ACADEMY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIA

Dialogue

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Contents

About the Academy

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia was established in 1971. Previously, some of the functions were carried out through the Social Science Research Council of Australia, established in 1942. Elected to the Academy for distinguished contributions to the social sciences, the 341 Fellows of the Academy offer expertise in the fields of *accounting, anthropology, demography, economics, economic history, education, geography, history, law, linguistics, philosophy, political science, psychology, social medicine, sociology and statistics.*

The Academy's objectives are:

- to promote excellence in and encourage the advancement of the social sciences in Australia;
- to act as a coordinating group for the promotion of research and teaching in the social sciences;
- to foster excellence in research and to subsidise the publication of studies in the social sciences;
- to encourage and assist in the formation of other national associations or institutions for the promotion of the social sciences or any branch of them;
- to promote international scholarly cooperation and to act as an Australian national member of international organisations concerned with the social sciences;
- to act as consultant and adviser in regard to the social sciences; and,
- to comment where appropriate on national needs and priorities in the area of the social sciences.

These objectives are fulfilled through a program of activities, research projects, independent advice to government and the community, publication and cooperation with fellow institutions both within Australia and internationally.

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President's column

Fay Gale

Great Social Scientists

In this issue of *Dialogue* we commence a program of recognising key social scientists. We are regularly reminded in various ways, such as through the media and school curricula, of the great scientists of the past and those in the present. These are primarily men and always from the physical and natural sciences. But there are now and have been for generations great social scientists whose contributions to the human race are just as significant as those of many eminent physical scientists. It is all part of society's failure to recognise the worth of social scientists whilst placing physical scientists on a pedestal. It is also a result of our own difficulty in identifying ourselves as social scientists as well as belonging to particular disciplines. We ask the perennial question, why is it easy to be called a scientist in the generic sense but not a social scientist?

For these reasons and our concern that our eminent social scientists are not given the recognition that leading scientists seem to achieve, we have decided to highlight individual 'greats' and clearly these are women as well as men. There are many amongst our fellowship whose contribution is outstanding and not fully recognised. We begin here in this *Dialogue* to recognise some of our great social scientists and to appreciate that their contribution to knowledge and the greater good equals that of leading physical and natural scientists.

Review of our Academy

Since my last report a great deal of brainstorming has gone into the preparation of our submission to the Review of the Learned Academies. I am very appreciative of the contribution of the Academy staff, small and overworked as it is, to this vital submission. I should also wish to acknowledge the input of members of our key committees. The draft submission was discussed at each committee meeting and the Executive during April before the final submission was printed.

Because this review is the most significant activity the Academy has been engaged in since my last report in *Dialogue*, I should like to quote key passages of the submission to enable all Fellows to gain some idea of the concepts being placed before the Minister.

> The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia is extremely successful in developing the social sciences across the whole range of disciplines. Through its initiating work in transdisciplinary areas of emerging knowledge it links scholars nationally and internationally. There is no area of intellectual pursuit that is not relevant to the social sciences or does not have social repercussions. All scientific endeavour impacts upon humans and their environment. It is from that

premise of the importance of social science and its increasing relevance to the modern world that we present this submission.

There has been rapid and unprecedented change in Australian – and global – society. While technological and/or scientific factors may have provided the means for change, those technological and scientific factors are in human hands. Change is caused by human activities, affects human beings and the problems generated by change need to be resolved by human beings. That essentially involves the social sciences.

It is the role of the social sciences to study complex human responses and to provide an understanding on which effective and equitable public policies can be developed. Australia's own material and non-material development and welfare depend crucially on the maintenance of excellence in the social sciences in Australia. The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia sees its role as contributing to nurturing that excellence.

Since its establishment, over 25 years ago, the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia has elected to its ranks those of a very high level of scholarly distinction, recognised internationally, and who are acknowledged for their contributions in one or more disciplines of the social sciences. As an entity the Academy is devoted to the advancement of knowledge and research in the various social sciences.

Fellows of the Academy make a major contribution to knowledge and understanding and ensure the dissemination of that knowledge to Australian society. Fellows of the Academy respond positively to requests for consultative involvement in public policy development. They do this in a variety of ways, through submissions, through membership of appropriate committees, and through interchange with students, government officials, politicians, the community, and the media.

This Review of our activities in the period 1995-2000 is concerned by some perceptions that Australia is not a country which particularly values scholarship and intellectual life. It is the worse for this. Anything which promotes intellectual life is to be welcomed, especially across the disciplines.

At the AGM at the end of 1999 a Research Projects Committee was formally established with Professor Sue Richardson as Chair. In a very brief time this committee has been very active and has developed a number of research proposals. The establishment of a committee was necessary because our research areas were growing rapidly with several interdisciplinary social science projects on the table. I quote from the review submission on two of our latest projects.

The Economic and Social Costs of Unemployment

The Academy considered it timely to examine the effects of unemployment on the community at the family level, including the implications for population health. As the Minister for Employment Services stated in a speech to CEDA on 30 June 1999: 'the fact that our society can wipe out killer diseases, solve unimaginably difficult technical problems, create wealth out of cyberspace – and not find something useful for everyone to do – creates a nagging sense of impatience and shame. . .'

There is increasing evidence in Australia of the links between socio-economic status and health parameters. At the same time there is a need to draw on the lessons of international experience to study how policies have been successfully implemented elsewhere, beyond the parameters of narrow economic costing, and to avoid the limitations of earlier studies.

It is on this basis that the Academy obtained Special Projects Funding in 2000 to undertake a research project, which will examine *inter alia*; the changing nature of unemployment in Australia; its longer-term duration and geographical location; and noting the implications of the synthesis for policies to alleviate the costs of unemployment.

Postgraduate Training in the Social Sciences

A sharpening of the focus on social sciences education, recognises that society's needs are continually changing. Continued national investment and attention is necessary to expand high quality education and research activities, not only in technologies, but also in social and cultural areas, increasingly relevant to the global knowledge economy.

Postgraduate education develops our best minds in research for its own sake and for its relevance for technological development. Just as investment in physical capital enhances productivity, investment in intellectual capital generates a similar return to the economy and society in general.

As outlined in the recent Discussion Paper on Higher Education Research and Research Training entitled *New Knowledge, New Opportunities,* research training represents one of the most significant areas of national investment in research. Not only is the 'public investment in research training significant in dollar terms, but also in its impact on the research community and society more generally.'

We have emphasised the importance of our workshop program in the review submission because of its important contribution to social science.

Nowhere is the Academy's role as a catalyst more evident than in the Workshop Program. The Program provides the biggest outreach function within the Academy's overall activity. In the Review period the Academy supported 24 workshops, involving leading experts in a wide range of disciplines and participating institutions and organisations across Australia. The program consists of a series of workshops which examines intellectual and practical concerns, with a forward-looking emphasis on problems confronting Australian society.

The aim is to bring together those working at the leading edge of research for an intense (generally two-day) period of intellectual exchange designed to address current theoretical and/or methodological concerns and generate new ideas often directed at informing policy. The overall purpose of the workshops is to advance knowledge and to promote its application through the dissemination of workshop outcomes.

A defining feature of the workshops is their multidisciplinary focus. Workshop organisers are actively encouraged to invite participants from across the broad spectrum of social science, including though not restricted to, Fellows of the Academy.

The role of the Academy's Workshop Committee is crucial to the nature and success of the Workshop program. In addition to reviewing the proposals submitted, the Committee provides extensive feedback to potential workshop convenors about the range of perspectives to be included. It also initiates possible workshop topics, actively seeks convenors and, once identified facilitates the planning and development of a firm proposal.

The Academy's Workshop Program is unique within the activities of the Learned Academies. It has become a major facilitator of collective work in the social sciences, and during the period of review has studied issues within 24 convened workshops.

The Academy plans to further develop the Program in the next five years. This will include making the Program more accessible to both younger scholars and those outside the Fellowship, and to further increase the interdisciplinary capacity of the Academy by involving the new cross-disciplinary areas.

Management of the Workshop Program is based on responding appropriately and within a short timeframe to current issues and concerns that involve the many disciplines of the social sciences. The Workshop Program complements the longer-term research projects as a vital part of the Academy's research activities.

We also highlighted the achievements of the Academy in recent years, as well as some of the difficulties faced, particularly that of a lack of appropriate channels for direct advice to government.

There have been considerable achievements by the Academy since the last Review. Not the least has been the development of substantial and highly respected international activities; the compilation of a *Directory of Fellows*; the release of the final volume in the series *Australia in Asia,* along with many other significant publications; the move to the new, independent Canberra headquarters of the Academy at 28 Balmain Crescent, Acton; and the collaborative linkages established with the other Learned Academies, within the National Academies Forum. In that period the membership of the Academy has increased from 285 in 1995 to 348 in 1999 noting that its membership in 1970 was 94.

It is significant to note that in the last 10 years the Academy has progressively improved the gender balance in the election of Fellows. In 1990 the percentage of females elected to the Academy was 18%. It has steadily increased since that time. Over the past five years it has been 19% (1995), 20% (1996), 29% (1997), 33% (1998), and 55% (1999). There is currently an excellent gender balance in the membership of the Academy's Executive Committee and also in its Standing Committee.

Despite its current benefits the international program has major limitations due to staff restrictions and financial resources. The program has the ability to enhance the reputation of Australians abroad, to facilitate our access to new ideas and research findings and encourage senior social scientists in other countries to recognise Australian social science research and perspectives. The program also recognises the importance of supporting future leaders, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, who at the early stage of their career could benefit from links established within academic structures such as the Academy.

There have, however, been disappointments particularly in failures of efforts to provide a focal point for social sciences within Government:

During the past five years the Academy has pressed the case for the establishment of a 'coordinating and promotional body for social science research' within the Commonwealth's administration in submissions to inquiries, media releases, articles in its newsletter and in its report on the review of research in the social sciences for the ARC (*Challenges for the Social Sciences and Australia,* 1998). All of these efforts have been unsuccessful.

The social sciences suffered a further reverse with the creation in December 1997 of the Prime Minister's Science,

Engineering and Innovation Council (PMSEIC), with a larger membership than the Prime Minister's Science and Engineering Council which it replaced but still without *ex officio* representation of the social sciences. Worse, the scientists' lobby group - the Federation of Scientific and Technological Societies (FASTS) – won representation by the appointment of its President as an *ex officio* member.

In the discussion paper *New Knowledge, New Opportunities,* released by the Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs in June 1999, it was stated that 'the Government, through such bodies as PMSEIC, has a broad role in identifying and advising on research priorities'. In its comments on the discussion paper, the Academy rejected this view of the Council's role, noting that the Council as presently constituted is not equipped to draw upon the knowledge and expertise of researchers in the social sciences.

At present, there is no Commonwealth Minister to whom ASSA is able to make representations on behalf of the social sciences. The Department of Industry, Science and Resources has specific responsibilities for the spheres of interest of AAS and AATSE, and the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts has specific responsibilities in relation to the fields of scholarship represented in the AAH. In discussion with some Fellows it was thought that, since the social sciences impinge on all areas of Government, it would make sense if we had more direct relations with Treasury given the strength of our economics Fellows and the fiscal implications for Australian society of our work.

The Secretariat

Our Executive Director has given notice that he wishes to retire at the end of the year. A small appointments committee was determined at the last meeting of the Executive Committee to examine the current staffing arrangements with a view to appointing a new Director. That committee consists of myself as Chair and the Chair of the Finance Committee (Professor Gavin Jones), the Chair of the Research Projects Committee (Professor Sue Richardson) and the Chair of the Workshop Committee (Professor Peter Saunders). We plan to meet on 25 July in time to report progress to the July meeting of the Executive Committee.

Vice President's note

Ian Castles

Opening the meeting of the International Statistical Institute in Paris in 1989, Lionel Jospin, the French Minister for Education (now Prime Minister of France) reflected upon the right of the citizen to information and the correlative responsibilities of statisticians:

> The right to information has become one of the most fundamental rights of the twentieth century citizen. In a society where information and the media play a considerable part, your action helps to safeguard a fundamental liberty: the freedom to understand, to have a critical perspective, to make up one's own mind, the essential freedom to know. … [T]his social and political role … deserves, in this the year of the commemoration of the 'Declaration des droits de l'Homme et du citoyen', to be underlined …The world owes you the text of an international declaration on professional ethics for statisticians.

> But is there not also an obligation to inform the public? … An effort to explain is necessary. This effort is also required by democracy. All the citizens must be in a position where they can understand and assess the policies followed by governments..[i]

The Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

M Jospin's proposal for an 'international declaration on professional ethics for statisticians' has been at least partially realised in the adoption by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) of the ten 'Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics' (1994). The first of these principles recognises official statistics as 'an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society', and requires such statistics to be 'made available on an impartial basis by official statistical agencies to honour citizens' entitlement to public information.[ii]

The full text of the 'Fundamental Principles ...' is reproduced as an appendix to Marion McEwin's paper in the Academy's recent publication *Facts and Fancies of Human Development.*

Human rights, human development and statistics

The theme of the *Human Development Report 2000* (HDR 2000), released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on 29 June, is the relationship between human rights and human development. The conceptual link is explored in its chapter 1: a fine essay by economist Amartya Sen.[iii]

This year's report reproduces the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights', Article 19 of which affirms that 'Everyone has the right … to

seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'.[iv]

But the report places the right of the citizen to information and the obligation of the statistician (among others) to provide it in a quite different perspective to that espoused in the Universal Declaration in 1948, elaborated by M Jospin in 1989 and enshrined in the 'Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics' in 1994. It argues that the statistician's role is one of advocacy rather than explanation, and that the citizen's right is not so much to know and to understand as to be empowered to use statistics as an instrument to bring about change:

> Statistical indicators are a powerful tool in the struggle for human rights. They make it possible for people and organizations – from grassroots activists and civil society to governments and the United Nations – to identify important actors and to hold them accountable for their actions. That is why developing and using indicators for human rights has become a cutting-edge area of advocacy. Working together, governments, activists, lawyers, statisticians and development specialists are breaking ground in using statistics to push for change – in perceptions, policies and practices.[v]

The role of the official statistician: explanation or advocacy?

In her paper to the Academy's Symposium last November, Marion McEwin argued that leading official statistical agencies had succeeded in drawing a line between explanation and advocacy:

> Statistical agencies should adopt dissemination practices that inform and explain without advocating a particular position. They should provide analysis and interpretation to assist in understanding the statistics. In addition, they should describe the context surrounding the issues that the statistics address.

> It can be a fine line between statistics and advocacy. A consciousness of this on the part of statistical agencies coupled with a desire to ensure that statements are properly qualified to guard against misinterpretation can result in a convoluted and/or boring way of writing about the statistics. However this does not have to be the case. Social trends publications produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Statistics Canada and the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) are proof of this, as are many other descriptive and analytical publications of these agencies.[vi]

UNSC review of statistics in the *Human Development Report*

In papers presented to the Academy's annual symposia in 1997[vii] and 1999,[viii] an essay in *Population and Development Review*[ix] and a paper in this column in *Dialogue* 1/2000, I have criticised the use of statistical evidence in previous issues of the UNDP's HDR.

