hostility towards, migrant compensation claimants as typified by the phrase

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'Mediterranean back' and so on. The ideology underpinning these stereotypes, the author concludes, is also reflected in the attitudes of those professional intermediaries (doctors, insurers, claims agents, bureaucrats and so on) upon which all workers' rely on to have their claims processed. This, the author argues is an ideology which functions

in favour of certain parties in the compensation process: employers and insurance companies, both of which have a direct interest in minimising workers' compensation costs and in minimising their responsibility for the work-related injuries suffered by employees. (p 144)

The report examines the experiences of non-English speaking immigrants with the compensation process but in a wider sphere it raises a number of issues concerning social institutions generally. Economic pressures over the past fifteen years or so have precipitated many basic structural reforms within industry, social institutions and in those many institutions mediating the so-called 'public' and 'private' sectors of the economy. As traditional technologies, skills, and conditions of employment (including secure and lifelong employment) have for some disappeared from the workplace the economic role of the public sector has increasingly become a major topic of debate. The scope and diversity of public sector contributions, not only in terms of subsidies to industry but also in terms of contributing directly to the well-being of individual employees, has begun to be discussed in greater detail.

The two important aspects which are often ignored, or receive insufficient emphasis in discussions

on the relative merit of public sector institutions are: firstly, the positive contribution which **social welfare** institutions make to the viability of the private sector and to the personal well-being of employed individuals and, secondly, the existence of disadvantage within social welfare structures, that is, the sensitivity of social welfare to the specific needs of a population with diverse social, ethnic and gender characteristics.

These two issues were in mind when the SWRC initiated research into workers' compensation and social security interaction and into the compensation experience of work-injured migrant persons.

The SWRC and the Centre for Multicultural Studies will be conducting a joint one-day public Seminar at the Technology Centre, University of Wollongong on June 9th. The theme of the seminar is **The Social Dimensions of Workers' Compensation**. The seminar has been organised to discuss the findings of **Migrant Workers' and Workers Compensation in New South Wales** and to discuss a range of other issues in this area of concern. Included in the program is also a summary of material which will appear in the forthcoming third report on the **Cost of Compensation** (see p 6 for details of the seminar and registration form).

POVERTY AND THE WORKFORCE

SWRC Reports and Proceedings No 72

By Bruce Bradbury, Diana Encel,
Jenny James and Joan Vipond

The extent of poverty is a significant indicator of the overall well-being of any community. Not surprisingly, research into the

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incidence and structure of poverty has been an important component of the research agenda of the Social Welfare Research Centre since its inception.

This report extends the Centre's earlier work in this area by looking at the relationship between poverty and the workforce. In doing so the report draws together research on poverty and the broader question of the social welfare implications of labour market changes.

The recognition that the alleviation of poverty can come about in a sustainable way only through wider access to employment opportunities has been long-standing in Australia. The Commission of Inquiry into Poverty noted in its first Main Report released in 1975 that 'the dominant factor which determines poverty is whether or not the head of the income unit is able to work' (p 16). With increasing unemployment over the last decade, the important factor is now more likely to be that of people being unable to find work. It is poverty among the families of people who are able to participate in the labour market, but who suffer from lack of appropriate employment opportunities that is the focus of this report.

The report is in three parts. Part 1 reviews the research on poverty and unemployment since the Henderson inquiry. This research has ranged from small scale studies describing the nature of the hardships suffered by the unemployed, to larger scale studies pointing to the overall extent of poverty, and the concentration of disadvantage.

That unemployment (in particular long duration unemployment) has become a major source of poverty has been clearly established. This link extends beyond the simple fact that

unemployment reduces incomes. Unemployment has been found to strike at those with the least resources available - those who were low paid when in employment or have lower incomes. Unemployment benefits, whilst of great assistance to such families, are clearly inadequate for the prevention of poverty among the long term unemployed.

In part 2 some of these issues are explored by a statistical analysis of the relationship between poverty and labour market disadvantage in 1981-82. The method used follows that of the Poverty Commission, whereby the annual incomes of families are compared with the poverty line. Whilst unemployment remains the main focus, the analysis here is broadened to include all income units where the head and/or the spouse (if relevant) was in the workforce for the full year. 'In the workforce' includes being employed, self employed (including employers) or looking for work. Thus the income units included in the analysis were primarily dependent upon people who were able to work, even if they could not find employment, or this employment did not pay enough to prevent poverty.

As expected, unemployment was the labour market characteristic most clearly associated with poverty. Of all income units dependent upon full time workers who had experienced one or more weeks of unemployment in 1981-82, 36 percent had annual incomes below the poverty line.

In general, the Australian literature has not pointed to low wages or part-time work as being associated with poverty. The second assumption can be questioned since in 1981-82 the incidence of poverty among part-time workers who had not been unemployed during the year was 17 percent. However, some of these low incomes may have reflected people's preferred

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choice, even though the proportion of part-time workers seeking more work has increased along with unemployment. The assumption that low wages are not a problem, however, seems to be confirmed (for 1981-82). Among workers who earned wages and salaries and who were not unemployed either during 1981-82 or when surveyed between September and November 1982, the incidence of poverty was 0.7 percent. Between 1972-73 and 1981-82, poverty among families with wage and salary earners who were fully employed had declined. This could not be ascribed to an increase in the proportion of married women at work.

Among families dependent upon self employed workers poverty was unexpectedly prevalent, with 16 percent of these families being below the poverty line in 1981-82. However this is one area where the limitations of income based definitions of poverty are important. Examination of the housing expenditures of the self-employed indicated that income as measured by such surveys is only a partial indicator of their economic well-being. However, unless this measurement problem has increased markedly, it would seem that there has been a decrease in the living standards of the self-employed since the poverty inquiry.

In the final part of the report, economic trends since 1981-82 are discussed, and the various policy responses to unemployment considered. Since the early 1980s Australia has experienced another recession, followed by a partial recovery. The post-war solution to unemployment, macroeconomic demand management, has been constrained by the other goals of controlling inflation and the external balance. With the further growth in uncertainty in world financial markets in the second half

of 1987, any return to buoyant labour market conditions seems a long way off.

With such a prospect, income support policies to prevent poverty among the unemployed become all the more important. The evidence presented in this report suggests that such policies have so far failed to meet this goal. Compared to many other countries of similar wealth, the Australian performance at providing income support for those bearing the burden of the recession has been, at best, mediocre. For an explanation of this lack of commitment to adequate income support for the unemployed we must look more to the political sphere than the economic - to the government's perceived need to play to the psychology of the financial markets, and to the political problems of mobilising support for the marginalised unemployed.

The failure of both macroeconomic and income support policy has in recent years resulted in greater emphasis on microeconomic policy initiatives attempting to maintain and strengthen the links between the unemployed and the workforce. Government rhetoric now places education and training at the forefront of policies to ameliorate the problems of unemployment. Indeed, such an emphasis upon microeconomic policies rather than income support characterises the systems of countries such as Sweden which have maintained low levels of unemployment. However, such countries also spend a good deal more than Australia on labour market policy. So far, there seems to be little evidence of the federal government being prepared to match the rhetoric on microeconomic policy with fiscal commitment.

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In any event, we should not expect measures aimed solely at increasing the quality of labour supplied to the labour market to have any major impact upon unemployment unless demand for labour is also increased.

A more optimistic goal for such policies in the current climate will be for them to assist in preventing the formation of a pool of low skill workers experiencing long duration unemployment. Such a spreading of the burden of unemployment is perhaps the best that realists can expect.

RECENT SWRC PUBLICATIONS

- No.65 Peter Saunders and Adam Jamrozik (eds),
Social Welfare in the Late 1980s: Reform, Progress, or Retreat?
(Proceedings of a conference held in Perth,
Western Australia on 27-28 March), June 1987, 180 pp. \$5
- No.66 Jill Hardwick, Jenny James and Fiona Brown,
Accommodation and Employment Policies and Services for people with Disabilities,
October 1987, 130 pp. \$5
- No.67 Peter Saunders (ed.),
*Redistribution and the Welfare State: Estimating the Effects of Government
Benefits and Taxes on Household Income.*
The Proceedings of a Workshop held at the University of New South Wales on
13 May 1987. August 1987, 77pp. \$5
- No.68 Sara Graham,
The Extra Costs Borne by Families Who Have a Child with a Disability,
September 1987, 146 pp. \$5
- No.69 Peter Saunders and Peter Whiteford,
Ending Child Poverty: An Assessment of the Government's Family Package,
December 1987, 86 pp. \$5
- No.70 Peter Saunders and Adam Jamrozik (eds),
Community Services in a Changing Economic and Social Environment,
December 1987, 165 pp. \$5
- No.71 Caroline Alcorso,
Migrant Workers and Workers' Compensation in New South Wales,
March 1988, 168 pp. \$5
- No.72 Bruce Bradbury, Diana Encel, Jenny James and Joan Vipond,
Poverty and the Workforce,
March 1988, 125 pp. \$5
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SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AT SWRC

By Susan Ducie

What is appropriate employment for social work? This has been a major question in my third field placement. I am relieved somewhat to say that there is room to 'stray' from the more traditional and limited options social work texts discuss.

