

## SWRC Newsletter No 17 - May 1985

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# SWRC Newsletter

Editor: Rosemary Hooke

No 17 May 1985

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## From the Acting Director . . .

With the completion of the first five years of its activities, the renewed agreement between the Commonwealth Government and the University of New South Wales to continue the Centre's operation for another five years, and with the departure of its Foundation Director, Dr. Adam Graycar, the Social Welfare Research Centre has clearly entered a new phase. There are some new people around the place, and a new research agenda is in progress. The work continues, although the flow in the output of reports has temporarily slowed down as the new projects take some time to complete. As the list of expected publications for 1985 and 1986 shows (see p. 22 of this Newsletter), there are numerous research projects either now in progress or in the planning stage, and we hope to keep to the projected time-table as close as possible.

Although we have a research agenda worked out for many months to come, we are keeping it under discussion and assessment through staff seminars and through consultation with outside researchers and research organisations. We have also started a process of consultation with the Development Division of the Department of Social Security and with the Policy Coordination Unit of the new Department of Community Services. It is important for us to maintain awareness of the changes that take place in the Australian community and the corresponding changing needs of families, social groups and individuals, so that our research agenda remains relevant to the social policy and social welfare issues of today and, as far as we can foresee it, of the years to come. By continuing with this approach, we hope to keep the community informed about the current and foreseeable issues and problems in social policy and social welfare as well as contribute valuable data for use by other researchers, administrators and service providers, and for policy makers.

Apart from the research reports which continue to be in demand throughout Australia and overseas, the SWRC seminars held monthly at the University of New South Wales serve as a medium for presentation of social policy and social welfare issues, for discussion and dissemination of information. The two seminars held, so far, this session have attracted good audiences and participation in discussion was lively. The remaining two seminars in this session and the four planned for August-November have important topics of current interest, and we hope that they will be equally well attended.

Among the people visiting the Centre. we had a visit from Dr. Noel Whiteside, Lecturer in the Department of Social Administration, University of Bristol, U.K. Dr. Whiteside's visit to Australia has been facilitated by the Australian Studies Centre in London. We also had a visit from the Honourable Brian Howe, M.P., Minister for Social Security. This was a welcome visit, giving us an opportunity to hear his concerns and interests and to share ours with him. Later this month we expect a visit from Professor James Schulz, Professor of Welfare Economics at Brandeis University, currently in Australia as Downing Fellow in Social Economics . University of Melbourne.

On a less welcome note, our expectations of moving some of our research staff to additional premises have again come to nought. After detailed plans of space allocation and fittings have been drawn up, the premises which were "certain" had been apparently leased to another party. It appears that we have become victims of the time-honoured Sydney practice of "gazumping" or of some other yet unknown to us reasons. Life continues, regardless.



## . . . (continued)

For me, the few months in the position of Acting Director have been busy but full of interest. I appreciate the co-operation I have received from the members of the Centre and from the University administration. I also take this opportunity to express my personal appreciation and of the staff, to Dr. Adam Graycar for laying the foundation of the Centre and its research agenda and for steering the Centre through the first five very productive years. We all hope that his new position of Commissioner for the Ageing in South Australia will be at least as fruitful and interesting as the position he held here. We wish him well. His research work in the many areas he started and carried out at the Centre has provided us with a solid ground upon which to build our current and future research agenda.

Adam Jamrozik Acting Director.



International Youth Year '85



This edition of the SWRC Newsletter is released to coincide with the University of New South Wales Open Day on May 25, 1985.

The SWRC is participating in Open Day with a stand on campus displaying and disseminating our publications. This is graphically assisted by posters illustrating some more dramatic everyday welfare statistics and a Question and Answer exercise, drawing on work completed or currently in progress.

If you are reading this Newsletter for the first time as a member of the public at Open Day, the Centre invites you to use the information resources of the Centre for your needs - personal or professional. Please refer to the centre pages for contact and ordering procedures.



## Subscribe Now for New SWRC Series

The current subscription period will end in about the middle of 1985, when we hope that the R & P No. 54 will be published.

We now invite you to subscribe to the next 16 publications, which includes R & P No. 55 through to No. 70.

Topics to be covered in these future R & Ps will continue to reflect the major social welfare concerns of the SWRC, viz: family and child welfare, taxation, unemployment, youth, housing, welfare and the handicapped, the social wage, ageing.

(A list of provisional titles and expected completion dates is published on page 22).

The cost of this subscription series will be \$55.00. This will be a saving as reports now cost \$4 or \$5 individually. Prices include postage and handling. For the benefit of new readers, the \$60 current (35 to 54) subscription package will also be available for some time after No. 54 has been published.

Current subscribers will, in addition to this reminder, receive an order form inserted in R & P No. 54, which will be the last opportunity to subscribe to and receive future editions.

If you would like to subscribe  $\underline{now}$  to this (35 to 54) or the next (55 to 70) series, or both, please turn to ORDER FORM (C) in the centre pages of this Newsletter.

Cheques should be made out to: Social Welfare Research Centre.





## THE 1985 SEMINARS

Session 2, August to November

**VENUE: Morven Brown Seminar Room 212** 

TIME: 9.15am to 12.30pm (Fridays)

**TOPICS:** 

Friday, August 9

Young People and Youth Policies

Adam Jamrozik, Social Welfare Research

Centre.

Visiting Speaker to be announced later.

Friday, September 13 : Trade Unions, Ethnic Minorities & Social Welfare

Loucas Nicolaou, Social Welfare Research Centre Alan Matheson, Ethnic Liaison Officer,

Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Friday, October 11

Human Impact of Economic Restructuring: Jobs

Education and Family Poverty.

