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Author:

Aldridge, Duncan; Purcal, Christiane; Thomson, Cathy

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USING THE SOCIAL CARE FRAMEWORK TO ANALYSE RESEARCH ON YOUNG CARERS

BY BETTINA CASS

PLACING YOUNG CARERS IN THE MAINSTREAM LITERATURE ON CARE

The theoretical frameworks on care-giving and analysis of the policy settings in which care-giving is situated rarely consider the case of young carers, focusing instead on parental care of children, and adult care for disabled or chronically ill offspring, spouses or older relatives. This may be because children and young people are not *expected* to take on substantial caring responsibilities. While adult carers are seen as conforming to familial and societal norms, the image of children and young people as

unpaid carers appears to transgress the norms that envisage them as care recipients, as *dependent*. Placing young carers within the 'social care' framework is to perceive them as active agents engaged in reciprocal relationships of care and contributing substantially to family well being, particularly the well-being of their care recipient. Much of the literature on care-giving tends to emphasise the concepts of 'stress' and 'burden', and fails to capture the complexity and *worth* of the diverse experiences of care (Burack-Weiss, 2006). Focusing on children and young people as active carers making profound contributions to their families and communities, while incurring

personal costs (Noble-Carr and FaCS, 2002a, 2002b), is consistent with a framework which sees children and young people as active participants within their families and communities (Ridge, 2002; Prior, 2005; NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2005).

Much of the literature on paid and unpaid care – the latter provided usually by family members within households and kin networks – constructs dichotomies of formal/informal, paid/unpaid care. There is, however, a newer literature which rejects these dichotomies, developing a conceptualisation of social care in which the interconnections of paid and

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Bettina Cass

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LEAD ARTICLE:

Professor Bettina Cass discusses research on Young Carers

EDITORS ♦ DUNCAN ALDRIDGE, CHRISTIANE PURCAL AND CATHY THOMSON

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Acting and Deputy Director
Professor Ilan Katz

Director, Australian Professorial Fellow and Scientia Professor
Professor Peter Saunders

Professorial Fellow
Professor Bettina Cass

Senior Research Fellows
Dr Bruce Bradbury
Dr Tony Eardley
Karen Fisher
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Research Fellows
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Research Scholars
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Sherman Chan
Bob Davidson
Marilyn McHugh
Christie Robertson
Peter Siminski
Gerry Redmond

Visitors
Professor Noraysiu Watanbe
Hanna-leena Myllarinen
Heidi Norman
Michael Russell
Ofir Thaler

Social Policy Research Centre
Building G2
Western Grounds
University of New South Wales
Sydney NSW 2052, Australia
Phone: +61 (2) 9385 7800
Fax: +61 (2) 9385 7838
Email: sprc@unsw.edu.au
http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au

STAFF AND VISITOR UPDATE

VISITORS:

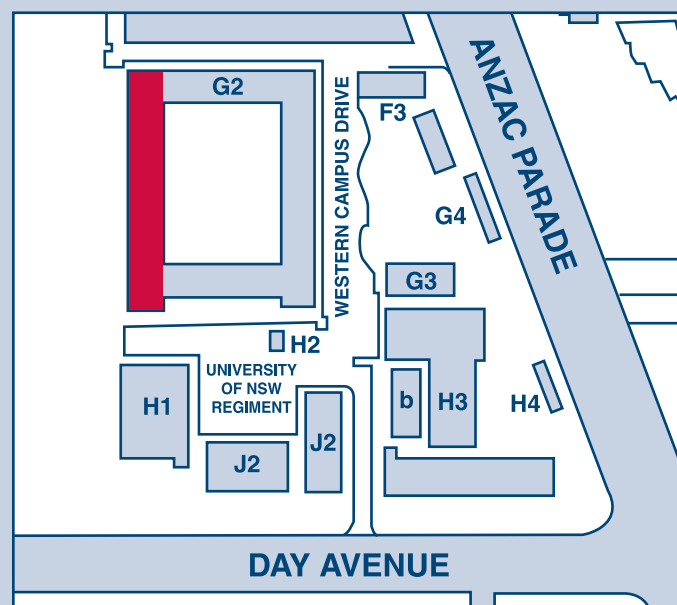
PROFESSOR NORAYSIU WATANBE visited the Centre during January to study social security systems in Australia. PROFESSOR TIM SMEEDING presented a seminar while visiting the Centre. PROFESSOR SIR TONY ATKINSON presented a lecture at SPRC during February while visiting Australia. HANNA-LEENA MYLLARINEN commenced an internship at the Centre in March. HEIDI NORMAN is on sabbatical from the Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning, University of Technology Sydney. MICHAEL RASSELL is visiting the Centre from Birmingham University. Michael's PhD research is looking at the impact of recent welfare reforms on well-being in Russia, using qualitative techniques to explore how people are adapting to the new policy structures and forms of assistance. OFIR THALER is beginning an internship at the Centre and will be assisting on a range of projects.

ARRIVALS:

SAUL FLAXMAN joined the Centre during February and is currently working on the evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy. BELINDA NEWTON joined the Centre to assist in the preparation of a grant application. KYLIE SAIT joined the Centre for 3 months to work on the Young Carers Project. CIARA SMYTH returned from maternity leave. CAROL SULLIVAN has joined the SPRC as Office Manager. JACQUELINE TUDBALL rejoined the Centre and has been working on a range of projects.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Congratulations to Professor PETER SAUNDERS who was awarded a SCIENTIA PROFESSORSHIP (2007-2012). KAREN FISHER has been approved for admission to a PhD.



The Social Policy Research Centre is located at G2 on the Western Side of Anzac Parade, Kensington Campus, enter via Day Avenue.

THE SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH CENTRE

The Social Policy Research Centre is located in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New South Wales. Under its original name, the Social Welfare Research Centre was established in January 1980, changing its name to the Social Policy Research Centre in 1990. The SPRC conducts research and fosters discussion on all aspects of social policy in Australia, as well as supporting PhD study in these areas. The Centre's research is funded by governments at both Commonwealth and State levels, by academic grant bodies and by non-governmental agencies. Our main topics of inquiry are: economic and social inequality; poverty, social exclusion and income support; employment, unemployment and labour market policies and programs; families, children, people with disabilities and older people; community needs, problems and services; evaluation of health and community service policies and programs; and comparative social policy and welfare state studies.

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

FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY PETER SAUNDERS



I took up my appointment at the Centre at the beginning of February 1987 and have thus just completed two decades as SPRC Director. This is my fifty-sixth contribution to the 'From the Director' column – a task that I have always anticipated with pleasure. The period has been one of immense change for the Centre, and for the government, university and community sector contexts within which it operates. Some of these changes were captured in a series of personal contributions to a recent issue of this Newsletter (No. 90, May 2005), which commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Centre's establishment in 1980. The reflections that follow represent some of my own memories of what has been a marvellous period for the Centre, and for me – professionally and personally.

When I arrived in 1987, social policy research had a very low academic profile and appeared to play a rather minor role in policy development. The (then) Department of Social Security had a strong research ethos and was seeking new solutions to the emerging challenges associated with rising individualism, the perceived declining ability of government to influence outcomes, and the ever-present task to square the circle between limited resources and growing needs – 'doing more with less'. The Social Welfare Research Centre (SWRC), as it was then called, contributed to the research task by reviewing the available evidence, identifying and challenging the implicit assumptions of policy makers and suggesting how the welfare state needed to be reformed. Its findings were often widely reported, but rarely affected government action.