It was because of social work's rigidity that superannuation became the topic for my research project. SWRC has provided an arena for this, as occupational welfare is an area addressed at the Centre.

The Superannuation debate, topical yet again, appears to follow a cyclical motion, especially in relation to taxation of 'super'. Having followed the debate consistently since 1985, I feel a sense of déjà vu reading current tax reform proposals. Proposals for reform are generally taken as a 'log of claims' and suffer a severe watering down. A worse fate is for a proposal to become lost behind a commission of inquiry such as the Hancock Inquiry 1975 - of course a change of government did not help. Clearly major social reform has no place in the present climate of economic recovery, which effectively depoliticises issues.

Since the early days of Friendly Societies, provision and administration of retirement income has become exceedingly complex. Associated with this is the need for specialised skills. More and more superannuation is facing a growing number of conflicting interests. The most recent appears to be the use of accountants to certify whether Super funds have complied with the new Government Occupational Superannuation Standards.

Locating the various vested interests gave context to the project focus,

nationalisation of superannuation. Nationalisation is a non-issue and has not been treated as a possibility since the Whitlam years. In fact, a commonly held belief is that Australia has a national scheme consisting of two 'tiers'. Firstly occupational super and secondly the Age Pension. But in using the term nationalisation, I am referring to an arrangement with a greater degree of equity than the one existing. ABS data make explicit the degree of inequity.

Apart from the project, an internal seminar proved fruitful. We as students raised the idea that there is a link between SWRC and social work. Both have the general aim of contributing to change of social policy. Social work can further the efforts of SWRC by using its findings in the field. In terms of the value of having social work students at the Centre, we thought that being 'future users' of SWRC material meant a need to become acquainted with the Centre's work and the research process.

By David Allan

A standing joke in research circles seems to be that a proper piece of research should always end with the issue of a clarion call for further research. 'Meta-analysis' promises to change all this. It aims at a synthesis of results from many different studies to produce a categorical conclusion. As a social work student 'placed' at SWRC and hoping to learn something worthwhile about welfare research this caught my interest - state of the art, leading edge. Anything 'meta' had to be good.

Gene Glass coined the term 'Meta-analysis' in 1976. Essentially the

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AT SWRC

idea is that the old stumbling block for the comparison of different studies - the variety in designs and methods - can be sidestepped with some bold statistical moves. Each study's outcome is treated as a single data point and manipulated as if it were an individual subject in a piece of primary research. To do this various techniques have been developed to standardise this type of data. For instance, the most common method involves just simply converting each study's results to a 'Z' score; a second 'Z' score can then be got for the occurrence of this first lot of 'Z' scores; and then the likelihood of a particular run of outcomes occurring by chance can be gauged.

It is argued that it does not matter that different studies use different methods. Results from badly designed studies are likely to cancel each other out. On the other hand, the consistent detection of something through a variety of different designs dramatically strengthens the case for its existence. At the end of the day, what is seen to be at stake with this type of synthesis is the elimination of impressionistic bias from research reviews. It is replaced by a rigorously objective procedure.

Now, to my mind this seemed the epitome of research - gleaning results by recursively refining information. Casting about for a good subject on which to apply it I settled on a look at studies to do with the relationship of income to quality of life. With nearly two dozen computers at SWRC there was also the singular opportunity to do this with the help of electronics. So, I familiarised myself with 'dBaseII+' software. Then I set myself the task of creating a data base for an integrative research review that could use meta-analysis

to investigate the relationship of income to quality of life.

A little to my surprise, I found the mixture of a social work perspective with the scientific approach to be fertile. Social work's need to bother about the context of things seemed to complement science's concern to get on with the job of abstracting reality. In a way it summoned up the old chestnut of wholism versus reductionism.

What I mean is that I found that a technique such as meta-analysis to a certain extent creates an illusion of objectivity. To start with, it is circumscribed by the practical necessity to deal with areas that are amenable to its techniques. With my integrative review I looked for a set of studies that consistently generated results in a particular quantifiable form such as correlation coefficients - idiographic studies, say, would not have got a guernsey

Elsewhere, Beulah Compton and Burt Galaway have described social workers as fulfilling five roles - advocate, enabler, broker, teacher and mediator. (Others might want to add 'change agent'). As I toggle off I think we could also add to this 'the social worker as boffin'.



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Social Security/Taxation
Workforce/Employment/Unemployment
Compensation/Occupational Health/Welfare
Child and Family Welfare
Youth
Ethnic Minorities
People with Disabilities
Women
Ageing
Housing
Community Services
Others

Please briefly describe your research interests

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Any other comments?

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N.B. Please write name, address and telephone number on reverse side of this sheet

READERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

NEEDS BASED PLANNING AND HACC

Editor, SWRC Newsletter

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to an article in the February 1988 edition of your news letter which has recently been brought to my attention. The article, by Mr Robert Nittolo reported on a seminar sponsored by NSW Council of Social Services, entitled 'Needs Based Planning and HACC'.

It is most unfortunate that the article misrepresents or confuses a number of important points put to that seminar by an officer of this Department, Ms Rosita Chan. I understand that Ms Chan has already provided direct to Mr Nittolo a full copy of her paper.

I would, however, like to concentrate on three particular issues regarding which it is important that the record be put straight with a fair and accurate representation of the Department's position.

First, Mr Nittolo's article suggests that 'input from consumer or services was sought in assessing State or Regional needs but was not considered (by the Department) in determining the final plan'. In fact, it is the Department's view that this input is not only essential to the construction of both regional and State plans, but as Ms Chan's paper explained '... better strategic plans can only be developed with greater input from the non-Government sector, including consumers into this planning process'.

Secondly, Mr Nittolo's article reported that '... the aim of HACC was to build services within the home on an equitable basis'. In fact, the program includes a range of services

for frail aged and disabled people including some which are provided in the home, some from community centres and some on an outreach basis. Ms Chan's paper noted that the aim of needs-based planning in HACC was '... to progressively build up a comprehensive range of HACC services in all areas of the State. The outcome of this is that it would secure an alternative to inappropriate residential care.' HACC aims to complement residential care, not replace it. It is choice-promoting, not choice-limiting. It is recognised that to give consumers a real choice of **flexible** range of both residential and community care services will be required.

Thirdly, the statement quoted by Mr Nittolo's article that '... if you rely entirely on statements of demand from local groups you are likely to miss out on the needs of minorities' was taken out of context. This statement was made during the discussion to highlight the need for a balanced approach to planning and consultation. While a number of consultation strategies are well able to elicit views of service providers, these are not necessarily the views of consumers nor of special interest/minority groups (such as people of a non-English speaking background). This is an argument for seeking a **wider** range of views in the consultation processes, certainly not narrowing this process.

The Department always welcomes constructive comments and criticisms on the way in which it has implemented programmes. However, we also expect fair and accurate reporting of the Department's approach.

I would also add that no other approach has so exposed itself to public analysis and critique as the needs-based planning approach of the

READERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

HACC Program. This is fitting, as in many ways this State is at the forefront in exploring such approaches, and we are continually looking at ways of enhancing our planning capacity.

I would be happy to ensure that a full copy of Ms Chan's paper is made available to any interested reader who contacts the Department's HACC Unit at the above address and telephone number [see below, Ed].

I trust you will be able to pass on my concerns and this information to your readers.

V J Dalton
Director-General
Department of Family and Community Services, NSW
P O Box 228
Parramatta NSW 2150
Telephone: (02) 698 8111

HACC AND NEEDS BASED PLANNING: A CORRECTION AND AN EXPLANATION

By Robert Nittolo

In the last edition of this Newsletter I reviewed a conference on Needs-Based Planning and the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program organised by NCOSS. In this review I discussed a paper presented by Rosita Chan from the Department of Youth and Community Services. Following the appearance of the review I was contacted by Ms Chan who asked me to make a correction to a statement which was attributed to her. Her concerns centred around a statement appearing on page 6 of the Newsletter which state that input from consumers and service providers was not sought in the final HACC plan on the basis that this would result in the exclusion of minority viewpoints.

The correct position is that input from consumers and service providers is sought at this level but final approval for any projects is the joint prerogative of the Commonwealth and State Ministers responsible for the HACC program. Community organisers are not involved in the approval of individual projects, this is a joint Commonwealth-State Ministerial decision. The function of consumer and service providers is dealt with at the 'higher' levels of planning eg 'establishing what local priorities and concerns and ensuring that the regional structures take into account those concerns'.

This is a significant point which has caused my confusion. The various planning bodies associated with the HACC program are concerned with community input only as far as it helps to determine needs and priorities within a given area. The decisions as to which actual projects are to be funded are made at the Ministerial level on the basis of the perception of needs. In other words there is an important distinction between identifying local needs and approving local projects. The role of local organisations is to determine the needs of their local community and communicate this to the appropriate HACC bodies. On the basis of this, and its own information, HACC will then determine which projects will be funded, subject to Ministerial approval.