David Tait, Social Welfare Research Centre Kim Polk, University of Melbourne.

Friday, November 15 :

Unemployment and Social Policy

Joan Vipond, Social Welfare Research Centre Knut Halvorsen, Norwegian College of Public Administration and Social Work,

Oslo, Norway.

The topics for seminars during Session 2, 1985, are all related to research projects currently in progress at the Social Welfare Research Centre. Two papers will be presented at each seminar, one by a researcher from the Centre and the other by a researcher from another institute or organisation. Specific titles of papers will be announced later and will also appear in the next issue of the Newsletter, in August.

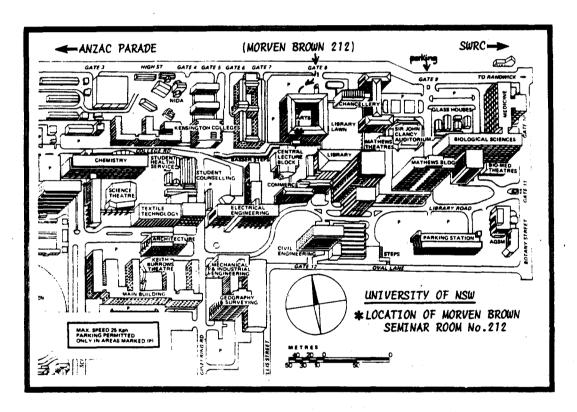
## SWRC SEMINARS, SESSION 2, 1985

During the Second Session of 1985 (August - Nov.) the Social Welfare Research Centre will hold four Public Seminars, on the dates and times indicated on the programme printed opposite.

The topics to be discussed at the Seminars are related to the research projects currently in progress at the Social Welfare Research Centre, and each Seminar will take up one current issue in social policy and social welfare. Papers presented by invited outside speakers will place the issues discussed in a wider perspective.

Time will be allowed at each Seminar for questions and comments from the participants. All interested persons are invited to participate. Attendance is free, and morning tea will be provided.

Further information may be obtained from the Publications and Information Officer, Rosemary Hooke, (telephone (02) 697 5150)



## SWRC SEMINARS, SESSION 1,1985

On June 7, the Social Welfare Research Centre completes the 1985 1st Seminar session.

On this day Ann Harding, author of Reports and Proceedings No.45, 'Who Benefits?: The Australian Welfare State and Redistribution', will present a Seminar on 'Income, Taxation, Social Security and Consumption Patterns'.

Russell Ross, visiting fellow at the SWRC, will also address this topic at the Seminar.

## SWRC SEMINAR REPORTS

In this section we provide summaries of seminars conducted by the Social Welfare Research Centre. Those held to date, and reported in this issue, are:

- 1. <u>Child Welfare</u>, Adam Jamrozik (SWRC) and Paul Havemann (visiting professor, Social Justice Project, The Australian National University), March 15.
- 2. <u>Housing and Homelessness</u>, Joan Vipond (SWRC) and Warwick Temby (Dept. of Housing and Construction, Canberra), April 12.
- 3. Changing Concepts of the 'Family' in Social Policy, David Tait (SWRC).

Please note that seminar papers are not available unless specified.

#### 1. CHILD WELFARE

The first SWRC seminar in the current series was held on March 15, with the theme of <u>Child Welfare</u>. Two papers were presented; one with the focus on the Australian scene, the other presenting the issues of child welfare and juvenile justice in a wider context of the Western world, especially Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Under the topic of The Changing Child Welfare Scene in Australia, Adam Jamrozik presented some of the data generated in the research project currently in progress, on the comparative developments in child welfare services in three States: New South Wales, South Australia, and Tasmania. Viewed in a time perspective of two decades, the trends in all three States clearly indicate a shift from the earlier focus on the child to the child in the family context. The numbers of children committed or admitted to State guardianship show a gradual decrease since the early 1970s, as have the numbers of children under guardianship located in residential care. At the same time, there appears to be a shift

towards short-term intervention, such as temporary guardianship, temporary fostering and other "preventive" methods. Increasing use of non-governmental organisations in child welfare by contracting services is another trend.

The role of the Commonwealth Government is most evident in the provision of child care services, but the role extends into the area of family support services, programmes for young people, services for handicapped children and other special projects. The Commonwealth/State relationship in the provision of family and child welfare services is thus growing more complex, posing certain questions for future policies, allocation of resources, and areas of respective responsibilities.

Professor Paul Havemann of the Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, and currently Visiting Fellow with the Social Justice Project, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, presented a paper on the topic of Needs and Rights and Deserts in the Juvenile Justice Model; the Politics of Rights and the Right. He examined the changes that

## SESSION 1

have taken place in the legislation and practice in the juvenile justice in Canada, drawing comparisons with the developments in the United Kingdom. The examination shows how a shift from treatment approaches to the "due process" of the law with emphasis on the rights of a young person has led to an increasing focus on the "right deserts" of retributive justice. Professor Havemann related these developments to the shift to the right in political thought and government policies in many countries of the Western world. These developments provided considerable food for thought to all persons involved in and concerned with child and family welfare.

#### 2. HOUSING

The first paper of the seminar was presented by Joan Vipond. It introduced preliminary findings from the SWRC housing project which is principally concerned with the affordability of housing, that is, the cost of housing in relation to a resident's income. The paper looked at the differences in housing affordability according to housing tenure and at social welfare implications of these discrepancies.

