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SWRC Newsletter

No 12 January 1984

Editor: Jo Jarrah

CONTENTS

page

FROM THE DIRECTOR	1
SWRC SENIOR RESEARCH POSTS	4
FOR YOUR DIARY - SWRC SEMINARS	5
SWRC SEMINAR REPORTS - SESSION 2, 1983	6
AREA STUDY - AGED SERVICES	9
EXTERNAL SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS BY SWRC STAFF	10
FORUM	13
CAN THERE BE A NEW WELFARE STATE?	19
NEW SWRC REPORTS AND PROCEEDINGS	20
OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST	22
SWRC PUBLICATIONS - SUBSCRIPTIONS AND SALES	24

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From the Director . . .

In 1978 I attended a large ACOSS Congress, the title of which was CHANCE OR CHOICE? The Congress theme was selected because the rush towards the future was seen to be haphazard and dependent on chance rather than on careful and considered choice. A 'charter for choice' was developed, but only after a large simulation took place. The Congress organisers explained that the title of the simulation, 'The 1983 Game', was chosen because 1983 was the year before 1984. The Charter for Choice strove vigorously to eschew the advancing apocalypse signified by the numerals one, nine, eight and four. 1983 has now passed and 1984 indeed is with us, and as an optimistic aspiration I hope 1984 will see a turnaround in relations between individuals and the State. Approximately one Australian in five is dependent on social security pensions and benefits for income and it is manifestly clear that our affluent society cannot deliver, through market mechanisms, a living wage to all. Exclusion and uncertainty have characterised the lives of far too many Australians for far too long, and hopefully 1984 will see the beginning of a turnaround. Our research in the Social Welfare Research Centre is directed towards the identification of situations and policies which promote and foster exclusion, inequality, uncertainty and inequity. 1984 is certainly going to be a big year for everybody, including the SWRC.

1984 marks the beginning of the Centre's fifth year. In the four years to date we have completed numerous research projects, presented hundreds of seminars and speeches, and since September 1980 have published 38 research reports, 21 items in our reprint series (listed on pages 25 to 28) and one book, and staff have contributed numerous other items to publications elsewhere. Within the next few months we will publish several more research reports (on topics as diverse as provision for single parents, distribution and redistribution of social expenditure, women and super-

annuation and patterns in child care). Details will be given in the next *Newsletter*, though subscribers to SWRC Reports and Proceedings will receive copies as soon as they are published. The reports presently being completed will mark the end of the first phase of the Centre's existence. Certain research questions have been pursued and the time has come to focus on issues which have not yet received attention, to examine in more depth some issues which have received only preliminary investigation, and to review and reassess our research methods.

In the last *Newsletter* I asked for comments on our research agenda and for suggestions about future research directions. I have sought comments from governments, Councils of Social Service, Councils on the Ageing and other relevant bodies in each state. I have given an undertaking to visit each state to consult on our research agenda and to ensure that our work reflects the nature of a truly national research organisation. We are also advertising a number of research positions (see page 4). Along with the new staff will be (hopefully) some extra accommodation for the Centre. For all of 1983 negotiations were under way for additional accommodation but unfortunately these negotiations came to nothing and we were not able to occupy the premises which were vacant all year (and which still are vacant). However alternative premises have been found and new negotiations are now under way. Seminars are now held around boxes of books and reports as we cannot put another single item on our crowded shelves and the volume of reports, working papers, journals, print-outs etc. which flow into the Centre means that our remaining floor space is being taken over by boxes of materials. In the very near future, however, we hope to be able, once again, to welcome visitors to the SWRC and provide them with somewhere to sit.

(STOP PRESS As we go to print it looks

From the Director (continued)

as if our accommodation situation has reverted to square one and we have to start looking once again.)

1984 will be a year which will see both consolidation and diversification in our research activities. Simply defined, research is some inquiry or investigation undertaken with the aid of standardised procedures in order to obtain information which will establish or augment a shared body of knowledge. It would be arrogant to assume that any one approach or method should dominate in a Centre such as the SWRC.

Accordingly our projects include the collection of new data from empirical surveys; the reworking of existing data which have either not been compiled or manipulated to answer the sorts of questions we wish to answer; and the analysis, extension and development of contemporary theory. Finding a balance between these approaches is difficult, for in combination they yield a great deal, but always leave a lot still to be done. To rely exclusively on any one approach would not be consistent with our position as a national research centre. To expect to be able to collect new data on a large scale is massively beyond our resources. We hope we do several things with our research. We hope we add to existing knowledge, and that this addition is useful to the many people who read our materials, and to those who form the subject of our studies. We also hope we raise as many questions as we provide answers. Good research should stimulate further research, and we hope there is a seeding quality in our research.

Let me illustrate from one of the areas in which I am personally working, and that is the area of the welfare of elderly people. We have tried to examine characteristics of the population in question, characteristics of the organisations with which that population interacts, and the overall policies which affect that population. To do this means devising a number of studies utilising a variety of methods.

We have confined our work to a limited number of fields, the prime focus being non-institutional care. We have done an overview of the state of play and provided an overall contextual background. This involved extensive literature reviews, demographic and census analysis, analyses of Commonwealth Budgets and other financial allocations etc. Our work on family care of disabled elderly people involved a household survey and interviews with family members who provide care and with some of their elderly relatives. Our work on home care services involved detailed policy analysis, surveys of government planners and providers, analysis of Budget materials and a comprehensive survey of formal service providers. We are in the process of completing an overview of the Meals on Wheels service, which has used policy analysis and very broad interview material, and we have completed the first stage of an area study of all of the services provided for elderly people within the boundaries of one local government area. This was done by a sweeping 'on the ground' search, followed by months of structured interviews, and in the next phase will move into case study and policy analysis. Other work has laid the groundwork in federal/state relations, and public/private as well as formal/informal service provision, for these are crucial conceptual building blocks in assembling the aged care services collage.

These many methods have helped us map this complex field, and we still feel that we are only on the edge of the area. In months to come we will try a variety of approaches to broaden our base and both diversify and consolidate in these areas. We plan extensive work on learning about the providers and recipients of home care services. We plan to write up the policy ramifications of our data on family care of elderly people but as academics we are seeking input from those involved in policy development and service development. Accordingly we are holding, within a few weeks, a

full day round table workshop, with people from all states. We will go step by step through all the data collected in our family care work to explore the policy issues which flow from the data. Our Meals on Wheels work might proceed by case study. We would like our area study replicated in other states and we will provide funds for researchers in other states to do this work (see page 9). The ageing field is not the only field in which we hope to see, in 1984, a variation in our research approach.