It is hoped that this clarifies the position on the relationship between 'needs-based planning' and the manner in which funding for individual projects is determined.

READERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

THE HANDICAPPED OR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

Dear Dr Saunders,

The Disability Council of New South Wales was established in 1984 to advise the Government on a broad range of issues relevant to people with disabilities. Strongly representative of people with disabilities, the Council is interested in language usage, as well as many others.


I request that you change the category 'The Handicapped' on the reverse side of your Order Form to 'People with Disabilities'. It is unfortunate that the term 'The Handicapped' appears in your otherwise excellent publication, for its implications belie several of the principles for which the SWRC Newsletter stands.

Jane Woodruff
Executive Officer
The Disability Council of NSW

(Note: Corrected - see centre pages
- Ed.)

ANNOUNCING

Alcohol Other Drugs & The Family



AN INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

to be held at
SYDNEY UNIVERSITY 27-30th November '88

Organised by
the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, N.S.W.
active in the alcohol and drug field for many years and have taken a
major role in the development of Australian services and research.


The program of the congress will feature:

- Genetics
- Family dynamics
- Social and subcultural influences
- Public health perspectives
- Family therapy
- Role of the family physician
- Community and welfare institutions
- Evaluation of outcomes of interventions
- Personal responsibility

The Congress will have an international flavour with major speakers and participants coming from overseas as well as key Australian speakers. Over 700 participants from a range of disciplines will attend the Congress. College accommodation has been secured at very reasonable rates.

Registration for the Congress will cost \$200 (Australian)

For a full programme of the Congress, contact the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, N.S.W., 100 Victoria Road, Sydney, N.S.W. 2000. Tel: (02) 955 1111. Fax: (02) 955 1112.



1989 WORLD CONGRESS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

21-25 AUGUST 1989
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

MENTAL HEALTH—EVERYONE'S CONCERN

**WORLD FEDERATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH:
1989 WORLD CONGRESS**

The World Federation for Mental Health in association with the Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand is hosting the 1989 World Congress in Auckland, New Zealand, 21-25 August 1989. The general theme is "Mental Health - Everyone's Concern". The Congress will address: international dimensions; cross-cultural, minority and women's issues; social change issues; patient rights; legal and ethical issues; natural disasters; deinstitutionalisation and community alternatives; alcohol and drug abuse; and mental health research.

The Congress is open to all people with an interest in mental health, from professionals in psychology, psychiatry, nursing, law, education, social work, and allied fields, to volunteers, consumers and clients, to researchers and administrators.

To ensure receipt of World Congress '89 information, write to:
Convention Management Services, P.O. Box 3839, Auckland, New Zealand.

**BIENNIAL CONGRESS OF THE WORLD FEDERATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH
IN ASSOCIATION WITH MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION OF NEW ZEALAND (M4)
PO BOX 37438 PARNELL, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND, PH (09) 31-517**

NEW RESEARCH PROJECTS

Labour Market Disadvantages and the Determinants of Labour Market Success:

(1) Employment and Unemployment Patterns of Aborigines in New South Wales

(2) Unemployment and Underemployment Analysis of Labour Underutilisation Rates

Person responsible: Russell Ross

Project 1:

It is widely believed that Aborigines are the most disadvantaged demographic group in the labour markets of Australia. Until recently, quantification of the extent of their disadvantage has been ad hoc. In 1986-87 Russell Ross undertook a survey of some 700 working-age Aborigines from throughout New South Wales as part of a research project funded by the then NSW Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

The major findings of that survey included:

19% of males were employed
14% of females were employed
55% of males were unemployed (using the ABS definition)
21% of females were unemployed (using the ABS definition)
67% of unemployed people had been unemployed for over 2 years

25% of males were outside the formal labour force
65% of females were outside the formal labour force
84% of all people outside the labour force were receiving some form of social security pension/benefit as their only source of income.

This SWRC project continues the analysis of the survey data.

The major issue to be addressed is why are Aborigines so poorly placed in the formal labour market. Factors underlying the current situation will be identified and their relative importance quantified. Alternative implications for social welfare policies will be highlighted and some possible policy options canvassed. A number of specific questions will be considered, including

- (i) what are the causes of the high incidence of long term unemployment among Aborigines?
- (ii) what factors distinguish those Aborigines who are in full-time and/or permanent employment from other Aborigines?
- (iii) what is the incidence of marginal attachment to the labour force among Aborigines?
- (iv) how significant is hidden unemployment among Aborigines?
- (v) what is the income distribution of Aborigines and what are the dominant sources of income? How do these compare with the Australian population as a whole?
- (vi) what role does education play in determining Aboriginal success in the labour market?
- (vii) what role have labour market training programs, eg Community Employment Program and Training for Aborigines Program, played in determining Aboriginal success in the labour market? How should such programs be integrated with general income support provisions?

The results of this research will provide better information on the role of labour market status in the determination of the well-being of

NEW RESEARCH PROJECTS

Aborigines. It will also allow some exploration into the issues involved in achieving an appropriate balance between education, training, labour market and income support policies for the Aboriginal population.

Project 2:

Labour market success within a demographic group is conventionally measured by the extent to which members of that group are successful in gaining employment which is commensurate with their wants. In determining the extent to which particular demographic groups enjoy labour market success, attention has been devoted to official unemployment as the primary indicator of lack of success. However, official unemployment is but one of four ways by which labour market failure is experienced. The other three types of failure are

- * underemployment (working fewer hours than desired)
- * discouraged workers (persons not in the labour force who want to work and can start work immediately but have been discouraged from undertaking active job search for one of a specific range of reasons)
- * marginal attachment (unemployed persons whose job search activities do not meet the ABS criteria for active job search but who want to work and can start work immediately).

While much is known about the size and composition of official unemployment, knowledge of the relative importance of underemployment, hidden unemployment and marginal attachment is very limited. Much of the data analysis to be carried out on this project

will utilise unpublished data provided by the ABS.

The major issue to be addressed is the extent to which selected demographic groups experience labour markets success or failure.

In addressing this issue, the following questions will be considered

- (i) What is the incidence of official unemployment among the group?
- (ii) What is the incidence of underemployment among the group?
- (iii) What is the incidence of discouraged workers among the group?
- (iv) What is the incidence of marginal attachment among the group?
- (v) Are these incidences related to cyclical variations in the state of the economy and are there any trends over time?
- (vi) Are the above incidences sensitive to changes in education, training, labour market, and/or income support policies?

This project will enable the Centre to monitor the position of selected demographic groups in the labour market. It will produce information of value in assessing the impact of education, training, labour market, and income support policies on the members of various demographic groups. It will also aid in the determination of the well-being of individuals within the demographic groups.

NEW RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Scope and Impact of Occupational Welfare in Australia

Persons responsible: Donald Stewart, Adam Jamrozik

The first (and only) research project on occupational welfare carried out at the SWRC was **Employment Benefits: Public or Private Welfare?** (SWRC Reports and Proceedings No 15, 1981). This project had a significant impact on the welfare debate and was extensively reported by the media in Australia and overseas. Since that time the SWRC has received numerous enquiries concerning further research on this aspect of welfare.

Occupational welfare is one of the 'hidden' aspects of welfare which only comes up for public debate from time to time. Yet, it is a significant part of the welfare provisions, the extent of which may be judged by the very public reaction to the introduction of an FBT and by the current opposition on the part of employers to the provision of superannuation to manual workers. It is expected that this project will become an important source of information on this issue, both to the public and to policy-makers.

Occupational welfare include a wide range of benefits encompassing both the immediate welfare of employees through health and safety requirements and compensation for injury as well as benefits of a diverse nature and value. These include education, superannuation, discounts on goods, services and loans, and other less tangible benefits. Some superannuation schemes have provisions for payment of benefits in the event of early retirement through invalidity, and child care has now become an important aspect of occupational welfare in many industries.

Opinions on occupational welfare differ widely. On the one hand, current Government policy is to support the extension of occupational superannuation to all workers, with employers' contributions to employees' superannuation as an allowable taxation deduction; on the other hand, this policy is criticised on the grounds that it benefits the affluent sections of the workforce and is thus inequitable.

Occupational welfare accounts for a considerable amount of taxation forgone, and with the growth of superannuation this amount is likely to increase. However, superannuation is only one part of occupational welfare. There are other forms of occupational welfare, relating to both deferred income and services (see R & P No 15). New forms appear to be readily developed and introduced, usually selectively for executives and senior management but extending in some cases to the lower echelons of a firm's labour force. Whatever the form, occupational welfare is a 'production cost' and therefore of relevance to Government policy on taxation and income security. These developments represent tangible aspects of major and diverse structural changes currently taking place in the Australian and overseas economies, some of which will undoubtedly have an impact on welfare policy.

Occupational welfare has received considerable attention in recent years particularly with the passing of the Fringe Benefits Tax legislation (FBT), changes in income tax arrangements concerning lump sum superannuation payments, and moves towards the introduction and/or extension of superannuation throughout industries. With the exception of descriptive data, such as that produced by the ABS on the distribution of employee benefits,

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little is known about the impact of these recent changes on the labour market, the current distribution of occupational benefits, or about the direction and impact of future developments on occupational and social welfare. There is now also the Commonwealth Government's current review of the whole field of corporate taxation which could also impact on these two areas. This project should constitute an input into the debate on occupational welfare and on its implications for social policy.

