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SWRC Newsletter

No 18 August 1985

Editor: Rosemary Hooke

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Social Welfare Research Centre

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
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From the Acting Director . . .

It appears that the interest in social policy and social welfare issues and the demand for relevant information are greater than ever. The mailing list for our **Newsletter** which now has well over 2500 names and addresses has been growing with each issue. The demand for our research reports has been continuously on the increase, and we have had to reprint many of the reports. The demand comes not only from Australia but also from other countries. It seems there is interest overseas in what happens here on the social welfare scene - recently, for example, we received an order for all the Centre's publications from Japan.

Some issues which had been raised in our earlier reports have now become 'topical' because of the current concerns and debates on taxation, occupational welfare, services for the aged, and services for children and families. This suggests that the research programme of the Centre developed in the earlier years had a 'forward look', indicating certain trends in the Australian society which have now grown into national significance.

Although the Social Welfare Research Centre is located in Sydney, we endeavour to maintain interest in issues of national importance. Apart from participating in national conferences we also collect data from all States and maintain an interchange of information. At present, we have two research projects that are conducted interstate by commissioned researchers and we plan to commission at least one more project interstate this financial year. These are not large projects as our resources are limited, but they enable us to keep a nationwide input of data into our research programmes.

Report No.53 in the SWRC Reports and Proceedings series is at the printers and should be available soon. The report, with a title:

Bearing the Burden of Unemployment - Unequally, analyses the data on unemployment from the 1981 Census and links the data to households (see p.24). The analysis shows how the impact of unemployment affects some forms of households to a much greater degree than others, and how that effect may be compounded by other factors such as household income, housing and household composition.

Our first graduate scholar, David Wiles, has completed his study for the Ph.D. degree. His thesis, **Pensioners, Life Chances and Social Policy in Australia**, provides a valuable and interesting insight into the lives of pensioners as well as into their own perceptions of their position in society. The thesis is based on a series of in-depth interviews with pensioners and subsequent analysis (see p.25). David is now seeking employment in services for the aged and he has our best wishes for a successful and fruitful working life. We also hope that he will find time to write an abridged version of his study so that we can make it available to a wider readership.

The series of monthly seminars for Session II, 1985, has now started and we will provide summaries of presented papers in the next issue of the Newsletter. In the meantime, our Publications and Information Officer, Rosemary Hooke will supply any information. Also, we are thinking of arranging a one-day seminar towards the end of the year on the subject of **Income and Social Security** and we will advise the readers of details when these have been finalized.

Adam Jamrozik
Acting Director.



Social Welfare Research Centre
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

THE 1985 SEMINARS

Session 2 , August to November

VENUE: Morven Brown Seminar Room 212

TIME: 9.15am to 12.30pm (Fridays)

TOPICS: ▾

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Friday, August 9: | <p><u>YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUTH POLICIES</u></p> <p>Adam Jamrozik, Social Welfare Research Centre,
Research in Youth Policy: A Critical Appraisal.</p> <p>Marion Dunlop, Policy Coordination Unit,
Department of Community Services, Canberra,
Social Welfare and Youth Policy.</p> |
| Friday, September 13: | <p><u>TRADE UNIONS, ETHNIC MINORITIES AND SOCIAL WELFARE</u></p> <p>Loucas Nicolaou, Social Welfare Research Centre,
The Position of Immigrant Workers in Australian
Unions: Implications for Social Welfare.</p> <p>Alan Matheson, Australian Council of Trade Unions,
Melbourne,
Trade Unions, Workers and Welfare: Current Develop-
ments in Ensuring the Rights of Migrant Workers.</p> |
| Friday, October 11: | <p><u>HUMAN IMPACT OF ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING: JOBS, EDUCATION AND FAMILY POLICY</u></p> <p>Ken Polk, University of Melbourne,
Jobs, Education and Youth Alienation: the New
Marginality.</p> <p>David Tait, Social Welfare Research Centre,
Jobs and Poverty: the Changing Face of Sydney.</p> |
| Friday, November 15: | <p><u>UNEMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY</u></p> <p>Joan Vipond, Social Welfare Research Centre,
The Impact of Unemployment on Incomes.</p> <p>Knut Halvorsen, Norwegian College of Public
Administration and Social Work, Oslo, Norway,
Theoretical and Methodological Problems in
Studying the Individual Consequences of
Unemployment.</p> |

SWRC SEMINAR REPORTS , SESSION 1

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

3. *Changing Concepts of the 'Family' in Social Policy*, May 10,
David Tait (SWRC),
4. *Income, Taxation, Social Security and Consumption Patterns*, June 7,
Ann Harding, Development Division, Department of
Social Security, Canberra
Tax and Social Security,

Russell Ross, Department of Economics,
The University of Sydney; Visiting Fellow, SWRC
Consumption Patterns and the Growth of Two-Earner Families.

Please note that seminar papers are not available unless specified.

3. THE FAMILY IN SOCIAL POLICY

In a paper entitled **Decoding the Notion of the 'Family' in Social Policy**, Dr. David Tait put forward a view that the 'family' was at the heart of the debate on social policy administration and research but the concept of the 'family', although seemingly self-evident, was not clear. He suggested that the family should not be perceived as an object like a tax package but a terrain on which different groups struggled for positions and advantages.

The institution of the family was a sort of battlefield. In some views the family was held up as a guardian of traditional values and a foundation of an ordered society, as well as a source of preservation. Others saw the family as an institution of sanctions and often of repressive relationships. Yet in another and rather optimistic view the family

was seen as a range of lifestyles potentially providing support for its members, opportunities for personal growth, and a refuge from the harsh realities of the capitalist society.

Dr. Tait argued that his purpose of raising these issues was not to take a normative stance but to identify the different interests involved in the institution of the family, their purposes and strategies used. He then traced various changes in the perceptions as well as the structure of the family over time, and attempted to demonstrate the consistency of certain issues, despite the changes, such as respectability, and property. This was certainly the case in Australia since the early days of the colonial settlement. The 'family wage' introduced in 1907 was an example of a decision to support the traditional notion of the family.

In conclusion, Dr. Tait argued that in order to understand social policies which claimed to support the family

SWRC SEMINAR REPORTS

there was a need to identify the particular elements that made up a 'family policy'. Also, it was necessary to ask what particular political and economic interests were involved in, or associated with, the elements that constituted any such policy.

4. TAX , SOCIAL SECURITY AND CONSUMPTION

The first paper at the seminar discussed the **compensation proposals for a new consumption tax**, contained in the Government's **Draft White Paper on Tax Reform** which had been released earlier in the week. Ann Harding, Assistant Director of the Taxation and Distributional Analysis Section in the Department of Social Security explained that many taxpayers would not pay enough tax for their new consumption tax burden to be fully offset by income tax cuts. Based on the White Paper estimate that the proposed 'Option C' would produce a CPI increase of 6.5 percent, single taxpayers with incomes below \$6080 and single income married couples with children with incomes below \$11530 could not be fully compensated for their extra indirect tax payments by income tax changes. As a result, the White Paper proposed a package of measures to protect such low income earners. Groups of particular concern were pensioners and beneficiaries, families with children and other low income groups in the workforce.

For pensioners and beneficiaries, increases in all indexed and non-indexed social security payments of at least the estimated price effects were proposed in the White Paper. Some allowance was also made for the dissaving of pensioners and beneficiaries, although it was recognised that little was known about the phenomenon of people's spending

exceeding their income and that further work was required before more precise estimates of dissaving could be made.