Some of the differences in housing costs result from differential government policies, and the paper commenced with a review of the recent policies affecting people living in different tenures. The year 1981/2 saw a turnaround in government commitments to housing matters and a substantial increase in expenditure after several years of declining outlays. Measures were undertaken to assist three of the four main tenure types (the fourth being outright owners who generally need little help with their housing costs): home

purchasers, private tenants and public tenants. However, the actual outlays have varied considerably between the different tenure groups.

The tax system, as well as explicit housing policies, have a differential impact on people living in different tenures. So too do other economic and social developments. The second section of the paper considered trends in housing costs, including fluctuating interest rates, rent levels (both public & private), the effects of inflation and variation in house prices.

The final section of the paper

presented new data on the relationship between housing affordability and tenure from the ABS Income and Housing Survey. The data presented were at income unit level giving a more detailed and rather different picture from aggregate analyses. Other studies have pointed to the particular affordability problems faced by people renting in the private sector. These data not only confirm these results, but they also indicate that such problems are not restricted to private tenants. Using a housing: income ratio of 20 per cent as the benchmark for a problem of housing affordability, it was estimated that around 1.2 million income units were above this benchmark, around 23 per cent of all income units in Australia. Of these, a worrying number, around

The actual numbers of purchasers spending above 20 per cent of income on housing was almost the same as that of tenants. However, in relative terms, affordability problems affected a greater proportion of private tenants than home purchasers.

430,000 income units were spending

over 40 per cent of their incomes

on housing expenses.

The paper concluded by pointing to directions for further research in this field, including analysis by level

#### **SWRC SEMINAR REPORTS**

and source of income, regional differences and the effect of different definitions of an affordability 'problem'. Even so, these first data indicate the wide extent of housing problems, at least in financial terms.

The second half of the seminar was presented by Warwick Temby of the Housing Policy Division of the Federal Department of Housing and Construction. His paper covered many aspects of housing and housing policy, and its particular focus was on homelessness. Although homelessness has long been seen as a problem in terms of health and welfare issues, it has only recently been addressed specifically by housing departments.

The paper described a survey commissioned by the Department of Housing and Construction on various aspects of homelessness. In particular it aimed to determine the extent of homelessness in Australia and to investigate the housing problems of particular groups in the population. The survey found widespread evidence of homelessness and inadequate housing as well as massive unmet housing need. Indeed, the consultants estimated that between 15,000 and 50,000 people live out of doors and in refuges, and that an additional number (possibly as many as 60,000) live on the brink of homelessness, with insecure tenure arrangements and/or precarious income support. Further, waiting lists for public housing are at record lengths and many households are forced to pay substantial proportions of their incomes on rent and other housing costs.

These findings indicate that there is a need for policies of two kinds: those to boost the supply of (appropriate) housing for people who are homeless or poorly housed, and policies to increase the incomes of certain groups of people to enable them to afford more suitable housing. There is no universal right to

adequate housing in Australia (as there is to health and education), but the survey results suggest that there is a substantial and increasing need for various forms of housing support. In particular, measures are required which offer more immediate assistance than being placed on a long list for public housing.

The paper concluded with a discussion of the various programmes for housing assistance administered by the Department of Housing and Construction and other departments. Particular dilemmas involved in the development of such policies include the decision between the provision of income maintenance or assistance in kind. A further issue is that of tenure neutrality; at present there is considerable discrepancy in the level and the speed of assistance provided to home owners, public tenants and private tenants.

Different measures for alleviating these inconsistencies were discussed, including increasing the eligibility criteria, for Supplementary Rent Assistance and raising its level, increasing the stock of public housing and improving the level of occupancy of the existing housing stock.

The study of homelessness mentioned in this paper was prepared by W.D. Scott & Associates and will be published shortly by the Department of Housing and Construction.





A report of the Seminar held on May 10 on "Changing Concepts of the 'Family' in Social Policy" will appear in the next newsletter.



#### Launching of

#### 'SYDNEY . . a Social Atlas'

David Tait was a co-author of the Sydney Social Atlas launched on February 3. This was part of a series of 7 atlases for Australian capital cities published by National Mapping and the Australian Bureau of Statistics from the 1981 census. 37 two-page A3 fold-out maps are presented for the city as a whole with one-page blow-ups of the inner city and inner suburban area. Most of the maps are presented for Sydney's 4613 census collection districts, and so give very fine-detailed profiles of each neighbourhood.

The atlas seeks to fill a need for visual presentation of often complex information produced by the census. Included are maps of youth unemployment, married women's labour force participation, workers in the CBD, persons speaking languages other than English, and 8 birthplace maps.

The map of population change in the atlas has potentially important welfare implications. It shows that although the outer fringes of the city are growing rapidly, frequently the areas just inside these urban boundaries are actually falling. This may result from shorter childbearing periods in the life cycle (i.e. shorter gap between birth of first child and last child leaving home) as much as out-migration. implication is that some services (such as childcare centres, and schools) which were provided to last 25 years may find their clientele starting to disappear more rapidly, or come from outside the immediate neighbourhood.

The atlases are available from the AGPS or ABS offices in capital cities.

#### Unemployment Literature

#### Needed!

The Social Welfare Research Centre intends to produce in early 1986 an Annotated Bibliography on Unemployment, similar in format to R & P No.36, covering works which have appeared since that publication was issued, as well as works which were missed at that time.