When we did try to identify the impact of government policies and programs, it was generally at a very

high level of abstraction, using secondary data that was often outdated and applying theories and arguments that were (as always) open to alternative interpretation. We addressed the 'big questions' and came up with 'big answers' – although they rarely took account of political realities and generally ignored the numerous practical issues of design and implementation. Even reformist Social Security Minister Brian Howe, who has a deep appreciation of the value of research and a keen sense of its importance, was frustrated at my unwillingness to accept the inevitability of greater benefit targeting, and my insistence on articulating instead the merits of universal provision.

I do not want to re-visit an old battleground (I've been there many times in the intervening years!) but the example illustrates the tension that exists between those responsible for setting policy (and for convincing their political colleagues to provide the funds) and those whose job it is to conduct research which illuminates current dilemmas, but also challenges existing ideas about what needs to be done in response to them. There is, of course, a need to implement the ideas that emerge from the political process most efficiently and to guarantee their effectiveness. Research has an important role to play in both tasks, but research that is conducted *in a university setting* must also be free to question the relevance of assumed constraints and challenge the validity of dogmatic assertions about cause and effect. When research becomes dominated by the agenda of *any* single body, it fails in its task of providing an independent assessment of the merits of the argument.

My sense is that two decades ago the SWRC was seen by many in government as overly concerned

to establish its independence by disputing the claims of the official policy elite, whereas today the SPRC is seen by some in the community sector as having lost its independence in the search for funds generally provided by government: in focusing on the details of policy (an essential ingredient of the role of research in evaluation), we have lost sight of the bigger picture that previously filled our investigative lenses. To paraphrase Keynes, we have become far more proficient as 'academic scribblers', but have lost sight of the 'defunct ideas' that often provide the real insights for policy reform.

Neither of the above perceptions is completely accurate, but each contains an element of truth. We do need to get the details right when examining the impact of policy, but we also need to ensure that the criteria by which we judge the desirability of policy are not just those set by policy-makers. The changes experienced by the SPRC over the last two decades have helped with the former by strengthening links with the bureaucracy, but they have had less of a beneficial impact on the latter – in part because those who have the ability to ask the big questions have been forced by funding imperatives to become too preoccupied with trying to answer the small ones.

Whereas we might now be guilty at times of 'not being able to see the wood for the trees' we were once possibly more guilty of 'not being able to see the trees for the wood'. We need to be able to take account of both 'the wood' and 'the trees' if we are to maximise the contribution of research to knowledge development and policy formulation, and it is trying to achieve the very difficult balance between these two objectives that makes social policy such an exciting, but difficult area of study.



Peter Saunders

FROM THE DIRECTOR

One great benefit of the switch from core to competitive funding has been to make the SPRC eligible to compete for Australian Research Council (ARC) grants. This has had a number of important impacts: first, it has allowed us to set our own research agenda in areas that we decide are important and provided an incentive for early career researchers in particular to demonstrate that they can compete

with the nation's top researchers; second, our success in being awarded grants has raised our profile within the university and added to our academic standing generally; third, the ARC Linkage grants have been very valuable in helping us to establish and develop links with research users in the sector.

Achieving the right balance between maintaining one's independence while conducting

research that is relevant remains a major challenge. I have strived to achieve this balance over the last two decades – both in my own work, and in the vision and values I have brought to the job of SPRC Director. It has been a fantastic experience and I feel greatly honoured to have been involved in such an important venture, and incredibly lucky to have had such wonderful colleagues accompanying me on the journey.

PETER SAUNDERS APPOINTED A SCIENTIA PROFESSOR

The SPRC is very proud of our Director, Peter Saunders, who, on top of his ARC Professorial Fellowship, has now been appointed a Scientia Professor by UNSW. This is the University's most prestigious award for research excellence, and is in recognition of Peter's pre-eminent role in the field of social policy. The award of a Scientia Professorship not only recognises past research eminence but also relates to ongoing research and outstanding research stature, so the university (and SPRC) sees Peter as having a long and productive research career ahead of him!

The criteria for Scientia Professors are: an impressive portfolio of major publications with international publishers and world class journals; internationally recognised prizes, awards, patents, honours, membership of one of the four learned academies or comparable organisations etc; citation by a broad cross-section of peers internationally; reports of eight referees, external to UNSW and all of international standing; and evaluation of future research potential and benefits to the University's research profile.



Professor Peter Saunders (r) with SPRC Acting Director Professor Ilan Katz at a celebration of the award, which was held, appropriately, in the university's Scientia Building.



Peter Saunders celebrates with colleagues.

USING THE SOCIAL CARE FRAMEWORK TO ANALYSE RESEARCH ON YOUNG CARERS

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FROM PAGE 1

unpaid care are mapped through the life-course. One influential contribution to this literature (Daly and Lewis, 2000) focuses on three interconnected aspects of care:

- *Care is labour*, requiring consideration of whether care is paid or unpaid, formal or informal and the social policy determination of these boundaries. These are not fixed but blurred and changing boundaries, framed by public policies, and may be subject to significant policy shifts.

- *Care is embedded within a normative framework of obligation and responsibility*. Informal care tends to be provided under conditions of social, usually familial, relations and responsibilities, making it inappropriate to consider the labour aspects of care alone.

- *Care is an activity which incurs costs* (financial, physical, mental health and emotional costs) which extend across public/private boundaries. These costs include *direct costs* with respect to expenditure and costs to physical and psychological health; and *opportunity costs*, concerned with disruption to education, training, labour force participation, income earning and participation in social/friendship networks - opportunity costs which for young carers may have both short and long-term impacts. The key question is: how are the costs of providing care shared, among individuals, within families and within society at large? This may be through pooling the costs of care provision through state-financed or subsidised services; or policies which expect that care will be delivered predominantly by family members and relatives, sometimes, as in Australia and the UK, with the assistance of government income support - in Australia through carer payment and carer allowance.

TYPOLOGIES OF CARE

Fisher and Tronto's (1990) typology of care distinguishes between different modalities of care provision:

- *caring about* – paying attention to the factors that determine well being and establishing the need for care;
- *caring for* – taking the initiative for concrete caring activities and taking responsibility to ensure that they are carried out;
- *taking care of* - actually carrying out the daily tasks of care-giving work;
- *care receiving* - signifying that caring is a reciprocal relationship.

Fine's (2004) typology encapsulates similar relational dimensions:

- care as a mental disposition, an emotional engagement with and concern for the wellbeing of others;
- care as an activity, a form of work concerned with personal maintenance, assistance or support;
- care as an interpersonal relationship between individuals with the emphasis on the development of ongoing personal ties through attending to the needs of the other.

The concept of social care provides a useful framework for analysing the research on young carers, exploring the socio-economic cultural circumstances of young carers' labour as well as their sense of normative obligation and responsibility; and identifying the current and longer-term cost of care, as well as the benefits.