At every income level families with children were likely to be more severely affected by a major shift to a consumption tax than those without, first, because of their different consumption patterns, and second, because they spent more and saved less of their income or because they dissaved more heavily than those without children. In the White Paper, increases in family allowances which were twice the estimated CPI increases were proposed, to provide some extra compensation for those with children.

Particular problems were still presented by families with children whose incomes fell below the 'compensation thresholds', and thus did not pay enough income tax to be fully compensated for their new indirect tax burdens by income tax cuts. To overcome this, the White Paper proposed increases in the rate of Family Income Supplement (FIS), and adjustments to the FIS income test.

Two other groups who could have faced extra indirect tax payments if there were a major shift to a consumption tax, but not benefitted fully if at all, from income tax cuts, yet who were also currently ineligible for any social security cash transfers, were low income single people and couples without children in the workforce. The White Paper acknowledged this problem, but suggested that further study be undertaken to determine exactly how many people might be in this position and may be regarded as requiring compensation. Two major groups with incomes below the compensation thresholds were students and married women. It was argued in the White Paper that these groups would receive indirect compensation through cuts in

SESSION 1 , 1985

the income tax of their parents or spouse (e.g. through increases in the dependent spouse rebate).

For single or married adults without children with joint incomes below the relevant compensation thresholds, special measures were proposed. The extension of FIS to these groups was included as an illustrative example, but the choice of appropriate compensation instruments was to be the subject of further study. Alternative compensation instruments included new tax credits, or, for those in employment, new payments made through their pay packet, and subsequently reimbursed to the employer by the Government.*

Dr. Russell Ross, a SWRC Visiting Research Fellow from the Economics Department at the University of Sydney, presented the second paper, covering a number of issues concerning the **growth in household disposable income and consumption expenditure patterns**. Specifically, he addressed three questions: what has been happening to the level of real (i.e. after allowing for inflation) household income, what types of goods and services are being consumed now in comparison to twenty years ago and what effect would a broad based consumption tax have on consumer patterns?

Using published data from the ABS, he demonstrated that, on average, households have fifty percent more **real** income than they did twenty years ago. That is, the average household can afford to consume half as much again as it could in the early 1960s. As the number of Australians living below the poverty line has increased

dramatically during the same period, the unavoidable conclusion is that the gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' is widening. Not only are poor households increasing in number, their economic plight is worsening relative to those households with average incomes. In this context, the increased labour force participation of married women is seen as a way of reducing the chances of a family being drawn into the poverty trap. As Dr. Ross pointed out, this is not the only reason why participation of married women has risen, although other evidence does suggest that economic factors have been important. He also pointed out that single parent families are less able to avoid the poverty trap since they do not have the option of utilising the earning power of a second adult worker.

The second focus of the paper was the types of goods and services being purchased. Over the last twenty years, consumption of basic items, e.g. food and clothing, has not altered much at all. The major changes have been the substitution of higher quality items for lower quality ones as income has risen. However, the major changes to purchases has been in the areas of accommodation and household durables (e.g. refrigerators, furniture, electrical appliances). These trends were also evident in preliminary figures from the 1984 Household Expenditure Survey, which had been released only several days before the seminar date.

The final focus of the paper was on the implications of a broad based consumption tax on household expenditure patterns. Dr. Ross was particularly concerned about

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## ... SEMINARS

the wisdom of basing the compensation package on the estimated CPI effect of the proposed tax. He argued that the government had got it wrong and that even if a 12½% tax rate did lead to a CPI effect of 6½% this did not mean that the price effects felt by **poor** people (to whom the compensation package was directed) would average 6½%. Dr. Ross argued that in fact this was an underestimate and gave several reasons; the poor were currently buying goods which were less taxed than average, the government's estimate was based on an assumption that no-one would alter their expenditure patterns after the tax was imposed, and another assumption was that all prices would alter by exactly the amount of the new tax imposed (after allowing for any reductions due to the elimination of the existing wholesale tax. This raised doubts about the adequacy of the compensation package proposed in the Government's preferred Option C, and he concluded by suggesting that much more research was needed before a definitive answer could be reached. In particular, the development of a 'low income' CPI was needed.

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\* An analysis by Ann Harding of the methodology underlying compensation for indirect tax changes and of the specific proposals in the Draft White Paper on Tax Reform has since been published in **Australian Tax Forum**, Winter 1985.

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## Summer Data Course 1986



### THE 2ND ACPRI SUMMER PROGRAM IN QUANTITATIVE SOCIAL SCIENCE METHODS

The second ACPRI Summer Program will be held in association with the School of Sociology at the University of New South Wales from 1-14 February, 1986. There will be 3 course streams: an introductory course in social science data analysis using SPSS-X spanning the entire period, and two shorter streams of one week's duration, back-to-back, covering specific and more advanced data analysis techniques.

These latter courses will include topics such as: Multiple regression analysis, Exploratory data analysis, Log-Linear modelling in GLIM and SPSS-X, Demographic analysis, Analysis of contingency tables, Survey research design, Structural equation models, Secondary analysis, Methods of Survey sampling, and Analysis of survey error.

Special emphasis is given to practical applications of the techniques with participants learning through a combination of lectures and computing laboratory sessions or tutorials. Full supporting and inter-active computing facilities will be available. Course fees range from:

\$175 to \$325 for ACPRI members,  
and from \$225 to \$650 for non  
ACPRI members.

For further information and application details contact Roger Jones at the Social Science Data Archives, R.S.S.S., Australian National University GPO Box 4

Canberra ACT 2601

Ph. (062) 49 4400

Applications close 15 November 1985.



## Subscribe Now for New SWRC Series

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

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

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

(A list of provisional titles and expected completion dates was published on page 22 of Newsletter No.17.)

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

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

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

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



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## EXTERNAL SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

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### NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VOLUNTEERISM

On June 5, Jill Hardwick was one of the panellists for the Open Forum Session of the **First National Conference on Volunteerism**, organised by the Volunteer Centre of NSW. The panel was chaired by Mr. James Dibble (ex ABC News), who is a member of Peer Support, a voluntary organisation. The other members included Mrs. Franca Arena, MLC, Mrs. Margaret Bell, Executive Director, Volunteer Centre of NSW, Virginia Foster from the Wayside Chapel.

The panel discussion concluded the fourth day of the Conference attended by 155 delegates from all over Australia. Questions and answers covered a range of topics: the need for research and evaluation of volunteer work, women as volunteers, involvement of minority groups in voluntary work, recruitment of volunteers into services such as Meals-on-Wheels, training of volunteers, the relationship of volunteers to professionals, and many more.

### SOCIAL INDICATORS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

David Tait and Jenny James gave a presentation to a one-day Conference of social workers and DSS officers in the Sydney Southern Metropolitan DSS office on 25 June. They provided a list of census indicators at postcode level on a range of issues such as unemployment and ethnicity, and showed a number of maps illustrating the patterns. The maps were drawn by Jenny James with the assistance of the expertise and equipment in the Geography Department at the University of New South Wales.

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### THE STRUCTURAL NATURE OF POVERTY

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The Hunter Region Information Network, Newcastle, NSW, held a public meeting on 25 June 1985, to discuss the issue of poverty in Australia, as a part of the Australia-wide 'Fair Share Campaign'. The invited speaker was Adam Jamrozik who addressed the meeting on **The Structural Nature of Poverty**. In his address Adam presented the issue of poverty in relation to the changes that have occurred over recent years in the structure of the labour market, which have led to high levels of unemployment, to new inequalities in the distribution of income, and to relative gains for some occupational and social groupings and to 'new' poverty for others.