As reported in the previous issue of *Dialogue,* these criticisms are currently being examined by a group of experts appointed by the Chair of the UNSC. I have provided the members of the Group with relevant documents, including the Academy's *Facts and Fancies of Human Development.*

It is satisfying to report that Richard Jolly, Principal Coordinator of the HDR, and Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Director of the HDR Office (HDRO), have advised the expert Group that they 'are taking the concerns of the UNSC very seriously and dealing with them as thoroughly as [they] can'; and that they have informed me that my paper has had a constructive impact, and has prompted a thorough review of the HDRO's statistical work.

Selim Jahan, Deputy Director of the HDRO, visited Canberra in late-June for the Australian launch of HDR 2000. Following an invitation from Mr Jahan to discuss my concerns with him during his visit, I joined with officials of the ABS for a productive discussion on 29 June.

How the HDR and the media mislead the world: a case study

HDR 2000 attracted less attention from the Australian media than in the past but, as in 1999, *The Age* (Melbourne) carried a report[x] on the new publication from correspondents of *The Guardian* (London). Headed 'Wealth, health gap between rich and poor at its widest', this item by Victoria Brittain and Larry Elliott exemplifies the inherent conflict between the citizen's right to know and to understand and the HDRO philosophy of using statistics to advocate 'changes - in perceptions, policies and practices'.

Virtually the whole of the content of this news report is either factually wrong or grossly misleading. In the remainder of this note, I argue that the authors of HDR 2000 and the journalists who produced the report for a global readership have effectively denied readers their right to know and to understand.

1)   The headline

The headline conveys the message that global gaps in wealth and in health are wider than ever before. Any serious discussion of such a proposition would need to start from clear definitions of the terms 'wealth', 'health' and 'gap'. In the absence of such definitions, one can only observe that, if words are given their ordinary meanings, the assertion in the headline is not supported by any valid evidence in HDR 2000. This is discussed further below.

2)   Responsibility for views expressed in HDR 2000

The report attributes the entire document to 'the United Nations'. In fact, it is not from the UN nor even, strictly speaking, from the UNDP. HDR 2000 includes the following disclaimer:

   The analysis and policy recommendations of the Report do
   not   necessarily   reflect   the   views   of   the   United   Nations

Development Programme, its Executive Board or its Member States. The Report is an independent publication commissioned by the UNDP.[xi]

3) Prospective life expectancy of the rich and the poor

'The mapping of the human genome may hold out the prospect of life expectancy in the West nudging 100 but it comes far too late for countries where poverty, war and HIV/AIDS have turned back the clock on development by decades.''

In 1967 Herman Kahn and colleagues at the Hudson Institute included 'general and substantial increase in life expectancy, postponement of aging and rejuvenation' in a list of 'technical innovations very likely in the last third of the twentieth century'; and 'major rejuvenation and/or significant extension of vigor and life span – say 100 to 150 years' in a list of 'less likely but important possibilities' within the same time-frame.[xii]

In the event, the increase in average life expectancy in the United States in the last third of the twentieth century was only 6.5 years, compared with nearly 12 years in the 'less developed regions' of the world and nearly 10 years in the group of countries designated by the United Nations as 'least developed countries'.[xiii]

Projections by the United Nations itself do not envisage that life expectancy in the West could reach 100 in the foreseeable future. In the Academy's 1999 Cunningham Lecture John Caldwell, Emeritus Professor of Demography, Australian National University, noted that by 2050 'the United Nations medium term population projection predicts that the life expectancy of the Third World will be over 76 years, converging with that of the First World'.[xiv]

Professor Caldwell made other comments which raise questions about the statement that 'poverty, war and HIV/AIDS have turned back the clock on human development by decades':

- 'half the HIV/AIDS in the world has occurred among 3 per cent of the world's population living in 10 countries of East and Southern Africa';
- 'research has shown that great numbers of individuals and most governments are not sufficiently awed by the rise in deaths [from AIDS] to do all they can to contain the epidemic', so that 'The African AIDS epidemic would be defeated if both individuals and governments regarded death as undeniably the worst outcome and felt a strong immediate responsibility for taking action to avoid it'.[xv]

4) The 'super-rich' are getting richer and living longer

'[The UN's] annual assessment of progress in 174 states finds that the super-rich are not only getting richer, they are living longer as well. While the income gap between rich and poor countries continues to widen, the lifespan in some sub-Saharan Africa countries is only half that of the developed world.'

(a) The super-rich are living longer

The clear implication of this statement is that the life span of the 'super-rich' is increasing relative to that of *most* of the world's population. By comparing the plight of people in the group of countries most severely affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic solely with the 'super rich', the HDR disregards more relevant comparisons and thereby diverts attention from the policies needed to defeat the epidemic.

The statement that the lifespan in 'some' sub-Saharan Africa countries is only half that of the developed world needs qualification. This statement is true of only one country (Sierra Leone), and there is only one other country (Malawi) in which average life expectancy also falls short of half that of the country with the highest life expectancy (Japan).

By way of contrast, in the middle of the twentieth century there were at least twenty African countries, and many countries in the Asia/Pacific region, in which life expectancy fell short of half that of the country which then had the highest life expectancy (Norway). And in the early part of the century, most of the population of the world lived in countries in which life expectancy fell short of half of the then leaders (Australia, New Zealand and the Scandinavian countries).

In the 1999 Cunningham Lecture, John Caldwell identified 'the pushing back of the frontiers of death and the guarantee that most people will live to old age' as perhaps 'the greatest advance of the latter part of the millennium'. He pointed out that 'Now China has a life expectancy of 71 years, India of 60 years, Latin America of 69 years and the whole developing world of 64 years'.[xvi]

The estimates of life expectancy in HDR 2000, which were used to calculate the latest human development index (HDI), show that in 1998 no less than 87 per cent of the world's population lived in countries in which life expectancy was between 60 and 80 years. By comparison with the most optimistic expectation of 50 years ago, this represents a remarkably long life span in countries in which seven-eighths of the world's population live.

It is not to be expected that a report from a development agency will understate the seriousness of the developing world's problems, including the sharp reversal in life expectancy in many countries in Africa. But HDR 2000 is grossly misleading in its concentration on an alleged widening of gaps in this area. The overwhelming weight of evidence is to the contrary.

(b) The income gap between rich and poor continues to widen

The assertion in past HDRs that 'the income gap between rich and poor continues to widen' was supported by comparisons of the ratio of average income in countries in the 'richest fifth' of the world's population with those in the 'poorest fifth'. These comparisons were spurious because they were based on the conversion of nominal

GDP figures expressed in national currencies to a common currency (US dollars) on the basis of varying exchange rates.

The abandonment of these claims in HDR 2000 is welcome, but they have been replaced by an alternative basis of calculation which is also invalid (see 6) below). If the ratio of the 'richest fifth' to the 'poorest fifth' had been calculated using purchasing power parities (the basis used in the HDR itself to calculate the HDI) the ratio of average incomes of people in countries in the 'richest fifth' to those in the 'poorest fifth' would be shown to have *narrowed* in the 1990s. In failing to report the trend in this vital indicator, and in persisting with its claims that intercountry differences in incomes are widening, the HDR fails to achieve acceptable standards of social reporting.

5) The wealth of the top billionaires

'The human development report says the top 200 billionaires had a combined wealth of $US1135 billion . . . last year . . .The total income of the 582 million people in all the developing countries barely exceeds 10 per cent of that: $US146 billion.'

The 'paper' wealth of the top billionaires represents the market's estimation of the present value of the future earnings to be derived from their net assets. To place the estimate in HDR 2000 in a more relevant context, the market's present valuation of the future earnings of the world's 200 wealthiest individuals and families is equivalent to the value of its production of goods and services every 10 days.

Presently, the largest fortune is that of William H Gates III of the United States. On 22 May 2000, when *Forbes* magazine made its most recent estimate of the value of the billionaires' holdings, Gates' wealth had retreated to a mere $US60 billion, compared with over $100 billion about a year ago.[xvii] This means that, late in May, the market put the then-value of Gates' future income at about half the value of the goods and services produced by the world each day, or at rather more than 2 days' production in the United States. This compares with the market's valuation of the Rockefeller fortune at the height of the stock market boom in 1913, which was equivalent to around 8 days' production in the United States at that time.[xviii]

Under the heading 'They could do a lot for world poverty', HDR 1999 claimed that 'A yearly contribution of 1 per cent of the wealth of the 200 richest people could provide universal access to primary education for all'.[xix] It is unnecessary to be an apologist for the system that permits great inequalities in wealth to recognise that such a claim is untrue - and that its appeal as a prescription depends on a failure to understand the complexities of policies in a range of areas, both in poor countries and in the advanced countries in which most (but by no means all) of the billionaires live.

The news report's comparison between the billionaires' wealth and the developing countries' income is invalid for a number of reasons. The estimates of income relate to the least developed countries, not

to 'all the developing countries'; the incomes of the countries are converted into US dollars on the basis of exchange rates, so that no allowance has been made for the fact that prices are lower (and the purchasing power of money correspondingly greater) in poor countries than in rich countries; and, most importantly, the billionaires' *stocks* of wealth (representing the market's estimate of the present value of the entire future flows of income) are compared with the aggregate *incomes* of the least developed countries in a single year.

It is not in dispute that those listed in the *Forbes* 200 are very rich, and that the vast majority of the people in the least developed countries are very poor; but this does not justify using erroneous and non-commensurable figures as debating points in ideological battles.

6) Long term changes in global income distribution

'The report says global inequalities have increased in the 20th century "by orders of magnitude out of proportion to anything experienced before". The gap between the incomes of the richest and poorest countries was about three to one in 1820, 35 to one in 1950, 44 to one in 1973 and 72 to one in 1992. Dr Jolly estimates that a calculation of a comparable figure today would show an even wider discrepancy.'

Angus Maddison's study *Monitoring the World Economy* (OECD, 1995) is the source of the estimates of average income on the basis of which these calculations are made, although this is not acknowledged in HDR and Maddison's work is not included in the list of references.

The ratios quoted are a misuse of the Maddison estimates, because the 'richest' and 'poorest' countries are drawn from his 'sample countries' only.

Maddison provides estimates for all countries for only two years: 1950 and 1990. In 1950 the GDP per head of the richest country (Qatar) was 113 times that of the poorest country (Guinea), and in 1990 the GDP per head of the richest country (United States) was 63 times that of the poorest country (Ethiopia).[xx] It cannot of course be inferred that global inequalities diminished during this period: these comparisons are not worth making, except to demonstrate the methodological inadmissibility of the figures quoted in the 'Overview' of HDR 2000[xxi] and reproduced in the news report.

It is not clear what Dr Jolly means by the statement that 'a calculation of a comparable figure today would show an even wider discrepancy'. It is a simple matter to calculate the ratio between the average incomes of the richest and poorest country in each HDR list. In the first report (HDR 1990), the GDP per head of the richest country (United States) was given as 80 times that of the poorest country (the Democratic Republic of the Congo). In HDR 2000, the GDP per head of the richest country (Luxembourg) is estimated to be 75 times that of the poorest country (Sierra Leone).[xxii]

Although the HDRO now uses a different methodological approach to the measurement of 'the gap', it has yet to produce evidence for its contention that global inequalities have increased 'by orders of magnitude out of proportion to anything experienced before'.

7) Falls in per capita income in the 1990s

'Between 1990 and 1998, per capita income fell in 50 countries, only one of them in the 29 states that make up the OECD.'

This statement in the news report is taken from the 'Overview' of HDR 2000.[xxiii] In fact, per capita income fell in two OECD countries over this period, as is shown in the table in chapter 4 which is presumably the source of the statement in the 'Overview'.[xxiv] The OECD countries in which per capita income fell were Switzerland and the Czech Republic.

The statement that there were 50 countries in which per capita income fell between 1990 and 1998 is misleading. The population of these countries amounts to only 11 per cent of the population of countries in the HDR analysis. Former Soviet republics and the states of eastern Europe account for 18 of the 50 countries, with a population aggregating half of the population in countries with negative growth since 1990. There were 20 African countries with negative growth over the period, with a total population of about 40 per cent of the countries in which incomes per head fell. Other countries with negative growth in the 1990s included Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Haiti, Paraguay, Fiji and the Solomon Islands.[xxv]

The results of the HDRO analysis of per capita growth rates of countries during the 1990-98 period are shown in a graph in HDR 2000, which carries the misleading label 'Slow growth in incomes'.[xxvi] Although there were only 29 countries with per capita growth rates exceeding 3 per cent annually on average between 1990 and 1998, the population of these countries represented half of the total population in all countries for which growth rate figures are available (2804 million out of a total of 5610 million). Virtually all of the countries with high growth rates were developing countries (the exceptions being Ireland, Norway and Poland).

By historical standards, a per capita growth rate of 3 per cent or more is exceptional: None of the countries included in the tables in Angus Maddison's paper to the ASSA Symposium last November managed a per capita growth rate higher than 2.2 per cent in any of the sub-periods shown between 1820 and 1950.[xxvii]

Thus the first decade of the *Human Development Report* is the first decade in history when as many as half the world's population lived in countries achieving a growth in average incomes of 3 per cent or more. If the incomes of countries are weighted by their populations (so as to produce a 'democratic index' of growth in world incomes), the 1990s almost certainly witnessed faster growth than any previous decade. Yet the HDRO, by counting up numbers of

countries rather than numbers of humans, has still been able to categorise the decade as one of 'slow growth in incomes'.

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[i] International Statistical Institute (1989). *Proceedings of the 47th Session*, 4:36.

[ii] Castles, Ian (ed) (2000). *Facts and Fancies of Human Development*, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia Occasional Paper Series 1/2000. 91-2.

[iii] UNDP (2000). *Human Development Report*, 19-26.

[iv] *ibid*. 15.

[v] *ibid*. 89.

[vi] McEwin, Marion (2000). 'The Global Statistical System – Roles and Realities in Measuring Human Development', in Castles, Ian (ed) (2000) *op cit*: 85.

[vii] Castles, Ian (1998). 'Measuring Wealth and Welfare: Why the HDI and the GPI Fail' in *Wealth, Work, Well-Being*, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia Occasional Paper Series 1/1998: 34-53.

[viii] Castles, Ian (2000). 'Reporting on Human Development: Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics' in Castles, Ian (ed) (2000), *op cit:* 55-82.

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Academy Workshops

The Workshop Program continues to provide a forum for debate and subsequent publication and dissemination of outcomes on a range of issues of interest to government and the community. All those who seek to propose a theme are advised to acquire a copy of the *Workshop Guidelines* before proceeding, to ensure that the requirements of the Academy are understood. The Committee requires a detailed submission at least three months in advance. The format of the Academy workshops, as presented in the *Guidelines*, have been favourably commented on by workshop convenors and participants alike. These comments have included:

> It was generally agreed that the opportunity to talk with interested practitioners and researchers across disciplines and to discuss issues in depth were major advantages of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia program.