The project aims to examine those developments which have occurred in occupational welfare since 1981, to analyse these areas (exemplified perhaps by superannuation benefits, education and retraining and aspects of the employment practices/productivity debate) by means of a general descriptive framework of fixed and recurrent costs of employment. It aims to evaluate the impact of occupational benefits on employment costs and individual well-being. Understanding the distribution of specific occupational benefits is central to the study as is an understanding of the impact of current changes in the labour market and employment, government policy on social security (especially pensions and benefits for the aged), and other areas of social policy. The project aims to present these factors in the form of a discussion of the social and occupational categories of welfare. The data for the project will be drawn from a range of sources, eg, ABS surveys, industrial awards, and business literature. New data on the distribution and impact of occupational benefits will be gained from interviews with trade unions, government departments and other relevant sources. Data from other countries will also be analysed for comparative purposes.

Provision and Utilisation of Human Resources in Community Services: A Conceptual and Empirical Overview

Person responsible:
Adam Jamrozik

Much of the research on social policy and social welfare in recent years has focused on income distribution, taxation, and various related forms of 'cash transfers'. Less systematic research has been done on the large and diverse field of provisions which consist of human rather than material resources, such as health, education, welfare and related services, which are referred to in broad terms as 'community services'. The responsibility for the provision of these services lies with the Commonwealth, the States (in some areas a joint responsibility) as well as with the non-governmental welfare sector or even in the private sector [eg care of the aged, child care, education and health services]. The complexity of funding arrangements, responsibility, organisation and professional orientations presents considerable difficulty in ascertaining how the system works, which forces determine or influence the direction of services, who benefits from services and to what extent, etc. It is therefore important to examine the dynamics of these arrangements so that the effects of services and any implications for social policy can be ascertained.

The feature of community service is a high usage of human resources. What these services provide is the knowledge and skills of professional and para-professional personnel which are used by the recipients to maintain, or improve, their health, to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to enter the labour market, or to receive assistance in child-

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rearing (as in child care services). Thus, in contrast to income support payments such as pensions and benefits whose function is to provide income for the individuals and families who do not receive adequate income from the market, community services have a facilitative function in that they enable the recipient to function in the market economy.

Community services are a labour-intensive industry. In terms of employment this has been the fastest-growing sector of industry for a long period (at least since the 1960s) and the growth of employment in this sector has continued even in the years when total employment was at a standstill. It is now the second-largest sector (after wholesale and retail trade), accounting (in 1986) for 18 percent of all employment. It is also the most professionalised sector, employing over half (55%) of all employed professional and para-professional persons, and close to half (46%) of all employed persons with tertiary degrees or equivalent qualifications. Human capital investment in community services is thus very high, and most of this investment comes from the public purse. People employed in community services are in the 'public' and 'private' labour market but most of their income comes from the Commonwealth and States' expenditure.

The importance of human resources in community services is likely to increase, as will the corresponding costs. For this reason, and for the reasons noted above, a study of resource allocation to human resources and community services therefore is clearly indicated.

The aim of this project is to provide an overview of what is meant by 'human resources' and 'community services'. The project will bring together the data from literature and

various SWRC reports and/or conference papers and will present those data in the conceptual framework outlined in Reports and Proceedings No 57 and No 65 and in other reports. This framework will then be used as the conceptual basis for other research projects in this research program. The project will also complement the currently extensive research conducted at the Centre on income distribution, taxation, and social security. The project will focus mainly on the dynamics of social (welfare) policy, that is, it will examine the paths between aggregate allocation of resources (funds) and the units of consumption (individuals, families, social groups), aiming to identify some of the 'intervening variables' along these paths, which might account for the outcome of certain policies and provisions.

The method of study used in the project will entail the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. Using a range of data sources, the project will address a number of issues, eg

- . The value of cash transfers v services
- . Human resources - their nature, process of generation, organisation, utilisation, etc.
- . Professionalisation - its positive and negative aspects.
- . Links between educational institutions and services.
- . Funding, responsibilities for administration and service delivery.
- . Services as part of the social wage.

NEW RESEARCH PROJECTS

Factors accounting for inequalities eg, location, urban/rural division, Commonwealth/State relations, interest groups, political expediency or necessity.

The conceptual framework for this research project has been formulated from the earlier studies at the SWRC and in a number of papers published in the SWRC Reports and Proceedings and elsewhere. The most recent outline of this conceptual framework was in 'Winners and Losers in the Welfare State: Recent Trends and Pointers for the Future' (R & P No 65, 45-78).

A Study of Attitudes to State and Private Welfare

Person responsible:
Dr Elim Papadakis, Lecturer in Sociology, University of New England, Armidale

The economic and social context of social policy is currently undergoing change. This is reflected in initiatives such as the Social Security Review undertaken by the Department of Social Security. In the area of health care the Australian Institute of Health was established in 1987 to develop national statistical collections and research into health services and technology assessment. In the area of pensions a review of superannuation tax concessions is being carried out by the Treasury. In the area of education, initiatives such as the policy discussion paper on higher education reflect the widespread concern over the function and role of education in general.

Shifts in public awareness are likely to impinge on the balance of people's support for changes in policy. The

extent to which public opinion is reflected in government policies is an important factor in influencing whether welfare policy is likely to gain widespread support. Knowledge of the structure of opinions will help us to understand the limits and the extent to which initiatives for change can gain popular support.

The project will explore the nature of support for public and private welfare provision in the areas of health care, education and pensions and to test explanations for it. Data will be gathered through a structured mail questionnaire survey from a national representative sample of adults in Australia.

The study will focus mainly on health care, education and retirement pensions. The data gathered from this survey will help us to better understand:

- the constraints on policy makers, however ideologically committed they might be to the goals of state regulation or privatisation or decentralisation;
- the extent to which 'alternatives' to existing arrangements may meet with popular acceptance or resistance;
- the correspondence between public attitudes and theories of the welfare state (for instance, those supportive of the New Right, the Social Democratic Centre and the Left);
- the ways in which the development of dual structures of welfare (namely of predominantly private services for the more affluent and public services for the remainder of society) may either be reinforcing existing trends or adding to their complexity; and

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- the importance of status (and 'positional' advantage) in certain areas of private welfare rather than of the material benefits to its recipients.

The survey will also provide comparative data for extensive researches carried out by the author in a project directed by Dr Peter Taylor-Gooby on the welfare state and private provision in the United Kingdom.

There is a considerable gap in knowledge of public attitudes and the welfare state Australia. The major source of researchers in this area has been public opinion polls which relate mainly to state rather than private welfare provision. Polls such as those conducted by the Morgan Gallup Organisations over the past four decades have often included questions on health schemes, medical services, means-testing pensions and educational issues according to their political salience at a given moment. No study attempts systematically to compare attitudes to both public and private welfare in several major areas. The only comparable data is from studies (mentioned above) carried out in the United Kingdom and from cross national work on public opinion and the welfare state covering countries such as the United States, Austria, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom.

The research will complement research by the SWRC into important aspects of social policy and social welfare particularly in the areas of child and family welfare, social security, the aged and occupational welfare issues. The questionnaire will also include a range of questions intended to provide attitudinal measures of poverty and therefore provide the Centre with original and recent data for its current research on the attitudinal approach to poverty

measurement. The questionnaire may also include questions on mortgage repayments and housing expenditures.

AUSTRALASIAN EVALUATION SOCIETY NATIONAL EVALUATION CONFERENCE

The Australasian Evaluation Society will hold the Fifth National Evaluation Conference in Melbourne July 27 - 29, 1988.

The Conference will bring together practitioners, managers, academics, researchers and users of evaluation.

This major event provides the opportunity for exchanging ideas and experiences. Keynote speakers review the current state of the art both here in Australia and internationally. A rich feast of speakers during Paper Presentations and Round Table Discussions will enable participants to obtain valuable information on evaluation methods; concepts and evaluations conducted over a cross section of policies, programs and services.

The popular Pre-Conference Workshops will be held during Wednesday, July 27, leading into registration and the plenary Conference session at 8 p.m. on Wednesday evening.

Over 250 delegates attended the Fourth Conference in Canberra last year, even more participants are expected this year to share a mutual wealth of knowledge and experiences.

The Conference will be held at the President Hotel, 63 Queens Road, Melbourne 3004
Telephone (03) 529 4300,
Facsimile (03) 51 1042

Enquiries regarding any aspect of the Conference can be directed to the Secretary at (03) 267 7444.

BOOK REVIEWS

SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE

By Michael Sullivan, London,
Allen & Unwin, 192pp. \$27.95
(Paperback)

Reviewed by Cathy Boland

This book is the social policy equivalent of a hair raiser (an Australian colloquial term meaning, among other things, interesting). It is a sociological critique of the welfare state, and an account of failure; it proposes that the welfare state does not promote equality, but rather inequality. These issues are set within the economic and social history of post-war Britain.