For this reason, he stressed, in order to understand the nature of the problem, we need to focus our attention on the structure in which the problem occurs, that is, on the labour market, so as to identify the processes and changes that take place in that structure. Second, we need to obtain some understanding of the forces which affect the operation of the labour market, such as the policies of governments, the nature of the economic system, and the global capitalist system of which Australia is part. For example, the decline of employment in manufacturing and extracting industries could not be explained solely by examining the local scene, as those industries have now become part of the international industrial capacity and have to compete with similar industries, on both external and internal markets.

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## BY SWRC STAFF

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However, while there has been a decline of employment in some sectors of industry, there have been substantial increases in others. From 1966 to 1984, the total number of employed persons in Australia increased by 34 per cent, from 4823.6 thousand to 6462.3 thousand, an increase of 1638.4 thousand. Over one half of that increase occurred in the public sector, and the fastest-growing part of that sector has been the sector defined as 'community services', which includes health, education, welfare and related industries. Employment in these industries increased over this period by 652.4 thousand, or 134.2 per cent, accounting for 40 per cent of all increase in employment. The second fastest-growing sector has been 'finance, property, and business services' (324.9 thousand, or 110.4 per cent) accounting for 20 per cent of all increase in employment. Public service, communications, electricity, gas and water supply, and wholesale and retail trade accounted for another 31 per cent, and recreation and personal services accounted for 8 per cent. Thus, almost the total increase in employment since 1966 has occurred in 'unproductive' sectors, concerned with the provision of services and the management of material and human factors of production and consumption.

These changes in the structure of the labour market currently benefit the people in the professional, sub-professional, and technical occupations, that is, people with post-secondary qualifications, and especially people with tertiary degrees, both men and women. As a result, we now have increasingly families in which both partners are in employment, each earning above-average incomes; while at the lower end of the scale we have families in which only one partner earns average or below-average income, the

other partner either earning some income in part-time employment or no income at all. In many instances, neither partner has a job, and the family survives on unemployment benefits.

The changes in the structure of the labour market are also reflected in income distribution. According to the ABS Survey of 1981-82 income distribution, the bottom half of individual incomes accounted for 15.8 per cent of total incomes, and the top half of 84.3 per cent (ABS, 1984, Cat. No. 6501.0). In the distribution of family incomes, approximately two thirds of families in which both parents were employed had incomes **above** \$400 per week (over 20 per cent of these families had incomes over \$700 per week), while in those families in which only one parent was employed approximately two thirds of families had incomes **below** \$400 per week.

The inequalities in income distribution are exacerbated by the fact that the above-average-income individuals and families are also those who are the major consumers of goods and services provided or subsidized by the government, such as health education, child care, tourism and cultural recreation. The above-average income earners are those who have access to credit, investment, and a range of occupational 'fringe' benefits which those on low incomes rarely enjoy. We are thus becoming increasingly a divided society of 'haves' and 'have nots' with increasing characteristics of social divisions in such countries as Britain, the United States, and in some of the Third World Countries. Unless we acknowledge these facts and their significance, no amount of concern and moral indignation will alleviate the poverty growing in the midst of affluence.

Poverty cannot be understood and adequately explained, let alone overcome, unless we consider the structural factors

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## EXTERNAL SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

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through which poverty is created and sustained. To do this, we need to examine the position of the poor in relation to that of the well-off and the affluent, with more attention given to the latter rather than to the former. This view was forcibly argued many years ago by R.H. Tawney who saw poverty as an 'industrial problem'. This being so, Tawney maintained that an understanding of poverty required more than the study of the poor themselves; specifically, he urged, a researcher wishing to examine the nature of poverty 'will be wise to start much higher up the stream than the points he wishes to reach', because 'what thoughtful rich people call the problem of poverty, thoughtful poor people call with equal justice the problem of riches'.

However, Tawney's prescriptions seem to be given little attention today, and the prevailing approaches in the studies of, and debates about, poverty have focused almost exclusively on the poor. What is lacking, by comparison, is the attention given to the situation of the people who are not poor. As a result, much of the research and debate in social welfare is 'truncated' in that it concentrates on the 'captive audience' of the losers. These approaches have two negative effects: first, the explanations of poverty and its causes are flawed; and second, the focus on the captive audience leads predictably to a situation in which solutions to what is perceived to be a 'social problem' are sought in the studied population rather than in the societal arrangements which create the problem. Furthermore, studies of captive audiences become unwittingly but logically a part of social control mechanisms.

Social phenomena such as 'poverty', 'dependence', or 'disadvantage' are not conditions which exist 'outside'

of society but they are part of the society in which they occur; 'a consequence of a given social structure and of definite social processes'. These conditions have a meaning only in relation to other comparative conditions such as 'wealth', 'independence' or 'advantage'. For this reason, a study of 'poor people' adds little value to our understanding of poverty unless it is related to the study of 'rich people', or 'well-off people'.

Whether the inequalities can be attenuated so as to produce a fairer society will depend on the willingness of those who enjoy positions of advantage to share some of that advantage with others. It will also depend on the political will of parties and governments. Moral indignation and expressions of altruism, but without some sacrifice from the well-off and the affluent, is only going to increase the extent of inequalities and associated extremes of wealth and poverty. Unfortunately, there are few signs of any change on the horizon of political or economic activities. On the contrary, the trend seems to be going in the direction of increasing inequalities and great resistance to change.

### CHILD CARE AND THE MINI BUDGET

On 20 July the Western Sydney Community Forum held a seminar relating to the Commonwealth Mini Budget.

Tania Sweeney presented a paper discussing changes in Commonwealth Government child care policies and funding. The paper was entitled **Resources and Support Needed for**

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## BY SWRC STAFF

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### Families, with Specific Reference to Child Care.

5 questions were addressed:

1. Why should governments fund children's services?
2. What do parents have to say about why they need to use children's services?
3. If governments do decide to support child care, what

principles should a child care policy encompass?

4. How do the findings in relation to these questions compare with recent and current government policies?
5. What are the consequences of the child care cuts likely to be?

(This paper is available on request from the Publications Section of the SWRC).

The Australian Social Policy and Administration Association (ASPAA) held a National Conference in Melbourne on 16-17 August, 1985. The theme of the Conference was Community Welfare Services in the Australian States. Three papers at the Conference were presented by the staff of the Social Welfare Research Centre. All three papers, together with the papers presented at the ANZAAS Festival of Science which was also held in Melbourne (26-30 August) will be published as a report in the SWRC Reports and Proceedings series.

The synopses of the three papers presented at the APSAA Conference are given below.

### SOCIAL POLICY AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Sarah Drury and Adam Jamrozik's paper was entitled **Conceptual Issues of Relevance to Social Policy and Services for Young People**.

The authors maintain that for some years now youth has been a subject of much social concern. The concern has been consistent and sustained, but the reasons for the concern have varied over time in line with changing concerns and issues in the society as a whole. Furthermore, the perceptions of issues related to young people have also varied according to individual orientations, ideological and political beliefs, and economic interests.

Typically, the causes of concern and consequently the remedies sought have been focussed on the young people themselves rather than on the conditions in the society in which logically the causative factors could be identified. Thus, perception of youth issues often occurs in a 'social vacuum' and, predictably, the response acquires some characteristics of 'blaming the victim'.