Unemployment is again to be the central theme of the bibliography but works in any discipline or from any activity connected with unemployment or unemployed people, will be included. Up until the publishing deadline of December 1985, the Centre would welcome information about any books, chapters in books, papers, articles (not newspaper articles) or pamphlets published, or about to be published since 1978. The material should refer directly to Australian conditions. We are happy to include references to multiple places of publication but regret that we cannot include material which has limited accessibility such as unpublished theses or papers.

Authors and publishers are invited to submit their own annotations if they wish.

## External Seminar Presentations

#### WOMEN'S HOUSING

#### **CONFERENCE**

The first ever national Women & Housing Conference, entitled 'On the Threshold - Housing Women', was held at the University of Adelaide during 1 - 3 March 1985. It aimed to bring together people from a broad range of backgrounds, including policy-makers from all tiers of government, community workers, academics, tenants, lawyers, voluntary organisations and women from groups with specific housing needs. In all, well over 800 people attended.

The topics discussed at the conference were as diverse as the participants, including housing finance, management, design and construction, legal and other policy issues, and questions of information and community participation. In particular, attention was focussed on processes whereby women can obtain better access not only to decent housing, but also to decision-making on all aspects of housing. It aimed to identify strategies which would encourage greater participation by women in the planning, provision and management of housing.

Joan Vipond and Chris Rossiter of the SWRC conducted a workshop on housing costs, placing women's housing circumstances in a broad context. Their paper - written jointly with Neil Warren, explored how women in particular are affected by expenditure on housing (i.e. rents, mortgages, rates, maintenance, etc.) relative to their incomes. The study, based on the last ABS Household Expenditure Survey indicated that women are overrepresented in households experiencing housing stress, that is, households whose relative expenditure on housing costs is so large that they are likely to experience financial stress as a result. The findings were related to the fact that women are overrepresented in households with low incomes. Women are also concentrated

in household types which spend high proportions of their incomes on housing: households consisting of single adults and particularly single parents with dependent children. The latter group although numerically small, often experienced particularly high relative housing costs. What is worrying is that, since the time of the Survey, the numbers of lone parents has increased substantially and economic problems have meant that their employment prospects are likely to have worsened, suggesting a deteriorating situation for households of this type. Copies of the conference paper are available from SWRC.

Although the paper itself was based on largely statistical material, the subsequent discussion covered more concrete and personal aspects. Indeed the housing experiences of both lone mothers and single women highlighted by the analysis were echoed throughout the conference: their problems were amongst the principal concerns of workshops, lectures and other sessions.

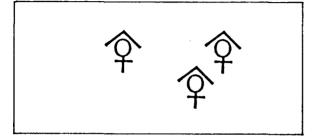
The conference concluded with a plenary session where participants devised a communique based on the most important themes and issues. The conference communique will be submitted to the next meeting of Commonwealth and State Housing ministers to be held in Perth in May 1985.

\*\* In a paper to the 14th Conference of Economists (University of NSW, 13-17 May 1983), Chris Rossiter and Joan Vipond presented further findings from the SWRC project on housing costs. The analysis aimed to review and update the conventional wisdom that tenants in the private sector were the most disadvantaged housing group in Australia. Like the SWRC Seminar paper, it concluded that although a larger number of owner-purchasers experience problems with housing affordability, the worst

## By SWRC STAFF

problems are still concentrated amongst private renters.

Copies of the conference paper,
'Housing Tenure - Social Welfare
Issues' by Chris Rossiter and Joan
Vipond are available from the SWRC
Publications Officer.



## SOCIAL INDICATORS FOR SMALL AREAS

David Tait was invited to speak on the use of the census for producing social indicators, to a meeting of officers and elected representatives of local government authorities, held at the University of New South Wales on March 29. He argued that the population census should not be seen in isolation, but could be enhanced by linking it to other statistical sources, such as surveys or administrative collections.

The most common approach was to use the census as a base to identify the 'target population'. An example presented was for childcare, in which the number of children attending childcare was expressed as a proportion of the number of children of the relevant age group in Sydney LGAs. This showed the familiar pattern of under-servicing in the western suburbs.

A second technique was to make adjustments to census tables based on

information derived from surveys. The example given was poverty, in which ABS equivalence scales derived from a Household Expenditure Survey were used to estimate the number of families counted in the census in each LGA who were in poverty. This was presented in the form of a colour-coded map, drawn by Jenny James.

A third technique was to estimate characteristics which are not collected on the census from information which is known to be related to the characteristic of interest. The example given was handicap. Dr. Tait demonstrated a method of calculating 'synthetic' handicap rates by applying information from the 1981 Handicapped Persons Survey to census tables.

The conclusion was that the potential of the population census is enormously expanded by using it in conjunction with other sources. The census should be seen as the centre of a whole system of social statistics; it required considerable work and linking to other sources to produce good indicators.



## EXTERNAL SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

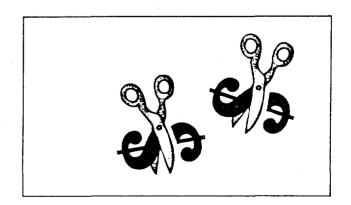
#### SYDNEY IN TRANSITION

David Tait gave a talk to the Sydney Branch of the Australian Population Association on April 2 based on his work as co-author of the Sydney social atlas. He presented colour maps of Sydney, drawn by Jenny James, which showed some of the changes which Sydney had experienced over the previous decade.