The book begins with the birth of the welfare state following the second world war and traces its evolution up until the present day. Following the Great Depression, adulation of the market had given way to despair; capitalism was seen to have failed. During the war, centralised governments developed a 'mixed' economy where governmental control of aviation, steel, electricity, gas and communications provided the base for capital expansion and full employment. Keynesian economics had worked well in controlling unemployment and inflation until 1976, when economic growth evaporated. Yet, Thatcher's intentions to dismantle the welfare state, except for housing, have failed, despite restructuring and privatisation. The state and capital appear to be inextricably interwoven.

Four sociological models are presented to explain these historical developments, and to some extent, each one is eclectic, as there are many views within each group. They differ somewhat from the prototype of this analysis, George and Wilding's *Ideology and Social Welfare*, which was published in 1976. In Chapter 1,

five pages are devoted to the radical right, ten to the reformists (Social Democrats), five to the model of the state and industrial society and eleven pages to the Marxists. This gives some indication of who has most to say.

The radical right comment that the welfare state has inhibited economic growth; failed to deliver non-stigmatised services; and created an infinite demand for its free services. The interface of capital and welfare and Thatcher's inability to dismantle them are implied as refuting the first of these arguments.

In the social democratic view, the state is seen as benevolently promoting equality and modifying injustice. Sullivan comments that this approach 'under-theorises the place of class' (p134).

Equality of access to the personal social services has initially failed to materialise ... evidence abounds ... that the welfare state, inasmuch as it has redistributed resources and life chances, has done so horizontally rather than vertically and has often benefited the rich rather than the poor (LeGrand, 1982: George and Wilding, 1984) (p 136).

To maintain the welfare state is benevolent is 'a refusal to evaluate not only the evidence of history but also the contemporary experience of state activities in welfare' (p 137).

The third perspective, the state and industrial society, sees the development of industry and technology as the core requisites of capitalist societies. The role of the state is to mould consensus, and to provide key support services to maintain a healthy, well educated workforce. Within this deterministic

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model there is no place for social conflict. The system is driven by logic, rather than other social forces. In times of recession, there is 'less need for welfare support systems and more functional necessity for overt social control' (p 140).

Marxist views of the state see welfare services as incorporating a potentially rebellious working class into capitalistic society. Unemployment benefits 'minimise the opposition of labour ... to economic restructuring' (p 53). Welfare services also co-opt the upper working class into mainstream society and coerce the underclass. A feminist perspective is cited to enlarge on this. Within this model, the role of social work is to create the concept of the ideal family, which does not exist, and police those of the poor who do not conform. These services are supplied by the middle class and directed at the under-class. Other Marxist views of social work are 'to promote conformity and value congruence in a society characterised by value conflicts and potential class welfare' (p 188).

Sullivan sees Marxist theories as being rigid and inflexible, yet, they share with the radical right 'a facility to uncover the paradoxes of welfare in a social democratic state' (p 145).

In his final chapter, Sullivan sees social work itself as contributing to inequality. The effects of poverty are well documented: ill health, social isolation, low self esteem, a sense of defeat. Depression, anxiety and living in a state of perpetual crises could be added to this. Sullivan suggests that in social work's bid for professionalisation it chose a psychiatric model and avoided social understanding of the relationship between class, the state

and welfare. Instead, it accepted a model of individual inadequacy and tended 'to pathologise what appear to be rational, if forced adaptations to difficult social and individual situations' (p 163). The child abuse debate is given as an example. He says,

Despite relatively recent evidence of a **prima-facie** association between levels of unemployment and levels of child abuse, statutory procedures and social work practice in this area seem to be informed by a crude model of individual or family pathology (p 157).

After what could be called a scathing review of the welfare state, Sullivan makes a number of recommendations: that 'some of interests of a wide societal constituency (the working class?) ... be met, albeit secondarily and contingently, by the state' (p 151). Sullivan appears to step away from his analysis by concluding that tinkering at the welfare margin should be an issue. Jakubowicz et al (1984) suggest a different position for the role of the state, one which would appear to be more consistent with the analysis of this book; that is, the central role of the state is to prevent class schism.

Sullivan finally makes one page of suggestions as to how social workers could improve the self esteem of clients, and act as their advocates (p 163). He does not suggest a broad range of administrative procedures to facilitate this even within the child welfare sector. There is no mention of co-ordinated philosophy and policy, an effective procedure for clients' rights, such as informing them at the interview on what they are legally obliged to answer (informed consent), a complaints unit and access to their records. These

BOOK REVIEWS

type of issues are common in the health services debate. Their absence from the welfare arena leaves those in the area of service delivery very close to the role of dark angels from the nineteenth century.

In conclusion, these perspectives provide an interesting juxtaposition of values and their interpretation, which can simplify and explain complex issues. Many of these are of current interest, including the integration of the state and capital, which will be centre stage in the oncoming privatisation debate.

References

Jakubowicz, A Morrissey, M and Palser J (1984) **Ethnicity, Class and Social Policy in Australia**, SWRC Reports and Proceedings No 46, Kensington, Social Welfare Research Centre, University of NSW.

GIVE AND TAKE IN FAMILIES: STUDIES IN RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

Julia Brannen and Gail Wilson
(Eds)

Allen & Unwin, 209pp \$69.95
(hardback) \$29.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by Tania Sweeney

The nine chapters in this collection cover issues about individual's access to or distribution of various types of resources - financial, goods and services and food - within different family structures including single parent households and households containing the elderly, and over different life cycle stages and situational events such as the

early child-rearing phase and the experience of unemployment and divorce.

Each chapter draws on empirical research conducted by the author(s) or other researchers in the field, both in Britain and overseas. Although a number of the surveys cited are small scale, they provide useful qualitative data which shed considerable light on the family dynamics involved in resource distribution. Such surveys are useful for generating new hypotheses about how families function.

The articles examine the distribution of resources within and/or between households, where households are perceived as units in which individual members are linked by marriage and/or parenthood. The rationale for the collection is based on a common concern that social policy research tends to assume that individuals within households (or rather families) have equal control over and access to a wide range of material and non-material resources. In the view of the contributors such an assumption is false and misleading and perpetuates the inequalities in resource access, power and status between men, women and children. Topics covered in the book include control and management, of finances and time and the organisation of work, the financial effects of divorce on children, lone mothers' experience of poverty, women's financial contributions to family living standards, unemployment as a process of impoverishment, inter-generational assistance with financial and other resources, resource distribution within families and child care organisations between families.

Many findings of the research on which the chapters are based

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challenge commonly held assumptions about how families function.

Chapters five and six illustrate this point. Chapter Five 'Household During Unemployment: the Resourcefulness of the Unemployed' by Lorna McKee examines **unemployment as a process of impoverishment**. It explores the resources available to and exploited by family members to help them through the period of unemployment. The research focussed on forty-five families with young children in the West Midlands of Britain in 1982/83 and was particularly concerned with the impact of the father's unemployment on domestic organisation including resource use. In general terms the study found greater variation in the extent to which households were able or willing to call upon the assistance of their extended family in times of unemployment. There was also considerable variation in the extent to which families were able or willing to assist. The giving and receiving of assistance seemed to depend on the degree of household autonomy or independence that existed before the period of unemployment. Thus the stereotype of 'the harmonious, mutually supportive network and the conflictual, avaricious network' could be used to provide some explanation of family behaviour in the face of unemployment but was not sufficient as unemployment did not 'transcend the history and structure of relationships already in existence.'

Chapter six by Qureshi and Simons, 'Resources Within Families: Caring for Elderly People' is the only one in the book specifically concerned with the ageing. The chapter examines how younger family members assist the aged members in terms of material resources and routine domestic help. It draws upon the survey data of almost 300 aged people

over the age of 75 years in Sheffield in 1982. The findings were regarded as important to social policy since the increasing number of elderly are large users of health and welfare services at the same time as being supported in their homes. With changing family patterns of marriage and divorce, unemployment or the employment of middle aged women who were traditional carers of the elderly, fewer families have the financial, temporal or other resources to assist the elderly.

The study found that the extent and the nature of family assistance provided to the elderly depended very much on the class position of their middle aged children,

Amongst the elderly, middle class people are most likely to be providing money to the next generation, whilst some elderly working class people receive resources, namely in the form of goods, from their children (1987:133).

Overall, the investigators found that inter-generational assistance seemed to be decreasing as there was a general expectation of 'mutual autonomy and independence' and 'those instances in which financial or material need is the most acute are those in which material help is least likely to be received from informal sources (1987:133).

While each of the chapters provides very enlightening information about resource access distribution between and within different kinds of families, the social policy implications, with which the book is supposed to be concerned, are seldom fully identified or explored. The analysis provided would have been enhanced if this had been done, not only at the end of each chapter, but also in the form of a concluding

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chapter. Such a chapter could have drawn the themes and material of each chapter together and identified major policy concerns and options. A concluding chapter could also have commented on some methodological considerations regarding family research, especially the complementary contributions of quantitative and qualitative research and the value of the latter in challenging assumptions about how families function and in doing so develop very different hypotheses for testing.