At present, the debate concerning young people revolves mainly around two related issues: first, their position in society as an identifiable social group with common interests and common claims, and consequently calling for specific policy responses and social provisions to meet those interests and claims; and, second, the 'disadvantaged' position of young people in relation to other social groups, the disadvantage being perceived as multidimensional, occurring in the areas of employment, housing, income maintenance, and in the

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## EXTERNAL SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

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decision-making institutions and arrangements.

There are, however, other perceptions of young people's position in society. In some views, young people are perceived as a potential threat to social stability and to the prevailing social values; in others, young people are perceived as a vehicle of social change who have, or should have, a role to play in making the world a better place to live, a role which the older generations have not been able, or not willing to achieve. The three concepts propounded as a theme of the International Youth Year (IYY) - Participation, Development, Peace - illustrate the latter attitude towards young people; while not suggesting that the older generations should be excluded from the decision-making processes, the argument is that young people should be included in those processes.

Varied perceptions of, and attitudes to, young people as a social group lead to corresponding claims for appropriate responses. However, all these perceptions indicate the prevailing current position which is based on the assumption that youth is an identifiable social group with specific common interests and common claims on the society. This is evident in the multitude of services and social provisions concerned with young people, in the Federal as well as in the State sphere and in the non-government sector: e.g., the Office of Youth Affairs and special Ministerial portfolio, the Youth Affairs Council of Australia (YACA), and a range of services provided by State governments in the fields of welfare, education and employment, are some notable examples.

Correspondingly, there has been a growth of interest in youth in literature and research, especially in social research concerned with welfare,

employment/unemployment, education, and in other related issues. Explicit or implicit assumptions in much of the research are that young people, as a social group, have become 'disadvantaged' in many areas of social, political and economic life.

The focus of the paper is on some of the theoretical and conceptual issues in social research concerned with youth, especially on the issues which are raised in policy-oriented research and literature. In this analysis the paper aims to demonstrate the multi-dimensional nature of the issues related to young people, which tends to be overlooked in the prevailing concentration in research on 'topical' issues such as employment, income maintenance, and special programmes aimed to improve young people's 'disadvantaged' position in the society.

The paper presents an argument that 'youth policy' should take into consideration the demographic, economic, technological, structural as well as cultural changes in society and then be formulated accordingly. It also addresses two further issues related to youth policy and services. First, it raises a question about the validity of perceiving youth as a homogenous group. Such a perception tends to conceal deeper social divisions of class and stratification that are present in that group, as they are present in other social groups, such as the aged, ethnic minorities, women etc.

The second issue addressed in the paper concerns the 'problem orientation' in social policy and services. This leads to remedial measures and tends to detract attention from the main-stream institutions such as the education system or the labour market - the institutions which appear to cause the 'problems' in the first place by creating the human residue, e.g. 'the early school leavers' or 'the unemployed'.

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## BY SWRC STAFF

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The paper is based on research currently in progress at the Social Welfare Research Centre. The arguments presented are substantiated by references from research literature and by the data generated in the research at the Centre.

### SOCIAL WELFARE AND THE ROLE OF UNIONS

Loucas Nicolaou, Research Scholar at the SWRC also spoke at the Melbourne Conference. His paper **Social Welfare and the Role of Unions in Australia: The Case for Minority Groups**, asserted that the role of trade unions in social policy and welfare arrangements has been largely neglected in the literature on both these fields.

On the one hand, in recent years the debate on social policy and social welfare has gradually narrowed to the single dimension of income support. Although, at a theoretical level, there is in welfare literature an awareness of the need for a wider perspective (Titmuss 1956, Sinfield 1978, Graycar 1979, Head 1980, Rein 1981, Jamrozik 1983 and others), the prevalent approach to empirical studies of social welfare issues in Australia (apart from a few exceptions such as Jamrozik et al. 1981, Keens and Cass 1982, Ingles et al. 1982, and a number of contributors in the **Retreat from the Welfare State** - Graycar, ed. 1983) has been to focus on the 'poor' ignoring issues of class structure in relation to the Welfare State.

On the other hand, one finds that in the field of industrial relations, as a reflection of the prevalent definitions and perceptions of what is, or is not welfare expenditure and concern, there is a notable absence

of the role of unions in social policy and social welfare.

This paper stresses the need for a conceptual framework in studies in the fields of social welfare and industrial relations within which the nature of the Welfare State as well as the nature of Unions can be seen and understood in a wider perspective. In the field of welfare literature and research, such a framework would include not only those welfare services dealing with the recipients' survival but also those which facilitate and enhance the recipients' social functioning. (Jamrozik, 1983). Also in the field of industrial relations, within such a framework Unions would be regarded as non-government service-providing institutions concerned not only with what have hitherto been considered as 'industrial' issues such as wages and conditions, but also with what have hitherto been regarded as 'social' issues, that is, issues concerning the position of groups (not necessarily the 'poor') such as immigrants, Aborigines, women, and disabled people in the workforce in particular, and in society in general. Such a framework would point to the argument that a reluctance among the union organisations (and the individuals involved in them) to consider these 'social' issues as important on their agenda may be seen as a way out of their industrial obligations.

In this context, the conceptual link between the fields of social welfare and industrial relations would identify a framework leading to a comprehensive analysis of the processes through which inequalities in the labour market, and society, are created and maintained.

The material presented in the paper is based on the findings of a research project, carried out for a Ph.D. thesis in the area of immigrant workers and

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## EXTERNAL SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

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unions in Australia, focussing on the welfare implications involved. In this paper, the term 'welfare' is used to refer to issues concerning the well-being and social functioning of members of the population group under study. Within such a framework, immigrant workers as members of Unions are not necessarily studied as 'the poor' but as a population group who for social, political and economic reasons compete in a labour market on unequal terms.

Drawing on the empirical evidence collected from eight unions in New South Wales, between March 1982 and March 1984, the paper argues that 'minority' groups such as women, Aborigines, disabled people, and immigrants, remain in a disadvantageous position in the workforce, and in society in general, largely because issues concerning these groups have been labelled as 'social' rather than 'industrial' and have therefore been given low or no priority in daily union aims and activities. In addition to this perception of Unions as having an 'industrial' and not 'social' role in society, one may identify, on the part of those involved in union policy and wider social structures and processes, racist, sexist and other attitudes and prejudices which may account for the perpetuation of the disadvantages found by the 'minority' groups mentioned above.

Focussing on immigrant workers, the paper calls for a change of attitudes and perceptions among people at all levels: non-unionists, rank-and-file members, union officials as much as academics and others involved in policy-making. This analysis suggests a wider role for Unions, encompassing issues which have hitherto been called 'social' and consequently 'not relevant' to the Australian union movement. The discussion also refers to the role of government involvement in this area as well as the role of those involved in the education of Social Workers and Social Welfare Officers in Australia.

### CHILDREN , FAMILIES AND THE STATE

Tania Sweeney's paper was entitled **Child Care, Child Welfare and Family Support: Policies and Practices of the Commonwealth and States**. This paper presents findings of part of the current research programme into the changing child welfare system in Australia being conducted at the Social Welfare Research Centre. It is concerned with the nature of the relationship between children, their families and the State in contemporary Australian society. In particular, it is concerned with the differential treatment of children by the State according to their race and social class. Traditionally, the Commonwealth has been more involved in child care (pre-school, day care etc.) while the States have been more oriented toward child welfare (substitute care - residential care, foster care etc.). In recent times a number of changes have taken place in policy practice in both child care and child welfare such that the distinctions between them are no longer clear cut.