On March 13 we start our ninth regular seminar series, and once again our seminars will be held on alternate Tuesdays from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. The program is reproduced on page 5 and if you would like copies of the program for your notice board please get in touch with our Information Officer, Jo Jarrah. May 1984 will see the second time that there will be a social welfare section at ANZAAS.

Since the last *Newsletter* was published, a number of staff members have left the Centre and I am delighted that some of the skills and methods honed in the Centre will be used in other milieux. We wish them all well in their new situations. Marilyn Hoey has joined the staff of the NSW Minister for Youth

and Community Services, Mr. Frank Walker; Diana Encel has gone overseas; Carol Keens has joined the Development Division of the Department of Social Security in Canberra; David Kinnear has moved to Adelaide; and Jo Harrison is working in aged care policy in the NSW Department of Youth and Community Services. Frances Staden was not permitted by the Immigration Department to stay in Australia to complete her project, but she has taken some data overseas with her. Visiting Fellows Linda Rosenman and Randall Smith are returning to their respective universities and by the time the next *Newsletter* comes out Bettina Cass will have taken up her new post of Associate Professor in Social Policy at the University of Sydney. To all of these people I extend my heartiest thanks for their tireless work over the years and for a job well done. I do not wish to single any one person out but should like to point out that Carol Keens has been, apart from myself, the longest serving SWRC staff member. She was on deck from the beginning and her input has been part of the Centre throughout. In those unfolding days of January 1980, as we rattled around in an empty building, we wondered how we would deal with the formidable challenge facing us. Yet January 1980 seems so far removed from 1984.

GRACE VAUGHAN

Grace Vaughan, former President of the Australian Association of Social Workers, President of the International Federation of Social Workers, friend and adviser to numerous people right across the social welfare spectrum, died suddenly in Perth on 21 January 1984.

SWRC SENIOR RESEARCH POSTS

The University of New South Wales is seeking to appoint a number of experienced researchers to senior positions in the Social Welfare Research Centre. Applications are invited from people who have the ability and the experience to be able to take prime responsibility for structuring, managing and carrying out research projects which fit within the Centre's research agenda. The Centre is required to conduct research on 'important aspects of social welfare in Australia' and to provide opportunities for postgraduate studies in social welfare.

Applicants should have a good higher degree in one of the relevant social sciences and/or a strong publication list. Successful candidates will be responsible for a small research team. Ability to assist in the supervision of students enrolled in higher degrees would be a significant advantage.

One of these positions is for a person with a background in Economics who is able to work either in income maintenance or tax and welfare. Another is for a person able to direct projects relating to the welfare of handicapped people. Two further positions will be in subject areas to be determined within the Centre's research agenda.

Depending on qualifications and experience, appointments may be made at one of the following levels

Senior Research Fellow	\$31,390 - 36,585
Principal Research Officer	\$29,631 - 30,515
*Research Fellow	\$23,394 - 26,540
*Research Associate	\$20,164 - 23,100

* For appointment as Research Fellow or Research Associate, candidates must have a Ph.D.

Appointments will be on the basis of a fixed term contract for periods of from 1 year to a maximum of 5 years. Applicants should indicate the area of interest and the level of appointment for which they wish to be considered.

Further information about these positions is available from the General Staff Office or the Director, Social Welfare Research Centre on (02) 662 3877. The Director would welcome inquiries from academics in Australian universities and others who wish to seek a period of secondment from their current position.

Written applications including the names of 2 referees should be forwarded to the General Staff Office, University of New South Wales by 29 February 1983.

Equality of employment opportunity is University policy.

FOR YOUR DIARY

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SWRC Seminars - Session 1, 1984

These seminars are held at the Social Welfare Research Centre, corner of High Street and Eurimbla Avenue, Randwick, on Tuesdays, from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. Brief reports of seminars appear in subsequent issues of the SWRC Newsletter.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 13 March | Bettina Cass and Mary Ann O'Loughlin (Social Welfare Research Centre)
'Single Parents' |
| 27 March | Daryl Dixon (Social Welfare Policy Secretariat, Canberra)
'Relative Social Welfare Costs to Government of Young and Old People' |
| 10 April | Vivi Koutsounadis (Ethnic Child Care Development Unit, Marrickville)
'Ethnic Child Care' |
| 24 April | NO SEMINAR |
| 8 May | Martin Mowbray (School of Social Work, University of New South Wales)
'Localism in Social Policy' |
| 22 May | Tania Sweeney (Social Welfare Research Centre)
'The Emerging System of Child Welfare' |
| 5 June | Adam Jamrozik (Social Welfare Research Centre)
'Social Wage : Is the Concept Tenable or Useful?' |
| 19 June | Carole Pateman (Department of Government and Public Administration, University of Sydney)
'On Patriarchy' |

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SWRC SEMINAR REPORTS . . .

In this section we provide summaries of seminars conducted by the Social Welfare Research Centre. Those held at the end of 1983, and reported in this issue, are:

1. Ideology and Child Welfare, Ros Thorpe (Department of Social Work, University of Sydney), 11 October.
2. Voluntary Initiatives in the Care of Elderly People, Randall Smith (SWRC/School for Advanced Urban Studies, University of Bristol), 25 October.
3. Family Policy : Contemporary Theories and Issues, Malcolm Wicks (Director, Family Policy Studies Centre, U.K.), 21 November.
4. Needs Based Decision Making : Applied Social Research and Social Policy, Jonathan Bradshaw (Director, Social Policy Research Unit, University of York, U.K.), 22 November.
5. The Distributional Impact of Social Expenditure, Julian Le Grand (Social Justice Project, A.N.U./London School of Economics), 8 December.

Please note that seminar papers are not available unless specified.

Details of the seminars to be held in Session 1, 1984, are given on page 5. Summaries will be included in the next issue of the *SWRC Newsletter*.

1. IDEOLOGY AND CHILD WELFARE

In this seminar on 11 October, Ros Thorpe focused on the practice of child welfare in relation to children (excluding juvenile offenders) in need of substitute care. Two main concerns were the influence of prevailing economic, political and social conditions on the outcomes (or lack of them) of research findings and the huge discrepancy between theory and child welfare practice. After discussing Picton and Boss' notions of child-centred versus family-centred welfare, she elaborated on the parallel notions of exclusive and inclusive care and briefly outlined the ideological swings in attitude

between these two approaches which have occurred in both Britain and Australia. Despite historical shifts and differing political stances, practice changes little for those actively involved in welfare situations. The reality is that children drift into unplanned, long term care neither keeping links with the family, nor developing new stable relations. They experience multiple placements and become increasingly damaged and confused, while child welfare workers have neither time, resources nor support to implement theory, regardless of which framework is being adopted at the time.