And

> The workshop was small to allow for meaningful interchange of ideas. This was particularly welcomed by participants, as there was plenty of time to become involved in lively, extensive and in-depth debate.

It is worth stating anew that the aim of the Academy workshops is to bring together those working at the leading edge of research for intense intellectual exchange and the generation of new ideas. The format is not that of seminars or conferences, but is interactive, normally held over two days. Numbers are limited to 20-25, and all participants are expected to attend throughout the workshop. Inter-disciplinarity is encouraged. Publication or dissemination of the workshop papers, with appropriate attribution of opinion, is expected. The maximum support to approved workshops is $5,000, and convenors will need to seek out other financial partners.

° Professor Russell Lansbury, Professor of Industrial Relations at the School of Business, University of Sydney and A/Professor Ron Callus, Director of the Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training, University of Sydney will convene a workshop in December on *The future of work and employment relations in Australia.* Papers will address the historical perspective and the economic aspects of the changes in the nature of work and employment relations; legal aspects of the changing social contract at work; stress and health effects of changes at work; anti-discrimination at work; and future directions for work and employment relations.

° Under consideration by the Workshop Committee is a proposal for a workshop on the *Ethical, social and legal implications of the Human Genome Project.*

° Other topics suggested at the Annual General Meeting, and in need of convenors, include *The future of civil society in the context*

of the scaling back of government and the stress of self-interest; Education in rural Australia, and A*spects of literacy* (given its prominence in government and the media). Initial enquiries can be made to Sue Rider at the Secretariat.

A future for volunteering in the new millenium?

Jeni Warburton and Melanie Oppenheimer

The workshop was held at the University of Western Sydney (Nepean) on 10-11 February 2000 and debated the future for volunteering in the current political, social and economic context.

The format of the workshop was a round-table discussion of issues, with participants all academics, researchers and practitioners with a keen interest in volunteering. The topic was particularly well suited to an interdisciplinary environment, with participants from a range of academic disciplines. It was generally agreed that the opportunity to talk with interested practitioners and researchers across disciplines and to discuss issues in depth were major advantages of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia program.

The workshop was kept deliberately small to allow for meaningful interchange of ideas. This was particularly welcomed by participants, as there was plenty of time to become involved in lively, extensive and in-depth debate. All workshop participants presented a paper on an agreed topic that had previously been circulated amongst the group. Time was then assigned for a detailed discussion of the paper. The final afternoon was allocated to a general discussion of themes from the workshop and the development of a future research agenda.

The workshop was introduced by Jill Roe, who is a Fellow of the ASSA. She also chaired the preliminary sessions and participated in the debate, and we are grateful to her for her contribution to the workshop. Other participants were Michael Bittman, Sha Cordingley, Eva Cox, Duncan Ironmonger, Rosemary Leonard, Mark Lyons, Catherine McDonald, Joy Noble, Jenny Onyx, Melanie Oppenheimer, Michael Pusey and Jeni Warburton. Two further participants (Cora Baldock and John May) were unfortunately unable to attend. Cora Baldock provided us with a paper that we were able to discuss in her absence.

All participants at the workshop expressed their gratitude to the ASSA for their support of the workshop. We would also like to thank the School of Employment Relations and Work (UWS) and the School of Social Work and Social Policy (UQ) who provided additional financial support. We were fortunate, in particular, to be provided with a superb venue at UWS (Nepean) in the beautifully restored house that was previously the residence of the hospital

superintendent. The historic surroundings, including a magnificent 'round table', certainly contributed to the excellent intellectual debate.

The rationale for the workshop was that volunteering as an activity has long been under-estimated, under-researched and under-valued. Yet recent data show that 2.6 million Australians volunteer for an organisation and over 434 million hours are donated annually to volunteer activities. The extent of volunteering demonstrates that many in the community have a strong commitment to donating their time to an organisation. The importance of volunteering to civil society is only recently being realised. Indeed, until recently, civil society has been a neglected area of research attention in favour of the state and the market. Participants at the workshop all agreed that it was time to redress that balance.

Workshop papers addressed the following themes:

- What is volunteering? Does it include contributions made by the household and informal care, as well as volunteering through an organisation?
- How can we make volunteering more visible?
- Where do volunteers fit in relation to civil society? Can we estimate their contribution to social capital formation?
- Is there a dark side to volunteering?
- What are the contributions made by volunteers? What about the broad diversity of volunteer experiences?
- What can we do to promote and support volunteering as an activity?
- Are there particular groups that are more likely to volunteer? What about women, the unemployed, older people?
- What are the current trends in assessing volunteering? Are volunteers declining?
- What is the impact of the contemporary context on volunteers?
- More specifically, what is the economic context of volunteering? Should we estimate and value volunteering in economic terms?
- What social changes are impacting on volunteering? Are there cohort and generational differences in propensity to volunteer?
- Does volunteering fit within our historical past?
- What about political change? Will people be willing to volunteer within a marketised system?
- What is the organisational context surrounding volunteers? How will changes within the sector impact on volunteers themselves?

Two of the major themes were thus how do we define volunteering, and what are the contextual issues surrounding volunteering and how do they impact on the future of volunteering.

Definitional issues

Papers presented at the workshop incorporated a variety of views relating to the definition of volunteering. All agreed that volunteering involved a gift of time to the community. The main distinction was

volunteering through an organisation, in other words, formal volunteering, as opposed to informal volunteering, which was a far broader notion. Certainly a fundamental difference emerged between the organisational context through the non-profit sector, and volunteering as an activity, which can occur within the sector but also occurs across society.

Sha Cordingley, from Volunteering Australia, emphasised the importance of discussing and developing a working definition of volunteering within the organisational context. From the practitioner perspective, it was important to designate that volunteering occurred within a specific context – the non-profit sector. She highlighted, for example, the potential ethical dilemmas that could emerge if volunteers work within the for-profit sector.

Many volunteer organisations are in the non-profit sector, and provide services to the community across a broad range of areas of social welfare and health, the arts, sport, housing, community education, recreation, employment and the environment. The reality today is that the activities of non-profit organisations are crucial to the delivery of a broad range of services, and that without volunteers, many of these organisations could not operate.

Participants discussed volunteering within formal organisations, making the links between the organisational context and volunteers themselves. Melanie Oppenheimer looked at the history of volunteering in the non-profit sector. Cora Baldock took a comparative perspective and looked at the contribution made by older people as volunteers within organisations. Both Catherine McDonald and Jeni Warburton looked specifically at the impact that changes imposed on the human services sector were having on volunteers. Mark Lyons also looked at organisational volunteering, and specifically at the decline of 'the highly committed volunteer'.

Other papers adopted a broader notion of volunteering, focusing on the activity rather than the sector. For example, Duncan Ironmonger talked about unpaid work done within the household, and not included in national accounting figures. Michael Bittman discussed informal care as the 'submerged portion of the iceberg of welfare', highlighting the huge contribution made by carers, often women, in allowing older people and those with disabilities to live in the community. There is no doubt that this is a major, and essentially invisible, part of caring. However, the voluntary notion is perhaps more contentious.

Indeed, workshop participants generally agreed that volunteering consisted of two intersecting dimensions. On one dimension, formal and informal volunteering were the end points; on the second, the end points were voluntary and obligatory notions of volunteering. Hence, informal caring was clearly located in the informal sector, but towards the obligatory end of the continuum. The current move towards 'compulsory volunteering' through mutual obligation policies and work for the dole schemes, were also located in the obligatory

sector of the continuum, but in the formal setting of organisational volunteering.

Contextual issues

Despite the extent of volunteering in society, there are many who suggest that the future of volunteering is grim. It is proposed that the changing political context in Australia and the move towards the privatisation of services and user pays systems will impact on the willingness of people to volunteer. Although some may be motivated to volunteer in response to a growing need, it may be that an altruistic activity is incompatible with a market economy. Already some recent analyses show the volunteer rate declining in some states.

Clearly volunteering operates within a socio-political context, thus both formal and informal volunteering are affected by the changing political climate. This is key to an assessment of the future of volunteering. Clearly the non-profit sector has a strategic importance to changing notions of the state, as well as to the development of a healthy civil society. Michael Pusey presented a paper based on data from the Middle Australia Project assessing the role and impact of volunteering at a time of profound economic restructuring and changing notions of civil society.

Other workshop papers focused on the contribution of volunteers to civil society and social capital. The paper by Jenny Onyx and Rosemary Leonard, for example, focused on the social capital generated through participation in social networks. The important contribution made by women was highlighted in this context. Eva Cox reminded us that unpaid work, whether formal or informal, while central to society, can have a dark side. It is important to remember that volunteering is not a panacea for all ills.

The economic context of volunteering and the relationship of volunteering with national accounting figures was also a major theme of the workshop. Participants debated the notion of valuing volunteering in economic terms, suggesting that volunteering and volunteers are an essential part of the fabric of society. Whether economic 'inclusion' would add value to volunteers was perhaps more contested.

The value of volunteering, in all its dimensions, was mutually agreed. However, as Joy Noble suggested, if volunteering as a concept and as an activity is to thrive, then a strategic approach needs to be adopted. Certainly the value of volunteering must be highlighted, and to do this, volunteering as an activity needs to be made more visible.

Outcomes of the workshop

All the participants felt that the workshop process itself was a good outcome, opening up debate and discussion in an area that has traditionally received less intellectual attention. Participants were pleased to develop links with others involved in the same area, and

spent time discussing a research agenda. We have also as a group made a submission to the Australian Bureau of Statistics requesting further data on volunteering, and increased access to these data by researchers.

There are few Australian texts focusing on volunteering and the non-profit sector, and are thus pleased to report that Federation Press are publishing the proceedings of the workshop in a book to be edited by Jeni Warburton and Melanie Oppenheimer. The book, with the provisional title 'New Perspectives on Volunteering: Value and Visibility' should be available by the end of the year, and in advance of 2001, International Year of the Volunteer.

Dr Jeni Warburton, School of Social Work and Social Policy, University of Queensland and Dr Melanie Oppenheimer, School of Employment Relations, University of Western Sydney (Nepean).

Population, gender and reproductive choice: the motherhood questions

Alison Mackinnon and Lois Bryson

This two day Workshop, sponsored by the Academy and assisted financially by the federal Department of Family and Community Services and Women's Health Australia, was held at St Marks College, North Adelaide on 10-11 February 2000 and brought together academics from a range of disciplines, including sociology, health, demography and economics. It also included young researchers who are just completing, or have recently completed, their PhD studies. Two representatives from FACS attended, Allison Barnes from the Policy Strategy Section and Lee Emerson from the National Families Strategy Task Force. We also welcomed Professor Marjorie Griffin Cohen, from British Columbia, a feminist economist and visiting scholar at the Hawke Institute, University of South Australia. Overall we were happy to have a mix of senior and junior researchers, policy makers and indeed someone from outside Australia. Unfortunately Dr Audrey Chia Chan from Singapore was unable to attend at the last minute. Nor was Dr Penny Kane but her paper was read by Julie Petersen-Gray, a postgraduate student from the University of South Australia. Dr Carol Bacchi from the University of Adelaide was able to attend several sessions and contribute to policy discussion.

The goals of the workshop were to advance theoretical discussion and to make policy recommendations.

Themes of the workshop

The participants spoke to prepared papers on issues concerning Australia's declining birthrate and its possible impact on our future society. Does declining fertility matter? Will immigration make up the shortfall? Will increased productivity enable a smaller number of workers to support a larger ageing cohort? Of course, many

environmentalists will be delighted if the total population falls, an important perspective but one that was not central to the workshop agenda. Participants were divided on whether declining births mattered overall, although demographer Peter McDonald pointed out that in some European countries where the birthrates are particularly low there was considerable political and social anxiety. Graeme Hugo also underlined the importance of that concern in his paper on international responses to fertility decline. It was pointed out that, while immigration is an excellent way of maintaining and enriching populations, if birthrates decline to very low levels, immigration will not meet the shortfall.

A crucial clue to the factors that affect decisions to have children is found in the fact that over recent years birthrates have dropped less precipitously in countries which provide social policies in support of gender equity. They have fallen more precipitously in countries, such as Japan and Italy, where it is more difficult to combine motherhood and a career, as both Peter McDonald and Graeme Hugo described. This finding underpinned much of our policy deliberation, as gender was a major focus of inquiry.

A key discussion centred on why Australian women are deferring or forgoing child bearing, and why the birthrate decreases with increasing levels of education. Childlessness is highest in women with postgraduate qualifications, for example, as Christine Kilmartin from the Australian Institute of Family Studies reported. Several of the participants also argued that birthrates tend to fall in times of change and uncertainty. In the present climate, child bearing decisions are influenced by high unemployment and underemployment, and changes in economic and industrial policies, as well as by changing gender roles and expectations.

Alison Mackinnon and Hera Cook gave historically based papers. Mackinnon gave an overview of population policy in Australia over the last 100 years, claiming that policies have been both implicit and explicit (often working in contradictory ways) and policy makers have rarely listened to women's voices. Hera Cook, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Sydney, argued that the birth control pill has revolutionised women's lives, blurring the boundaries between married and single women, creating an historically new period in women's lives in which women can experience financial independence and sexual expression without commitment.

For those who have family commitments other sets of issues arise. Much discussion focused on the perennial questions of combining home and work, the intensification of full-time work, and the difficulty of finding high quality child care. 'Who does the housework' came up, inevitably. Strangely, attitudinal studies show *overwhelmingly* that men and women believe housework and child care should be shared, but time budget and other quantitative studies illustrate very clearly that women still do the bulk of housework and child care. Evidence from a number of studies including the Women's Health Australia Study and the ANU's Negotiating the Life Course Survey

demonstrate that women's expectations of combining motherhood and parenting has become normalised. This is both for financial reasons, that is that families need two incomes to achieve an acceptable lifestyle, as well as to allow women the possibility of pursuing their own life goals, as Edith Gray argued.

Rhonda Sharp demonstrated that women's employment has also become essential for the economy. The integration of women into the workforce underscores the necessity to have policies that support women and men to combine employment and families with ease, and in ways which enhance the well-being of all family members. Evidence from the Women's Health Australia Study, as Penny Warner-Smith (in a paper jointly written with Carla Imbruglia) discussed, suggests that for women higher levels of health and well-being are generally associated with a combination of family and paid employment. Being happy with child care is essential, as are flexible employment conditions and the availability of appropriate supports for caring for others, as well as children. Lois Bryson and Penny Warner-Smith from the Women's Health Australia Study reported that work is good for one's health, at least up to about 34 hours per week, after which benefits decline and poorer health outcomes are noticed.

There is still much unfinished business around issues of contraception and reproductive health, particularly for young women as Penny Kane, Lois Bryson and Ann Evans illustrated. And very young women who become pregnant often do so as a result of male pressure, as Ann Evans reported. Some women do not have access to adequate information about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases, and services may be inadequate or service providers unsympathetic to women's concerns. Lois Bryson and Penny Kane pointed out that these problems are more acute in rural and remote areas where there may not be a choice of services and it is more difficult to ensure privacy.