The conceptual framework adopted in the research does not follow the convention of dividing 'child care' from 'child welfare'. Rather, it perceives the issue as a continuum of care/welfare, ranging from parental/family care to substitute care provided by State authorities, either directly or through non-governmental child welfare organizations. The guiding hypothesis for the investigation is that innovations and changes that have occurred in the last 10 to 15 years have a possibility of coalescing into a system of child

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## BY SWRC STAFF

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welfare that would appropriately be defined as social parenthood.

The Commonwealth and States' initiatives in child care, child welfare and family support have not always proceeded in a coherent, co-ordinated fashion, resulting in an increasing complexity of funding and administrative arrangements and at times inhibiting the effectiveness of resources provided and used. Some of the changes have included the following:

1. child care policy has been such that priority of access has been given to various disadvantaged groups including low income families, single parent families, children at risk etc, to the extent that there is now concern about the 'overuse' of services by these groups;
2. the Commonwealth has funded a range of family support services, youth services etc. aimed at keeping children out of residential care;
3. some other family support services such as temporary care have been funded by the State;
4. the States have been developing alternatives to residential care by providing and/or funding a range of alternatives such as temporary care, temporary foster care, paying child care fees of children referred by State welfare authorities, etc.

Thus while the numbers of children under guardianship or in State residential care institutions appear to be declining, the numbers of children in the 'welfare system' may in fact be steady, if not increasing. Moreover, the alternatives to

residential care may be developing in such a way that the entry of children into residential care is simply being delayed—children appear to be experiencing a succession of alternatives to care before ending up in residential care, at an older age.

The paper explores briefly the historical, policy, legislative and administrative changes that have taken place both in child care and child welfare. In this context it explores what actually has been happening in practice by an analysis of reports of welfare departments and a study of the work of voluntary agencies. The paper traces briefly the recent developments in child care, family support services and child welfare, with an emphasis on policy and programme changes. It considers the apparent significance of these changes, taking into account the work of Carter (1983) and Jamrozik and Sweeney (forthcoming). It then contrasts aspects of the child care, family support and child welfare systems in terms of aims of provision, process of service provision, use and outcomes for families and children. Finally, drawing on past and current research of child care and child welfare providers and users, the paper considers the concepts child welfare embodied in the policies and systems of child care, family support and child welfare (substitute care). It raises the issue of whether all systems constitute a form of child welfare, but are different in terms of target groups, nature of intervention, degree of acceptance/stigma attached and outcomes for the child.



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## Progress Report on Child and

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This research programme advances into a further stage the research which began at the SWRC in 1980. The earlier stages of the research have focussed on the welfare of young children (SWRC Reports and Proceedings Nos. 19 and 44); the current stage has a wider scope and aims to examine child and family welfare as a system of policies and services involving the Commonwealth, the States and the non-government welfare sector.

The programme draws on data from a range of sources, and is carried out in a number of projects, each project covering an aspect of the child and family welfare system. The first project, now nearing completion, aims to ascertain the significance of changes that have occurred in the child and family welfare system over the past two decades, the year 1966 being used as a benchmark for analysis. This has involved analyzing statistical and descriptive data mainly from government departments in three States of Australia, and placing the data in the context of Commonwealth and States' initiatives as well as in a wider context of changes in employment/unemployment, income distribution and family formation. The aim is to consider the interpretations of findings for Commonwealth and State policies and their respective spheres of responsibility.

The second project, now in progress, relies on field work for the source of data. The purpose of the field work is to describe and analyze how the child and family welfare system works 'on the ground', at the level of service delivery, to determine whether, and to what extent, there has been a shift from protection to prevention as Jan Carter (1983) has suggested, and if so, what this has meant for the welfare of families and children.

Questions which the field work addresses include: how are the concepts of child welfare perceived by

workers; how are those concepts applied to different families (that is, how are concepts translated into practice); on what basis is assistance provided or intervention undertaken; what is the process of assistance or intervention and what are the outcomes for the child(ren) and the family?

On a broader level, we aim to consider whether, in policy and practice, the perception of child care and child welfare and family support as two separate welfare systems is an accurate one; or whether in reality, they both constitute a form of child welfare; whether the target groups, the nature of intervention and the outcomes are different in each system? Are both the child care and child welfare systems confronting, to a large extent, the same problem—families' need for resources and assistance with child rearing? Their problem, it seems, may be defined and acted upon differently for different families, according to their socio-economic status. Thus certain groups of poor and low-income families may for various reasons have access only to the 'traditional' child welfare system which has attached degrees of stigma and coercion, with outcomes for the child that have been the subject of some concern. On the other hand, middle class families confronting the same problem are more likely to have access to the child care system, which is regarded in a more positive light and is believed to have more beneficial outcomes for the child.

In Social Welfare and Child Welfare literature Social Workers are often perceived as key 'gatekeepers' in assisting families, defining their problems and organizing resources and/or intervention for them. For these reasons, we decided to study child welfare in practice. Therefore, we are undertaking a study of providers and users of child welfare, family support and some child care services in two regions in Sydney, and we aim to include both the government and

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## Family Welfare —

voluntary sector so as to identify some relevant aspects of interaction between the two sectors. Data will be collected by

1. interviews with agency staff about their perceptions of and practice in child welfare.
2. developing a profile of the agencies, collecting information about policies, funding, management, etc.
3. developing a profile of users.
4. analysis of files.
5. interviews with families to find out how they determine their own needs, what resources they have had access to in the rearing of their children, etc.

It is anticipated that the first report from the field work will be available in mid-1986.

Some of the results of the fairly extensive pilot study were incorporated into a paper presented at a conference 'Community Welfare in the Australian States', on 17 August 1985, organized by the Australian Social Policy and Administration Association. The paper presented by Tania Sweeney was entitled 'Child Care, Child Welfare and Family Support: Policies and Practices of the Commonwealth and States'. (See page 14 for synopsis).

Another project in the programme is concerned more specifically with social welfare issues related to young people. The first part of the project, which addresses these issues in a broad perspective of social welfare policy and social change is expected to be completed later this year.

## Visiting Fellow

Mark Lyons, a Visiting Fellow at the Centre from February to June 1985 whilst on leave from Kuring-gai College, spent three weeks in the United Kingdom in late April - early May. Whilst there he collected information on his major research interest, **the changing relationship of statutory and voluntary organisations**. He attended the Critical Social Policy Conference held at the University of London and the Annual Conference of the Social Services Research Group, held at the University of Manchester. At the latter he gave a short address on the politics of social research, by way of summing up the major concerns of the Conference. He also spent four days at the School for Advanced Urban Studies in Bristol. There he presented a paper on a recent Australian effort at bureaucratic rationalising, the creation by the Victorian Government of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands.

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Our Computer Programmer, Garry Hobbes has become a father. Our best wishes to him and his wife Dianne.

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## NEW SWRC REPORTS and PROCEEDINGS

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*This new issue in the Reports and Proceedings Series is now available.  
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No.53 Bruce Bradbury, Pauline Garde and Joan Vipond, Bearing the Burden of Unemployment - Unequally, August 1985. \$5.

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Although the level of unemployment, its causes and cures receive more attention, the distribution of unemployment in Australian society is not an unimportant issue. The more unequally that a given amount of unemployment is spread among households, the more that it will cause poverty for those who are affected. As a result, there will be more income inequality. The more concentrated unemployment is among a few people or households, the less understanding that unemployed people may expect from the rest of society.

It is possible that unemployment concentration can reduce the efficacy of economic policies to reduce unemployment. For instance it may worsen any unemployment/inflation trade-off that exists because the majority of people will not be influenced in their economic behaviour by a perceived threat of unemployment. Similarly, real wage levels may be set with little regard to unemployment levels if the risk of unemployment is concentrated among marginal workers such as young people and those who live amongst low income workers.