Matters such as these, among others, will be explored in an ARC Linkage Grant project titled *Young carers: Social policy impacts of the caring responsibilities of children and young adults*, which is funded for 2007-2009. The Chief Investigators are Bettina Cass (SPRC), Deborah Brennan, University of Sydney, Ilan Katz and Cathy Thomson (SPRC) and Deborah Mitchell,


ANU. There are ten Partner Organisations: government departments in NSW and South Australia, Carers NSW, Carers South Australia and NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AS CARERS: AUSTRALIAN DATA AND EXISTING RESEARCH

'Young carers' is the term used in Australia, the UK and the USA to refer to children and young adults with informal caring responsibilities for other people, usually family members, who have a chronic illness, physical or mental disability. In Australia, it can be argued that the identification of 'young carers' as a category was initiated by non-government sector advocacy giving carers in general and young carers in particular a political voice through the efforts of State/Territory and national Carers Associations. These efforts inspired partnerships with researchers and government policy-makers, generating a small number of Australian studies on the characteristics, circumstances and needs of young carers and the people for whom they care, and the policy environments in which their care-giving is located (Price, 1996; Gays, 2000; Noble-Carr and DFACS, 2002a, 2002b; Moore, 2005; Morrow, 2005; Thomson et al, 2005).

DEFINITIONS OF CARERS

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers* (SDAC) defines a carer as "a person of any age who provides any informal assistance, in terms of help or supervision, to persons with disabilities or long-term conditions, or older people (aged 60 and over)". This assistance has to be ongoing, or



likely to be ongoing, for at least six months. Where the care recipient lives in the same household, the assistance is for one or more of the following activities: cognition or emotion; communication; health care; housework; meal preparation; mobility; paperwork; property maintenance; self care; and transport. Assistance for a person in a different household relates to 'everyday types of activities', without specific information on the activities (ABS, 2004, p.71).

A 'primary carer' is defined as "a person who provides the most informal assistance, in terms of help or supervision, to a person with one or more disabilities", for one or more of the core activities of communication, mobility and self care (ABS, 2004, p.77). The SDAC survey did not enable young carers aged under 15 to be identified as primary carers because in this survey primary carers include only persons aged 15 years and over with whom a personal interview was conducted; those aged 15-17 were interviewed if parental permission was granted. This caveat matters because it is likely to have resulted in the undercounting of young primary carers, who would be counted in the 'carer' category, which does not restrict age, but would not be counted in the 'primary carer' category if aged under 15, while some aged 15-17 may not be counted.

AUSTRALIAN DATA ON YOUNG CARERS

This study covers children and teenagers up to age 17 and young adults aged 18-24. According to the ABS SDAC data for 2003 (ABS, 2004), there were 170,600 carers up to age 17, comprising 3.6 per cent of all children and young people in this age range; and 178,000 carers aged 18-24, comprising 9.1 per cent of young people in this age range (Table 1). Thus 348,600 children and young people were undertaking caring responsibilities

for persons with disabilities or long-term conditions, or older people, for at least six months, or were likely to be doing so for at least 6 months.

The data on young primary carers is of considerable interest, even though an under-estimate (explained above): there were 4,700 young people aged 15-17 and 15,600 aged 18-24 identified as a primary carer. The gender composition of young carers is significant: whereas females comprise 48.7 per cent of carers aged up to 17 and 49.0 per cent of carers aged 18-24, gender parity no longer pertains when primary carers are considered. Females comprise 48.9 per cent of primary carers aged up to 17, but a much greater 80.8 per cent of primary carers aged 18-24. In summary, there is virtually no gender difference with respect to the numbers of young carers up to the age of 24. However, women comprise the majority of young people aged 18-24 who provide the most informal assistance to a person with one or more disabilities. This suggests that among young adults there are gender-differentiated practices influencing primary care responsibilities, which may be related to different emphases placed on continuation in education, training and labour force participation. This issue has not been explored in Australia, and is important in understanding the familial, socio-cultural and socio-economic processes that influence the taking up of primary care responsibilities.

Analysis of SDAC data for 1998 shows that of young carers aged 10-24 years, two thirds provided care for a parent with 43 per cent caring for their mother, and 23 per cent for their father; a further 10 per cent provided care for a female relative and 10 per cent for a male relative other than their parents; and 14 per cent cared for other persons, which includes friends and neighbours (Bittman et al, 2004, p. 64; Thomson et al, 2005).

The Australian, UK and USA research shows that a number of young carers are 'hidden' and do not identify as a care-giver, predominantly because they see themselves as carrying out their family obligations and not requiring, or unwilling to claim, services and benefits (Bittman et al, 2004; Morrow, 2005; Becker, 2005). Those who do identify as carers often indicate that they are proud of what they do, note the valuable skills which they gain and the close relationships formed; they usually come from strong, close-knit families and many manage well (Aldridge and Becker, 1998, 1999; Noble-Carr and DFACS, 2002a, 2002b; Hunt et al, 2005).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS DUE TO CARING

However, care-giving responsibilities may impose constraints on continuing participation in school education, post-secondary education and training, and access to employment, with implications for longer term employment histories and income circumstances (Noble-Carr and DFACS, 2002a, 2002b; Moore, 2005; Becker, 2005; Hunt, 2005). Young carers are at high risk of leaving school early: approximately 60 per cent of primary carers aged 15-24 were unemployed or not in the labour force, compared with 38 per cent of the general population in this age range. Similarly, only four per cent of primary carers aged 15-24 were still in education, compared with 23 per cent of their age peers (ABS, 1999). Caring responsibilities may also constrain participation in friendship networks, social and recreational activities, impacting on health and wellbeing (Price, 1996; Morrow, 2005).

Analysing data from the SDAC 1998, Bittman et al (2004) found that young carers were more likely than their peers to be in a sole

parent family; live in socio-economically disadvantaged areas; have a disability or long-term health condition themselves; those aged 15-24, especially those aged 20-24, were more likely to be unemployed or not in the labour force, or more likely to be working part-time if employed; more likely to be in receipt of government income support; and be of CALD background. Research in the USA showed similar findings: young caregivers tend to live in households with lower incomes than their peers, and are more likely to live in a one-parent household (Hunt, 2005).

What are the family circumstances and policy settings in which children and young people undertake informal caring? Studies in the UK show that co-resident young carers are perceived as available to provide care as part of the family network of obligation and responsibility; especially so in cultural circumstances where kin reciprocity is paramount in family functioning; and when formal health and social services are insufficient or seen as culturally inappropriate (Aldridge and Becker, 1999).

YOUNG CARERS' SERVICE USE

Australian research shows that the majority of young carers whose care recipients needed assistance did not use formal services (Bittman et al, 2004; Thomson et al, 2005). Many do not identify as a 'carer' and consider that they do not need to access formal services. The relationships of familial caregiving permeate their sense of identity. Others indicate that service providers lack awareness about their particular needs; or that appropriate, affordable services are not available, have inconvenient hours of operation or cannot be accessed because of transport difficulties; and young carers mistrust services. Lack of access to culturally appropriate services is greater for young carers and their families of CALD background (Misic, 1996), and of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background (Orcher, 1995).