The participants discussed the worrying trend to view children not as a 'public good' but as a 'private commodity', even a luxury. Treating families as consumers threatens to overturn the principle that child rearing is a societal benefit and that funds should be redistributed to families to achieve horizontal, or life course, equity. At a time when economic indicators dominate, we as a society are in danger of forgetting to value cooperation and care.

Outcomes and policy recommendations

The workshop convenors prepared a full report with policy recommendations for the Department of Family and Community Services, and are preparing some of the papers for publication, initially in a special issue of the *Journal of Population Research*. 'Seeking stability in unstable times' might well be the theme of the report, which saw stable policy frameworks as key to supporting women and men in their child-bearing decision making.

The report recommended free child care as one of its major points. Economists at the workshop, the University of South Australia's Rhonda Sharp and Deborah Mitchell from ANU, assured us that the increased productivity of those freed to work will ensure that this is not a high cost item in a context of declining birthrates. However, this was only one of many significant changes needed. Genuinely equal pay for women has still not been achieved and women are rarely in a position to determine workplace policy, and these are issues which must be redressed. To ensure that caring responsibilities are shared, employers need to embrace policies which encourage fathers, as well as mothers, to take parental and caring leave. A shorter working day and more flexible hours are also important ways to make workplaces more 'family-friendly'. Support and retraining are needed for women or men who have chosen to leave the workforce for a time while their children are young. The report also recommended that care for disabled and frail adults in the community, as well as children, should be considered in policy decisions.

The report recommended that all young people should receive education about the negotiation of family and sexual relationships, reproductive health and contraception. It also recommended universal access to a wide range of methods of contraception, while ensuring respect for individual choice and privacy.

The population issue is on the agenda, as recent comment by both Opposition leader Kim Beazley and Prime Minister Howard have signalled. Population 'politics' will continue to attract discussion as the population ages, fertility declines and immigrants and asylum seekers knock at our doors. The workshop provided an important opportunity for Australian academics and policy analysts to consider issues of population and reproductive choice and to make recommendations for Australia's future. We are most grateful for the Academy's support on this important issue.

Professor Alison Mackinnon is Director, The Hawke Institute University of South Australia and Professor Lois Bryson is from the Department of Social Science and Planning, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Resourcing Schools[1]

Peter Karmel

I became interested in education policy some forty years ago. At that time and in the years following the Second World War, educational institutions had been coming under increasing pressure. The Australian population, and especially the younger age groups, was increasing relatively rapidly as a result of migration and high birth rates, and educational participation was rising from what had been low levels. At the same time there were acute shortages of teachers, particularly well qualified ones. At the end of the War, expenditure on education was around 1.5 to 2 per cent of gross domestic product. When the 1960s opened it was still only about 3 per cent.

In these circumstances it was not surprising that the major theme in education policy making was the enhancement of resources for education. The first major response to this was the Commonwealth Government's increased involvement in funding the universities, which followed the *Murray Report* (1957), and in funding other institutions of higher education (colleges of advanced education) after the *Martin Report* (1964).

During the 1960s the plight of schools, especially government schools, was highlighted by a series of needs surveys issued by State Governments, accompanied by agitation by teacher unions and parent bodies. The Catholic schools system was near collapse and the Catholic authorities were politically active in seeking help. During the 1960s the Menzies Government began to provide some Commonwealth funds for secondary school libraries and laboratories and some State government funds began to flow to non-government schools.

In 1972 the Whitlam Government was elected on a platform that included a commitment to provide funds to meet the financial needs of government and non-government primary and secondary schools. The Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission was appointed at the end of 1972 to advise the Commonwealth on schools' financial needs and reported in May 1973 under the title, *Schools in Australia*.

The emphasis of *Schools in Australia* was naturally enough on resources and their assembling to meet a range of school needs. It is common now to claim that *Schools in Australia* was essentially about inputs and paid little attention to outputs and outcomes. This, however, was not the case. In its chapters on 'Values and Perspectives' and 'Equality of Opportunity,' the report gave considerable emphasis to the purposes of schooling, as they affected both the individual and the public interest. However, it is true that the general flavour of the report was that the purposes of school education would be met by providing resources (teachers, ancillary staff, equipment, buildings, support services) in sufficient

quantity and of appropriate quality. Precise input-output/outcome relationships were not in the minds of the members of the Interim Committee.

In discussing school resourcing it is important to keep in mind the broad purposes of education which school outcomes should meet. These purposes are manifold and varied; they compete for resources, particularly in the form of teachers' time, and they compete for students' time. It is inconceivable that all can be met 100 per cent. Indeed, some purposes may be contradictory. There must be trade-offs and compromises.

There would be general agreement that for the individual student the purposes can be summarised under six broad headings:

- development of the person, so that people may enjoy their lives to the fullest;
- socialisation of the individual so that people may participate in activities with others;
- provision of a knowledge base about the physical and social worlds;
- acquisition of basic skills of literacy, numeracy, oracy and, in recent times, computer literacy;
- acquisition of key competencies for life and work, including problem solving skills and ethical understandings; and
- specific vocational skills.

These purposes have a public interest dimension. Meeting them not only benefits the individual but also benefits society as a whole by promoting informed social and political relations and enhancing the productivity of the economy. However school education is generally represented as also having specifically public interest purposes including:

- induction into citizenship, so that people can act as responsible citizens and participate effectively in community and national affairs;
- inculcation of common understandings about what it means to be Australian and the core values of Australian society; and
- the promotion of equity, social justice and equality of opportunity.

In Australia there would be broad consensus that the above categories embrace the goals of schooling, although there might be some who would question the specifically social purposes. In April 1999, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment Training and Youth Affairs met in Adelaide and issued 'The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century'. This set out in detail eighteen common and agreed goals for schooling. These clearly reflected the purposes I have listed. However, while there appears to be wide agreement on the suite of common goals, it cannot be assumed that there are agreed priorities or weightings attached to individual goals. The priorities of those responsible for administering schools, both government and non-

government, reflect ideological or political positions, especially, for example, in relation to social justice issues, parental choice and the nexus between school and subsequent employment.

In the ten years or so following the implementation of *Schools in Australia* there was a great increase in the resources devoted to education, partly as a deliberate attempt to raise standards of provision and partly in response to increased educational participation. By the late 1970s, expenditure on education had risen to about 6.5 per cent of GDP, roughly a doubling in fifteen years; and significant improvements in pupil/teacher ratios had taken place.

It is not surprising that the increased financial burdens that educational expansion had imposed on governments should stimulate questions about whether value for money was being received. These questions surfaced in the 1980s, prompted not only by the size of the education budget, and coincidental budgetary pressures from other sources, but also by the ideological transformation from a commitment to a mixed economy with a large and active public sector to a belief in free market philosophies, economic rationalisation, deregulation and small government with low taxation. Thus in 1984 the Commonwealth appointed a committee to review the effectiveness of the Commonwealth's involvement in primary and secondary education with a view to obtaining improved outcomes. The report, *Quality of Education in Australia*, published in 1985 was the result. A year later the *Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education* was also completed.

Until some time in the 1980s educational policy discourse was in terms of a belief that, if sufficient resources were provided, educational institutions would achieve their purposes. This now changed to asking how effectively were resources being used. The discourse switched to measuring outcomes and aiming at achieving optimum outcomes with given resources or specified outcomes with minimum resources. Notions of efficiency (achieving outputs at minimum cost) and effectiveness (producing outcomes to achieve given purposes) became common currency. The work of the Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision provides an example.

The switch in emphasis from maximising resources (inputs) to maximising (optimising) outputs/outcomes should not be deplored. It underlines the purposefulness of schooling and highlights teachers' effectiveness. However it leads to concentration on measurable performance indicators, for example benchmarked numeracy and literacy tests, destinations of school leavers etc. But performance indicators have limited although specific meanings and often do not capture the concepts they are intended to represent. Their use can have unintended, even if perfectly predictable, consequences as, for example, when teachers concentrate on achieving high test scores in a narrow range of testable subjects to the exclusion of other desirable education objectives.

There is a clear risk that emphasis on indicators of performance outcomes may distort educational activity by obscuring the broad purposes of education and by detracting from the processes of schooling. After all, for around 10 to 12 years of their lives children spend a great deal of time at school, and this experience ought to be worthwhile in itself. From the late 1980s Commonwealth and State governments have required schools to assess students on standardised tests of basic skills. The emphasis on measuring outcomes is likely to privilege measurable elements among educational objectives at the expense of those involving values, human relationships and students' personalities. This bias needs to be guarded against. Nevertheless, I would not wish to play down the critical importance of the basic skills.

Economic theorists use the concept of a 'production function' to describe the mathematical relationship between the inputs of factors of production (labour, equipment, raw materials) and the output of a product. Concepts of labour productivity or efficiency (output per unit of labour) and cost efficiency (cost per unit of output) follow. The notion of a production function implies that the characteristics of inputs and outcomes can be clearly defined and do not vary significantly.

The concept of a production function is, however, difficult to apply to education. This is partly because teachers vary greatly in their attributes as does the quality of the environments in which they work and the students with whom they work. But it is also because the outputs/outcomes of education are intended to serve a wide range of purposes, and quantitative measurement of many of the desired outcomes is either difficult or conceptually impossible. Moreover, the benefits of education, both to the individual and to society, are realised not simply when the individual exits an educational institution, but accrue over their lifetime. Only partial benefits can be captured by performance indicators measured at a point of time. There is also the question of whether a student's achievement should be measured in terms of performance at the time of leaving school or in terms of the value added to their performance between entry to school and exit.

On the whole the concept of a production function as applied to education does not seem to be very useful other than to underline the fact that outputs/outcomes flow from the resources devoted to educational institutions. Indeed the use of traditional economic efficiency measures in education can be positively misleading. For example, from the 1970s onwards academic staff/student ratios in universities have fallen from 1:12 to 1:18. Thus the 'productivity' of staff in teaching students has increased by 50 per cent. But, classes have increased in size and staff-student contact has diminished; the quality of the educational experiences of students appears to have deteriorated, even though there may have been substitution of technology for staff. What meaning can be attached to such a measure of efficiency? The dilemmas raised by crude measures of

efficiency in educational institutions are also present in interstate comparisons of educational unit costs in which there is no clarity as to whether like is being compared with like. It could even be argued that a government dollar spent in supporting a student in a private school is more cost effective than one directed to a government school, since in a private school the government has to cover only a part of the cost of educating the student; thus, the criterion of minimising cost to government would lead logically to the phasing out of government schools! But efficiency cannot be the sole criterion for determining educational provision. Free, compulsory and secular schooling, and notions of a common school experience available to all Australians, underpin the provision of primary and secondary education by Australian governments.

The priority given to economy in public administration has resulted in a decline in government expenditure on education as a proportion of GDP from almost 6 per cent in the late 1970s to about 4.5 per cent. In general, pupil/teacher ratios in schools, which improved greatly in the ten years following *Schools in Australia,* have not deteriorated significantly, but public expenditure on education has been constrained, especially for the universities where it has been declining in absolute terms in recent years accompanied by a shift to private funding. There is, of course, nothing sacrosanct about the 6 per cent figure achieved in the late 1970s – education has to compete with other elements of public expenditure such as health and social security – but educational expenditure has clearly lost the priority it had in the 1970s.

Until the 1980s, emphasis in school resourcing was on the aggregate of resources available and, to some degree, on their quality. There is, however, the question of how resources in schools are managed and whether the outcomes, derived from a given volume of resources, might be affected by the way in which the resources are administered.

Traditionally, government schools in Australia have been organised in systems centrally managed on a State basis. The desirability of moving towards a less centralised form of control of operations was, in fact, raised in *Schools in Australia.* Until some 25 to 30 years ago, quality control was exercised through inspectorial arrangements. This gradually changed with the development of advisory services and in-service training; more recently, assessment of student achievement has been used as a means of controlling quality.

In some government systems, both in Australia and overseas, the centralised management of resources has yielded to arrangements for school based management, more akin to that of independent private schools. The degree of decentralised management is reflected in the proportion of the budget devolved to school management, the power of individual schools over staffing arrangements and the autonomy granted school principals, school boards and local communities. In some systems, management has been almost completely decentralised, and some schools have been

separated from school systems to become 'self governing'. These arrangements have been accompanied by dezoning schools so that parents may select the school of their choice. Systems of decentralised management of this kind can be said to constitute a *quasi-market* for school services in which parents can 'shop around' to satisfy their requirements. The concept of charter schools in the USA is a special case of self-managed schools, where a school is funded by government on the basis of its achieving goals set out in the charter establishing it.

In theory, the quasi-market should ensure a more effective and less intrusive control of quality than centralised systems with head office management and monitoring by performance indicators and student assessments. 'Good' schools will attract students and flourish; 'bad' ones will decline and wither away. Effectiveness will be achieved by the 'hidden hand' of the market, rather than by hands-on management of bureaucrats from head office and the tyranny of performance indicators.

In economic theory, the market model for a particular product assumes that the product is clearly defined and that there is a large number of well informed producers and consumers, none of whom can dominate the market. In these circumstances the search for profit by producers and for satisfaction by consumers will result in production which is efficient (least cost) and effective (meeting consumers' requirements). As far as schools are concerned, the underlying assumptions of the competitive market model are by no means fully met. Schooling is not a simply described product like a cake of soap or an automobile whose characteristics are well understood and whose performance is predictable: its purposes are manifold and often not well appreciated by parents; its benefits are not always recognisable and accrue not at the time of purchase but over a lifetime. Moreover parents are not generally well informed about the qualities of different schools and cannot be assumed always to act in their children's interests. Schools presumably measure their success by their capacity to attract students (not by profits), but their size must sooner or later be limited, denying access to successful schools to some parents. New successful schools cannot be created overnight. Unsuccessful schools may decline but there will be a period (perhaps a long period) in which they will offer an inferior product. Moreover, successful schools will have a capacity to select students which will impact on less successful schools.

Thus a quasi-market for school services cannot be said to have the optimum properties of the competitive market model. Nevertheless, there is evidence that many self-managed schools demonstrate great effectiveness and that there are considerable benefits to be won by giving schools a high degree of autonomy. However, the benefits are unlikely to be universal: unsuccessful schools will persist and students will attend them. On equity grounds, special programs and additional resources would need to be provided to

underpin the less successful schools and to avoid disadvantage to the students enrolled in them. Unlike the market model, the unsuccessful schools will not simply disappear without damage to their clients.

The quasi-market of a system of self-managed schools could be extended to become a full market by allowing schools to charge fees and providing government support in the form of vouchers. Under such arrangements schools could be both government and private. Small scale experiments with vouchers have been attempted in USA. However a market based on vouchers would be even less perfect than the quasi-market discussed above, because schools would become segregated according to fee levels (and thus parental income). Equity issues would be even more pressing than with the quasi-market. Moreover, while dezoning would be a requirement for government schools to participate in a market for school education, they would still be obliged to enrol students from their neighbourhoods: unlike non-government schools they could not select students, other than out of area students. Accordingly, there would be a risk of social polarisation. This appears to have been the New Zealand experience. There is unquestionably some conflict between parental choice of school and equality of opportunity for students.