This report benefits from the new policy of the Australian Bureau of Statistics of releasing data from individual records. These permit new measurements of unemployment distribution in Australia. The analysis was based on the Household Sample File of the 1981 Census which contains data on one per cent of Australian households. Records

for individuals within households were linked so that their domestic environments could be examined. The aim was to show in statistical terms how unemployment was distributed among households and, for young people, how it was associated with their family backgrounds.

The results, rather than being totally new, tend to confirm impressionist views and conclusions based on small sample surveys. Nevertheless, the scale of the concentration of unemployment in Australia was surprising. One in every four unemployed people in 1981 lived in a household that contained at least one other unemployed person.

The majority of unemployed people lived in one-family households but unemployed people were much more likely than employed people to live in households which did not consist solely of a nuclear family. They lived in households that contained families plus non-family members (boarders, perhaps) and they lived in groups of unrelated individuals. The data on living situations suggest a danger that assumptions that unemployed people can rely for financial support upon the households in which they live will be invalid.

Incomes data showed the low income levels of individual unemployed persons. They also indicated that unemployed people lived in households with low per capita incomes and with low incomes among those who were employed. This last fact again demonstrates the isolation of

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## No. 53

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unemployed people from the mainstream of economic activity.

Thirty per cent of unemployed people were aged less than twenty years. It was possible to link data on teenagers who lived at home with statistics on their parents. The report describes teenage unemployment rates according to teenagers' characteristics and parents' characteristics.

Regression analysis was used to show the statistical significance of the associations between the two sets of characteristics. The key pattern found was the positive association between parental disadvantages, particularly in terms of income but also in occupational status, and the high risks of unemployment of their children.

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## — First SWRC Ph.D. Completed —

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The first postgraduate student to take up a scholarship with the SWRC, **David Wiles**, has now submitted his Ph.D. thesis. The study is entitled **Age Pensioners: Life Chances and Social Policy in Australia**. Based on his 1982 social survey of fifty pensioners living in Sydney, the thesis explores the adequacy of income provision and its wider implications for the quality of life in retirement, along with the attitudinal profiles of respondents, so as to yield an experiential account of life on the pension.

Participants were questioned about a range of historical and contemporary influences upon their present living standards – including housing situations, health and social service utilisation, and social interaction – so as to illuminate the central research issues of adequacy and deprivation.

The study found that one half of the sample recorded a worse standard of living on the pension. They adjusted to poverty with stoicism, and tended to discount any deprivations suffered.

This survey indicated that forward financial planning towards retirement is unlikely amongst those of modest socio-economic status. Economic 'self reliance' through past savings or present part-time work cannot be expected, nor does the 'family' provide an income security 'safety net', so the pension must be sufficient rather than supplementary in its amount.

Though the Age Pension has been a social institution for seven decades, the sense of pension stigma is not yet extinct. Nevertheless, retirement itself was experienced as a positive relief. Pensioners favoured universalist provision, though only by a narrow margin, and selectivist pension sentiments went with worse life outcomes across a range of variables. While pensioners held firmly that the care of the aged was a societal responsibility, they were not militant politically.

The study suggests a range of social policy targets, proposes a common retirement age of 65 years for both sexes, and floats a proposal for a 'survival bonus', so as to reach those pensioners in greatest need.

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## NEW SWRC RESEARCH PROJECTS

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### DECLINING WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION FOR OLDER WORKERS : IMPLICATIONS FOR WELFARE

One of the most dramatic changes to the workforce in the past decade has been the decline in the participation rate of older people, especially males. In 1972 the labour force participation rate of men aged 55 to 59 years was 90.6 per cent and for men aged 60-64 years it was 76.5 per cent. The subsequent decade saw a steady decline in these figures so that by 1983 the participation rates stood at: men aged 55-59 — 78.2 per cent; men aged 60-64 — 42.9 per cent. Women in the same age groups also lowered their participation rates, albeit less dramatically, over this period. The proposed study is designed to answer the following questions:

1. Who are the people affected in terms of socio-economic status, former occupations, ethnic background, geographic location, etc?
2. Why did the participation rate fall so dramatically in this period? What were the respective contributions of unemployment, social security payments, superannuation arrangements, early retirement schemes etc?
3. Is this decline likely to continue at the same rate in the future? Are there economic, industrial relations or social policy interventions that might accelerate or decelerate the trend?
4. What has been the impact of this trend to date upon social security pensions, superannuation payments and welfare services?
5. What are the likely implications in terms of future numbers

dependent upon social security pensions, superannuation payments, and welfare services?

The project will include a literature review of Australian and overseas research into the issue. It will be followed by an extensive analysis of statistics available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The statistical analysis will be based on a comparison of longitudinal data of:

- workforce participation rates for the 55-64 age groups;
- patterns of unemployment among people in these age groups;
- recipients of age pensions, invalid pensions, sickness benefits, spouse carer benefits, widows pensions, unemployment benefits,
- any other ABS data that might be relevant to the issue.

The project will also analyse other government and industry statistics on retirements and superannuation payments. It will study recent patterns within industrial relations in relation to early retirements, redundancy and retrenchments. It will also examine government policy at both State and Federal levels on these issues.

The project is conducted by Mr. Keith Windschuttle, Senior Lecturer in Social Policy, School of Social Work, University of New South Wales, and is expected to be completed by April-May, 1986.

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## NEW BOOKS

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Robert Dingwall, John Eekelaar and  
Topsy Murray

**THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN: STATE  
INTERVENTION AND FAMILY LIFE**

Social Science Research Council of  
Great Britain, Oxford, 1983

Reviewed by Tania Sweeney, SWRC

This book reports research concerned with the processes involved in defining, identifying and intervening in, cases of child abuse in Britain. The authors observe that while the incidence of child abuse appears to be increasing, there is general agreement that there is an underreporting of such cases. This leads them to question the nature of social problems, how they come to be defined as such and how they are acted upon, as 'the existence and nature of social problems cannot be separated from the values of those who would identify them' (p.2). Referring to Waller (1936, p.924) they observe (p.2):

'... the perception of events as problematic arises from the interaction of two conflicting sets of **mores** of private property and individualism. The first of these, the organizational or basic **mores**, 'are those upon which the social order is founded, the **mores** of monogamous family, Christianity and nationalism' ... alongside these exist humanitarian **mores** held by those who feel an urge to make the world better or to remedy the misfortunes of others'.

The research and discussion on child abuse, a particularly critical aspect of child welfare, is important as it '... encapsulated the interaction between a number of different ideas

about the proper nature of our society and about relations between the families and the state' (p.5).

In summary, the researchers are not interested in defining child abuse themselves, but how others define it, what that process of definition and action is like and how that "constructs a particular population of identified cases" (p.20).

The methodology used was an ethnographic style of research, drawing on a variety of theoretical perspectives in sociology and giving priority to observation of 'naturally - occurring events' (p.247) as their data source. Agency workers, including solicitors, doctors and social workers were interviewed, case files were studied, worker-client interactions were observed and case conferences and magistrates courts were attended in three different districts in England over a five year period.

It is not possible in this summary review to present all the significant findings of this research. However, a few of the most interesting observations are worth noting.