Poor areas were tending to get poorer, while the more affluent areas on the north shore and southern fringe were experiencing less poverty. Unemployment was becoming more concentrated in the inner city and inner suburbs, particularly in areas settled by recent migrants. Part of this social change resulted from the major economic restructuring the city had seen: manufacturing jobs in the inner areas were declining rapidly, while professional and technical jobs were increasing. This change in the job mix had important implications for women's paid work. south of the harbour which have suffered the most job loss had the biggest decline in married women's labour force participation. Areas inhabited by people with relatively more professional and technical qualificiations tended to register an increase in the workforce involvement of married women. So areas in which families tended to be losing their so-called 'second-income' were often the areas experiencing increasing family poverty.

#### WORK, INCOME AND LEISURE

Adam Jamrozik held a seminar with graduate students in recreational studies at the Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education on 13 April, on the topic of Equity in Social Consumption. The seminar was based on the paper Adam presented at the Conference on 'Work, Income and Leisure in the Years Ahead", held at the Wollongong University in September 1984. The paper (now a chapter in a forthcoming book) is used by the students as a reference in their Course. The key point in the paper considers the changes in the distribution of income between low income earners (frequently in a one-income family with dependent children) and high income earners (increasingly in two-income families). The increasing inequality in the distribution of income is reflected in the patterns of consumption, especially in the consumption of services provided for or subsidized by governments, eg. education, health, personal care, recreation, and tourism. fields have now become important parts of economic activities, providing employment for professional occupations the holders of which are themselves among significant consumers of the services they provide.



## By Swrc Staff

#### CHILD WELFARE

#### AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Much is written and spoken these days about the need for family support services, and many such services have appeared in recent years on the social welfare scene: budgeting advice, crisis care, child care, and a host of services offering a variety of "counselling". The Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) originally introduced by the Commonwealth Government in 1978 under its Children's Services Program as a three-year pilot scheme, was later extended and in 1984, 111 projects funded under the scheme were in operation in all States and Territories. A support service that has featured prominently in the Scheme has been the Homemakers' Program. These services are provided under various auspices in all States, some are government-sponsored, some are sponsored by non-governmental agencies or community groups.

In Tasmania, the Homemaker Service is provided by the Department for Community Welfare but the Homemakers work as a distinct unit with considerable autonomy. The service appears to be effective in providing support to families experiencing difficulties in management, parent-child relationships and in social functioning generally. To discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of the service, a three day workshop for Homemakers was held at Campbelltown on 22-24 April. Adam Jamrozik was invited to conduct a one-day seminar with the Homemakers as part of the workshop programme. The aim of the seminar was to present to the Homemakers some of the current issues in child and family welfare and to place the Homemakers service in a wider context of family support services.

While in Tasmania, Adam also addressed a meeting of social workers and community welfare workers in Hobart. He presented data generated from the current research project in child and family welfare at the SWRC, illustrating how the growing dependence on income maintenance and income support services was related to the changes in the labour market as well as to the changes in family structure. The data suggest a high degree of overlap between the recipients of Commonwealth pensions and benefits and the recipients of family and child welfare services provided by the States.

There was a need for the identification of socio-economic group characteristics of the recipients, so that appropriate implications may be drawn for policy formulation from the data obtained in the process of service delivery. Adam explained to the meeting that this was the aim of the current research programme at the SWRC in child and family welfare.

#### APPROACHES TO CHILDHOOD

#### AND PARENTHOOD

Tania Sweeney gave a paper on 19 February at the Annual In-service Seminar of Early Childhood Advisers. With the theme of "Approaches to Childhood & Parenthood & Child Care Policy", the paper discussed why parents use child care services and related that to the research material available about the experience of parenthood. That work, for example the research of Lyn Richards (1978) Having Families, suggests that it is social isolation, whether real or perceived, that makes child rearing difficult for today's families. This task becomes even more difficult when financial and material resources are limited. The paper then related these issues to government policy which has seldom recognised that parents need to use child care services to meet their own needs as well as those of the family and the children. Attention of the audience was drawn to R & P No. 44.

## \* NEW SWRC PROJECTS \*

# Neighbourhood Houses as a Family and Child Welfare Service

The current stage of the SWRC research programme in child and family welfare entails an examination of the developments in that field in three States: New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania. (Other States are likely to be included at a later stage). The focus of the research is on the services funded by the Commonwealth, either directly to community groups or non-governmental organisations, or through the State authorities. In each of the three States we aim to identify and examine in detail a programme of an innovative character which then will be used for comparison with similar programmes in other States.

One such service that we aim to study is the Neighbourhood House. Over the past decade, the concept of a Neighbourhood House has emerged as an innovative form of family and child welfare service. A Neighbourhood House is a multi-functional service, based in a local community, managed by a local committee, and utilising local paid and voluntary labour. The House functions as a focal point for local community organisations, providing venue for meetings and various activities, such as adult learning programmes, youth groups, or parents' groups. Some Houses are also used as premises for consultations by community and child health nurses, community welfare workers, or for TAFE Outreach courses.

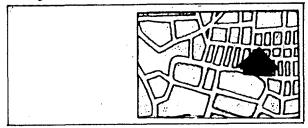
Among the services that Neighourhood Houses offer regularly is flexible child care, assisted financially by the Commonwealth under its Children's Serivces Programme. This form of child care is particularly valuable in situations of family emergencies as well as on occasions where the parent (usually the mother) needs to attend to such activities as shopping, visit to a doctor, or attend an

adult learning course.

Neighbourhood Houses have now been established in most States, and their total number in Australia has recently been estimated at 250. They provide an interesting example of joint Commonwealth/State co-operation in the provision of community services, as the State usually provides the building or rent for a building and the Commonwealth assists with funds for various programmes.