SUMMARY

The Australian, UK and USA research suggests that children and young people become carers in two

interconnected circumstances: through individual and family decisions opting for informal care within the family, and because other adult carers are not available within the kin network (e.g. in sole parent families); and through lack of appropriate, accessible and affordable formal services. This ARC Linkage project will explore the complex interconnections of these two frameworks – the cultural/familial and the policy frameworks. For young carers, *care is labour* which may occupy time which would otherwise be available for participation in education, training, employment and social/friendship activities; *care is located in a normative framework* within which young people may not identify themselves as carers but as family members carrying out their responsibilities and obligations; *caring incurs costs* of interrupted education and labour force participation which may have long-term implications for future employment and income. There are benefits as well as costs: profound contributions to the wellbeing of the care receiver and the family, and the acquisition by

Table 1: Carer Status of Young Carers by Age and Gender

Carer Status	Males up to 17 years		Males 18–24 years		Females up to 17 years		Females 18–24 years		Total up to 17 years		Total 18–24 years	
	N ('000)	%	N ('000)	%	N ('000)	%	N ('000)	%	N ('000)	%	N ('000)	%
Primary carer (a)	2.4	0.1	3.0	0.3	2.3	0.1	12.6	1.3	4.7	0.1	15.6	0.8
Carer not a primary carer	85.1	3.5	87.8	8.8	80.8	3.5	74.6	7.7	165.9	3.5	162.4	8.3
Total carers	87.6	3.6	90.8	9.1	83.1	3.6	87.2	9.0	170.6	3.6	178.0	9.0
Not a carer	2,345.0	96.4	907.4	90.9	2,224.2	96.4	881.6	91.0	4,569.3	96.4	1,789.0	91.0
Total	2,432.6	100	998.2	100	2,307.3	100	968.8	100	4,739.9	100	1,967.0	100

Source: ABS SDAC (2004) All Persons, Living in Households, Carer Status by Age

Notes: (a) Primary carers only include persons aged 15 years and over for whom a personal interview was conducted. Persons aged 15-17 were only interviewed if parental permission was granted.

the carer of valuable skills.

The literature suggests that young carers tend to be located in identifiable socio-economic-cultural circumstances, often in low income families where care giving is central to the mobilisation of inter-generational resources and strengths.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key research questions are: what are the diverse socio-economic and socio-cultural factors which initiate and sustain caring responsibilities for children and young people? Under what policy and service provision settings is the care-giving of young carers embedded? Is there access to appropriate and affordable health and social support services for the care recipient, and to flexible education, training and employment conditions for the young person? Are socio-economic, linguistic and cultural differences taken into account in service provision? How might the nature and intensity of care be altered under different policy frameworks, so that a young person's normative ethic of 'caring about' and 'caring for' need not necessarily be extended into responsibility for 'taking care of'?

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MEASURING 'SELF-RELIANCE' AMONGST USERS OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

BY ANN DADICH AND TONY EARDLEY

The full extent of homelessness in Australia is difficult to gauge, but one authoritative estimate, using a broad definition including those in highly insecure housing, has put the number at around 100,000 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2003). Within this population are individuals and families with widely varying circumstances, including young people who have left parental homes or State care, and women and children escaping domestic violence. Many have additional problems such as poor mental health or substance misuse.

THE SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAAP)

The main service response to homelessness in Australia is the *Supported Accommodation Assistance Program* (SAAP), established in 1985. SAAP is cost-shared and jointly managed by the Commonwealth, States and Territories. Together they fund services provided by more than 1,200 agencies, including non-governmental, community-based and local government organisations, throughout Australia.

The ultimate aim of SAAP is to 'provide transitional supported accommodation and related support services to help homeless people achieve the maximum possible degree of self-reliance and independence' (AIHW, 2006, p.1). Services typically provide crisis, medium or long-term accommodation, and/or case management. While the focus of services varies across jurisdictions, case management has become an increasingly important element of the SAAP program in recent years.

How do we know whether SAAP services are helping clients achieve greater self-reliance? Part of the SAAP V Multilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth, States and Territories involves a program of evaluation. Under this initiative, the SPRC has been

commissioned by the SAAP Coordination and Development Committee (CAD), through the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA), to design and implement a client survey. The aim is to measure how far receiving SAAP services does improve clients' self-reliance and what forms this improvement takes.

SAAP V describes self-reliance as a multifaceted concept demonstrated by access to long-term independent accommodation, family links, social inclusion, financial security and a degree of self-sufficiency (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). This understanding is grounded in previous research carried out for SAAP conceptualising and testing measures of self-reliance and other client outcomes (Browton, 2001; Baulderstone and Talbot, 2004; Kunnen and Martin, 2004). Kunnen and Martin concluded from their in-depth interviews with clients of SAAP services that self-reliance could usefully be expressed as '*getting back on one's feet*'. They proposed that this could be viewed along a number of dimensions, including affect, control/security, knowledge, behaviour, status, connectedness and capacity, and stability. We have developed and built upon their work in designing our survey instrument.

Despite this useful understanding of what self-reliance might mean to homeless people, developing a survey to gauge the impact of SAAP services has brought significant conceptual and practical challenges. The purpose of this article is to discuss these challenges and how we have dealt with them. Some of the issues arose in the course of consultations with peak homelessness organisations, SAAP service providers and client reference groups. A number of services have already developed their own instruments for assessing client outcomes, and the importance of such consultations in

planning a study of this kind cannot be overemphasised.

LIMITATIONS OF AN INDIVIDUALIST PERSPECTIVE ON HOMELESSNESS

The concept of *self-reliance* is primarily one that assumes a basis in individual psychology. Some of the difficulties people face in trying to escape homelessness may have links with individual psychopathology or behaviour, yet this approach risks neglecting wider socio-economic and political factors. Both the underlying causes of homelessness and the constraints on people's ability to escape it are often external and material, related to the lack of affordable housing options, to poverty or unemployment, and to social inequalities. It would also be inappropriate to attribute major precursors of homelessness such as domestic violence or family breakdown to personal shortcomings. Thus any attempt to measure self-reliance on the part of people using homelessness services has to bear in mind both the material constraints on the individual and the limits to what services are capable of providing, given that most cannot offer long-term, secure housing or jobs.

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL


The literature exploring the concept of self-reliance in the context of homelessness is clear in rejecting a *one-size-fits-all* approach. Participants in our consultation groups also pointed out that moving towards self-reliance is a journey that clients start at quite different points and with widely varying constraints. For some, simply engaging in dialogue with service staff about their difficulties is an achievement in itself, whereas for others the focus of change may be on learning practical skills of household management or sustaining a tenancy. An instrument



Ann Dadich



Tony Eardley



to measure change thus needs the flexibility to pick up this wide range of possible achievements.

SELF-RELIANCE AND INDEPENDENCE

Conceptually, self-reliance is often conflated with the idea of *independence* – which in turn is commonly interpreted as not being reliant on welfare or public services. Few people, however, regardless of their circumstances, have lives that are fully independent of others. Nor is such independence necessarily a desirable social goal. Indeed, the dimensions of self-reliance identified for SAAP clients involve both *connectedness and relationships with other people and knowledge about and access to appropriate services and other forms of support*. Thus, the fact that a former client no longer uses a SAAP service may not in itself be a good measure of self-reliance if they have not been able to access alternative resources.

SELF-RELIANCE AND RESILIENCE

Another issue concerns the relationship with *resilience* – again conceptually similar to self-reliance. While resilience might be understood as the ability to cope in times of crisis, it too is often linked to a sense of connectedness. Yet apparent resilience and self-reliance may in some cases be features of isolation and alienation – a response to limited support from others rather than a capacity gained by establishing connections. This is particularly the case among young homeless people who may survive by becoming ‘street smart’ or over-reliant on their own resources to such an extent as to be anomic (Rew *et al.*, 2001). Again this needs to be borne in mind when considering indicators of self-reliance.