... SESSION 2, 1983

2. VOLUNTARY INITIATIVES IN THE CARE OF ELDERLY PEOPLE

On 25 October 1983 Randall Smith outlined some recent developments in voluntarism in the UK, and in particular stressed contrasting results in recent surveys on participation in voluntary work. He pointed out that the range of these research results was not without importance in the context of the UK Conservative Government's strategy of lessening the role of the state, reducing public expenditure, and emphasising the crucial role of voluntary organisations, volunteers and informal caring networks. He touched on the issue of classifying voluntary organisations, whether by role, source of finance, nature of membership or level of specialisation, but focused particular attention on the issue of staffing. As well as paid and unpaid work, it was crucial to note the amount of unpaid work undertaken by paid staff, and to recognise, from the conclusions of several studies, the importance of paying people in order to recruit from the working class to participate in voluntary work in the social services.

The implications of the emphasis on voluntarism in the UK on the debate about strategies and policies for frail, older people were then outlined. The emphasis was to be care of vulnerable old people by the community - whatever community meant - rather than in the community. The problems of identifying groups of vulnerable people for policy purposes, and of identifying vulnerable individuals for action purposes were stressed.

These linked themes of voluntarism and strategies to address the needs and preferences of frail, older people provided a backcloth to a detailed description of the origin and early development of a particular voluntary initiative which focused on the health

care of older people in a particular locality in Southern England.

Randall Smith was one of two advisers to a group of representatives from both statutory and non-statutory organisations, and the initial task of the group was (i) to identify the priority needs of older people in the area; (ii) to suggest ways of meeting those needs; and (iii) to take forward what seemed to be feasible ideas in the local interest. Having overcome a number of distractions and difficulties, the group agreed to promote more voluntary activity in the primary health care sector. With funding from the district health authority, a part-time organiser was appointed and had been in the post for about 6 months at the time of Randall Smith's talk. About 30 volunteers had been recruited, and they were mainly concerned with longer term social support for frail, older people rather than short-term practical tasks, such as household repairs.

The role of advisers had initially been to help the group focus on feasible and acceptable local initiatives, but once the group had decided on the way forward, the role of the advisers changed to that of trying to develop a system for assessing progress without impeding progress. Consideration of this evaluation system brought the story of the initiative up to date, and concluded the seminar.

3. FAMILY POLICY; CONTEMPORARY THEORIES AND ISSUES

In this seminar on 21 November Malcolm Wicks identified some of the main factors causing a re-emergence of interest in the family in the last 5-7 years:

- * There is greater recognition of the extended family, particularly with a growing elderly population.
- * The growth in female employment outside the home and increasing

SWRC Seminar Reports - Session 2, 1983 (continued)

unemployment in general are making a fundamental impact on the family, rather than on individuals.

- * Marriage rates are constant, although the divorce rates have increased so that, in the U.K. now, 20 per cent of children aged 10-15 do not live with both natural parents.
- * There is a growing politicisation of the welfare state and a recognition that what have been seen as individuals' problems are in fact problems for families.
- * Feminist thinking has focused on the family in public terms such as distribution of work and income, thereby bringing it out of the private realm.
- * The family debate links into 2 other crucial debates : the future of work and the future of the state in welfare.

Wicks argued that we are facing institutions of the 1940s with criticisms of the 1960s and 1970s and that we need to look forward to next century with new perspectives, strategies and serious social policies.

4. NEEDS BASED DECISION MAKING APPLIED SOCIAL RESEARCH AND SOCIAL POLICY#

In this seminar on 22 November, Jonathan Bradshaw discussed the processes and constraints of undertaking policy research in the U.K. He outlined the types of research establishments which exist and the means by which research projects are chosen. Compared to other researchers, applied researchers often need to be more resourceful, quick on their feet and possess a good political nose. Policies are often difficult to affect as answers to research questions are usually neither clear-cut nor costless; policies are usually a trade-off of conflicting demands. In striving to

undertake research which is of scientific merit and which also informs policy, Bradshaw stressed the need to disseminate information more widely and to achieve a finer tie between government and applied research - closer than at present, but not so close that detachment and objectivity are jeopardised.

#Jonathan Bradshaw apologised that the content of his seminar was not more closely related to the topic which had been advertised.

5. THE DISTRIBUTIONAL IMPACT OF SOCIAL EXPENDITURE

In his seminar on 8 December Julian Le Grand examined U.K. figures on the per person usage of various social welfare services such as health, public housing/rent allowances, education and public transport. In all services except education for children aged 3-16,

it was found that people in the 'top' occupational group (defined as professionals, employers and managerial positions) used these services to a far greater extent than did those in the 'bottom' group. In explaining why the middle class have captured certain welfare services, Le Grand emphasised

- * the pressure of the bureaucracy wishing to extend its power.
- * boundary problems in welfare entitlement regulations.
- * pressure from the tax-paying middle class to receive services.

Programs become less selective, and more difficult to stop or reverse.

Le Grand argued that, although these services are seen as redistributive, not only are they not redistributive, but they form active barriers to real redistribution. As such, he advocated doing away with many of the programs and subsidies, and radically altering others.

Please note that
papers are not
available for distribution
unless specified

☆☆Area Study - Aged Services☆☆

During 1983 the SWRC started a project aimed at identifying all of the services in a limited area (a local government area) which were directed to elderly people. The objectives of the study were to document the pattern of services, the structure of decision making about funding, service delivery and target populations, and the mechanisms for co-ordinating or at least linking the services. The study was not designed to be an evaluation of the services themselves. The study does, however, attempt to uncover the positive and negative factors relating to the ability of service providers to achieve their desired goals, and to identify whether existing policies aid or hinder satisfactory service delivery. Questions were asked in eight specific areas :

1. Which services are provided at a formal level or informal level, by voluntary or other authorities?
2. What role do service providers see their agencies fulfilling?
3. What mechanisms exist which affect the delivery of services at a local level?
4. On what basis are criteria for eligibility for services determined?
5. What funding arrangements are applicable to the services studied?
What problems/avenues are created by these arrangements?
What accountability for funding is there?
Are allocated funds taken up? If not, why?
6. If funded by government(s), what inter-government relationships can be identified between Federal, State and Local governments?
7. Is a submission model adopted for funding? What are the major expectations by government of service providers? Through what hoops must deliverers jump to continue existing?
8. How do policies determined at federal, state, local and non-government level affect service delivery? What part do agencies play in policy development and implementation?

By the end of 1983 a list of agencies had been compiled for one local government authority in the Sydney metropolitan area and a questionnaire administered. These were the first two steps and will lead on to a number of case studies and some policy analysis. A working paper has been compiled by Jo Harrison, the SWRC staff member who did the work on the project, and this paper will be available in March 1984 from the SWRC Information Officer.