In Tasmania, 23 Neighbourhood Houses have been established to date. Most of these are located in public housing estates inhabited by relatively young, low-income families; and in some isolated country towns. The Houses receive Commonwealth support for child care services, and the State actively assists by providing buildings or rent as well as professional advice from its Department for Community Welfare. The programme is believed to be very successful and is regarded as one of the most effective innovative programmes in that State.

Because of these characteristics and the feasibility of including the whole programme in a State, we have selected the Neighbourhood Houses programme in Tasmania for a detailed study. The project has been entrusted to Ms. Elizabeth Dean of Sandy Bay, Hobart, with some assistance from the Tasmanian Department for Community Welfare. The project is expected to be completed early in 1986.





## Social Welfare Research Centre

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#### (ii) BY INDIVIDUAL COPY

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## B. Publications List

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	No. 2	Bettina Cass and Kris Pedler, "Where are They Hiding the Unemployed?" from : Australian Social Welfare - Impact, November 1980, 27 pp.	\$1	*
	No. 3	Bettina Cass, "Housing and the Family" from : Home Ownership in Australia : A Perspective for Future Policies, Housing Industry Association Seminar Proceedings, 1980, 14 pp.	\$1	
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No.24	Adam Graycar, "Non-Government Welfare Organisations in Australia: Preliminary results from a national sample survey" from: <u>Journal of Voluntary Action</u> <u>Research</u> , Vol.13, No.3, July-September 1984, 9 pp.	\$1	·-····
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No.26	Adam Graycar, "Role and Effectiveness of Voluntary Agencies in Aged Care", from : Today as a Foundation for Tomorrow, Proceedings of the Uniting Church National Aged Care Conference, August 1984, 4 pp.	\$1	
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•	Adam Graycar (ed) (1983) <u>Retreat from the Welfare State</u> , Sydney, George Allen & Unwin, 216pp.	\$11.95	
•	1983 Diary of Social Legislation and Policy (Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne; Institute of Families Studies, Melbourne; Social Welfare Research Centre, UNSW).	\$ 2.50	
•	1980, 1981 and 1982 Diary of Social Legislation and Policy (Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne; Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne; Social Welfare Research Centre, UNSW).	Free	
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## NEW SWRC REPORTS and PROCEEDINGS

This new issue in the Reports and Proceedings Series is now available. For details of ordering, please see centre pages.

No.52 Richard Chisholm, <u>Black Children: White Welfare?</u> <u>Aboriginal Child Welfare Law and Policy in New South Wales</u>, April 1985. \$5.

Richard Chisholm's research monograph is a study of Aboriginal welfare. The main focus is on New South Wales, but the issues confront people in all parts of Australia.

Is there such a thing as Aboriginal child welfare? Should there be? The initial response of many people might be that laws and policies should not in any way distinguish between Aboriginal and other children. Laws and policies which make any such distinction between children of different races seem contrary to current notions of equality. Should we not be striving towards a child welfare system in which it makes no difference whether a child is black or white?

The purpose of this study is to show that whether this is the right goal for child welfare is a remarkably complex question. Many Aboriginal people believe that it is not. They yearn for a future in which they, as Aboriginal people, have control over their destiny and the right to pass on to their children what it is to be Aboriginal. Many have bitter memories of attempts by white people to "assimilate" them, and of the use of child welfare laws to take their children away; away from their homes and communities, and often more than that, away from their identity as Aboriginal people. For them, laws, and policies based on simple notions of equality and non-discrimination mean a society in which the original invasion and theft of their land

become legitimated through the gradual disappearance of any identifiable Aboriginal identity. Aboriginal concerns about their children and the child welfare system, as much as about land rights, touch on wider claims to justice.

This study, then, attempts to consider Aboriginal child welfare in the light of these wider issues.

The study also includes some less "impressionistic" empirical research. With the co-operation of the Department, a survey was made of all children admitted as state wards over a twelve-month period. Information was based on returns from the Department's Regional Offices. second study was based on a visit to a particular community welfare office of the Department: an analysis was made, based on interviews and a study of the files, of all Aboriginal children who were wards of that particular office at the time. It is not known, of course, how representative were these cases, but they provide some insight into the range of issues that arise with Aboriginal children, and give some indication of the translation into practice of some recent policies of the Department. Finally, again with the help of the Department which identified the sample, a study was made of a group of non-Aboriginal foster parents who had Aboriginal foster children, examining their attitudes and esperiences. All these are discussed in chapter 3.

## NO 52

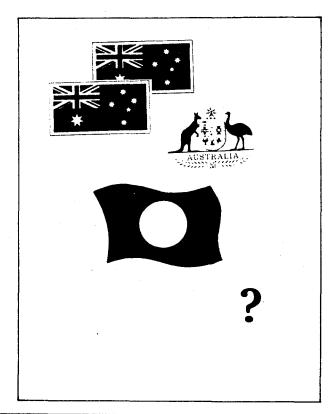
Nevertheless, the study does not draw primarily on statistical material. The essential concern is with the development of appropriate laws and policies for Aboriginal child welfare. Unfortunately, we do not have a reliable data base for much that we would like to know. For example, we do not know the rate of breakdowns in foster placements of Aboriginal children, and cannot systematically compare or example, the "success" of placements with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families. No amount of statistical information can allow us to escape from the uncomfortable fact that evaluation of such matters may depend very much on whether one adopts the values of the Aboriginal or the non-Aboriginal community.