MEASURING SMALL CHANGES

A further problem arises in attempting to detect change in individuals where levels of change may only be slight. Because of the many difficulties facing homeless

people, small changes may for some be highly significant. Just being able to access a community service, for example, could indicate increased personal confidence, even though it might not appear to be contributing significantly to greater self-reliance.

Some of the agencies taking part in the consultations argued that a thorough understanding of the relationship between SAAP services and self-reliance requires a comprehensive, longitudinal study that incorporates the perspectives of a range of stakeholders (including clients, service providers and family members) and uses in-depth or scaled measures of achievement against individual and personal goals. However, such a methodology was beyond the scope of the present project and the resources available. The survey needed to be able to identify elements of change that service users themselves can appreciate and recognise as relevant to their circumstances and personal histories – even if the subjective nature of such perceptions may be seen as a limitation. For this reason, it was determined that clients themselves, as opposed to the SAAP service providers who work with them, should complete the survey.

ESTABLISHING CAUSAL LINKS BETWEEN CLIENT CHANGE AND SERVICE USE

A final difficulty arises in trying to establish direct causal links between changes in client behaviour, situation or perception and the services they have received through SAAP. While the survey attempts to focus on the relationship with recent service support, many other factors may contribute to the development of self-reliance in any one individual. These may include personal attributes (such as motivation), family or friendship networks, broader socio-cultural factors and other service use. The survey collects data on demographic and

social circumstances, and on service use, but the influences on attaining self-reliance are likely to be multifactorial and intertwined. This poses a problem since SAAP funding represents only part of the financial resources of many services, especially the larger, multi-service agencies. Nevertheless, our study makes a concerted attempt to identify the interacting factors promoting (or militating against) self-reliance and is careful to identify the particular role of SAAP services.

WHICH CLIENTS MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO DEVELOP SELF-RELIANCE?

Given the need to link change in self-reliance with SAAP service provision, when might we realistically expect to observe change in an individual client? Most SAAP support periods, as recorded in administrative data, are very short – often less than one week, although many clients return for further assistance. Does it make sense to expect a client to demonstrate change simply by accessing crisis accommodation for a few nights? However, by focusing only on long-term support recipients, would we miss out on the majority experience? This was one of the key questions put to the consultative bodies. After much deliberation it was decided to include clients who were known to a SAAP service for at least four weeks, either continuously or intermittently, *and* received case management. This threshold has the potential to include the largest proportion of clients who might be expected to perceive changes in self-reliance.

SURVEY DESIGN

Finally, in spite of all the complexities discussed, it was imperative that the questionnaire be short, clear and simple – a tool that would encourage participation by clients and services alike. Services are typically over-worked and under-resourced, with staff members having limited time to

contribute to the study. Moreover, some clients are likely to have limited literacy skills. Thus the survey had to be simply worded and laid out in a way that clients found easy to understand and follow with only limited assistance.

CONCLUSION

This article has discussed the conceptual and methodological challenges involved in researching a complex area of policy and practice. While the problems are significant, they are not insurmountable, but they require genuine collaboration with key stakeholders - including clients of community services. Moreover, these issues provide an important context for the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. Only by understanding this context will the research findings have the potential to inform policy in a useful way.

In collaboration with the commissioning and consultative bodies, and drawing on earlier studies undertaken for SAAP, the research team has designed a concise and relatively simple survey instrument capable of administration with clients by busy service providers. The pilot phase of the study, which was carried out

with clients in a small number of services in the Sydney area as well as with two client reference groups in Melbourne, suggested that the survey has the potential to produce valuable information on the progress clients are making towards 'getting back on their feet'.

The survey was recently distributed to a representative sample of 65 SAAP services across Australia (based on key criteria of main service type and client group, agency size, jurisdiction and geographical location). Collectively, these agencies will invite around 750 eligible clients to complete the survey. At a later stage a small number of in-depth case studies will also be undertaken with individual clients, to explore areas of special interest arising from the survey results. The project is due for completion by the middle of 2007.

The SPRC research team is led by Dr Tony Eardley and includes Professor Bettina Cass, Dr Ann Dadich and Dr Denise Thompson. For further information please email t.eardley@unsw.edu.au.

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NEW PROJECTS

ATTENDANT CARE DIRECT FUNDING PILOT PROJECT EVALUATION

Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care NSW

Karen Fisher and Kristy Muir with Sally Robinson and Carolyn Campbell McLean, Disability Studies and Research Institute

The research evaluates the NSW Attendant Care Program (ACP) direct funding pilot project. The pilot project is aimed at people with physical disability with high

personal care needs who have the capacity to directly manage administration of attendant care funding. The research objectives are to measure the success of the project, provide comparative information with existing funding arrangements and identify issues for consideration when determining future funding options for the ACP. The evaluation includes process, outcomes and economic measures. Methods include a literature review; longitudinal data collection through interviews and questionnaires; and economic analysis.

HASI CASE PLANNING

New South Wales Health

Karen Fisher, Ann Dadich, Kristy Muir

The project reviews the effectiveness of client support case planning processes in the Mental Health Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI 1), NSW Health and Department of Housing. The review examines the plans and includes interviews with clients, accommodation support provider case workers and mental health case managers.

EVALUATION OF THE TIRKANDI INABURRA CULTURAL AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

BY CATHERINE SPOONER



Catherine Spooner

In March 2003, the NSW Government announced that it would set up community-controlled, regionally-based residential 'outstations' for Aboriginal young people in the age range 12-18 at risk of contact with the criminal justice system, with the aim of reducing crime, substance abuse and victimisation amongst Aboriginal communities. *The Tirkandi Inaburra Cultural and Development Centre* (Tirkandi), near Coleambally, is the first of these 'outstations'. Tirkandi provides a culturally based residential program for 12-15 year old Aboriginal boys. It aims to empower Aboriginal youth to develop and draw on their own resilience in order to take responsibility for their own lives, develop strategies to deal with their problems and minimise the risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

The NSW Attorney General's Department sought expressions of interest to evaluate this program. Two key aims were identified:

a) to assist Tirkandi in their conceptualisation and development of data collection tools for ongoing monitoring that will enable them to refine their policies and programs; and

b) to conduct an outcomes study that will assess the effectiveness of Tirkandi in achieving its objectives for participants, particularly in relation to education, social integration and involvement in the criminal justice system.

A consortium led by Dr Catherine Spooner of the Social Policy Research Centre successfully tendered for this project. Our partners are:

- Assoc. Prof. Lisa Jackson Pulver, Head, Muru Marri Indigenous Health Unit, School of

Public Health and Community Medicine, UNSW

- Prof. Chris Cunneen, NewSouth Global Professor, Law Faculty, UNSW

- Dr John Howard, Director of Clinical Services, Training and Research, Ted Noffs Foundation

- Ms Elizabeth Moore, Lecturer, Social Policy and Welfare, Charles Sturt University.

The evaluation is using a mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to monitor the progress of the boys and the program. In short, this will include pre-test, post-test and follow-up interviews with the boys who participate in the program; activities with the boys during the program; interviews with their parents/carers, sponsors and mentors; observation of the boys in the program; an interview with the program manager; a survey of Board members; and document analysis. In this article, some of the considerations that influenced the research design and method are described. These included:

1. The program is in its early stage of development
2. The importance of context
3. The need to ensure the research is culturally appropriate and sustainable
4. The value of triangulation of multi-method research

These factors are not mutually exclusive and are discussed below.