These equity issues apply with less force to tertiary education. Socio-economic status impacts less once students have achieved tertiary entry. The higher education contribution scheme (HECS) provides income contingent loans for undergraduate fees. Tertiary institutions are generally not limited in size and have wide and permeable catchments. Their students are generally better informed about what tertiary institutions can offer and are more able to judge the quality of institutional performance. Moreover the purposes of tertiary education are more focussed. The negative consequences of a deregulated market approach are much less for tertiary than for school education. Indeed I believe that, given current constraints on government funding, a strong case can be made for deregulation of tertiary education.

In Australia , non-government fee paying schools with dezoned government schools do constitute a market, although an imperfect one, for educational services. However, equity issues are important given the variation in resources among schools, the capacity of non-government schools to select students and the fact that the Commonwealth is subsidising some private schools, the fees of which alone are more than 50 per cent greater than total expenditure per pupil in corresponding government schools. But the differences between government schools and most non-government schools, although real enough, should not be overstated.

As we look forward to the first decades of the 21st century it seems likely that resources for education from government sources with fall further relative to GDP. For demographic reasons the demand for places in educational institutions will decline relative to the

population as a whole. Competition from health and social security expenditures will increase. Pressure to substitute private for public expenditure will rise.

A key question is the extent to which educational participation will rise. At the school level there is clearly room for some increase in participation in years 11 and 12: in non-Catholic private schools retention to year 12 is over 95 per cent but in Catholic schools it is 77 per cent and in government schools 66 per cent. Moreover, retention to year 12 has retreated from its maximum of 77 per cent in 1992 to about 72 per cent. There are well-researched differentials in retention according to socio-economic status of parents and geographical location. Over the past couple of decades these differentials have been declining and further decline is likely. The gender differential (78 percent for females *versus* 66 per cent for males) may well diminish. Nevertheless the absolute numbers of students involved are unlikely to be large relative to total school enrolments.

At the post-secondary level, higher education administrative data and Australian Bureau of Statistics educational qualifications data suggest that access to higher education or vocational education and training is close to universal, with around 85 – 90 per cent of a cohort accessing courses of at least one year's duration at some time during their lifetimes, with some 70 per cent completing courses[2]. These proportions must include a significant number of early school leavers. There may, of course, be some increase in participation as students spend longer periods in post-secondary courses; and there may be changes in the higher education/VET balance.

In summary, demographic pressures and trends relating to retention, access and participation are unlikely in themselves to increase educational resource requirements relative to GDP over the next twenty years. The case for greater resourcing per student (particularly in relation to disadvantaged students), the need to raise the relative rewards of academics and teachers, and the argument for enhanced funding for university research will remain.

The shift towards small government, combined with the preference for market solutions that has taken place in the latter decades of the 20th century, risks an increasing social stratification of schools and a retreat from the provision of a common schooling for all Australians as an exercise in nation building. On average the parents of children attending non-government schools have higher incomes. Moreover, the last two decades have seen the establishment of schools which lie well outside the mainstream. Tensions are developing between, on the one hand, fostering efficient and effective individual schools (in terms of their use of resources in meeting their particular goals) and promoting parental choice and, on the other hand, social justice (in terms of the correction of disadvantage to greater equalise social and economic opportunities) and a common schooling (in the sense of laying the foundation for agreed principles and practices for

Australian society). Nevertheless the tensions should not be exaggerated, and political compromises that balance common values, parental choice and equality of opportunity need to be negotiated and renegotiated from time to time. The more we move in the market direction, the more important special programs for the disadvantaged and an Australia-wide core curriculum become. In developing public policy for resourcing education, decisions need to be made, not on the basis of ideological predilections, but on an assessment of the consequences that flow from the decisions with all their efficiency, effectiveness and equity implications. Anything less risks the future of Australia as a just and equitable society based on democratic principles.

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[1] This is a slightly modified version of the introductory chapter in *School Resourcing: Models and Practices in Changing Times,* The Australian College of Education Year Book: 2000.
[2] *See* P Aungles, T Karmel and T Wu in The Australian College of Education, *op cit* Ch 12.

Comment

Peter Karmel in my times

Keith Hancock

The two people who have played the most consequential roles in my life as a social scientist are Henry Phelps Brown, my PhD supervisor, and Peter Karmel. In 1959, I left Henry in London to join Peter in Adelaide. Until just a few months earlier, it had never occurred to me that I would be taking a job in Adelaide – or that I would still be there 41 years later. It was Geoff Harcourt who alerted me to the opportunity. Peter, Geoff and Bob Wallace met me as I stepped off The Overland. Peter's first words were 'Welcome to the hanging State'. The Stuart Case was then in full cry.

Peter had gone to Adelaide in 1950, at the age of 28, succeeding Brian Tew as Professor of Economics. He was a wartime graduate of the University of Melbourne. After a short period as a Research Officer in the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics and another as a Lecturer at Melbourne, he took his PhD at Cambridge. Returning to Melbourne at the beginning of 1949 as a Senior Lecturer, he spent only a year there before going to Adelaide. When considering the wisdom of the move to Adelaide, he sought the advice of a senior staff member at Melbourne. Observing that his putative mentor was soundly asleep, he realised that he would have

to make his own decision. That was Adelaide's (and my) good fortune.

Within a decade or so, Peter created the premier department in the country. On my count, there were in 1961 fourteen economists of the rank of Lecturer above (other than Peter). All but three of these were to become Professors in Australian universities. Of the three, two were or became Readers. The other would be Deputy-Premier of South Australia and Chair of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission.

Although his achievements, by the standard measures of publications, conference papers and the like, were formidable, Peter's success in building an outstanding department owed most to the intellectual climate that he engendered. He was a magnet. He could and often did set the agenda of debate; but he could equally 'tune in' to others' interests and propose extensions to their inquiries and arguments. Tea-room conversation might well turn into a paper. If you gave Peter a draft for comment, you could be sure of a quick and constructive response. If he had to tell you that you had backed a wrong horse, he did it in a way that made you grateful at being saved you from your own folly.

Until the mid-1950s, Peter's principal research achievements were in demography, migration and the construction of economic indices. There was then a shift toward commentary on current economic conditions and policy. His national reputation as an economist whose views mattered was firmly established. The profession was, of course, much smaller then than now; and the economist who could range widely was more appreciated. That was a reason why Peter was to be found as a participant in a high proportion of the economic debates and forums of the day. But his ability to talk sense – to distil what was important and put aside the incidentals – and the certainty that he would 'deliver' were the principal drivers of the demand for his involvement.

Around 1960, the South Australian Government received advice from the University of Adelaide that the University, given the predicted growth in its enrolments, would exhaust the capacity of its existing site by about 1966. (The University's present enrolment, on essentially the same site, is perhaps twice the projected 1966 level.) The Government responded by making available for University use the site of a former TB sanatorium. The minutes of the University Council's Committee on Bedford Park record that on 8 June 1961 it authorised the Vice-Chancellor to invite Professor Karmel 'to accept the office of Principal Designate while still retaining his Chair but relinquishing most of his departmental responsibilities'. I well remember the approval with which the news of Peter's appointment was received in the University at large. In Economics, however, delight was tempered by dismay at the unexpected prospect of Peter's imminent removal from the life of a Department in which his role had been so central.

The next four-and-a-half years were a time of intense planning, in which Peter assembled his initial team and guided their contributions. The Planning Office was in the former Mothers' and Babies' Health Centre in North Terrace, where visitors were asked to leave their prams at the door. In 1992, Peter told the Council Committee that he favoured a School, rather than a departmental, structure for the new campus. One of the four commencing Schools would be Social Sciences. The initial Chairs were to be in History and Economics; and I was delighted to be appointed to the latter. In the nine years or so between the time of my appointment and Peter's departure for Canberra, he resisted the urge which he must have surely felt from time to time to intervene in the development of the Economics discipline. There was no hint of either approval or disapproval. To this day, I do not know how differently he would have done things. I shall not ask him.

Early in 1995 there was a State election. The long era of Playford ended. (One of the two seats which changed hands was Glenelg, won by Hugh Hudson, whom Peter had recruited to Economics at Adelaide in 1960.) The ALP had promised that, upon winning Government, it would create a second University. Once in office, it discovered that the only economic way of honouring its promise was to reconstitute the University of Adelaide at Bedford Park as a separate University. Thus Flinders University, inaugurated by the Queen Mother, came into being in mid-1966. At its first meeting, the Council appointed Peter Karmel to be the Vice-Chancellor.

For most mortals, planning a new university institution would have been work enough. But in 1963, Peter was appointed to the Committee of Economic Enquiry. This was to be his last major economic assignment (though the economist's mode of thought permeated much of what he did later). Prime Minister Menzies had announced the Government's intention to appoint a committee in October 1962. A cynical, and probably accurate, view is that it was an expedient whereby Menzies excluded from the agenda of current debate issues which might be awkward at a time when he was contending with the problems of a parliamentary majority of one. By 1965, when the Committee presented its voluminous report, Menzies was again firmly in control and had little use for Vernon and his colleagues. (The statement in which he politely dismissed their Report is, nevertheless, an interesting discourse on the boundary between expert opinion and political decision-making.)

After Vernon, Peter continued to take on extra jobs. He took part in the planning of the University of Papua New Guinea and became its first Chancellor. He also chaired a major review of primary and secondary education in South Australia.

David Hilliard, who wrote a history of Flinders at its silver jubilee, observed that Peter could have run the new University with one arm tied behind his back. There was no great surprise when, in 1971, he was called to wider responsibilities as Chair of the Australian Universities Commission. But we at Flinders did feel orphaned. He

visited us, with the AUC, in 1974. Flinders was then in the midst of its student revolt. 'Buchan buggers beetroot', said one piece of graffiti. Howard Buchan served with Peter, first as Secretary for Bedford Park and then as Registrar of Flinders, from 1961 to 1971. (He was to outlast the next two Vice-Chancellors.) Opening the formal proceedings, Peter noted that the Registrar had developed some new and interesting habits.

Despite his movement away from Economics, there was a continuity in Peter's career. He was of the breed of economists who flourished in the quarter-century after World War II and who saw a place for a sizeable public sector and for active public intervention in the interests of stability and equity. That perception coloured his attitudes to education policy and was reflected in both his contribution to new ideas about funding schools and his involvement in the planning of universities and colleges of advanced education. Both the economy and education would now be in better shape if his views had continued to prevail.

A heart for people

Barry McGaw

Education in Australia has been a significant beneficiary of Peter Karmel's meteoric rise through academic ranks. Having returned to the University of Melbourne with his PhD in economics from Cambridge, Peter was appointed Professor of Economics at the University of Adelaide at the age of 28. His subsequent appointment as Foundation Vice-Chancellor of Flinders University drew his attention to more general matters of education. He cut his teeth on educational issues at the school level in chairing a major inquiry in South Australia but then turned, in 1973, to national issues as Chair of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission. This second Karmel Report provided the Whitlam government with the detailed program it needed for its efforts to transform Australia's schools. There was support for innovation, professional development of teachers and enhanced resources for disadvantaged students.

A decade later, when a new Minister was being challenged for justification of a federal role in school education and, more particularly, for evidence that the additional resources released on the advice of Professor Karmel's committee had been beneficial, his advice was sought again. This time he chaired the Quality of Education Review Committee, marshalled the available evidence and became one of the early voices commending a shift in focus from inputs to outcomes.

This work on issues of school education was undertaken alongside his full-time professional engagement with higher education as Chair of the Universities Commission and then the Tertiary Education Commission and his subsequent return to the ranks of Vice-

Chancellors with his appointment at the Australian National University.

Peter Karmel is a living national treasure in Australian education, our pre-eminent educationist. He has willingly taken on formal roles but has also willingly used his experience and authority to engage in public debate in less formal ways. He is a prolific writer and conference speaker. He is always well-prepared so that journalists always have the full text of his speeches in advance. Since they are often controversial, this ensures extensive coverage of what he has to say and, often, virtually complete publication of his text in the press. Ministers and senior public servants do not always welcome his interventions. Some try, at least informally, to diminish the force of his comments by representing them as a pining for the days when he was in charge. But that does not work. First, his case is always well supported by careful examination of empirical evidence. Secondly, he is always open-minded and ready enough to change his own prescriptions in the light of new circumstances. He may not be swayed by each new economic orthodoxy but he is willing to see the need for new educational solutions for new social and economic contexts. And he is able to propose coherent policy responses.

He is a prodigious and rapid worker. This is well illustrated by the way in which he filled his role as Chair of the Council and Board of Directors of the Australian Council for Educational Research. He joined the Council in the 1960s and became Chair in ACER's 50th anniversary year in 1980 and remained in that role until 1999. As Director of ACER from 1985 to 1998, I was witness to the care with which he prepared for meetings and the willingness with which he read and commented helpfully on draft research reports. In 1998, when he was hospitalised soon after a Board meeting and temporarily able to communicate only in writing, he responded to the delivery of flowers from the ACER staff with a written note to his wife, Lena, asking her to let Bo (the Board Secretary) know that he would not be sending his suggested changes to the draft minutes until the following week. He then delivered them as he said he would.

The picture of Peter Karmel is incomplete if only his engagement with professional issues is seen. He has a heart for people as well as a mind for ideas. He is a wonderful mentor and companion.

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The Role of Social Factors in Child Development - a clinical and epidemiological point of view

Fiona Stanley

> The basic incongruity in . . . perinatal care lies in our superb ability to care for the individual patient and our dismal failure to address the problems of the larger society. (Rosenblatt 1989 [American Epidemiologist])

Personal History

As a student I became increasingly aware of the importance of the nexus between social environments and health. This became reality when confronted with actual life situations as a medical resident. After graduating in Medicine from The University of Western Australia, I became interested in paediatrics. I remember looking after an Aboriginal boy in the children's hospital who was admitted repeatedly, mainly because of the poor social conditions in which he was living. He eventually died in hospital, after several expensive episodes of care, each of which was hailed as a "medical miracle" of survival. Surely better medicine would have been to look to the causes of his poor health? As Rosenblatt says (1989) we spend so much effort and money in ensuring that a preterm infant has the best chance of surviving and very little effort and money on preventing preterm birth. In Australia disadvantaged children can still die from preventable diseases. The experience affected me deeply and I felt increasingly dissatisfied with clinical paediatrics. I had to discover another way to contribute to the health and well being of children and began a journey towards epidemiology and social medicine. This journey started whilst doing a locum on a remote Scottish island. I read an advertisement in the Lancet and moved to London to do a Masters in the research skills for population health sciences, *viz* epidemiology and biostatistics at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. This broadly based training included medical sociology at the London School of Economics, health economics with Brian Abel-Smith, lectures from Archie Cochrane, Peter Townsend and Peter Armitage (who wrote the best text in biostatistics). I had been fortunate enough to get an National Health & Medical Research Council overseas training fellowship in Epidemiology at London University which also paid for a year as a Visiting Scientist at the National Institutes of Health, USA. During my UK training I discovered the power of population databases as the first stage in aetiological research as well as to evaluate the impact of interventions, and to help determine policy.