Despite these difficulties with the book, it does make a valuable contribution to the literature of family research.

THE PRIVATE PROVISION OF PUBLIC WELFARE

Elim Papadakis and Peter Taylor-Gooby, Great Britain: Wheatsheaf 1987. xii 226 pp. \$25.00 (paperback)

Reviewed by Michael Wearing

What have been the effects of a decade of Conservative rule on the British Welfare State? Papadakis and Taylor-Gooby confront this question with broad historical, empirical and analytic insights into the interplay of private and public welfare in Britain. They are especially concerned to demonstrate that the radical privatisation rhetoric of the Conservatives over the last decade has shifted the debate rather than redirected the already unequal distributional nature of British welfare. It would appear from their findings that the only effective

privatisation strategy has been in the area of council housing.

The 'introduction' and 'conclusion' provide a critique and extension of conventional approaches to welfare privatisation which tend to separate the state from market provision of services in a 'mixed economy' approach. Contrary to this approach, the authors focus on 'privatisation' as private welfare subsidies and government deregulation as well as cut-backs in government services. The complexities of state-market transfers are seen as part of the long-term structure of British welfare. The effects of these complexities have been inadequately assessed by the radical reform proposals of the Conservatives. This structure has a duality which is represented in the divide between the affluent and the poor. The pre-given distribution of assets between these two groups is maintained by heterogeneous welfare outcomes which favour the well-off at the expense of weaker groups. There are further insights into this divide in the way interests of professionals and other powerful economic and political groups maintain their 'islands of privilege' through British welfare at the expense of the quality of services to the working class.

Detailed historical, as well as recent, developments in private provision are covered in the book by four chapters on health, education, occupational and private pensions and housing. The authors conclude that while the public supports largely incoherent private options and alternatives, there is still strong support for the National Health Scheme. In education, the state has successfully intervened with provisions and regulation for the lower and middle classes while the privileges of 'upper class' private education remain untouched. In

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occupational and private pensions, there is public support for both preferred private schemes as well as those available through the state. This ambiguous attitude, along with the entrenched institutional arrangements, have all but halted the Conservatives' privatisation designs for the area. Finally, while Conservative policy has maintained a residual approach to public housing, all political parties have continued to gain electoral mileage from the 'ideal of home ownership'. The authors argue against such a policy on the basis that such property ownership within the existing welfare context will not change the distribution of life chances or the living standards of the working class.

On the whole, detailed analysis of the private provision of public welfare could become a rich vein of social policy studies. In the British context, such analysis points to amongst other things the myths of welfare 'crisis', the deep inequalities which already exist in a 'pluralist' welfare system and the continued uncertainty facing the British Welfare State. The real yet far from original innovation of this analysis is that the unequal distribution of British welfare is closely aligned to the disparate effects of Britain's class structure. In the long-term, such analysis may help to regain some of those lost conversations on the realities of inequality excluded from the masquerades of conservative rhetoric.

THE COMMON TREASURY: THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME TO FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS,

Background/Discussion Paper No 22, Social Security Review; also issued as Research Paper No 37, Policy and Research Branch, Development Division, Department of Social Security, 2 Volumes

By Alan Jordan

Reviewed by Diana Encel

The papers in both the series to which this one belongs provide excellent sources of information on a wide variety of circumstances important to welfare and social policy, some of them based on original survey material and some on analyses of either departmental or Australian Bureau of Statistics data. The data used here came from the unit record tapes derived from the ABS Income and Housing Survey conducted in 1982. It was analysed within the Department of Social Security, using a program 'cluster analysis', a method described and justified in some detail in Chapter 2 of the paper. The justification involves an analogy with the analytic methods used in science, in particular in biology, in the classification of Australian elapids (snakes to the uninitiated) and in chemistry, in the elucidation of the structure of the DNA molecule.

The cluster method of analysis used by Jordan is described thus:

... members of the sample of individuals, income units or households are described in magnitudes or alternative states of the characteristics thought relevant to classification, the preferred number of clusters is specified and the algorithm

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begins by defining that many cluster centres provisionally in the data matrix - a hypothetical space with as many dimensions as there are characteristics to be taken into account - allocating all cases to one or another of the cluster centres and then reallocating so as to achieve maximum homogeneity within cluster boundaries and, in that sense, an optimal solution. (p.25).

This quotation may indicate to the reader the degree of difficulty in following all the argument. However Jordan also presents the information more simply. The aim of the method described is

... to sort individuals, income units or households into groups having as much similarity as possible within and as much dissimilarity as possible between groups.' (p 23)

The sample population is divided into twenty-two separate classifications of large, overlapping sections. The first of the twenty-two (A), is described as 'all income units whose principal source of income for the survey year was earnings from personal exertion, excluding units paying board and lodging. Age of head of units is not included as a criterion for the classification'. At random some other groups are 'all mothers of dependent children, and the income units to which they belong, educational and occupational qualifications not used as a clustering criterion.' (L); 'all households with at least one constituent income unit principally dependent on unearned income' (T) and (U) 'all households with at least one unit principally dependant on earned income'. Once these twenty-two overlapping groups have been identified, Jordan lists the

characteristics according to which the various sets of income units are classified. These are broken into groups: 18 characteristics related to composition of income unit and household (sex of head, age of head, number of dependent children, aged persons in household etc.); 4 characteristics related to educational and occupational qualifications; and 19 characteristics related to employment status and source of income, 5 of which relate to housing.

Jordan explains the way in which he has used the data and the data weighting processes which he has used to form useful, 'non-distorted' classifications. The purpose of these procedures is to construct a taxonomy of income units and households that will also be a taxonomy of the distribution of income or rather, of equivalent income, a concept he also discusses in detail but which differs from that used by most other researchers.

The results of the analysis are presented in six chapters. The first deals with workers and non-workers, and also includes some initial comparisons with results obtained in other studies - mainly the Henderson Poverty Enquiry but also a longitudinal survey being carried out in America. It also presents a 'first approach to explanation' in which Jordan tackles questions such as the effect of class, family responsibilities, sex, personal idiosyncrasies, culture and chance, and position in the life-cycle. The second deals with families. At this stage Jordan also considers population units with very low earned incomes, the effects of life-cycle events, status (which includes reference to qualifications) and age cohorts (which canvasses the effects of the varying ages at which people acquired their current

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qualifications). This chapter shows that

... other things being equal, the incomes of older people are more stable than those of young people, the incomes of married couples are more stable than those of sole parents, which are more stable than those of single people, and higher incomes are more stable than low incomes. (p 79)

The third of the chapters presenting results deals with women and children. Factors affecting women's incomes dealt with here are motherhood, education, family status and sole parenthood. The next chapter deals with households, 'economies of scale and transfers within the household', and the household membership of young people. Older men are the subject of the following chapter, their labour force participation, their general characteristics, their working life and retirement.

The analyses in the last of these chapters deal with extremes of earned income and differ from those in the earlier ones in that there is an imposition of prior income constraints, rather than a demographic basis, to the classification. Jordan finds that the analysis 'has not produced a better result but has largely confirmed earlier findings'.

Apparently neither the rich nor the poor, as defined here and in so far as their characteristics are knowable from the data, are distinct classes. Nor are they the same as each other, or the same as the people in between. Nor can the respective levels be fully explained by an additive effect whereby income is determined by possession of a

given sum of the characteristics independently associated with higher rather than lower income.. Motivation and luck have been mentioned, but one of the themes that has run through the chapter is stability and the lack of it. Much may depend on a process whereby the individual or family begins with resources sufficient to adopt a larger rather than smaller view of itself and its future, and to establish and maintain itself on a kind of stable platform from which to proceed to the realisation of its vision. (p.166-7)

These six chapters (3-8) provide a rich and varied body of data analysis and interpretation about the incomes of overlapping groups of people presented in a form which adds greatly to our understanding of factors contributing to income variation and inequality. It is not always easy reading. Such passages as the following require close attention.

Members of Y5 have a higher median income -452- than any group except the next and last, Y3, although for some reason housing costs are slightly higher than in Y10, and except for Y3 they also have the highest mean unearned income - \$75. (p 158)

However large portions of the work are free of these letter classifications and the range of analysis is accessible to readers in summarised form.

Jordan gives us also an analysis of the redistribution of incomes set against the ideal of 'equality'.

By equality we have to understand not uniformity but a more complex reality. In practice presumably, however strong our commitment to

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the ideal, the immediate concern is to identify excessive inequality. (p.202).

Ultimately however equality is a property not of institutions but of the lives of individuals and their dealings with each other. The institutions of the society may impede or facilitate its growth but it cannot be manufactured. (p.232-3)

Thus far this review has been little more than a description of the publication, leavened by direct quotations, to provide a background for the following section which attempts to comment on the work and its presentation.