EARLY STAGE OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The program was relatively new and was likely to continue to be fine-tuned throughout the evaluation period. Consequently, an action-research model of evaluation was considered more appropriate than an outcomes-

focussed model (Hansen, 2005).

This meant, for example, providing regular feedback to the program so that study results could be used to inform program modification.

IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

The program is only one influence on the lives of the participants. An evaluation model that suits the needs of a newly started program and which incorporates contextual factors is the 'Realistic Evaluation' framework developed by Pawson and Tilley (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). The framework describes the relationships between outcome, mechanism and context as follows: outcome = mechanism + context.

This suggests that program outcomes only work in so far as they introduce the appropriate ideas and opportunities ('mechanisms') to groups in the appropriate social and cultural conditions ('contexts'). Realistic evaluation asks not 'does this work?', but 'what works for whom in what circumstances and in what respects, and how?'. This model gives information to assist program refinement (important as the program is new), and it heeds the different social realities within which the program is embedded. This is important as program participants come from and return to different social systems that influence program outcomes. This means, for example, collecting information on the cultural, community and family background of the program participants and analysing how these factors impact program outcomes.

CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

The evaluation needed to be culturally appropriate for the participants and the Tirkandi staff who would contribute to data collection and record keeping. Given that the brief was to establish a monitoring system for the program, the evaluation needed to include methods that could be sustained after the research project ended. Participatory methods were considered an effective way to develop methods that were culturally appropriate and sustainable.

Other researchers have found that participatory research methods tend to be more effective than other methods when working with marginalised communities in general (Power, 2002), and Aboriginal communities in particular (Fisher and Ball, 2003).

This meant, for example, working with program staff to develop culturally appropriate and age-specific methods and tools of data collection. As the research participants are Aboriginal boys aged between 12 and 15 with conduct problems, and some with low literacy levels, the assessment instruments were designed to be as short as possible and the evaluation study did not rely exclusively upon interview surveys. Alternate sources of information (e.g. observations, interviews with parents) and a range of means of expression (e.g. drawings) have been incorporated into the study.

MULTI-METHOD APPROACH

The value of combining a number of qualitative and quantitative research methods and triangulating the information to understand a complex social issue is well established (Mahoney and Goertz, 2006). Qualitative and quantitative research methods each have strengths and limitations. For example, qualitative methods provide an opportunity to explore issues in depth; to achieve a deeper



Tirkandi graduates term 3, 2006 (l to r): Aiden Harris, Blake Russell, Brodie Hutchins, Dylan Parkes, Danny King Jack Simpkin (photo courtesy of Tirkandi Inaburra)

understanding of the respondent's world and contextual factors. However, qualitative research methods are time-consuming and are sometimes criticised for introducing researcher subjectivity. Quantitative methods can be more objective, less costly per person interviewed, and provide statistical information on the prevalence and interrelationships of variables; yet they have limited capacity for understanding the complexity of behavioural drivers.

Within each of these two categories, further diversity of methods exists, each with their own strengths and limitations. Qualitative research methods include focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and observational research, while quantitative research methods include structured, close-ended surveys. Combining the methods allows for the strengths of each method to be built upon.

No single source of information or data collection method was relied upon in this evaluation. Data collection methods include:

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Observation
- In-program activities which allow for self-expression.

Further, multiple sources of information were used. These included:

- Program participants
- Program management and Board members
- Parents, sponsors and mentors of program participants
- Program documents.

As I write this article, the first group of boys to be included in the program evaluation have just begun the program. We look forward to charting their progress and contributing to the evidence base on what works with young Aboriginal boys at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE LABOUR MARKET ATE MY BABIES

BY BARBARA POCOCK, THE FEDERATION PRESS, SYDNEY 2006

REVIEWED BY SHARNI CHAN AND NATASHA CORTIS



Sharni Chan



Natasha Cortis

Professor Barbara Pocock's (University of South Australia) latest book *The Labour Market Ate My Babies: Work, Children and a Sustainable Future* generated considerable interest in the SPRC's feminist reading group, with the level of media coverage it attracted reflecting its broader appeal. Armed with findings from focus groups with 93 primary and high school aged children, the book brings young people's perspectives into otherwise adult-focused debates about work, family and consumption - and the policy arrangements needed to enhance Australian family and community life.

This book's main contribution is to show how the primary and high schoolers who participated in the focus groups observe their parents' working time arrangements, and how this shapes their own plans for their work and family lives. Pocock is concerned with intersecting trends toward longer and more unpredictable working hours; job insecurity (pre-'Work Choices'); accelerated materialism; and persistent gender inequalities in household labour. By exploring these issues from young people's perspectives, the book adds weight to arguments that slow-to-change labour markets, inequitable gender relations and a contraction of public supports risk stopping Australians from sharing the time required to relate authentically, ultimately undermining the quality of paid work and family lives.

Pocock's opening theoretical chapter on households, work and social reproduction reminds readers of the link between slipping birth rates and thinning benefits from employment and social citizenship, which she sees as fuelling a self-perpetuating cycle of working, private spending and consumption. Pocock paints a grim picture, arguing that the 'hidden

externalities' of work strain and marketised care include "damaging babies, widening inequality, weakening communities or loading up women with impossible workloads cloaked by private guilt" (page 5).

Pocock's empirical questions, and the findings arising from the focus groups with young people, are more intriguing. She finds that, across income groups, children yearn more for parental time than money or material goods. By reconsidering hypothetical trade-offs between time and money through the eyes of young people, Pocock clearly overcomes the adult-centric lens that usually frames earlier mainstream debates about work and family in Australia.

Chapter Four shows how these young people see their parents' work spill into family life, while the following chapter 'Guilt, Money and the Market at Work' shows children are well aware of their parents' guilt-driven consumption patterns. Guilt, Pocock argues, stimulates further purchasing and consumption (and, ironically, the need to spend more time earning money) as parents seek to compensate children for their absence, a strategy of 'spending our way out of guilt' (page 104).

Chapter Six presents the children and young people's imagined futures for work, family and domestic labour. The interesting point is the rift Pocock finds between young women's expectations of equality and the attitudes of many of the boys, which, if left unnegotiated, will challenge how this generation will be able to juggle work and family life. Outside the scope of this particular study (but worthy of further attention) is how these young people's plans to marry, work, use childcare, and share (or evade) housework translate into lived experiences as they negotiate struggles over work and care in

their first out-of-home households and relationships. Pocock predicts that continuing gender inequalities will accelerate the marketisation of care, as women seek solutions to the work-life collision in markets, not partners. One manifestation of this is the commercialisation of childcare, discussed in Chapter Seven. Here Pocock shows young peoples' attitudes to formal and informal care arrangements, though she is quick to acknowledge that her respondents used childcare well before the ABC Learning Centre boom.

Another area for future research, and a disappointing omission from the study, is the role of young people's own paid work in the work-life collision. Young people are actors in the 'hungry market' in their own right, and are more than just subject to the benefits and strains of their parents' labour. Pocock's high-school aged cohort, for example, are more likely than their parents to work non-standard or anti-social hours, or to be in insecure jobs. The research would give more credence to the agency of children and young people by acknowledging that their own work patterns might both temper work-family balance in the household and shape how they intend to organise their adult work and family lives.

Notwithstanding, *The Labour Market Ate My Babies* gives refreshing insight into the views of children and young people, who, on the topic of work and family, are largely seen but not heard. How these young people plan to organise paid and unpaid work in their adult lives, and the likely persistence of traditional gender roles, are key indicators of how much more Australian social policy and Australian feminism need to achieve.