In the foreword to the report, Adam Jamrozik has written: Among the many areas of Social Welfare research that the Social Welfare Research Centre has engaged in since it became established five years ago, welfare issues related specifically to Australian Aborigines have received relatively little attention. This omission has not been due to any lack of concern at the Centre in welfare issues concerning the Aboriginal population but rather to the difficulty of allocating the limited resources of the Centre to all areas of welfare.

Richard Chisholm's research monograph is, in fact, the first of the Centre's publications concerned exclusively with social policy and social welfare issues related to the Aboriginal population and especially to Aboriginal children. The source of data for the Study comes from the State of New South Wales, but the issues raised in the Study clearly extend beyond the boundaries of that State, to Australia as a whole.

The particular value of Richard Chisholm's study lies not only in the depth of perception and analysis but also in that it clearly and forcefully demonstrates the importance of historical perspective in the understanding of current issues and problems encountered in the provision of welfare services to the Aboriginal community. Past policies and practices weigh heavily on current endeavours, affecting reciprocal attitudes, responses, and relationships between the policy makers and service providers on the one hand and the Aboriginal population on the other. Even with the progress achieved in that relationship over recent years, current problems are far from being solved.

We are indeed fortunate to have been able to assist Richard Chisholm's study, and we are certain that the readers will find this report of considerable interest and offering a great deal of food for thought.



## **Future SWRC Reports**

Over the next three months, three research reports will be published.

- No.52 Black Children: White Welfare? Aboriginal Child Welfare Law and Policy in New South Wales, by Richard Chisholm (Now available)
- No.53 Unemployment in Households, by Bruce Bradbury, Pauline Garde and Joan Vipond (June)
- No.54 <u>Innovation and Change in Family and Child Welfare</u>: 1966 1983, by Adam Jamrozik, Sarah Drury and Tania Sweeney (August)

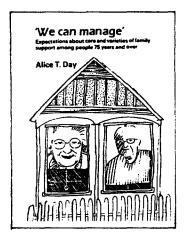
These reports will complete the current subscription list for SWRC Reports and Proceedings. As mentioned earlier, subscriptions are now invited for the next series of 16 reports on current and planned research projects which are expected to be finished later in 1985 and in 1986. The list and the titles are provisional, as the outcome of a research project cannot be stated until the project has been completed. There are also likely to be additional reports published during the period in the area of income security. The details of the research in that area will be worked out by the Senior Research Fellow who is expected to join the Centre in August, 1985. Other reports containing conference and seminar papers written by the Staff of the Centre are also likely to be published. The areas of reseach and provisional titles of research as planned are as follows:

Authors	Provisional Title	Expected date of publication
Sarah Drury and Adam Jamrozik	Young People and Youth Policies and Services	September 1985
David Tait	The 1982 ABS Families Survey: A Guide to its Use in Social Welfare Research	September 1985
Bruce Bradbury Chris Rossiter Joan Vipond	The Affordability of Housing in Relation to Tenure	November 1985
Adam Jamrozik and Don Stewart	The Social Wage: The Concept and its Dimensions	February 1986
David Tait Jill Hardwick	Measuring Family Welfare: Indicators of Family Wellbeing	February 1986
Loucas Nicoleau Adam Jamrozik	Services for Children of Ethnic Minorities	March 1986
Diana Encel	An Annotated Bibliography on Unemployment: 1983-1985	March 1986

## and Proceedings-

Jan Carter	Indebtedness of Unemployed Persons	March 1	1986
Elizabeth Dean Adam Jamrozik	The Neighbourhood Houses as Family and Children's Services	April l	986
Bruce Bradbury Joan Vipond	The Impact of Unemployment on Income	May 1	986
Tania Sweeney Connie Comber Sarah Drury	Child Care and Child Welfare: The Commonwealth-States- Families Interaction	June 1	986
David Tait Jenny James Fiona Brown	The Geographical Distribution of Handicap	July 1	1986
Chris Rossiter	Housing Choices and Australia's Elderly Population	August 1	1986
Bruce Bradbury Chris Rossiter	Housing: Variations in the Capital Cities	November 1	1986
Adam Jamrozik Don Stewart	The Labour Market, Income Distribution and the Social Wage	November 1	1986
David Tait Jill Hardwick Jenny James	Need and Provision: Provision of Services to the Handicapped	December 1	1986

## **NEW BOOKS**



"WE CAN MANAGE"

Alice T. Day (1985)

Institute of Family Studies
Melbourne

Alice Day's monograph is a report of and commentary on detailed interviews with 23 people aged 75 and over, living in Sydney. However, it is also much more than that. It gives a sensitive and invaluable account of the lives of the 23 individuals, but at the same time it provides an understanding of some of the wider processes of growing old and of the different means of support elderly people receive — and give.

This is the I.F.S.'s first report specifically dealing with family relationships in old age, and hopefully not their last. However, the study itself was based on ANU's Ageing and the Family Project. Data from their extensive and detailed survey are already widely used by social researchers and policy makers. This study builds on the Project's existing body of demographic material and information on the health, social and family characteristics of people aged over 60. By returning for a second, longer more free-ranging interview with a small subsample, Dr. Day has complemented the more quantitative and static findings with a wealth of qualitative, historical and personal revelations.

Like the vast majority of elderly people, the 23 men and women referred to in the report live 'in the community', although in a variety of circumstances. Some live alone,

others with their spouses (some of whom are very frail and need considerable care; others thermselves provide help). Others still live with their own children. These arrangements bring varying degrees of comfort and assistance to the respondents. The selection of the sample illustrates the great diversity amongst those so often lumped together and classified as the 'very elderly'; those people included here vary in health, financial resources, family networks, housing circumstances, and in their outlook and views on many aspects of life.