I returned to Perth, Western Australia in 1977 and with the $4000 Setting-up Grant in the last year of my fellowship I established the now renowned WA Cerebral Palsy Register (one of the very few population based disability registers in the world at that time) and the first congenital malformations register in Australia (funded by the Commonwealth Government in the wake of the Agent Orange

scare). Then, as Senior Medical Officer in Child Health for the Health Department of Western Australia, my group developed statewide links with midwives and child health nurses and laid the foundations for the Maternal and Child Health Research Data Base. This population-based, record linked database has become the best in Australia and underpins much of the epidemiological work in the Institute. They were great days as there was so little going on in maternal and child health epidemiology in Australia and we felt like pioneers!

The Institute for Child Health Research

After 10 years of epidemiological research, I became dissatisfied with the limitations of epidemiology, on its own, to solve the problems of causation and prevention in maternal and child ill-health. At the same time there was the threat of losing funding for medical research from the local Telethon that raised money for sick children. This affected other research groups as well as my own. These two factors stimulated discussions between myself and Professor Lou Landau (who had just taken up the Chair in Paediatrics in Perth in 1984) about setting up an Institute for Child Health Research at the Children's hospital. The primary aim was to encourage collaboration between basic scientists, clinical researchers and epidemiologists to properly elucidate causal pathways and be able to develop effective preventive strategies for childhood diseases.

Were we mad? Set up a world class institute in the most isolated city in the largest and most deserted state in Australia, in the middle of a recession which was in full swing? We invited a group of Australia's leading health and medical researchers to Perth in 1986 and asked them to interview all of the players and make an assessment. The committee felt we had the right ingredients and encouraged us to go ahead. The Institute was formed in 1990 and I was appointed founding Director.

Complex diseases and multidisciplinary research

The rationale for setting up the Institute was that the problems in child health are now complex and embedded within problems pertaining to society as a whole. They are epitomised by diseases such as asthma, birth defects and other developmental problems, cancers and psychosocial problems. These stem from a complicated series of interactions between genes and environment (both social and physical). Their causal pathways are variable and they demand complex solutions for their management or prevention. Our thinking was that if we brought together scientists from different disciplines under one roof we might be able to better unravel the causes. The aims of the Institute are to describe the burden of diseases in children and families in WA, to seek causal pathways using all types of scientific methods and then to apply any knowledge to prevent disease in the community or to improve treatment at the bedside.

Maternal and Child Health Epidemiological Research

The databases mentioned above described maternal and child health in the Western Australian population and spawned a range of epidemiological studies. We identified three major contributors to child mortality and morbidity: birth defects, cerebral palsy and low birth weight. Studies into these problems began in 1980 and continue to be central to our research. Some of the significant outcomes have been: research on folate and spina bifida, debunking the myth that all cerebral palsy cases arise from problems during labour, and establishing a successful maternal and child health program for Indigenous families in Kalgoorlie, particularly aimed at the social antecedents of low birth weight. Most of these are national and international issues and increasingly our Institute is being seen as a source of information for government.

The importance of psychosocial factors, both in the aetiologies of disease and as outcomes is increasingly obvious. Preterm birth illustrates this well - social adversity is clearly a major risk factor, *and* children born preterm are at higher risk of developmental problems and psychosocial morbidities.

Aboriginal Health Research

Our studies into the causes of low birth weight babies identified a significantly higher burden of this problem in remote Aboriginal communities and raised the issue of developing culturally appropriate models of Aboriginal Health research that would be more effective and less damaging than those of previous decades. We commenced by forming partnerships with Aboriginal communities; these have grown stronger over the years. We employed Aboriginal health workers in research before others had considered it important and have two Aboriginal PhD students at present.

The investment over the last two decades has led to the formation of the Indigenous Maternal and Child Health Research Network with Sir William Deane as the Patron-In -Chief and Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue as Patron. The primary role of the Network is to act as an advocate for Indigenous children and families in Western Australia. It will ensure that community based and culturally relevant research benefits Indigenous people by influencing policy in government and other key agencies, and by ensuring they are involved in all areas of research and its implementation. The Network is a joint activity between researchers at the Institute and all of the WA Aboriginal Medical Services. All projects involve the training, input and cooperation of Indigenous people. We believe that this is one key to realising improved Indigenous health.

One of the major new projects overseen by the Network is the Aboriginal Child Health Survey, which is being run by our Psychosocial Research Division (headed by Professor Stephen Zubrick). The collection of data in this survey will take place throughout Western Australian during 2000 and involve over 3000

Aboriginal families and a field staff of 180 screeners and interviewers. This project will gather complex psychosocial data (including mental health interviews) on about 4300 Aboriginal children from birth to age 18. The project represents eight years of development work and is supported by a large State and Commonwealth Government funding strategy. This will be the first time that there has been whole of government support for Indigenous children in Australia. The results are expected in 2001.

Ecological and social contexts in epidemiological research

Epidemiological research has long had a focus on risk factors and disease outcomes in individuals often ignoring the ecological and social contexts of the societal or individual behaviours in which such risk factors occur. Full knowledge of causal pathways takes into account these early and important stimuli to the sequence and opens up early and more effective strategies. The overall system in which disease pathways commence is as crucial to the solution as the underlying biological mechanisms. Therefore, not only should epidemiology be co-housed with biological and fundamental research, it must link up with the ecological and social context in which data collection and analysis occur. The bringing together this year of the former divisions of epidemiology, psychosocial research, biostatistics and genetic epidemiology into the Division of Population Sciences at the Institute marks a significant transition that acknowledges the broad social and psychological basis of child development and health.

The commonality of research paradigms and the extensive cross-collaboration between researchers in these areas have made this an easy and natural transition. Advances in information systems technology have enhanced the integration. Not only does this mean that epidemiological, psychosocial, biostatistical and computing scientists bring powerful and sophisticated methodologies to the collaborative table, but large amounts of complex data on large populations are collected, linked and readily accessible to all in the group. There is now the capacity for rapid exchange of ideas and of information. For example: by linking the Child Health Survey (a study conducted in 1993 with the Australian Bureau of Statistics which looked at the mental health of children in WA) with the Maternal and Child Health Research Database we were able to observe an association between restricted fetal growth and subsequent mental health problems in 4-13 year olds. We could not have achieved this sized study and its complexity within an isolated discipline.

Social inequities in Maternal and Child Health

There is ample evidence now that maternal and child health outcomes vary significantly with markers of social inequity. It is necessary to ask why these associations are so consistent and strong in the wealthy nations of the 21st Century. We need to investigate the implications this has for research into the causal pathways of childhood disease. Most importantly how does this

information help in developing effective preventive strategies for ill health?

Our research has clearly shown that Aboriginal race is a marker of social inequity that has a strong association with poor infant and child health outcomes. Indigenous communities have lower birth weight babies, a higher rate of still births and very high rates of cot death (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) compared to the non Indigenous community (up to seven times higher). The same pattern of inequality by race is evident in childhood mortality statistics. In addition, accidents and infections are excessive for infants of young and unsupported mothers in the overall population.

These results have been verified in other studies from the Institute as well as those from the UK, USA and Scandinavia. It is clear that strategies to decrease the mortality rates of Aboriginal and other disadvantaged families will depend on improving the social and economic conditions in which they live. This would also impact on many other maternal and child health outcomes such as maternal smoking, breast feeding, cerebral palsy, youth mental health problems, student academic competence and drug taking, all of which have an association with socio-economic status.

National data on poverty shows that social inequality is increasing in Australia with an increasing number of children living in poverty (mainly due to a sharp increase in the number of sole parents). It is the inequality or the growing gap between the rich and the poor more than absolute poverty *per se* that is the main problem for maternal and child health outcomes. Some poorer countries like Cuba and China have achieved excellent health outcomes for children, better than that in Australia or the USA. Their commitment to community, health, education and welfare policies bear scrutiny.

Why is there a link between socio-economic standing and health? Is it a higher rate of illness, more risk factors for illness, less access to good medical care or a combination of these factors amongst those less advantaged? Rigorous social epidemiological research should focus on obtaining answers to these very important questions, which could have enormous implications for health and medical services. It is vital that population health scientists develop qualities that include scientific rigour and an awareness of the link between social inequality and ill-health in order to expose the hidden burden of disease in our disadvantaged communities.

Health and medical research has an obligation to participate in improving the health of society and needs to be aware of these broader issues. It must put its effort into the overall context of the "larger society" as Rosenblatt observed. Framing issues in health within a context that is relevant to the broader community is one way of achieving this. In 1999 the Institute hosted a one-day visit by the late Robert Theobald, an internationally renowned futurist and public speaker. Leaders from the media, business, academia, research, government and the community met for a workshop and lecture on

the essential elements of resilient communities. Preventive strategies in child health will depend on effective decision making which these people can influence, and which is underpinned by evidence, and on social cohesion, effective leadership and a shift to collaboration and partnerships within both the research and the broader community.

Comment

A passionate commitment

Margot Prior

Professor Stanley is a one of the world's most eminent researchers in the field of social medicine, particularly in the sphere of perinatal and paediatric epidemiology. She is currently the Director of the Institute for Child Health Research in Western Australia, and Professor in the Department of Paediatrics at the University of Western Australia.

She has been the recipient of a number of medals, is a Companion of the Order of Australia, and in 2000 was nominated as one of Australia's 'tall poppies'. Professor Stanley was elected to Fellowship of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia in 1996.

Her medical and research career began in Perth in the early 1970s, and it was at this time that her very special contributions to Aboriginal health began. Between 1972 and 1976, she worked in Britain at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine where she took out her MSc and MFPHM; and then as a guest worker in the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in the US. Her experiences led her from a potential career as a medical practitioner to a career in public health epidemiology.

During the 1980s, Professor Stanley held senior positions in the NH&MRC Research Unit in Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine at UWA. She has been the Director of the TVW Telethon Institute for Child Health Research since 1991 and under her leadership this institute has achieved international recognition for its cutting edge research across a broad range of multi-disciplinary paediatric interests. Research domains at the Institute presided over by Professor Stanley include Aboriginal health, asthma and allergies, infectious diseases, cancer research, birth difficulties and child disabilities, perinatal epidemiology, and child and adolescent mental health. She has been instrumental in the creation of population databases which underpin her life's work in basic epidemiology and make a major national and international contribution to medical research.

Her strong and clearly articulated commitment to psychosocial perspectives on health and disability is the foundation of her outstanding contribution in enhancing the understanding of social factors in health in this country. This commitment springs from her fundamental interest in people, in politics, and in social action, along with a transcending empathy for people and their well being. Professor Stanley has articulated a vision of medical and health research which is more comprehensive and integrated than is usual in the field, and which has contributed to the quality and value of the directions of her institute. She has developed sophisticated understanding of the causal pathways in health and illness, and awareness of the complex social and economic determinants that influence health outcomes and which are critical in effective prevention and health promotion.

A passionate commitment to the improvement of the health of indigenous people can be seen in the programs in this domain at the institute. In collaboration and cooperation with indigenous people, she has established the Indigenous Maternal and Child Health Research Network whose role is to act as an advocate for indigenous families in WA, and to ensure that research is culturally relevant, community based, aimed at influencing policy and planning agencies, and involving Aboriginal people in planning and implementation of policies to improve indigenous health. A major current project is the Aboriginal Child Health Survey managed by the Psychosocial Division of the Institute, which will involve more than 3000 aboriginal families and field staff across the state. This research will gather psychosocial data relevant to the mental health of aboriginal children from birth to 18 years, and will be a landmark study in Australia.

Professor Stanley's contribution to maternal and child health is impossible to quantify but may be seen in part, in her publication of over 135 scientific papers and contributions to 27 books. She has achieved international renown for her work in the epidemiology of the cerebral palsies, which has culminated in the publication of her recent book with Blair and Alberman *The Cerebral Palsies: Epidemiology and Casual Pathways*.

She has also made a major contribution to the understanding of the role of folate in the prevention of Spina Bifida with public health consequences in instigation of dietary modifications for women of childbearing age which can reduce the incidence of this problem. Her work is particularly valuable in its focus on causal pathways for disease, and in its facility for translation into practical outcomes for families and children, which will improve health and reduce disease and suffering.

Her influence in teaching, research, and public health advocacy has been enormous and is well recognised through her appointment to such bodies as the Prime Minister's Science Engineering and Innovation Council, the National Health Advisory Council and the Health and Medical Research Strategic Review Committee, of the

NH&MRC, the Aboriginal Ethics Committee of the Health Department of WA, and the Western Pacific Advisory committee on Health Research of the World Health Organization.

Professor Stanley also serves on the Editorial Boards of a number of international journals. She has been an outstanding model for health practitioners and researchers and has greatly enhanced knowledge in the medical profession in Australia concerned with the epidemiology of childhood disabilities, peri-natal morbidity, and a range of child public health domains.

The account of her scientific achievements is impressive indeed, but does not sufficiently capture the essence of her dynamic personality. Fiona Stanley is one of those people described as 'once seen, never forgotten'. Her vibrancy, warmth, energy, enthusiasm, and insatiable attraction to learning are infectious; she has been described as 'an intuitive visionary'. Her courageous, articulate, and outspoken commitment to human rights and social justice shine through her personality, her social, scientific, and political interactions, and permeates her research and clinical work. She is superb as a collaborator and in the mentoring role and is always ready with lively interest and support, accompanied by an extraordinarily rapid grasp of new ideas and problems. This is invaluable in the invigoration and nurture of the many colleagues from medical, social, and behavioural disciplines, who have found her an inspiration and a fount of wisdom.

The proceedings from the National Academies Forum seminar

FIRE! The Australian Experience

held at the University of Adelaide in late 1999 have been published. Papers include 'The fire at the centre of each family': Aboriginal traditional fire regimes and the challenges for reproducing ancient fire management in the protected areas of northern Australia. Marcia Langton; How Fire Shaped a Continent: Australian Experiences of First Since 1788. Geoffrey Blainey; The Arsonist's Mind. Fabian Crowe; Cycles of Fire, Cycles of Life. Malcolm Gill; Recent Advancements in Weather Observation and Forecast Technologies relating to Wildfires in Australia. Andrew Watson; The Bastard Country: Fire on Stage. Malcolm Gillies; Returning to Ashes. Peter Read; The International Scene and its Impact on Australia. Wendy Catchpole.

Cost $20.00. Requests should be sent to:

Fiona Knight, Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, PO Box 355, Carlton South, Victoria 3053.