Barbara Pocock will be a keynote speaker at the Australian Social Policy Conference in July 2007.

NEW INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AT THE SPRC

BY SARAH PARKER AND OFIR THALER

A new comprehensive internship program is currently being developed at the SPRC. It will enable students both nationally and internationally to undertake placements in a multi-disciplinary policy research environment. The SPRC will be hosting senior undergraduate and Masters students from a variety of disciplines including social work, social sciences, government, international relations and Indigenous policy. Interns are offered unique opportunities to gain an understanding of social policy in a research environment, gain practical policy research and evaluation experience, and develop their research and analytical skills.

Internships can be anywhere from one month to five months in length, with students undertaking a wide variety of tasks. These could include: literature reviews; drafting of reports and tenders; designing research instruments (e.g. surveys); undertaking fieldwork (e.g. interviews, focus groups, observation); data entry and analysis; attendance and/or participation at policy seminars/conferences. Currently the SPRC is hosting two interns: Hanna Leena Myllarinen, who is undertaking her Masters of Social Sciences at the University of Turku in Finland and will be at the SPRC full-time for three months; and Ofir Thaler, who is doing his Bachelor of Social Sciences at the University

of Sydney and will be at the SPRC part-time for three months.

For further information on this program please contact Sarah Parker: sarah.parker@unsw.edu.au.

EXPERIENCING THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM – OFIR THALER, UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

As part of my Bachelor of Social Sciences Degree at the University of Sydney, I am currently undertaking a 10-week internship at the SPRC. I chose the SPRC because during the course of my studies in social policy I came across many SPRC reports and articles written by SPRC researchers that were central to much of my academic research and general studies – especially in relation to issues of poverty and welfare policy. Therefore the SPRC seemed an obvious first choice for my internship, and in my short time here this has proven this to be a good decision.

Over the past month, I have had the opportunity to assist on several research and evaluation projects, which represent the different styles of policy work undertaken by researchers at the SPRC. The topics of the projects have included: supported living for people with disabilities, personalised service provision for people with mental health issues,

sustainability of funding for non-governmental organisations, and early intervention programs for vulnerable families. Specifically I have undertaken literature reviews; observed and taken notes for focus groups and interviews with key policy stakeholders; assisted with piloting a questionnaire; and have provided input regarding my impressions of the processes and group dynamics during stakeholder meetings. An integral part of these tasks were frequent consultations with SPRC researchers and staff. I have also had the opportunity to present at an SPRC postgraduate seminar, as well as attend a number of internal and external presentations by policy experts.

During the course of my internship thus far, I have gained valuable insight into the wide scope and complexity of the work done here at the SPRC. I have been able to acquire an in-depth understanding of the various challenges posed by different methods and styles of policy research, which has helped me comprehend the large amount of work and care that goes into producing a well-researched, reliable and useful piece of policy analysis or evaluation. I am grateful for this opportunity to experience first-hand the process of professional policy research in what has been referred to in my classes as the 'premier social policy research facility in Australia'.



Ofir Thaler

NEW PUBLICATIONS

The four reports below have been released during 2007 and are available on the SPRC website.

Natasha Cortis, Pooja Sawrikar and Kristy Muir, *Participation in sport and recreation by culturally and linguistically diverse women*, SPRC Report 4/07.

http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/reports/Participation_in_Sport_by_CALD.pdf

Karen Fisher, Andrew Anderson

and Kristy Muir, *Attendant Care Direct Funding Pilot Project: Evaluation Plan*, SPRC Report 3/07. http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/reports/s/Attendant_Care.pdf.

Kristy Muir, Ann Dadich, David Abelló, Michael Bleasdale and Karen Fisher, *Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative: Report III*, report prepared for the NSW Department of Health, SPRC Report 2/07.

http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/reports/HASI_Report_III.pdf

Kristy Muir, Ann Dadich, David Abelló, Michael Bleasdale and Karen Fisher, *Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative: Report III*, Summary, report prepared for the NSW Department of Health, SPRC Report 1/07. http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/reports/s/HASI_Report3Summary.pdf

PHD AND POSTGRADUATE NEWS

The start of 2007 is an exciting time to be reporting on the various happenings with PhD and Masters Scholars at the SPRC.



Karen Fisher

Congratulations go to **Karen Fisher**, a Senior Research Fellow at the SPRC, who has been recommended for admission to a PhD; the champagne corks are ready to pop! Karen's thesis is: *'Whose values shape social policy? Policy process limits to economic rationalism: Australian coordinated care policy 1994 to 2001'*. The thesis addresses the relationship between the impact of economic rationalism on social policy and interest representation during policy implementation. With a foundation in Weberian social theory about participant values, the analytical framework incorporates institutional policy implementation concepts to capture the dynamic characteristics of the Australian coordinated care policy. The study argues that policy implementation research can refine the literature on economic rationalism, particularly insights about the impact of which organisation is responsible for policy at various policy stages.

In November 2006 **Sarah Parker**, Research Officer, submitted her PhD thesis. Sarah's thesis is *'Searching for the Absent Citizen: Negotiating Citizenship, Human Rights and Social Justice for People with Disabilities in International and Domestic Legislation and Policy'*. The thesis examines the extent to which international



Sarah Parker

and domestic policy discourses and practices facilitate or impede parity of participation and citizenship rights of people with disabilities. It explores how the United Nations and two nation-states (Australia and the United States) accommodate human rights and social justice for people with disabilities in three key policy domains: (i) international rights-based instruments; (ii) domestic social security laws/policies; and (iii) domestic anti-discrimination laws/policies.



Tom Longden

In February 2006 **Tom Longden**, Research Officer, commenced his PhD thesis through the Centre for Energy and Environmental Markets at UNSW. Focusing on the use of tradeable permits schemes in monitoring and facilitating the usage of water, the research will review trading-ratio and exchange rate trading schemes using economic techniques such as experimental simulations and econometric analysis. The prevailing motivation for these schemes lies in the fact that water

usage is different from other applications of tradable permits, most famous of these being the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme and the Kyoto Protocol. Using practical examples, including the Murray-Darling River System, this research will envisage and evaluate further innovations in the implementation of such schemes.



Scott Burrows

Scott Burrows, Research Scholar, commenced his Masters research in 2006. Scott plans to examine how current welfare reforms (2000-2006) within unemployment policy (mutual obligation policies) in Australia and the United Kingdom are changing the conception of social citizenship. The rationale for the study is in response to welfare regime changes, for example, more punitive income support policies that challenge existing conceptions of citizenship in Australia and the UK. The broad aim of the research is to investigate how, and to what extent, recent changes in unemployment policy are compatible with Marshall's (1949) model of social citizenship and whether other models would be more useful in framing unemployment policies in the two countries. The study seeks to find a better understanding of how social citizenship ideas may emerge in future social policy debates. This research will engage with existing literature and contemporary debates as well as analysing policy documents.

SPRC SEMINAR PROGRAM

APRIL TO JUNE 2007

TUESDAY 10TH APRIL

Dr Ann Dadich (Social Policy Research Centre)

How do young people with mental health issues access community-based support networks?

TUESDAY 17TH APRIL

Professor Keith Banting (Queen's Research Chair in Public Policy, Queen's University, Canada)

Multiculturalism and the welfare state: is diversity the enemy of redistribution?