1. The researchers distinguish two types of evidence used in identifying child abuse cases - clinical evidence and social evidence. The researchers found that where workers, usually doctors, concentrate on clinical evidence to the exclusion of social evidence as an assessment of parental character, there tends to be a minimizing of identification rates. The use of social evidence was found to be an important element in identification. Social evidence was sometimes identified by doctors, but more often was provided by social workers and health visitors. This evidence related to details about a family's material environment and their inter-personal environment as evidenced by family size and spacing, adult to adult relationships and adult-child

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## NEW BOOKS

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relationships. Like 'social problems', what is a 'normal family environment, behaviour and attitudes' depends on value judgements. An emphasis, then, on social evidence is likely to lead to overreporting of abuse, since workers reliance on what the authors call "lay social theories" are not only descriptive, but prescriptive.

### 2. Which families are affected by State intervention?

The researchers imply that there is in fact a filtering of families or a process through which they go before compulsory intervention and removal of children is undertaken.

Dingwall et al suggest that nowadays workers are somewhat reluctant to use compulsory intervention or removal of children as a first course of action. This can be explained by a "rule of optimism" relating to, among other things:

1. Cultural relativism - whereby workers try not to impose their own values but try to help clients realize their own, in an attempt to acknowledge that different ways of living are now acceptable.

2. Natural love - a belief that all parents love their children.

Because of these beliefs, it is only when the moral character of parents becomes open to question, that workers tend to take a more coercive stance. This more coercive, "investigative" assessment and treatment was found to occur in two situations:

1. When parents were seen to be incorrigible, that is, when they became reluctant to have continued surveillance.

2. When families became known to a number of agencies and where

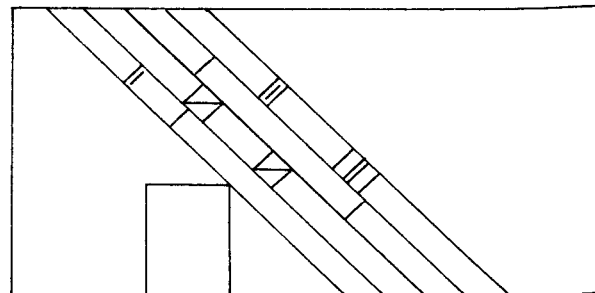
perhaps the resources of those agencies could no longer meet the family's needs or overcome their problems - (called failure of agency containment). This was found to be an important trigger for compulsory intervention.

The authors concluded (p.101):

'The rule of optimism ... would seem to filter moral character in such a way as to hold back some upper, middle - and 'respectable' working-class parents, members of ethnic minorities and mentally incompetent parents while leaving women and the 'rough' indigenous working classes the groups proportionately most vulnerable to compulsory measures'.

In addition to the culture of decision-making, the authors explore its structure by assessing the impact of the interaction of the professions and bureaucracy on the treatment of clients.

While this is an excellent book concerned with the process of service delivery in child welfare, its conclusions about achieving a balance between child and adult rights and the nature of appropriate State interventions are somewhat disappointing. The suggestions here relate to changes in legal proceedings and a better co-ordination of agency resources. The 'solutions' do not seem to address the problems, first, that the processes of identification of abuse are problematic, and second, that the decision-making processes most affect families of low socio-economic status, who are seen to have inappropriate child rearing attitudes and practices.



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## NEW BOOKS

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Sally Baldwin

**THE COSTS OF CARING: FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN**

Routledge and Kegan Paul,  
London, 1985

Reviewed by Jill Hardwick, SWRC

Although Sally Baldwin's study of the financial consequences to families of disabled children was undertaken in Britain, her findings are very relevant to Australia for a number of reasons. Australia, like Britain, is a Western industrialised country with a well established welfare state, so the issues explored here and the findings, would probably be very similar if the study was replicated here. Moreover, the policy discussion which is centred on caring for disabled children, extends to the caring of all kinds of dependent people.

The clarity of style, the logical development of the argument, the tightness of the methodology and the comprehensive nature of this book made it difficult to fault. Any criticism that could be made are usually made by Baldwin herself in the careful construction and defence of her methodology.

The aim of the book is to explore both the income and expenditure patterns of families with disabled children. Most previous studies focussed on either incomes or expenditures, so this combination gives the book a unique balance. Moreover it achieves its aim by adopting a multi-dimensional methodology that allows hard statistical material on income and expenditure of almost 500 families with disabled children and 700 control families to be

combined with subjective, personal accounts of parents' responses to caring for a disabled child.

In the examination of income patterns, Baldwin does not just look at total family income but rather examines the work and earnings of women and men separately. There was a big difference in women's participation rates, the hours they worked and their earnings between the sample and control groups. Even controlling for the age of the youngest child, fewer women with a disabled child were in paid employment, they worked fewer hours and earned less than similar women in the control. The picture in relation to men's earnings was less consistent. However, the incomes of the sample of families with a severely disabled child were found to be lower, on average, than those of the control families even when benefits intended to cover some of the costs of disablement were included in their incomes. Another interesting finding was the inability of the families with disabled children to become more prosperous as their children grew up, a phenomenon which was apparent among the control families.

On the expenditure side, it was reported the child's condition created extra costs in three areas: everyday living costs (food, fuel, clothing and shoes, transport, durable household goods such as furniture and carpets, services, housing costs); larger items bought less frequently (special equipment, housing, consumer durables such as washing machines, colour television, stereos); and the episode costs associated with hospital treatment. These 'extra costs' were not a fixed amount but rather they varied with the level of family income.

In this section of the book the data on extra costs are illustrated by case study material on individuals showing

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## NEW BOOKS

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how for these particular cases, costs are higher. This is a good example of how the interweaving of statistics and subjective descriptive material makes the situation much more realistic.

Finally Baldwin addresses the policy implications of her findings although related material is scattered throughout the book. For example, the discussion at the beginning of the book on disabled children's rights to compensation provides the philosophical basis upon which policies for caring for dependent people of all kinds can be established and developed. On another level, in the reporting of findings on women's income there is very important policy information on reasons why paid employment was not possible, related to the child's condition, hours of work, need for time off when a child is sick. Furthermore, for the women who were working, they were very often taking jobs below the level of their qualifications or experience in casual or part-time positions.

In the concluding chapter, Baldwin examines the more general implications of her work. She canvasses the options for change discussing the advantages and disadvantages of an increase in cash benefits or improvement in service provision. She is pragmatic about where she feels immediate changes could be made - in the area of increased cash support - and discusses three specific options: a benefit to help with extra expenses, a benefit to compensate for parental earnings loss and a benefit to compensate the disabled child and other family members for the restrictions and stresses imposed upon them. She favours the argument of a benefit to compensate women for their loss of earnings both because it would best help redress the inequalities between families with disabled children and those without, but more importantly, because it would value and recognise the care provided by women to a growing dependent population of all kinds.

### ANTI-UNION EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES: FINAL REPORT

Trans National Co-operative Workers' Research, Sydney, June 1985

Reviewed by Don Stewart, SWRC

In 1983 the Congress of the Australian Council of Trade Unions resolved that a study be undertaken to document the current changes occurring in employment practices throughout Australia and how these changes relate to similar practices occurring overseas.

Focussing on how these changes affect the power and influence of the union movement, as reflected in its ability to organise members and to influence the attitude of workers in general to unions, the study was undertaken within the following terms of reference:

1. To investigate the extent and form of the various anti-union employment practices which seek to defeat or undermine the operation of awards.
2. To investigate the effects of these practices on wage standards, employment conditions, union membership and members' perceptions of the union movement.
3. To examine the implications of these processes for current industrial law and regulation.
4. To make recommendations as to appropriate industrial and legislative responses by the union movement.