Telephone: 03 9347 0622. email: fionak@atse.org.au

Academy News

2000/2001 Canadian Studies Awards in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities. The Canadian High Commission has announced a number of research and teaching grants, open to faculty members and postgraduate students in Canadian Studies. Topics which lend themselves most readily to Canadian Studies include business studies, economics, law, international relations, public administration, history, politics, geography, arts, literature in English or French, linguistics, education communications policy, media studies, planning, science policy, social administration, environmental studies, architecture, and other related fields. For further information visit the ACSANZ website at: http://www.powerup.com/au/~aczanz/

For guidelines and applications forms contact: Canadian High Commission, Academic & Public Affairs Section, Commonwealth Avenue, Canberra, ACT \ 2600. Tel 02 6270 4000, Fax 02 6270 4083. Email: eva.zarka@defait-maeci.gc.ca.

° *Professor Frank Jackson*, Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies at the Australian National University, has been elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

Research Projects

Postgraduate Training in the Social Sciences. On 8 May the second workshop for the research project on postgraduate training was held at the Key Centre for Women's Health at the University of Melbourne. The workshop was chaired by Professor Simon Marginson as project director and Professor Lenore Manderson from the ASSA project committee.

Contributors presented draft chapters with assigned respondents commenting on drafts, followed by a lively group discussion. The concluding session of the day was devoted to ensuring that all papers were in accordance with the agreed structure and strategic direction of the research project.It is anticipated that all chapters will be at the final draft stage by mid August.

Creating Unequal Futures? Rethinking Poverty, Inequality and Disadvantage in Australia. Ruth Fincher and Peter Saunders (eds). This will be published as a paperback of approximately 250 pages for first semester 2001.

The Economic and Social Costs of Unemployment. On Thursday 4 May 2000 ASSA held the first workshop for participants in the research project on *The Economic and Social Costs of Unemployment.* The workshop was chaired by Professor Peter Saunders who is joint project director with Associate Professor Richard Taylor. Introductory comments on behalf of the Academy were made by Sue Richardson who is Chair of the Academy's Research Committee and a member of the project committee. The Academy has assembled an impressive group of scholars for this project.

Contributors provided short chapter summaries on the following themes: 'Introduction and Overview: Costing Unemployment' Peter Saunders, Richard Taylor; 'Identifying and Quantifying the Cost of Unemployment' Tony Eardley; 'The Changing Nature and Profile of Australian Unemployment' Stephen Bell; 'Unemployment, Exclusion and Inequality' Peter Saunders; 'Unemployment and Health' Richard Taylor; 'Unemployment and Criminal Activity' Don Weatherburn; 'Unemployment and Community Life: A Case Study of Newtown' Lois Bryson, Ian Winter; 'Experiencing Retrenchment in the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Industry: Case Studies of an Industry in Decline' Michael Webber; 'Unemployment, Family Life and Family Functioning' Janet Taylor; 'The Psychological Impact of Unemployment on the Unemployed' Bruce Headey; 'The Impact of Unemployment on Youth' Mathew Gray; 'Policies for Minimising the Cost of Unemployment' John Nevile.

A second workshop is scheduled for 23-24 November.

Special Projects 2001 On 23 May 2000 the Academy submitted an Expression of Interest application for funding under the DETYA Learned Academies Special Projects program. Following consultation with Fellows and others in the academic community, three projects were developed and submitted by Sue Richardson and the Research Committee: *The Sustainability of Australian Rural Communities; Stress in the Workplace; Investing in our Children.*

Comments from the ARC committee on the projects are anticipated in July. The Research Committee will consider the three projects in the light of comments received, with a view to submitting a full proposal on 28 July 2000.

International News

Readers are reminded that the closing dates for applicants to participate in the Academy's funded Exchange Schemes are fast approaching.

A new agreement signed this year with the **Chinese Academy of Social Sciences** (CASS) invites research scholars in the social sciences, who are Australian citizens, to apply for a travel grant and per diem. The aims of the program include collaboration between Australian and Chinese scholars, the opportunity for access to research and research materials not easily accessible outside the countries concerned, and the development of networks of scholars with related interests both within and between the two countries. The Academy facilitates visits by scholars to specific research institutes and/or conferences in China, preferably for a period of four weeks. The sending country pays international excursion fares to the capital city of the host country, and the host provides transport and accommodation. Applicants need to propose a program for the approval of the host Academy. The applicant should be a **junior scholar** (including those who had recently completed their doctorate). ***Closing date is 31 July*** each year (for travel to China in the following year)*.*

The **Australia-Netherlands Exchange Scheme** is a funded program between the joint Australian academies of the Academy of Social Sciences and the Australian Academy of the Humanities, with the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (The Netherlands). The Joint Academies facilitate visits by scholars to specific research institutes or conferences in the Netherlands, preferably for periods of one or two weeks. The scholar is responsible for the cost of the international airfare to the Netherlands, however the Royal Netherlands Academy will meet the cost of living and approved internal travel during the period of stay. Applicants will need to propose a program for the approval of the host Academy. This program has importance for, among other things, continued access to Dutch research and research materials on Indonesia. *Closing date is 15 August* each year (for travel to The Netherlands in the following year).

Application forms for both Exchange Programs is available on the Academy's website www.assa.edu.au or from Sue Rider at the Secretariat.

The Joint Australian Academies of Humanities and Social Sciences and **The Vietnam National Centre for the Social Sciences and Humanities** have an agreement of collaboration to promote the development of scholarly relations between Australian and Vietnamese scholars. The Vietnam National Centre for the Social Sciences and Humanities facilitates a limited number of visits of not less than two weeks by Australian scholars each year to specific research institutes and universities in Vietnam. Support provided to scholars includes accommodation and living costs and local hospitality arrangements. Prior contact with, and a program of studies at a particular institution/research institute in Vietnam will need to be specified in an application, to be submitted through the Academies, for the approval of the Vietnam National Centre. Where possible, applicants should submit copies of invitations from their host institution/research centre with their application form. Modifications to the program, once accepted by the Centre, may be made only if conducive to more effective collaboration. The Centre supports at least one Vietnamese scholar per year to visit Australia, which includes international travel from Vietnam. The Joint Academies welcome information from Australian departments/scholars interested in hosting Vietnamese scholars under this scheme. *Further information is available from: The Secretariat, The Australian Academy of the Humanities, GPO Box 93, CANBERRA 2601. Tel (02) 6248 7744; Fax (02) 6248 6287.* email: aah@anu.edu.au

Australia-Netherlands Exchange Scheme *Dr Marian Klamer* from the Department of Linguistics, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam will be visiting the Australian National University from 16-25 July 2000 under the Scheme. Dr Klamer, one of the leading international linguistic experts on the eastern Indonesian region, will be

participating in the *2000 East Nusantara Linguistic* Workshop to be held in the Department of Linguistics, ANU.

Associate Professor Amarjit Kaur, from the School of Economic Studies at the University of New England has been accepted by The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences as an Exchange scholar to visit the International Institute of Asian Studies in Leiden and the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam. Professor Kaur, whose area of study include women workers in Asia, child labour in SE Asia, and wage labour and social change in SE Asia, will consult with other members of the *Changing Labour Relations in Asia* project.

Emeritus Professor Oskar Spate, formerly of the Australian National University has died.

His obituary will appear in the Annual Report.

The **Secretariat is connected to e-mail**. The general address for all Academy matters is: ASSA.Secretariat@anu.edu.au

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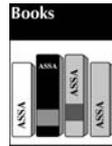Mrs Pam Shepherd, Executive Assistant: at the general address
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Books

Rednecks, Eggheads and Blackfellas. A study of racial power and intimacy in Australia. By Gillian Cowlishaw. Allen & Unwin, St Leonards: 1999.

This is a rare book and certainly one worth taking seriously. It is a pleasure to recommend it to serious thinkers who care about Australian identity.

Cowlishaw takes a small scale pastoral station in Northern Australia known as Mainoru, home to the Pembarrnga people, as a case study from which to draw large scale conclusions about our history of interaction on the frontier.

The author is an anthropologist and bases her interpretations on detailed field work amongst a small group of people in one location. What I found valuable, speaking as a geographer, was the way she was able to go beyond the narrow confines of a small population focus to a much broader canvas both temporally and spatially. It is this extrapolation to the bigger scene that makes the leap beyond traditional ethnography possible and ensures the work is enhanced in its extension to the interests of a much broader reading group.

In general terms, much of the material is not new, but its handling and interpretation add great value to a now rather familiar and unjust story of European relationships with indigenous people. It is partly content, but also her clear and readable style, which enable this book to deliver such a punch. Take for example the clarity of the description in the chapter entitled 'Reforming the People'. Cowlishaw says: 'When rations were supplied, a brake was applied to the relationship between people and country. There was nothing gradual about the presence of whitefellas' (p 132). The whole cataclysmic event for the Pembarrnga was thus summed up with two very succinct sentences.

Cowlishaw is able to look at the history of interaction from the points of view of each of the groups of often unwitting players. For this reason the book is more of a balanced view of a difficult history than some of the more emotional and selective descriptions have been, and more real-life in its portrayal of people than some anthropological studies which follow, as Cowlishaw describes, 'the traditional quest of ethnographic work' (p 11). 'Mine is not an anthropology primarily concerned with documenting the domain of a radical, unique otherness . . . I believe there are limitations in that enterprise' (p 11).

She states very early in the book her larger perspective, an approach not always popular with her colleagues. I found it refreshing, and was encouraged to read on and enjoy the whole book.

Cowlishaw researched well beyond her field area and worked extensively with primary historical sources to situate her

ethnographic work in real place and time. She understood the driving forces behind the racialism. 'The high moral worth of civilisation was the faith on which the national conscience rested, and the inevitability of progress gave it a firm foundation.' 'Inevitability' is an operative word. The state saw progress as sweeping over the Australian landscape taking all indigenous inhabitants with it. The role of the state as Cowlishaw says was 'to manage things, to curb the excesses, dampen the violence, reduce the distances, and to impose rationality both on the pastoralists' lawlessness and the natives' untamed waywardness' (p 58).

We are shown the occupational history through the eyes of the pastoralist and his family, the government administrators and the people who were on the one hand, in the way of economic change and on the other, fundamental to it. These balancing, competing viewpoints, all treated with empathy, are the real strength of this book.

This is a history with a difference. The process of change to people and country is treated chronologically like any history of occupation. The chapter titles reflect this – 'Opening the Country', 'Civilising the Country', 'Reforming the People', A New Modernism'. Such titles illustrate a more personal view of the history, one seen through the attitudes of those intimately involved in the processes described.

Albeit rather subtly, the author does at times dump on the more traditional, straightline anthropological interpreters of these processes. Yet the ethnographic material, acquired during intense and quite integrated field work, still forms the strong foundation on which the interpretive history is built. The strength of this is seen in the ways the lives of the key players are described in small cameos throughout the text.

The opening of the country is described first in the words of George Jaurdaku: 'Before I was born, in this country there were a lot of people here. People were shooting people. This lot here, whitefellas used to chase them along and shoot them. The wild blackfellas. They had no anything, no English, no tucker (p 50).

A quote from a patrol officer in 1948 illustrates the use of primary source material in the section 'Reforming the People': 'The McKay brothers showed me around the native quarters which were very clean and tidy. I was pleasantly impressed by the native huts. These have been constructed under supervision and apart from being waterproof have ample standing room. The natives were pleasant, contented, clean and appeared to be well cared for' (p 134).

These two quotations, as do many others in the book, graphically illustrate the views of history through the experiences of the local participants.

Cowlishaw quotes rather critically from the father of Australian anthropology who established the Sydney Department and whose views dominated Australian images of Aboriginal people for

generations: 'At night there is a radio, electric light and kerosene refrigerator. Thus the modern world comes to the heart of Arnhemland. A quarter mile away the sticks tap, the Bungal is sung and feet stamp as the primitive meets the meta-modern. The settler is between . . ., gone primitive, no sheets, enamel mugs and plate, but plenty to eat' (p 91). Cowlishaw took this from Elkin's papers of material recorded on his 1949 visit to Mainoru.

It is also by means of personal histories and written records that Cowlishaw follows the history through the 1970s, the era declared to be one of self-determination. Her summing up of this policy highlights with great clarity the delusion of this policy change.

'The narcissism of the vision is revealed in the mythic dimensions of 'self-determination' which was supposed to usher in equality and freedom' (p 22). She goes on to describe how far reality fell short of that vision and how that misplaced idealism damaged some groups of people. The damning comments of the present 'policy' illustrates this. 'The history of trying to abolish native culture is still present in the contemporary wish to reinstate it' (p 296).

I thoroughly recommend this book. It is an important, if sometimes annoying, addition to our national history. Some of us can say 'sorry' and know that is only a beginning.

Fay Gale

International Toxic Risk Management – Ideals, Interests and Implementation. By Aynsley Kellow. Cambridge University Press: 1999.

This book is timely since it deals with a topic that has become a major concern in environmental management – the management of hazardous chemicals. The economics of chemical manufacture require transport and registration in multiple user countries for an operation to succeed. Thus, as the author points out, the focus for the management of chemicals is not only at the national level but increasingly at the international level. This book addresses the complex web of national and international policies and legislation as well as the role of the many players who influence these matters.

The book confronts and questions many issues: for example, it argues that chemical risk assessment is, at its base, subjective in nature whereas many scientists would claim a high degree of objectivity. The author also outlines examples of policy decisions which were expected to have positive outcomes on chemical management but instead the outcomes were negative due to faulty perceptions of the nature of the problem. The author goes on to reveal many more similar matters in a courageous and objective manner.

The book is comprehensive, well organised and written in a readable manner. It starts with the nature of risk, how it is perceived by the public and government, and the politics of risk management in general. It then proceeds to trade, environmental and international

politics. The concluding chapter attempts to draw out some general lessons to be learned and some directions for the future.

This book will not be popular in many quarters for it brings into question many matters which are accepted as being in the public good or for the betterment of the environment. However it is a highly valuable book for this very reason and is recommended reading for the development of the next step on the path forward to the protection of the environment from hazardous chemicals.

Des Connell

Opinion

Migration and Multilingualism in Europe and Australia

Guus Extra
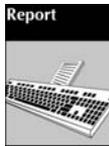
How 'they' hit the headlines Imagine a European citizen who has never been abroad and who travels to San Francisco for the first time in life, walks around downtown for a week, gets an impression of the Chinese community, is invited for dinner by a Chinese family, and asks the host at the dinner table: 'How many foreigners live in San Francisco?' in this way referring to the many Asian, Latin, and other non-Anglo Americans(s) seen during that week. Now, two things might happen: if the guest's English is poor, the Chinese host might leave this European reference to ethnocultural diversity unnoticed and go on with the conversation; if the guest's English is good, however, the Chinese host might interrupt the dinner and charge his guest with discrimination.