If we look at the footnotes which support Jordan's arguments we cannot but be struck by the extraordinary mix of literature he has consulted - scholars from a wide range of disciplines and periods, philosophers, economists, historians, political theorists, scientists, statisticians, legal scholars, policy analysts: we have Gerrard Winstanley (17th century), Jonathan Swift (of the 18th), Hobbes, John Stuart Mill, John Rawls, Proudhon, Dworkin, Pareto, Schumpeter, Sahota, Piachaud, Walzer, and, nearer home, Henderson, Gallagher, Cass; these are but a representative few. A philosophical approach illuminates the whole and provides us with the motivation for an intensive review not only of the social security system, but of our whole society.

Jordan argues in his conclusions that 'income is an ambiguous indicator of welfare', degrees of inequality have been measured elsewhere. It is the light that Jordan sheds on the forces which maintain or seek to change the degree of inequality which characterises our society which offers something more than other analyses. For instance, he concludes

a discussion of 'equality as policy' with arguments about horizontal and vertical equity, concepts which are often used in devising and justifying policies of redistribution. Horizontal equity, he argues, is a term which is

philosophically empty without further specification, the historical reference point having been assumed arbitrary to represent the desirable state whereas, for all we know, the departures from it may have been justified. (p.210)

Similarly, vertical equity

could be taken as requiring that existing differentials ought to be preserved, or, under a progressive regime, that the ranking not be disturbed or, on the contrary, that it ought to be changed, or that any change should enhance the position of people at the bottom of the distribution. The terms, merely as terms, can carry such a variety of meanings as to be virtually meaningless. (p.210)

Having brought us to a consideration of any unquestioning use of the terms in which we often regard equality and equity, Jordan goes on to develop his preferred scheme for the achievement of equity through the taxation system even though he argues, as many others do, that

... only by change in the institutions directly related to the primary distribution can greater equality be achieved in respect both of income and other social goods. (p.231)

This work was undertaken as part of a review of the social security system and should inform the deliberations of those who will make changes to

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that system. It is therefore appropriate to examine it to discover what it offers in this area.

After discovering the degree of income inequality in the community, Jordan accepts ('for purposes of argument') Mill's assertion that 'the distribution of wealth ... is a matter of human institution only'. Further, he argues, 'systematic inequalities of income, in such a polity as twentieth-century Australia, must have a substantially consensual basis'. He goes on to state that

... we are committed to equality across whole lives rather than across the population at any one time. We don't know how people would choose, being able to foresee the changes they were to pass through, if they were offered the alternative of stable income throughout adulthood at the rate of the total divided by that period. Perhaps they would prefer to retain the prospect of middle-aged affluence even at the cost of stringency in early life ... On the other hand, they might prefer to begin their lives as new families from a higher base of resources, for their own sake and their children's. (p.207)

Jordan makes a distinction between the initial distribution of income, the second, corrective distribution that is effected through the tax-transfer system and the third distribution made to beneficiaries of categorical cash payments. He argues that the effects of this last distribution is unclear although there is scope for changes in the directions it should take. It is the construction of an appropriate taxation system which is of foremost importance if we are to achieve equitable redistribution.

This paper provides the Review with a wealth of information about inequality. It also throws a beam of light on social policy which may reveal questions beyond the scope of the Review, and maybe of any government, to answer.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES: A STRATEGIC APPROACH: REPORTS OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY GROUPS ON LOCAL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

Reviewed by Don Stewart

National and international economic pressures have seen average levels of unemployment rise and remain at around 10 percent or more in most modern industrial economies. With few exceptions, namely in those few countries with specific policies designed to complement and stimulate the labour market, OECD countries have also experienced these high levels of unemployment and the attendant social dislocation and poverty. These apparently endemic levels of unemployment have lead to speculation that labour markets now have the beginnings of a permanent underclass of persons, more likely to be dependent on casual employment in unregulated low status occupations, and on social welfare when employment is unavailable.

Unemployment is not a new feature and governments have traditionally had a range of policies designed to alleviate the negative effects of short-to-medium-term unemployment. Until recently however, few of them had instigated the large scale employment creation policies to foster the retention of people in the regulated labour market which are now

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recognised by many as necessary measures in the prevention of large scale, long-term structural unemployment. Previous unemployment policies have focused on the provision of low level, means-tested income maintenance rather than actively pursuing the redeployment of unemployed persons by providing them with skills to seek new forms of employment, or loans sufficient to revitalise old or establish new businesses.

In Australia, active labour market policies with a commitment to providing training, skills formation and re-deployment, while not entirely lacking, have only really begun to emerge in the last few years, as yet are not fully developed and it remains to be seen what their net impact will be.

Apart from the retraining and education, which is generally oriented to the existing and forecasted needs of large scale employers and industry sectors, a few other Federal initiatives have been directed at exploring other possible means of diverting unemployment. It was with this directive in mind that the National Advisory Group on Local Employment Initiatives (NAGLEI) was established in mid 1985 in order to 'report on the viability of local employment initiatives for permanent job creation'. NAGLEI's terms of reference included reporting on the potential and relevance of local employment initiatives as a viable option for permanent job creation in Australia, having regard to the Government's social and economic objectives including the need for continued expenditure restraint; and to advise the minister on the strategies and policy options available to the Commonwealth Government, including measures which may complement strategies adopted by

State and Local government and the community sector.

Local employment initiatives (LEI's) can be broadly defined as job creation activities that are:

developed in response to local needs, problems, opportunities and resources;

created and controlled by individuals and groups in the community in which they are located, are not brought into the locality from outside;

concerned with the creation of viable employment; and based on long term economic viability from the production and/or sale of goods and services, which clearly distinguishes them from public sector job creation projects, charitable and voluntary work.

The NAGLEI found many local groups in Australia that were successfully creating local employment opportunities, if on a limited scale, and that nationally more than 60 groups had, at the time of reporting, the potential to develop further in this area. Access to additional finance, expert advice and organisational support, each of which was considered necessary to the further development of local employment initiatives on any scale, was found by NAGLEI to be lacking. It saw Federal intervention in this area as providing strategic co-ordination and the economies of scale required for cost-effective raising and administration of finance capital. NAGLEI also felt that the current climate of economic and social restructuring in Australia was well suited to intervention in this area.

In its final report, **Local Employment Initiatives: A Strategic Approach**

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(accompanied by several other reports detailing among other things existing local and regional organisations and conventional and alternative sources of finance) NAGLEI recommended:

- * the establishment of a network of up to 20 small organisations in selected regions to both stimulate, and channel local employment initiatives.
- * that these organisations be made up of representatives from all levels of government, business, unions and educational institutions.
- * that this network operate with the support of a small national Local Employment Initiatives Corporation which would provide training, policy and expert advice.
- * and that funding for local employment initiatives should be via a Local Initiatives Finance Trust (LIFT) which would raise money, possibly through a bond issue.

A series of public consultative seminars has been held subsequent to the release of the report in order to publicise and discuss the more than 50 recommendations which deal with the establishment, organisation, financing and administration of a co-ordinated LEI program in Australia.

The NAGLEI proposals are interesting for a variety of reasons: firstly, they recognise a legitimate role for government employment creation projects and intervention in the labour market; secondly, NAGLEI advocates measures targeted to a local and regional level rather than nationally; and finally, it recognises a diversity of viable industry types (worker co-operatives, municipal enterprises, community businesses and socially focused

enterprises) co-ordinated by advisory bodies and financed by commercial loans systematically structured to meet the cash flows and earning life cycles of new small businesses.

Additional information on the NAGLEI report, **Local Employment Initiatives: A Strategic Approach** (AGPS 1987) can be obtained from:

Mr Mike Malloy, Assistant Secretary, Job Creation Branch, Department of Employment, Education and Training, GPO Box 9880, Canberra ACT 2601. Phone (062) 76 8750.

or Verna Valderrama of the same department, Phone (062) 76 8752.

Information on local employment initiatives is also contained in **Work Matters** and **Scan**, published by the National Clearinghouse on Local Employment Initiatives. They can be obtained from The Work Resources Centre, F Block, Kingsley Street, ANU P O Box 4, Canberra ACT 2601.

WHO PAYS? FINANCING SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Edited by Chris Foster and Hal Kendig, Commonwealth Policy Co-ordination Unit and ANU Ageing and Family Project, Canberra, 1987, 419 pp.

Reviewed by Robert Nittolo

The steadily increasing cost of services for the aged persons has been a perennial concern of policy makers over a number of years. Successive governments have sought in one way or another to limit the growth of spending on services for

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aged persons. The extent of this growth can be illustrated by the fact that in 1979/80 total expenditure on capital grants for accommodation programs, subsidies for nursing homes, payments for community and home based services and expenditure on various other subsidies totalled \$344 million. By the year 1985/86 expenditure on the same programs (or their equivalents) had risen to \$1,328 million; in short, the increase in expenditure alone over this period is nearly three times the total amount spent in 1979/80.