Although all this book is clearly and beautifully written, some of the best and most interesting material comes from the elderly people them-It is very satisfying that selves. their own words are used so extensively to illustrate and explain throughout the report. Detailed case histories are used to illustrate the two main research areas : the variety of family relationships amongst elderly people and their aspirations and requirements in the future. For the present, most contend that 'we can manage'. These histories and insights into current arrangements indicate much more directly and immediately than any number of theories why more elderly people feel cherished, autonomous and fulfilled, while others are vulnerable or even desperate. Yet, although the picture drawn of these 23 people is so rich and revealing the author is reluctant to generalise too recklessly to the broader elderly population. This study indicates all the strengths and few of the flaws of small-scale, qualitative research, indeed its conclusion and appendices provide very useful advice for those intending to embark on such an enterprise.

Despite the very personal nature of the findings in this study it has important implications for policies on aged care. Not only does it

## **NEW BOOKS**

describe some of the realities of family support, it also indicates ways of assisting or substituting for such support. These suggestions do not always coincide with the way aged care services and family policies have developed so far.

This report is a valuable, optimistic and very welcome addition to the Australian literature on ageing. It makes absorbing reading not only for people involved in the area of gerontology, but for all those concerned with human relationships.

Available from:

IFS 766 Elizabeth Street Melbourne Vic 3000.

Regulating Poverty and the Splitting of the German Welfare State

Stephan Leibfried & Florian Tennstedt
Editors

Suhrkamp: Frankfurt/Main 1985

The book asserts that West Germany is currently undergoing a process in which the welfare state is overtly being split in two. The result, according to the authorities, is an increasing polarisation of society. It is said that soon a quarter of the West German population will be segregated into social ghettos and forced to depend for its livelihood either on steadily diminishing public transfers of income based on means testing, or, increasingly, on illegal forms of radical 'self-help'. In contrast, the other three quarters of the population still enjoy the

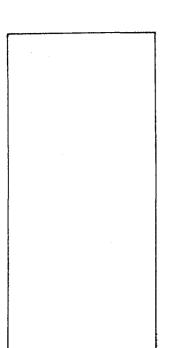
relative security of the established social insurance system with its hierarchical structure of benefits corresponding strictly to levels of earned income. Nevertheless, the levels of the income transfers derived from the social insurance system are also sinking. In the present situation of increasing social insecurity, the beneficiaries of the social insurance system are attempting to preserve their relative position in the income hierarchy and to maintain the differentials, however marginal, vis a vis the (official) poor, although a comprehensive and equitable basic social security standard for the whole population, as a measure which would underpin rather than replace the existing graded system, would appear to be a better solution for all concerned.

Today, for the first time since the second world war, the regulation of poverty has become an issue which poses a fundamental challenge to the West German political system, to its welfare state legitimation and to the traditional mechanisms of social integration via social policy.

This volume focuses on the politics of poverty in West Germany, on the structure, the functions and resources of the existing institutions that define and deal with poverty. Particular attention is paid to the gaping holes that have in recent years been torn in this 'safety net' of public welfare in order to demonstrate the degree to which basic elements of the West German welfare state have already been undermined or destroyed. It thereby becomes evident that the regulation of poverty is of vital importance for the regulation of the living standards and social opportunities for all members of society.

The editors are currently seeking an English language publisher. The book is at present available only in German.

## **NEW BOOKS**





Helga Nowotny (ed.) Thought and Action in Social Policy

Social Concerns for the 1980s

This volume, published on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the European Centre for Social Welfare Training and Research, attempts to capture the spirit, commitment and scope of the social policy community that exists in the UN European Region. 40 experts with whom the European Centre has established contacts over the past decade, have contributed a most diverse and fruitful account of their common endeavour to extend their professional and personal concerns to those recipients living in that region for whom social policies are formulated.

Over the past decade considerable change in pressing social concerns has occurred. Social policies designed to cope with these concerns are not immune from the harsh realities of economic upheavals that have left such a strong imprint on dominant ways of thinking or even behaviour, of this past decade. And yet, while

social policies seem further removed than ever from escaping the shadows of economic policy, the debate whereto the present transition is leading has generated new dimensions of autonomy of thought to the realm of social policy. This book is a lively proof thereof.

Available in English from: European Centre for Social Welfare Training and Research, Berggasse 17, A-1090 Vienna/Austria.

Hardcover 360 pages ISBN 3-900-37618-2



## SUBJECT GUIDE TO SWRC PUBLICATIONS

In response to the many requests received from readers for research material linked to subject areas, we have cross-referenced SWRC publications to help serve the most usual enquiries.

It is worth mentioning that this was done in consideration of those people who require a quick guide to commence reading in a given area, and that it represents only a single-take classification (with some exceptions) in a field where multiple classifications are likely. It includes the complete publications of the Reports and Proceedings (R & Ps) and the Reprint series.



In order to purchase any of these reports, please refer, using the publication number given, to the publications list and order form in the centre pages of this Newsletter.

## **FAMILY STUDIES**

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- No. 19 Tania Sweeney and Adam Jamrozik, <u>Services for Young Children: Welfare Service or Social Parenthood?</u>, March 1982, 144 pp.
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We now have copies of Retreat from the Welfare State available for purchase through the Publications section of SWRC.

Edited by Adam Graycar, the book contains 10 chapters by researchers from the SWRC across a similar range of subject areas to the above, with particular focus on what happens to the social welfare, occupational welfare and fiscal welfare components of Australian social policy during a recession.

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