12:30pm – 1:45pm, Room 201, Law Building, UNSW

A public lecture sponsored by SPRC and the School of Social Science and International Studies

TUESDAY 15TH MAY

Associate Professor Alison Ritter (Director, Drug Policy Modelling Program, National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre)

Policy-making on illicit drugs: some challenges and new approaches

TUESDAY 22ND MAY

Robert Griew (Former Chief Executive Officer, Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services)

Taking Aboriginal health and welfare seriously

TUESDAY 12 JUNE

Tony Eardley, Bettina Cass, Denise Thompson and Ann Dadich (Social Policy Research Centre)

Measuring the impact of SAAP services on client self-reliance: conceptual and methodological challenges

WEDNESDAY 27TH JUNE

Professor Ian Walker (University of Warwick, Visiting Professor CHERE UTS and UNSW Economics)

Ostensible hypothecation: the effect of cash transfers to the elderly for fuel on their fuel expenditure

Slides from previous seminars are available from the SPRC website.

Seminars are held from 1-2pm in Room 2, Building G2,

Western Grounds UNSW, unless otherwise indicated above.

To RSVP or for further information please contact Megan Griffiths on (02) 9385 7817 or email megangriffiths@unsw.edu.au. The Seminar program is available online at <http://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/seminars/2007s1.htm>

SOCIAL POLICY THROUGH THE LIFE COURSE: BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE

The theme for the 2007 conference is 'Social Policy through the Life Course: Building Community Capacity and Social Resilience'. This theme encapsulates two interrelated issues in social policy. The first concerns life-course transitions, including the diverse challenges and opportunities which people experience within their age, gender, social, economic and cultural contexts. The second focuses on identifying the interconnections between social investment policies, services and programs which build both community capacity and social resilience for individuals situated within their social networks

PLENARY SPEAKERS

FAMILIES AND POLICIES MATTER: HOW TO ENHANCE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY

Professor Jeanne Brooks-Gunn

Virginia and Leonard Marx Professor in Child Development and Education, Columbia University. Founder and Co-director of the National Center for Children and Families, Columbia University

SHIFTING CHILD-CARE POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN WESTERN EUROPE: IS THERE A CASE FOR DEVELOPING A GLOBAL ETHIC OF CARE?

Professor Fiona Williams

Professor of Social Policy, School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds. Past Director of the ESRC Research Group for the Study of Care, Values and the Future of Welfare, University of Leeds

GOVERNING WORK LIFE INTERSECTIONS IN AUSTRALIA OVER THE LIFE COURSE: POLICY AND PROSPECTS

Professor Barbara Pocock

Director of the Centre for Work+Life, University of South Australia

FORUMS

Speaker details for the forums will be made available in 2007.

- **Advocacy and consumer participation**
- **Building family and community capacities: policies that make a difference for children and families facing economic adversity**
- **Rethinking Indigenous policies and programs: building community strengths and social resilience.**
- **Australia's demographic challenges**

CONFERENCE 11-13 JULY 2007

CALL FOR PAPERS

The success of the Australian Social Policy Conference is based on the presentation of high quality, original papers across the range of social policy fields. We are now inviting offers of papers from researchers, teachers, students and practitioners of social policy. Papers can present the results of research, discuss conceptual approaches to contemporary social policy, describe work in progress or raise issues for debate. We are also inviting proposals of ideas for special sessions, including groups of related papers within the contributed paper streams.

As in previous conferences, discussion will be organised around thematic strands. The topic areas from within which the final strands will be selected, and for which we are currently seeking offers of papers, include the following.

- Labour market participation and welfare reform
- Income distribution and social inequalities
- Retirement and ageing
- Children, young people and families
- Identity and diversity
- Community and place
- Organisation and delivery of human services
- Citizenship and participation
- An Open strand will also exist for papers on other subjects of interest and importance outside the main themes.

SELECTION OF PAPERS

Acceptance of papers for presentation at the conference is necessarily competitive. Selection will be the responsibility of the SPRC, in collaboration with some external session organisers, and will be based on the abstracts submitted. Criteria for selection will include academic quality, originality, accessibility and relevance to current debates in social policy. Where papers are based on empirical research, preference will be given to abstracts showing evidence of research results. We welcome papers presenting all points of view.

If you wish to offer a paper, please send the title and an abstract of no more than 200 words. Please specify the thematic area (or areas) into which you feel your paper falls. We reserve the right to place it elsewhere, where appropriate, to maintain program balance.

The closing date for the receipt of abstracts is 10 April 2007. Please send your abstract (preferably as a Microsoft Word attachment to an email) to: ASPC2007@unsw.edu.au.

For more information see www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/ASPC2007. Information on the papers presented at the previous (2005) conference can be found at www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/ASPC2005.

Telephone enquiries about papers or the conference in general should be directed to (02) 9385 7802.

2007 LUXEMBOURG INCOME STUDY: WORKSHOP AND TRAVEL SUBSIDY

The Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) Summer Workshop is a one-week workshop designed to introduce researchers in the social sciences to comparative research in income distribution, employment and social policy using the LIS database. It is held annually, and is aimed at researchers with varying levels of knowledge and experience.

The Luxembourg Income Study has made comparable over 160 large microdata sets that contain comprehensive measures of income, employment and household characteristics for 30 industrialized countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and the United States).

The language of instruction is English. The workshop format

includes a mixture of lectures on comparative research, laboratory sessions and individual one-on-one advisory sessions. Attendees will also be introduced to the new Luxembourg Wealth Study (<http://www.lisproject.org/lws.htm>). By the end of the workshop, attendees will be fully trained to use the database independently. Workshop faculty includes the LIS directors, Janet Gornick and Markus Jäntti, the LIS staff and guest lecturers. In addition, the winner of the annual Aldi Hageaars Memorial Award will present his/her paper.

The 2007 workshop will be held from 24-30 June 2007.

The standard tuition fee of 1,400 Euros covers instructional materials, single-occupancy accommodation, and full board. Transportation to and from Luxembourg is generally the responsibility of the student.

By a special arrangement between the LIS project and the SPRC, a subsidy of up to A\$3,000 towards the cost of tuition and

airfares is being offered to Australian resident researchers who wish to attend the 2007 Workshop. The objective of the subsidy is to boost Australia's research capacity for cross-national socio-economic research, and early career researchers are particularly encouraged to apply.

Applications consisting of a Curriculum Vitae, a one-page statement on the reasons for attending the workshop and the names of two academic referees should be sent to Bruce Bradbury by email at B.Bradbury@unsw.edu.au by 6 April 2007. The successful applicant(s) will be notified within two weeks, but applicants are advised to enquire about travel bookings ahead of that date in order to secure flights.

The standard workshop application form can be downloaded at (<http://www.lisproject.org/workshop/2007application.pdf>). For information about the LIS project, see <http://www.lisproject.org>.

PUBLICATIONS AND MAILING LISTS

MAILING LISTS (FREE)

- ☐ SPRC Email Notices *You will receive email updates about events at SPRC*
- ☐ SPRC Newsletter Mailing List *You will receive Newsletters regularly*
- ☐ SPRC Annual Report Mailing List *You will receive Annual Reports*

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Publications, Social Policy Research Centre
University of New South Wales, SYDNEY NSW 2052
OR Fax: +61 (2) 9385 7838 Phone: +61 (2) 9385 7802
Email : sprc@unsw.edu.au