The Centre plans to do follow up work in states other than New South Wales and is now seeking expressions of interest from researchers in other states. It is anticipated that funds will be available for the project to be replicated to test State effects and to develop as broad a picture as possible of services for elderly people in Australia. The Director of the SWRC would like to receive comments or expressions of interest from people able to carry out work of this nature.



EXTERNAL SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS . . .

POPULATION CHANGES AND PUBLIC POLICY

On October 28 Adam Graycar was invited to present a seminar to planning staff at the Public Service Board of South Australia. The focus was on population projections, changes in population distribution and the human service and public policy ramifications of these changes. Data were presented which showed Australia-wide distributions, and South Australian changes against the Australia-wide backdrop. South Australia's share of the national population will drop in years to come; the rate of national and total increase is now much lower than in any other State and will continue as such; the crude birth rate will fall and the crude death rate will rise, the upshot of which will be a population containing a much greater proportion of elderly people than any other State and a lower proportion of young people than any other State. The discussion centred on these figures in terms of planning and service needs, as well as interstate comparisons and Federal/State relations.

OPTIONS FOR SOCIAL POLICY IN A CHANGING ECONOMY

Adam Jamrozik attended the Sixth National Conference of Labor Economists, held at Sydney University on 29-30 October, 1983, under the theme : Economic Challenges for Labor, and presented a paper, Options for Social Policy in a Changing Economy. The abstract of the paper reads :

Changes currently experienced in the Australian economy indicate that the market, as it now operates, is incapable of providing employment for all people who seek it. High levels of

unemployment are likely to continue into the foreseeable future, leading to economic and social divisions of a permanent nature. As paid employment is losing its central place in the social life of an increasing number of people, the countries which experience this problem are now giving more attention to social policy for possible solutions. What kind of social policy would be most appropriate, however, is subject to an ongoing debate.

In Australia, social policy of recent years was based on selective, or residualist, philosophy. Examination of that policy indicates that it contains visible and hidden elements, and far from alleviating the inequalities generated in the market it has served to maintain them. For the present social democratic government in Canberra the feasible options seem to be either a policy of gradual modification of the inherited policy or a direction towards a universalistic social policy compatible with social democratic philosophy. Either option, but especially the latter, is likely to meet obstacles and constraints emanating from various interests in the country as well as from the global nature of the capitalist system of which Australia is a part.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CARE OF ELDERLY PEOPLE

In November 1983 South Australia held its first ever 'Seniors Week', and SWRC Director, Adam Graycar, delivered the keynote address at a conference on Aged Care held in the Adelaide Festival Theatre on November 2. The speech focused on the issue of family care of dependent elderly people, canvassed some of the demographic and social issues relating to increasing ageing and increasing chronicity, and reported data from a study conducted by the Ageing team in the SWRC (published as R & P No.38, see p.21).

... BY SWRC STAFF

The main point was that the rate of population change and incidence of chronicity are such that there is time to plan carefully and sensitively, and planners have a challenge before them to develop workable, equitable and humane policies. However planning care systems on the assumption that family members (in particular women) will provide the care which is required will lead to an unworkable, inefficient and inequitable care system. The data he reported showed that providing care after a household was re-formed (elderly person moving in with adult child or vice versa) created a long-term situation of tension, trauma, and isolation for the carer. The research showed that many families want to look after their elderly relatives, but they are not equipped to do so, nor do they have the social supports they need. Long-term solutions will lie in elderly people looking more towards the formal care systems than their families.

(Copies of the speech are available from the SWRC Information Officer.)

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

The Implications for Social Welfare Services arising from the changing economic conditions in Australia was the topic of a one-day seminar organised by the Australian Association of Social Workers (Tasmanian Branch), held in Hobart on 4 November, 1983. The seminar considered such questions as : What kind of social welfare measures would be more appropriate? Which methods of service delivery to adopt? What kind of information to communicate to policy makers? Is there a need for 'more welfare', or 'less welfare', or is it necessary to consider different arrangements entirely?

The basis for discussion was a

presentation of research findings from Australia and other countries by Adam Jamrozik. The seminar participants considered the relevance of those findings for Tasmania.

WOMEN AND THE CONCEPT OF WORK

Bettina Cass delivered a paper at the Academy of Social Sciences Symposium, Women and the Social Sciences, New Modes of Thought, held at the Australian National University, 9 November, 1983. Her paper, 'Women and the Concept of Work : Issues of Theory, Measurement and Social Policy' traced changes in the unequal treatment of market and non-market work and their respective rewards in social scientific thought, statistical measurement and public policy

negotiations in Australia through the 20th century. Data from 1968-69, 1973-74, 1978-79 and 1981-82 ABS Income Distribution

surveys were used to explore changes in the share of income to women in this period in the light of the equal pay decisions in the Commonwealth Arbitration Commission, 1969-1972, changes in the tax/transfer system, 1975-1976 and labour market changes 1974-1982. One of the major conclusions of the study was that as the concept of the 'family wage' was superseded in the wage fixation system it was reconstructed in the tax system, maintaining the centrality of the breadwinner/dependent relationship. It was argued that despite the increase in the share of income to women in the period under review, the goal of equality for women and men in the paid workforce and in the income distribution, and the equal participation of men in non-market, caring work in the family remains elusive while women's dependency is reinforced in social policies.

Please note that papers are not available for distribution unless specified

External Seminar Presentations by SWRC Staff (continued)

SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES
AND SOCIAL POLICIES

Bettina Cass and Mary Ann O'Loughlin delivered a paper at the Institute of Family Studies' Australian Family Research Conference, 23-25 November, 1983 at the Australian National University. Titled 'Single Parent Families and Social Policies : Australia and Sweden, a Comparative Study', the paper examined the three major sources of income support available to single parent families in Australia : social security and cash transfers for children; earned income from the parent's labour force participation; and intra-family transfers, i.e. maintenance payments from the non-custodial parent. The analysis centred on the trends in labour force participation and proportions in receipt of pensions and benefits in the period 1974-1982; and the incentives and disincentives to paid employment for male and female single parents. The analysis also focused on the adequacy of social security and transfer payments, tax treatments and services (childcare, labour force training and housing) as they apply to single parents, and the adequacy of the system regulating child maintenance payments from the non-custodial to the custodial parent. On each of these issues comparisons were made with the labour force policies, tax/transfer treatments, and child maintenance policies relating to single parent families in Sweden so as to identify the major characteristics of single parent family policies in both countries. The study will be published in the SWRC Reports and Proceedings Series.

WOMEN AS VOLUNTEERS

On December 13, 1983, Jill Hardwick attended a meeting of North Sydney Inter Agency to discuss Women as Volunteers.