Acting on this brief, the authors provide a clear and succinct analysis of how structural and economic

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## NEW BOOKS

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mechanisms operating in Australia are increasingly tying the small firm to the strategies of the larger corporation, and of the implications this trend has for organised labour. They focus on one of the most important transformations currently occurring with contemporary capitalist relations – the process whereby the large corporation controls the smaller, not by ownership but by various employment relationships including franchising, pyramid contracting, body-hire and payment by result (piece work) practices, and how these practices artificially elevate the worker to the status of independent or self-employed operator. The authors then document the increasing influence such practices have on structuring an employment market in which workers are increasingly prepared to accept pay and conditions below those awarded by arbitration – for example some clothing trade outworkers receiving as little as 50 cents per hour, with \$1.50 per hour being common. Examples are provided through case studies of the clothing and housing industries, franchising in the instant printing and contract cleaning industries, and how these practices are conducive to tax evasion, inadequate coverage for workers' compensation and the other benefits associated with the traditional organisation of labour.

The report contends that all of the above are bad for the union movement, ultimately bad for the traditionally competitive smaller employers forced out of business by these practices, have negative effects on standards of living, are anti-social and degrading to labour. They are ultimately a regression to some of the worst employment practices of the 19th century.

In presenting the above argument the study notes that such anti-union pressures are not solely instigated

by employer groups or business but also notes that government, by legislative and fiscal means, can either positively condone or give indirect support to such practices.

This publication, sponsored by twenty-one unions provides an insight into a growing trend in Australian employment practices. It warns that, allowed to flourish, these practices could have profound negative effects on established social structures and thereby affect the welfare of many more Australians.

Cost: Summary and Recommendations  
\$4.50 Concess. \$6.00 Others  
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### AGEING IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: THE SITUATION OF MIGRANTS FROM NON-ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Australian Institute of Multicultural  
Affairs, Melbourne, July 1985

This publication is a report to the Federal Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. It examines the present and projected numbers of ethnic aged in Australia; their living arrangements, economic and social circumstances, and the need for ethno-specific accommodation. It includes a summary of key findings, conclusions and recommendations to the Australian Government.

#### Some of the Key Findings....

\* Since the early 1970s the

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## NEW BOOKS

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proportion of the overseas-born aged has risen more sharply than that of the Australian-born aged.

- \* Aged migrants will more than double in number over the next two decades. By comparison, the Australian-born will remain a relatively young population.
- \* English language difficulty among the ethnic aged is widespread.
- \* The great majority of aged Australians live at home. The proportion of ethnic aged living at home is greater than it is for the aged generally.
- \* The ethnic aged are more geographically concentrated in capital cities than are the Australian-born aged.
- \* The ethnic aged have fewer family members to care for them and are more likely to be isolated socially than the Australian-born aged.
- \* There is a strong preference among the ethnic aged for residential care facilities which cater to members of their own ethnic group.
- \* In the past 25 years there has been a development of 'ethno-specific' care facilities for the urban ethnic aged.
- \* Surveys indicate that the proportion of the ethnic aged living in nursing homes is significantly lower than that for the Australian-born aged.

For further information contact:

The Publications Officer  
Australian Institute of  
Multicultural Affairs  
GPO Box 2370V  
Melbourne Vic 3001  
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The Price is \$4.00

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### YOUTH EXPO REPORT AVAILABLE

In May 1984, the **Youth Policy Expo**, the inaugural meeting of the National Forum of Non-Government Youth Policy organisations, was held in Melbourne.

The Report contains keynote addresses from the sectors of the Forum: employment, education, income security, health, housing and media; and addresses by representatives from six population groups: Aboriginal, women, gay, ethnic, disabled and rural/isolated young people. The Report also contains the Working Document which emerged from the Conference for further discussion and development.

It is available at a cost of \$3.50 plus \$2.50 for postage and handling, from:

Youth Affairs Council of  
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**International Youth Year '85**

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# SUBJECT GUIDE TO SWRC PUBLICATIONS

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

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

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

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## FAMILY STUDIES

### R&Ps

- No. 7 Bettina Cass, Unemployment and the Family : The Social Impact of the Restructuring of the Australian Labour Market, April 1981, 55 pp.
- No. 19 Tania Sweeney and Adam Jamrozik, Services for Young Children : Welfare Service or Social Parenthood?, March 1982, 144 pp.
- No. 21 Bettina Cass, Family Policies in Australia : Contest over the Social Wage, May 1982, 41 pp.
- No. 23 David Kinnear and Adam Graycar, Family Care of Elderly People : Australian Perspectives, May 1982, 63 pp.
- No. 24 Carol Keens and Bettina Cass, Fiscal Welfare : Some Aspects of Australian Tax Policy. Class and Gender Considerations, September 1982, 55 pp.
- No. 37 Stuart Rees and Anneke Emerson, Disabled Children, Disabling Practices, January 1984, 129 pp.
- No. 38 Chris Rossiter, David Kinnear and Adam Graycar, Family Care of Elderly People : 1983 Survey Results, January 1984, 100 pp.
- No. 40 Bettina Cass and Mary Ann O'Loughlin, Social Policies for Single Parent Families in Australia : An Analysis and a Comparison with Sweden, March 1984, 48 pp.
- No. 43 Ian Manning, Measuring the Costs of Living of Australian Families, April 1984, 70 pp.
- No. 44 Tania Sweeney and Adam Jamrozik, Perspectives in Child Care : Experience of Parents and Service Providers, April 1984, 201 pp.

### Reprints

- No. 3 Bettina Cass, "Housing and the Family" from : Home Ownership in Australia : A Perspective for Future Policies, Housing Industry Association Seminar Proceedings, 1980, 14 pp.
  - No. 5 Bettina Cass, Carol Keens and Jerry Moller, "Family Policy Halloween; Family Allowances : Trick or Treat?" from : Australian Quarterly, Vol.53, No.1, Autumn 1981, 17 pp.
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## SUBJECT GUIDE

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- No. 8 Bettina Cass, "Wages, Women and Children" from : R.F. Henderson (ed.) The Welfare Stakes, IAESR 1981, 38 pp.
- No. 15 Diana Wyndham, "Why Study Working Mothers and Ignore Working Fathers? : The Impact of Parental Employment on Children" from : The Australian Quarterly, Vol.55, No.1, Autumn 1983, 8 pp.
- No. 18 Adam Graycar, "Informal, Voluntary and Statutory Services : The Complex Relationship" from : The British Journal of Social Work, Vol.13, No.4, August 1983, 15 pp.
- No. 19 Jo Harrison, "Women and Ageing : Experience and Implications" from : Ageing and Society, Vol.3, Part 2, July 1983, 27 pp.
- No. 20 Bettina Cass, "Poverty and Children : the effects of the recession" from : Social Alternatives, Australian Social Welfare : Impact and New Doctor, Joint Issue September/October 1983, 5 pp.
- No. 22 David Kinnear and Adam Graycar, "Ageing and Family Dependency" from Australian Journal of Social Issues, Vol.19, No.1, February 1984, 14 pp.

## CHILD WELFARE / CHILD CARE

### R&Ps

- No. 19 Tania Sweeney and Adam Jamrozik, Services for Young Children : Welfare Service or Social Parenthood?, March 1982, 144 pp.
- No. 22 Tania Sweeney, An Analysis of Federal Funding of Children's Services - A Sourcebook, May 1982, 62 pp.
- No. 29 Jan Carter, Protection to Prevention : Child Welfare Policies, January 1983, 76 pp.
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