The increase has occurred largely as a result of increases in expenditure on nursing homes (from \$227.4 to \$1,051 million) followed by increases in domiciliary services (\$56 to \$159). The increases in nursing home expenditure have occurred in spite of all attempts to control nursing home fees, admissions and the number of homes. On the other hand increases in the domiciliary services have been encouraged through the introduction of the Home and Community Care Program, partly because of the desire to direct potential users away from more expensive nursing homes, and partly because expenditure in the domiciliary field can be more tightly controlled than that for nursing homes. Increases in capital expenditure on accommodation for aged persons has increased at a more modest rate from \$62 to \$83 million, largely because of a lessening emphasis on the Aged and Disabled Persons Home Scheme and a low rate of growth of expenditure for pensioner housing under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement.

These figures represent only outlays by the Commonwealth Government; they are only a conservative estimate of the true total spent on aged services in this country.

Given these facts then the work under review is a timely work to deal with many aspects of this issue. The book is a compilation of papers presented by a number of well-known specialist experts in their field at a conference held at the Australian National University in June of 1986. The collection deals exclusively with community and residential services (both accommodation and nursing) for the aged, the general question of income-support is not dealt with as there is sufficient information elsewhere.

If the book could be said to contain a general theme then it would be that increasing economic restraint coupled with an increasing demand for services has resulted in a greater awareness of such factors as equity, accountability and the need for clearly defined goals and objectives in both the planning and delivery of aged services. These must be applied to services to ensure that the most appropriate services are delivered to those who need them most. The general assumption underlying these appears to be that increases in demand must be accompanied by increased sophistication in planning and resource allocation as well as increased efficiency in delivery.

The papers contained in the book deal with the question of financing services for the aged from a number of perspectives.

The first half of the book deals with the question of financing services from the point of view of Commonwealth, State, Commonwealth-State, State-State, Local Government and voluntary sectors: as Anna Howe states in her paper, the question of 'who pays' for services for the aged becomes an exercise in the analysis of inter-governmental financial relations. Some programs are funded on a matching-grant basis with

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voluntary organisations; others are on a cost-shared basis with the States; others are totally financed by the Commonwealth. Some programs are financed on a fixed basis, while in others the benefit varies between the States. The consequence of this is, as one may expect, that there are wide per capita variations both from State to State and from program-type to program-type.

The second half of the book deals with a number of issues related to the funding of aged services. These include such aspects as multicultural services for the ethnic aged; financing housing innovations; the cost of nursing (residential) care; the cost of institutional versus community care; the purchase of service contracting in service provision; needs based planning and equity in aged care services.

The work covers the area of financing services in great detail, both in describing the services themselves as well as the various complex issues associated with providing services for the aged. Some of the detail is repetitive, the editors having apparently left the papers as they were. Some of the appendices of the papers are virtually identical, and there are eight tables on 'Commonwealth outlays on expenditure for aged services' for various years which could have been brought together to make comparisons between years easier.

The work is highly recommended for those who are interested in the question of community services for the aged in general, and for those who may be interested in the issue of the cost of community services.

RETIREMENT GUIDE: SERVICES FOR THE AGED IN NSW

The NSW Council on the Ageing,
516 pp.

Reviewed by Robert Nittolo

The NSW Council on the Ageing has published its annual information and service for the elderly in NSW. This book is not only for the elderly themselves but for those who are involved in caring for the aged or those who require an informative and helpful guide to day-to-day services for elderly people.

The guide offers non-technical information on a wide area of services divided into four broad areas: accommodation; financial insurance and legal; health and welfare; and holidays, travel and leisure. Each section contains a description of possible alternatives and options and, just as importantly, gives the names and addresses of organisations and persons who can be contacted for further information in any area.

The section on accommodation deals with a full range of housing options, ranging from dual occupancy, congregate housing, Abbeyfield housing, hostels, independent self-care units, nursing homes and retirement villages. The guide describes each option in detail and gives sufficient information for anyone to be able to make an informed choice as to which accommodation option would be best for them. The sections on nursing homes and retirement villages give a list of important points to be considered in choosing either form of accommodation.

The financial section gives detailed information on choosing an investment adviser, on retirement roll-over funds, as well as a number of highly

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useful guides on investment, guides to property trusts, unit trusts. There is also a guide to common law questions and problems faced by elderly persons.

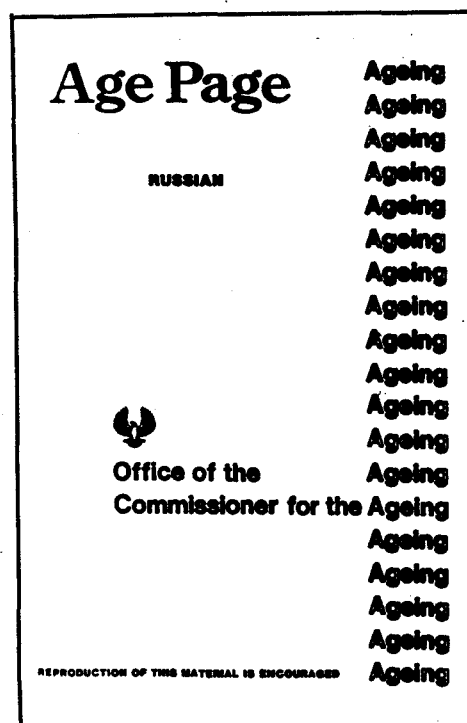
The section on health and welfare contains a short description on the most common medical problems faced by the aged as well as a comprehensive list of organisations which can be contacted for advice or further information.

For those who intend to spend their retirement seeking more leisurable pursuits the guide contains a detailed discussion of questions associated with travel. For those who prefer to remain at home and broaden their minds and thin their bodies then the list of clubs and activity centres would be just the thing to help them decide how to obtain the maximum enjoyment from their retirement.

The remainder of the guide is devoted to giving a brief description of the services available for the elderly in each local government area in NSW. Services listed include the availability of Home and Community Care and other domiciliary services; hospitals, nursing homes and hostels; Department of Social Security offices (for pensions and other entitlements); as well as the all important social groups for the aged.

This is an important work, not only for aged persons reaching retirement, but also for those who work or deal with the aged in any way. The information is accurate and comprehensive and this work provides an important reference source for those wishing to be informed of developments in the field of ageing or for those who wish to contact other workers in the field of age care. It is highly recommended. Available from NSW Council for the

Ageing, 34 Argyle Place, Sydney NSW 2000. Telephone (02) 27 4857.



Age Page is an informative brochure for the ageing population providing very useful hints and advice about various aspects of personal care. The brochure has been produced by the South Australian Health Commission for the Office of the Commissioner for the Ageing. It is written in an easy to follow clear language (and fairly large script) and the aspects of care include:

- High blood pressure
- Safety in the home
- Foot care for older people
- Safe use of medications
- Nutrition: a lifelong concern
- Arthritis
- Ageing and your eyes
- Hints on shopping, cooking and

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enjoying meals
Care of your teeth and mouth
Loss
Bladder problems

It also gives names and addresses of organisations where relevant information can be obtained.

The brochure is available in:

English, Polish, Russian, Arabian,
Serbian, Croatian, Italian, Greek,
Lithuanian, Latvian, Hungarian,
German, Dutch, Czechoslovakian,
Vietnamese and Mandarin.

The brochure may be obtained free from

Office of the Commissioner for the Ageing
GPO Box 1765,
Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 213 3555

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev / UCLA
Hubert H. Humphrey Institute for Social Ecology

Second International Symposium on the Role of the Universities in Developing Areas

Beer-Sheva, Israel
December 1989

CALL FOR PAPERS

The first Symposium on Universities in Developing Areas was held at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute for Social Ecology at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel, in December 1983, under the sponsorship of the UCLA-BGU Academic Cooperation Program. Conference papers have been published in the "Symposium on Developing Areas, Universities and Public Policy" which appeared in *Policy Studies Journal* XIV, Number 3 (March 1986); 403-494, and in *The Policy Role of Universities in Developing Regions* (Macmillan Press, worldwide circulation and St. Martin Press in the U.S., forthcoming).

The Second International Symposium will be held at the Humphrey Institute during late December 1989. Scholars interested in the role of universities in developing areas in both developing, industrial, and post-industrial countries are invited to submit abstracts, together with a recent curriculum vitae, by February 1, 1989, to Professors Fred A. Lazin and Yehuda Gradus (Hubert H. Humphrey Institute, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva 84103, Israel).

Co-sponsors of the Second International Symposium are the Humphrey Institute and the UCLA-BGU Academic Cooperation Program.

Major themes will include:

- a. The role of the university in the national development;
- b. The role of the university in the urban environment, national centers and peripheries;
- c. The role of the university in professional training and development;
- d. The role of research institutes;
- e. The role of the university in technological and scientific developing areas;
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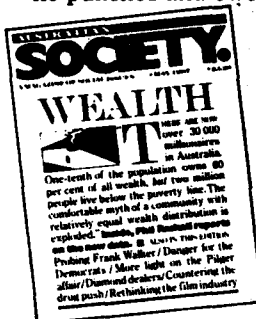
For further information contact either Professor Samuel Aron, GSAUP, UCLA, Los Angeles, California 90024 (Tel. (213) 825-7430, BITNET LAQ2SA1@UCLAMVS), or Professor Fred Lazin (BITNET KDBU100@BGUNOS).

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