The discussion revolved around a number of issues :

- * characteristics of volunteers (number, gender, age, labour force status, marital status, occupation) from the SWRC survey of voluntary organisations and the recent ABS survey of volunteers in Victoria.
- * nature of voluntary work in terms of the main activities performed by volunteers and the types of organisations through which help was given.
- * relationship of women's volunteer work to women's domestic work and women's paid work.

IFS CONFERENCE

Three papers were presented by SWRC staff at the Institute of Family Studies' Australian Family Research Conference, 23-25 November 1983, at the Australian National University :

1. Bettina Cass and Mary Ann O'Loughlin - Single Parent Families and Social Policies : Australia and Sweden, A Comparative Study (described above).
2. David Kinnear and Chris Rossiter - Family Care Policies : Findings from a Survey of Carers.
3. Tania Sweeney and Adam Jamrozik - Child Care from a Consumer Perspective : The Experience of 156 Sydney Families.

FORUM

In order to stimulate discussion, debate and feedback on the Centre's work, readers are invited to submit written responses for inclusion in this section of the SWRC Newsletter. Should you wish to comment on some aspect of the Centre's research or publications, you are welcome to forward contributions to the Editor. (Please note that future contributions which exceed five A4 pages of double-spaced typing cannot be accepted due to space constraints.)

'PROTECTION TO PREVENTION : CHILD WELFARE POLICIES' by Jan Carter. A Response to SWRC Reports and Proceedings No.29.

from Lesley Hughes (Research Assistant, Social Work, University of Sydney), Chris Milne (Lecturer, Tranby Aboriginal College), Rosamund Thorpe (Senior Lecturer, Social Work, University of Sydney), Louise Voigt (Co-ordinator, Waverley Temporary Care), Marie Wilkinson (Project Officer, NSW Department of Youth and Community Services).

Introduction

We are members of a Post Graduate seminar group interested in child welfare and concerned about the relative dearth of critical analysis, especially in relation to the Australian child welfare scene. Whilst we consider that Jan Carter's report Protection to Prevention : Child Welfare Policies (SWRC Reports and Proceedings No.29 January 1983) makes some useful and positive conclusions, especially concerning the need for increased preventative services, and an expose of the decreased real spending in the area of supplementary interventions, we are concerned that the paper does not contribute to a process of demystifying child welfare and in fact adds to the confusion in various respects.

We believe that many of the difficulties are attributable to Carter's implicit positivist social policy perspective - a belief that objective, 'scientifically' formulated social policy is able single-handedly to determine reality (in this case the number of children coming into care). Such an assumption belies the truth - which is that socio-economic and political factors rather than particular social policies alone are in fact more influential determinants of how many, and we would argue equally importantly, which children come into care.

Critique of Carter's Methodology

Within her positivist framework, and partly because of it, Carter's analysis suffers from theoretical and methodological inadequacies. The classification she develops along the protective to preventative policy range is at the level of government intervention into family life, starting from 'substitute' interventions as the most protective through 'supervisory' to 'supplementary' and 'supportive' at the preventative end. Carter's basic assumption is that changed rates of these interventions are indicators of policy differences, either over time or between countries, states and authorities. In this section, we will show that even within the terms of this assumption, taking substitute interventions as an example, Carter fails to accurately measure rates of intervention. In Australia, the available official data collections most directly related to children in substitute care are the numbers of children in state care compiled by state welfare departments both as children under guardianship of the state and children in state run substitute care arrangements (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1981). This category corresponds to Carter's substitute intervention classification.

As she describes her method, Carter works back from the data to construct her classification, and so defines

Forum (continued)

Figure 1

Auspice of Care	Child's Legal Status	
	State Guardianship	Other
Government department	A	D
Non-government department	B	E
Natural family	C	F

substitute interventions as those where the state 'assumes parental rights over children in guardianship and, in that sense, substitutes for the biological family' (p.17). This definition focuses on two aspects of the intervention:- the resultant legal status of the child (state guardianship); and the auspice for the care of the child. Figure 1 shows that at least six combinations of legal status and auspice of care are possible. Carter's definition of substitute intervention only accounts for 3 combinations: A, B and C. She classes A and B as 'formal' substitute care, as against children under state guardianship placed back with their families (C). Children in F are not in substitute care by these definitions.

Thus she excludes, for example, children who have been compulsorily removed from their parents through statutory intervention; then placed by a court with a non-government child care agency (a 'committal to care' order in N.S.W.); as well as children who have entered non-government homes on a 'voluntary' basis and remained. (Both 'E' in Figure 1.) The rapidly increasing number and usage of youth refuges also falls into E and is similarly excluded by Carter. Another group of children in substitute care who should not be ignored are those children in government (D) and non-government (E) care facilities that ostensibly cater for children with health and special education needs, where there is often considerable overlap with child

welfare facilities, such as schedule 3 hospitals in N.S.W. (Dalton, 1982, 118).

Carter briefly admits her failure to include non-government substitute care, E (p.16), ignores the health and special education sector, and continues with her analysis undeterred. To do this she must be confident that either there are relatively few children in substitute care who are not under state guardianship (i.e. D and E are insignificant), or in making comparisons over time, or between Australia and England and Wales, the distribution of children between guardianship and non-guardianship categories is relatively constant. None of these assumptions are supported by the available evidence, at least in the Australian case. Firstly substantial numbers of children are in substitute care outside of state care. In 1980, a survey of substitute care in N.S.W. showed that only 53% of all children who experienced out-of-home care over the year were in state care (almost entirely under state guardianship), while a further 24% were cared for by non-government agencies, and 20% in youth refuges, scheduled hospitals and nursing homes (with a minimal number under state guardianship) (Dalton, 1982, p.118).

These patterns differ between states. However, nationally, of a minimum of 10,200 children in foster care in 1981, 41% were not under state guardianship. These figures also revealed a marked shift to the non-government agency/non-state guardianship category (i.e. from

A to B to E) over the previous year. In 1980, 26% of children were in this category; by 1981, with a similar number of children in foster care overall, this had increased to 37% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1981, p.13, Table 11). In other words, while the number of children in foster care remained constant from 1980 to 1981, there was a significant drop in the number under state guardianship. The possibility of similar shifts over the period of Carter's analysis highlights the implausibility of her second assumption. In N.S.W., for example, Mowbray has shown that for the period 1972 to 1980, the number of children in the care of non-government agencies (primarily E) has declined at half the rate of children in government care (A), a trend which he relates to a quite different aspect of government policy over the period – the desire to cut expenditure and transfer costs from the government sector (Mowbray, 1983, p.3).

Without a detailed knowledge of the substitute care systems of England and Wales, it is difficult to critically examine Carter's overseas data, in part because she does not provide a precise definition of her 'state care' category. If, by restricting her definition of substitute intervention and limiting her operational measures to children under state guardianship in Australia and state care in England and Wales, Carter has excluded substantial numbers of children in substitute care and failed to account for shifts between different kinds of substitute care, her conclusions become questionable. In particular, the logic of comparing rates per thousand children between Australia and England and Wales cannot be sustained. More evidence about the whole spectrum of substitute interventions in both countries is needed before any meaningful comparisons of policies can be made. Rather than pointing to the success of the Australian states in pursuing preventative policies since 1972 compared to England and Wales, Carter's data could equally suggest the success of the state welfare departments in

transferring their responsibilities for substitute care to other agencies!

We thus conclude that Carter has not shown conclusively that there is a difference between Australia and the U.K. on the 'dependent variable' viz rates of children in substitute care. In the following section we look at a part of Carter's analysis of the independent variable – preventative services to families.

The Relationship Between Day Care and Substitute Care

Carter claims that the alleged reduction of children in care is attributable to the development in Australia of a range of preventative services, including day care. In order to show a relationship between a decline in numbers of children in substitute care and increased provision of day care it is necessary to show that the extra day care places are used by that group whose children are admitted to substitute care. The available evidence does not support such a conclusion.

Sweeney and Jamrozik (1982) have pointed out in their analysis of day care figures that close examination shows that the greatest access to and highest use of day care, is by more affluent groups. Although the proportion of low income single parents in centres supported by the Commonwealth increased, they accounted for only a fraction of the total. The least use of child care by far is where neither parent is employed. (Sweeney & Jamrozik, 1982:118). Yet it is from this last group that the highest numbers of children admitted to substitute care come. Both overseas, (e.g. Holman on U.K., Jenkins on U.S.A.), and Australian evidence shows that the majority of children are placed in care basically because of 'poverty – that is lack of material and personal supporting networks in the child's family.' (Sweeney, 1983: 43).

Forum (continued)

Thus, we think Carter has made a classic, fundamental error in assuming that a correlation between increased day care and decreased substitute care is indicative of a causal connection. By contrast we suspect that any alleged decrease of children in care and the increase of children in day care are both the result of other underlying features of Australian society - features which Carter fails to take into account since she simplistically assumes similarities in economic and political conditions between Australia and the U.K. which do not stand up to closer inspection.

Political and Economic Contexts of Child Welfare in Australia and U.K.

Whilst Australia was enjoying the 'long boom' of the 50's and 60's, the U.K. was already in industrial decline (Bolger et al 1981). Similarly the world wide recession of the 70's hit Australia both later and less hard than the U.S.A. and the U.K. Thus in the early 70's there was less unemployment and less poverty in Australia than in the U.K. (A.C.O.S.S. 1977:11) and whereas cuts in welfare services began in the early 70's in the U.K., in Australia this same period was marked by a catch-up expansion of welfare services during the Whitlam federal government.

During the 50's and 60's social policy (including child welfare policy) in Australia had lagged severely behind developments in the U.K. Whereas in England and Wales radical reform of child welfare services had been an essential part of the post second world war welfare state provisions, in Australia, being a state responsibility, child welfare remained untouched by the more modest changes of the Chifley government. Thus, while in the U.K. a professional child welfare service developed during the 50's and 60's, with increased emphasis on restoration and prevention, child welfare in Australia remained small, centralised, unprofessional and essentially 'protective' in its orientation (Picton & Boss:1981). Only in the late 60's did significant changes start to occur in Australian child welfare, when, for example most states started to decentralise their

operations from a single metropolitan base and increase and professionalise their staff. Thus, at belatedly long last, child welfare in Australia had sufficient manpower at a local level to broaden its focus 'from protection to prevention' plus, in the early 70's, the economic and political conditions to underpin such a shift.

Meanwhile, with a deteriorating economy in the U.K., the numbers of children entering care steadily increased, and was legitimized in the late 70's by policy changes in favour of 'protection', as part of the general move to the Right in social, economic and political philosophy.

Conclusion

Clearly then, there were significant differences between Australia and the U.K. during the 1970's, which make it inappropriate to assume that the only variable influencing the proportion of children in care was that of policy. Given the growing recession in Australia since the late 1970's we may well find that the relatively favourable Australian figures were short-lived - if, indeed, they were ever as favourable as Carter claims.

We share Carter's concern that there will be an increased need for children's services (p.58) and would echo her cry for action to defend preventative services which have been cut in real terms over recent years. Things may be better than ever in terms solely of Australian child welfare policy but the realities of existence for families whose children are, or are in danger of, coming into substitute care are shaped by political, and economic factors which unfortunately are definitely not 'better than ever'. In such times a 'neutral', empiricist perspective which focuses only on narrowly defined social policy and ignores political and economic realities - both past and present - can do little to alleviate the misery and injustice which characterise the receiving end of child welfare provisions.

(This is an abridged version of a paper available from Dr. Rosamund Thorpe, Social Work Department, University of Sydney, N.S.W. 2006.)

(The contributors included a bibliography which, owing to space constraints, we are unable to print. However it is available as part of the paper mentioned above. Ed.)

Author's Comment

from Jan Carter

This particular project was commissioned to research the impact of policies. The context within which the commissioning took place was one of Commonwealth Government consideration about the future of child care services in general, and the long standing debate about the purposes and effects of interventionist activities on the lives of children. During the course of the research, the Office of Child Care found itself on shaky ground and the then Director was transferred summarily out of the office. Options for transfer or closure of the Office were being privately canvassed and against this backdrop this research task was undertaken.

Shaping a manageable conceptual task is perhaps the most difficult intellectual task in carrying out a piece of research work. Hughes, Milne, Thorpe, Voigt and Wilkinson object to the fact that my chosen independent variable is 'government policy'. I am aware that many issues other than official policy influence the reasons children are taken into State care. But it is legitimate to decide to explore one major independent variable. The project, after all, lasted 4 months, not 4 years.

In this connection, Hughes, Milne, Thorpe, Voigt and Wilkinson have attributed to me statements and emphases which are not within the report. They say that I have made 'conclusions' and 'causal statements'. In fact, I avoided both. For example, they say: 'Carter has made a classic fundamental error in assuming that a correlation between increased day care and decreased substitute care is indicative of a causal connection'.

This is quite wrong. What Carter did say is this:

- (i) 'the increase in subsidised day care in the mid seventies did not "cause" the reduced institutional population.' (page 50).
- (ii) '... the development of supplementary services has been initially related to the reduction of children in public care, how the ingredients ... interact with each other is uncertain.' (page 51).

Further, Hughes, Milne, Thorpe, Voigt and Wilkinson keep insisting that my dependent variable is children in substitute care. Again they miss the point: the dependent variable is actually State intervention (i.e. State guardianship and other forms of State control of children). It follows that the group of children in substitute care who are also under State guardianship are one convenient operational measure. I did not attempt to examine the numbers of children in substitute care in Australia.

Hughes, Milne, Thorpe, Voigt and Wilkinson have not produced any longitudinal evidence to refute my results. The points they make about N.S.W. are interesting, but they need to be aware that to argue the case of N.S.W. (which has very different patterns of law and placement) represents a move to a different unit and therefore level of analysis. Also their data on foster care fails to provide a longitudinal perspective over the decade.

My remarks on similarities between the U.K. and Australia were exploratory and

Forum (continued)

not made with any air of finality. However, Hughes, Milne, Thorpe, Voigt and Wilkinson may be interested to learn my cross cultural observations appear to have some 'face validity' in the U.K. at least, (see *New Society*, 3rd March, 1983, p.342 for one view).

If pressed to express a tentative causal hypothesis, it would go like this: Whilst poverty is clearly the prior determinant of the entry of children into the child welfare system, government policies are the crucial intervening variable. If Hughes, Milne, Thorpe, Voigt and Wilkinson had read my previous work in the field of child welfare, they would have been acquainted with my views about the role of poverty in defining child welfare 'problems'. (I would have thought this background essential in attempting to categorise my research stance.)

Finally, I would like to make it clear that I am very much in favour of debate and discussion about research results and methods. But, Hughes, Milne, Thorpe, Voigt and Wilkinson should offer accurate quotation of those they criticise if they wish to be taken seriously. Also, their lapses into pejorative 'trade' language (e.g. 'positivist') and into polemic (as in their last paragraph) are a matter of taste, but do not help to clarify their argument. Further, their attitude (probably unintended), suggests that they have a monopoly on social concern and commitment and this is a little self righteous and is also patronising. It is very much easier to criticise research than to do it. I look forward to reading substantive contributions to the issues they address from each of them soon.

(My apologies to Jan Carter who deliberately made no direct reference to Figure 1 in Hughes' (et al.) response as she was given to understand, by me, that it would not be included. However, clarity deemed it essential and there has been insufficient time to seek further comment from the author. Ed.)

COMMUNITY CARE CONFERENCE

Techsearch at the South Australian Institute of Technology is planning to run a conference during Professor Rosemary Sarri's visit to Adelaide, probably in June 1984.

The first purpose is to provide an opportunity for people working at the program planning or project management level to attend seminars run by Rosemary and at the same time to meet some of these people at academic or senior administrative levels to exchange views about policy and practice. The second is to invite participants to contribute a paper (theme papers from academics or policy makers and case studies from administrators) for circulation and later publication.

For further information, please contact

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Like to be kept up to date on social legislation?

The 1982 Diary of Social Legislation and Policy is now available.

The Diary is published and edited in co-operation by the Institute of Family Studies, the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research of the University of Melbourne and the Social Welfare Research Centre of the University of New South Wales.

The Diary summarises the legislative and administrative changes made in the social welfare field by the Commonwealth Government.

It is available, free of charge, from the Editor, Institute of Family Studies, 766 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne 3000 (or from Publications, Social Welfare Research Centre).

Can There Be a New Welfare State?

In most countries of the Western world, the 'welfare state' is seen to be in 'crisis'. After a steady economic growth for nearly three decades, the industrialised countries have experienced a period of recession, resulting in growing unemployment, poverty and lack of income security. A belief has grown that the expansion of the welfare state had reached its limits, and far from further expansion, a curtailment of public expenditure on welfare was necessary so as to lessen the 'burden' on the economies of the countries concerned.

Are other alternatives feasible? This was the question addressed by a meeting of experts, organised by the European Centre for Social Welfare Training and Research (Vienna), held at Baden (Austria) from 25 September to 1 October, 1983. The topic: Can There Be a New Welfare State: Social Policy Options Towards Shaping an Uncertain Future, was discussed under five headings: Economics/Technology; Interventions around Work; Social Policy and Social Life; New Forms and Institutions of Conflict/Consensus; and Cross-National Comparisons.

Over 40 people attended the meeting, from 19 countries, plus representatives of international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations, World Health Organisation (WHO) and International Council on Social Welfare. Papers presented for discussion at the meeting (23 in number) provided a wide range of analysis of welfare issues as well as challenging ideas for alternative directions in social welfare policies. Discussion with the Austrian Minister for Social Affairs and with the Austrian social welfare researchers were also held during the meeting. The meeting then addressed the question of directions and methods of research in social policy and social welfare that would be feasible and appropriate for the forthcoming years. The design for the first research project with the working title of Social Welfare, Social Subjects and the State is now being prepared.

(Adam Jamrozik of the Social Welfare Research Centre attended the meeting.)

NEW SWRC REPORTS and PROCEEDINGS

Four new issues in the SWRC Reports and Proceedings Series are now available. For details of ordering Reports and Proceedings, please see page 24.

No.35 Carol Keens, Frances Staden and Adam Graycar, Options for Independence : Australian Home Help Policies for Elderly People, December 1983, 119 pp. \$5.

An important focus of the Social Welfare Research Centre's work on the welfare of elderly people has been non-institutional care; that is, formal care provided by family members. This report is the first in a planned series to look at one specific formal service, the Home Help Service, in relation to elderly people. In the context of theoretical and practical issues relating to the development of home support services, this study examines Home Help service structures across Australia and, in particular, the workings of the service in New South Wales.

Data for this study were collected in 1981/82 by means of a postal questionnaire sent to the State

authorities (throughout Australia) responsible for the administration of the States Grants (Home Care) Act 1969.

Although some services (particularly the Home Care Service of New South Wales) have experienced a continuous process of change and development since the data were collected, many important issues regarding the allocation of home help resources at both the geographic and client level have been raised in this report. Future work in the area by the SWRC will examine the resource allocation process in more detail and will include a critical examination of the needs indicator approach to resource allocation.

No.36 Diana Encel and Pauline Garde, Unemployment in Australia : An Annotated Bibliography, 1978-83, January 1984, 152 pp. \$5.

This bibliography consists of a collection of 237 annotations of items specifically related to unemployment in Australia. All items (books, chapters of books, journal articles, some brochures and posters) were published in the period 1978-83. As far as possible, each annotation uses the language and terminology of the work cited or on occasions the published abstract has been quoted. The annotations are descriptive and are not intended to be critical reviews or evaluations. They are arranged alphabetically by author and each item has been allocated an identification number which is cross-referenced to a

Keyword Index and an Author Index. The keywords include surveys, statistics, labour market segmentation, education and training, causes of unemployment, effects of unemployment, society (relationships between social conditions and the experience of unemployment), women, youth, other specific demographic groups, policies and strategies. Also included is a list of relevant publications from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Commonwealth Employment Service and the Department of Social Security.

No.37 Stuart Rees and Anneke Emerson, Disabled Children, Disabling Practices, January 1984, 129 pp. \$5.

This study of the relationships between parents, professionals and policies concerned with the family care of disabled children was prepared by Stuart Rees and Anneke Emerson from the Social Work Department of the University of Sydney as part of a research contract issued by the SWRC.

On three occasions over a 12 month period they interviewed 51 families to examine their use of health and welfare services for their severely handicapped young children. In addition they noted factors relating to the financial and non-financial costs involved in the

caring situation.

This is a pioneering piece in an area in which there is virtually no Australian research. As such anyone hoping for a definitive report on issues relating to the care of handicapped children will not have their expectations met here. They will not, however, be disappointed for this study traces the background and provides valuable data on a small sample. In doing so it adds to our store of knowledge, and in the best of research traditions raises questions about directions for future research in this important area.

No.38 Chris Rossiter, David Kinnear and Adam Graycar, Family Care of the Elderly : 1983 Survey Results, January 1984, 110 pp. \$5.

This publication reports findings from a survey of families caring for dependent elderly relatives and is a successor to the earlier report Family Care of Elderly People : Australian Perspectives (SWRC Reports and Proceedings No.23). The latter examined the concept of 'community care' and presented preliminary findings from a study of what it means in practice for the individuals who provide care. The new report presents detailed data from a wider survey of carers and their relatives.

In all, 158 carers were interviewed and their replies build up a picture of what family care entails: often a far cry from rosy images of family life. Many had been looking after a sick or disabled relative for several years, often to the detriment of their own physical and emotional health. Not only was there evidence of financial costs for carers who bought aids and equipment or converted their homes to make caring tasks easier, many carers also experienced severe personal costs such as restrictions on their social and 'family' lives, withdrawal from the labour force, the physical strain of

extra housework and the needs of a frail or confused person, and the frequent anxiety over their relative's health and the conflicting demands made on them.

Nearly all the carers surveyed were women and many experienced a sense of being torn between the needs of the elderly person, and their own and their families' interests. The report discusses the reasons why these women undertook to look after their elderly relatives at home and notes the lack of alternatives for many elderly people who are no longer able to live independently but who do not desire or need institutional care.

A small subsample of carers had recently given up the role of primary carer when their relatives entered a nursing home. The report examines the process of reaching this decision and the particular circumstances and experiences of these carers which set them apart from those who continue to look after their elderly family members.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

CAPITALISM AND THE WELFARE STATE : DILEMMAS OF SOCIAL BENEVOLENCE

by Neil Gilbert, New Haven : Yale University Press, 1983, 196 pp.

Is the welfare state possible in a capitalist society? Gilbert addresses this question in his recent book, pointing out that the experience, so far, does not lead to a great optimism. The welfare state was expected to humanise the capitalist society, but the developments over the past two decades or so indicate that rather than changing the nature of capitalism, the social market has become more like the capitalist market. The author sees the growth of welfare capitalism - 'an emerging view of the welfare state as an untapped market (with profit potential) which is ready for conversion to capitalist doctrine'. This trend is evident in such developments as governments' purchase of welfare services from non-profit and profit organisations, welfare activities operated as profit-making ventures (e.g. nursing homes), and growing entrepreneurship of welfare professionals.

How far, then, can the social market accommodate the capitalist doctrine

without losing the essential nature of the welfare state? The author's solution is a middle-road course conducted with social responsibility. He argues that the 'search for a workable balance between the economic and social markets of a mixed economy poses a crucial challenge to the future of the welfare state in a capitalist society. It is a challenge that demands sober regard for both the vitality of private enterprise and the humanity of social welfare'. Not a revolutionary thesis or a road to utopia but a critical examination of the social reality of welfare in a capitalist society.

Gilbert examines mainly the American welfare scene, with some brief reference to the British experience, but the issues he addresses are of relevance to any capitalist society - worthwhile reading for those who are interested in the current issues of social welfare.

HEALTH, WELFARE AND FAMILY IN LATER LIFE

by H.L. Kendig, D.M. Gibson, D.T. Rowland and J.M. Hemer

Ageing and the Family Project, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, November 1983 : 185 pp.

Available for \$5 from New South Wales Council on the Ageing, 34 Argyle Place, Millers Point, NSW, 2000.

This is the report on a detailed and rigorous study of 1050 elderly people living in private residences throughout the Sydney metropolitan area. The survey was conducted in 1981 and is the most comprehensive data source of its type in Australia. In assembling the

material the authors have skilfully integrated new data, policy and demographic analysis, and contemporary social theory, family theory, and gerontological theory into a substantial and significant piece of work.

The material presented has been organised around three topic areas -

1. personal family resources
2. frailty and disability
3. use of services and informal assistance.

The report opens with basic information on the personal resources of the aged, particularly in terms of household membership and the family network extending beyond the home. There is considerable evidence that, in Australia, the modified extended family provides extensive support to aged members. The first chapter documents both household structure and the distribution of relatives who live elsewhere. It examines the evidence that those living with others remain in the community despite poorer health.

The emphasis in the second chapter is on functional health. To what extent are activities limited or constrained in old age, and what proportion of the population are so affected? How are health problems distributed amongst the population, between the young-old and old-old, men and women, and those of higher or lower socio-economic status?

This information on the nature, extent and distribution of disability may be used to identify which groups are most in need of assistance - whether from government, voluntary or informal sources.

Patterns of medical and paramedical service utilisation provide the subject area for Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 focuses on the diverse ways that older people manage the activities of daily living. The tasks include transport and shopping, meal preparation, housework and home upkeep, and personal care. The data provide a picture of the amounts and types of assistance received by older people in different circumstances. They also compare the functions of informal support (family and friends), paid services on the private market and community services (voluntary and government agencies). The chapter thus confronts the questions of what assistance the aged living in the community receive, who is providing it, and how many have unmet needs. It examines beliefs as to who should be responsible for community care, as well as who does take on the responsibility for it.

The fifth chapter deals specifically with the providers of community care. It examines in more detail the particular parts played by spouses, children, and other informal providers, as well as paid help and community services.

In the concluding chapter, the findings of the report are summarised, and the linkages between the chapters are shown in greater detail. This chapter does not attempt to develop policies, but shows how the survey results shed light on some of the large questions raised.



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