In the European public discourse on immigrant minority (henceforward IM) groups, two major characteristics emerge: IM groups are often referred to as *foreigners* (*étrangers*, *Ausländer*) and as being in need of *integration*. It is common practice to refer to IM groups in terms of non-national residents and to their languages in terms of *non-European*, *non-territorial* or *non-indigenous* languages. At the national level, IM groups in Great Britain are often referred to as *non-English speaking* residents and in the Netherlands even more curtly as *anderstaligen* ('those who speak other languages'). The conceptual exclusion rather than inclusion in the European public discourse derives from a restrictive interpretation of the notions of *citizenship* and *nationality*. From a historical point of view, such notions are commonly shaped by a constitutional *ius sanguinis* (law of the blood) in which nationality derives from parental origins, in contrast to *ius soli* (law of the ground) in which nationality derives from the country of birth. When European emigrants left their continent in the past and colonised countries abroad, they legitimised their claims to citizenship by

spelling out *ius soli* in the constitutions of the countries of settlement. Good examples of this strategy are evident in English-dominant immigration countries like the USA, Canada, Australia, and South Africa. In establishing the constitutions of these (sub)continents no consultation took place with native inhabitants, such as Indians, Eskimos, Aboriginals, and Zulus respectively. At home, however, Europeans predominantly upheld *ius sanguinis* in their constitutions and/or perceptions of nationality and citizenship, in spite of the growing numbers of IM groups who strive for an equal status as citizens in a new multicultural European context.

A second major characteristic of the European public discourse on IM groups is the focus on *integration.* This notion is both vague and popular, and it may actually refer to a whole spectrum of underlying concepts that vary over space and time[1]. The extremes of the spectrum range from assimilation to multiculturalism. The concept of assimilation is based on the premise that cultural differences should and will disappear over time in a society which is proclaimed to be culturally and linguistically homogeneous. On the other side of the spectrum, the concept of multiculturalism is based on the premise that such differences are an asset to a pluralist society which actually promotes cultural and linguistic diversity in terms of new resources and opportunities. While the concept of assimilation focuses on unilateral tasks of *newcomers*, the concept of multiculturalism focuses on multilateral tasks for all inhabitants in demographically changing societies. In practice, established majority groups often make strong demands on IM groups for integration in terms of assimilation and are commonly very reluctant to promote or even accept the notion of cultural diversity as a determining characteristic of an increasingly multicultural environment.

It is interesting to compare the underlying assumptions of *integration* in the European public discourse on IM groups at the national level with assumptions at the level of cross-national cooperation and legislation. In the latter context, European politicians are eager to stress the importance of a proper balance between the loss and maintenance of 'national' norms and values. A prime concern in the public debate on such norms and values is cultural and linguistic diversity. In this context, the national languages of EU countries are considered to be core values of cultural identity. It is a paradoxical phenomenon that in the same public discourse IM languages and cultures are commonly conceived as sources of problems and deficits and as obstacles to integration, while national languages and cultures in an expanding EU are regarded as sources of enrichment and as prerequisites for integration.

The public discourse on integration of IM groups in terms of assimilation *vs* multiculturalism can also be noticed in the domain of education. Due to a growing influx of IM pupils, schools are increasingly faced with the challenge of adapting their curricula to this trend. The pattern of modification may be inspired by a strong and unilateral emphasis on learning (in) the language of the majority of society, given its significance for success in school and on the

labour market, or by the awareness that the response to emerging multicultural school populations cannot be reduced to monolingual education programming. In the former case, the focus will be on learning (in) the national language as a second language only, in the latter case on offering more languages than the national language in the school curriculum.

There is considerable critical discussion of the concepts of *non-nationals* and *integration* in the public discourse on IM groups[2]. These studies show that the emergence of multicultural societies in Europe has implications for all citizens, not just for 'newcomers'.

Demographic trends and criteria   As a consequence of socio-economically or politically determined processes of migration, the traditional patterns of language variation across Western Europe have changed considerably over the past several decades[3]. The first pattern of migration started in the sixties and early seventies, and it was mainly economically motivated. In the case of Mediterranean groups, migration initially involved contract workers who stayed for a limited period of time. As their stay lengthened, this pattern of economic migration was followed by a second, of social migration, as their families joined them. Subsequently, a second generation was born in the immigrant countries, while their parents often remained ambivalent about whether to stay or return to the country of origin. These demographic shifts over time have also been accompanied by shifts of designation for the groups under consideration – 'migrant workers', 'immigrant families', and 'ethnic minorities', respectively.

As a result, many industrialised Western European countries have a growing number of IM populations which differ widely, both culturally and linguistically, from the mainstream indigenous population. In spite of more stringent IM policies in most EU countries, the prognosis is that IM populations will continue to grow as a consequence of the increasing number of political refugees, the opening of the internal European borders, and political and economic developments in Central and Eastern Europe and in other regions of the world. It has been estimated that in the year 2000, at least one third of the population under the age of 35 in urbanised Western Europe has an immigration background.

There are large differences among EU countries as regards the size and composition of IM groups. Owing to labour market mechanisms, such groups are found mainly in the northern industrialised EU countries, whereas their presence in Mediterranean countries like Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain is rather limited (although increasing). Mediterranean groups immigrate mainly to France or Germany. Portuguese, Spanish, and Maghreb residents concentrate in France, whereas Italian, Greek, former Yugoslavian, and Turkish residents concentrate in Germany. The largest IM groups in EU countries are Turkish and Maghreb residents; the latter originate from Morocco, Algeria, or Tunisia. For various reasons, however, reliable demographic information on IM groups in EU countries is difficult to obtain. For some groups or countries, updated information

is not available or such data have never been collected at all. Moreover, official statistics only reflect IM groups with legal resident status. Another source of disparity is the different data collection systems being used, ranging from nationwide census data to more or less representative surveys. Most important, however, the most widely used criteria for IM status - nationality and/or country of birth - have become less valid over time because of an increasing trend towards naturalisation and births within the countries of residence. In addition, most residents from former colonies already have the nationality of their countries of immigration; and based on the conservative nationality criterion, in 1993 the largest Turkish and Maghreb communities could be found in Germany (almost two million) and France (almost 1.4 million), respectively. Within the EU, the Netherlands is in second place as the country of immigration for Turkish and Moroccan residents.[4]

Given the decreasing significance of nationality and birth-country criteria, collecting reliable information about the composition of IM groups in EU countries is one of the most challenging tasks facing demographers. Complementary or alternative criteria have been suggested in various countries with a longer immigration history, and, for this reason, a history of collecting census data on multicultural population groups. In English-dominant immigration countries such as the USA, Canada, and Australia, census questions have been phrased in terms of self-categorisation and home language use. There is no single royal road to a solution of the identification problem. Different criteria may complement and strengthen each other. The combined criterion of self-categorisation and home language use is a potentially promising long-term alternative.

The problems of identifying multicultural population groups become even more striking in European statistics on IM groups in education. Most of these statistics are based on the nationality criterion. To take the Netherlands as a case in point: according to statistics of the Ministry of Education dating from 1994, about 7.8 per cent of the pupils in primary schools have non-Dutch citizenship[5]. On the basis of the same criterion, it appears that in the 1992/1993 school year, on the national level, 69 per cent of Dutch primary schools were attended by IM children. In most of these schools (51 per cent), the proportion of IM children were less than 10 per cent, and in only 4 per cent of the schools it was 50 per cent or higher. In the four largest Dutch cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht), however, these figures were strikingly different: the percentage of schools attended by IM children was 96 per cent or higher and the proportion of schools in these cities where more than 50 per cent of the children were of non-Dutch nationality were 44 per cent, 37 per cent, 28 per cent, and 33 per cent, respectively. At present, over 50 per cent of the first-year intake into primary education in these cities consists of IM children. A periodical collection of home language data at schools would offer

indispensable cornerstones for educational policy on both first and second language instruction for IM children[6].

Language policies in the European Union As yet, language policies in the EU are strongly developed within the national boundaries of the different EU member states. Proposals for a common EU language policy are laboriously achieved and noncommittal in character[7]. The most important declarations, recommendations, or directives on language policy, each of which concepts carry a different charge in the EU jargon, concern the recognition of the status of (in the order mentioned):

- national EU languages;
- indigenous or regional minority languages;
- immigrant or 'non-territorial' minority languages.

The Treaty of Rome (1958) confers equal status on all national languages of the EU member states (with the exception of Irish and Luxembourgian) as working languages. On numerous occasions, the EU ministers of education have declared that the EU citizens' knowledge of languages should be promoted[8]. Each EU member state should promote pupils' proficiency in at least two 'foreign' languages, and at least one of these languages should be the national standard language of one of the EU states.

Promoting knowledge of regional and IM languages has been left out of consideration in these ministerial statements. The European Parliament accepted various resolutions in 1981, 1987 and 1994, in which the protection and promotion of regional minority languages were recommended. The first resolution led to the foundation of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages in 1982. Meanwhile, the Bureau has member state committees in 13 EU countries and it has recently acquired the status of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) at the levels of the European Council and the United Nations. Another result of the European Parliament resolutions is the foundation of the European MERCATOR Network, aimed at promoting research on the status and use of regional minority languages. In March 1998, the European Charter of Regional Minority Languages came into operation. This Charter was framed by the Council of Europe in 1992 and it has meanwhile been ratified by seven member states. The Charter is aimed at the protection and the promotion of regional minority languages, and it functions as an international instrument for the comparison of legal measures and other facilities of the EU member states in this policy domain.

As yet, no such initiatives have been taken in the policy domain of IM languages. It is remarkable that the teaching of indigenous or regional minority languages is generally advocated for reasons of cultural diversity as a matter of course, whereas this is rarely a major argument in favour of teaching IM languages. In various EU countries, the 1977 guideline of the Council of European Communities on education for IM children[9] has promoted the legitimisation of IMLI and occasionally also its legislation[10]. In Sweden, this guideline has never had any effect, as Sweden has only recently joined the EU. Meanwhile, the guideline needs to be

reformulated and extended to pupils from non-EU countries, and it needs to be given greater binding force in the EU member states. The increasing internationalisation of pupil populations in European schools, finally, requires a language policy for *all* pupils in which the traditional dichotomy between foreign language instruction for indigenous majority pupils and home language instruction for IM pupils is put aside.

Comparative perspectives on language policies in Australia and Europe As a consequence of processes of migration and minorisation, both Australia and Western Europe have become multicultural and multilingual societies. Although these processes started to have a growing impact on the receiving societies at different points in time (in Australia after the second World War, in Europe only since the late sixties), the initial public discourse on these developments showed many similarities. The focus was most commonly on integration as a unilateral task for newcomers. Derived from this perspective, learning the national language of the country of immigration was seen as a prerequisite, whereas the maintenance and intergenerational transmission of IM languages was often seen as an obstacle to integration. Major differences in the two geopolitical contexts, however, relate to the citizenship of most IM groups. Derived from *ius soli*, IM groups in Australia are commonly referred to as eg, British Australians, Chinese Australians or Cambodian Australians; derived from *ius sanguinis* in Europe, they are commonly referred to as foreigners. As a consequence of such status differences in citizenship, political rhetoric on multiculturalism has as yet been reluctant in Europe in order to please the old electorate and has become favourite in Australia in order to please the new electorate.

Apart from these cross-continental differences in public and political attitudes, there are also remarkable differences in the actual knowledge and awareness of multilingualism, due to the (non-)availability of statewide census data on the use of languages other than English in Australia (commonly referred to as LOTE) *versus* the use of non-national languages in Europe[11]. In Australia such data are regularly collected, made available, studied and discussed in public[12]. In EU countries, such data are almost completely lacking, apart from Scandinavian countries, where nationwide home language statistics of school children are collected yearly and used for the implementation of majority and minority language policies in education.

Also the actual constellation of languages in Australia and in EU countries shows interesting similarities and differences. In both contexts, as anywhere, implicit or explicit hierarchies exist in the public status of different language varieties. English has the highest prestige as the *lingua franca* for intercultural communication at the expense of all other languages, although this status has been and still is disputed in Romanic Southern Europe where French had this status in the past. As a consequence of globalisation processes and the enlargement of the EU, the outcome in Europe will no doubt be

in favour of English as *lingua franca*. To the LOTE spectrum in Australia belongs a wide range of both indigenous minority languages and IM languages. To LOTE in the European context belong national languages like German, French or Dutch, indigenous minority languages like Welsh, Basque, or Frisian, and IM languages like Turkish or Arabic. Meanwhile, there are millions of speakers of the last-mentioned languages in EU countries. Whereas in Australia indigenous and IM languages are often referred to as 'community languages', such reference in the EU would be hindered by occupied territory: 'community languages' are commonly understood as the national languages of the EU.

Significant differences between Australia and EU countries exist in the domain of education. More than 20 languages other than English are taught in primary and secondary schools of some Australian states. These languages are open to anyone to study, regardless of whether these languages are first, second or foreign languages. By offering such opportunities, some states (in particular Victoria and South Australia) choose a rather balanced perspective on ESL and LOTE provisions. Such a perspective has earlier been outlined in the National Policy on Languages[13], which established complementary principles in terms of access to competence in English and LOTE. Victoria is meanwhile working towards making an optional LOTE compulsory for at least 11 years of schooling. The acknowledgment of multilingualism in Australia is also evident in other public domains, such as interpreting and translating services, audiovisual media and the written press, public libraries and information/internet services, and occupational requirements. Most EU countries come nowhere near such multilingual policies, and they focus more unilaterally on the learning and teaching of their national languages.

To most youngsters who grow up in urban areas of Australia or Europe, multiculturalism is a fact of daily life, and monocultural styles of living together are unimaginable[14]. Australia has gradually accepted and acknowledged multilingualism as a source of knowledge and enrichment rather than a source of deficits and problems. Due to ongoing processes of migration and minorisation, and due to widening notions of citizenship, Europe will take a similar route, although at a later stage. As yet, it is a paradox that there is so much long-term expertise in Europe (in particular in the Netherlands) on the learning and teaching of neighbouring languages which is hardly put to use in the learning and teaching of languages that originate from farther away.

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[1]   See Kruyt, A & J Niessen (1997), 'Integration', in H Vermeulen (ed), Immigration policy for a multicultural society. A comparative study of integration, language and religious policy in five Western European countries. Brussels: Migration Policy Group, for a comparative study of the notion of integration in five European Union (EU) countries since the early seventies.

[2]   Refer to Cohn-Bendit, D & Th Schmid (1992), *Heimat Babylon. Das Wagnis der multikulturellen Demokratie*, Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, who focus on Germany in a changing multicultural European context. Gogolin, I (1994), *Der*

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monolinguale Habitus der multilingualen Schule. Münster/New York: Waxmann addresses the monolingual *habitus* of multilingual schools in Germany. Eldering, L (1996), 'Multiculturalism and multicultural education in an international perspective', *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *27*, 3: 315-330; Broeder, P & G Extra (1998a), 'Migration and multilingualism in Western Europe: the Netherlands as case study' in G Extra & J Maartens (eds), *Multilingualism in a multicultural context. Case studies on South Africa and Western Europe*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press; and Extra, G & T Vallen (1998), 'Dutch as a second language in the Netherlands and Flanders' in G Extra & J Maartens (eds), *ibid* focus on the consequences of multiculturalism for education in the Netherlands

[3] Extra, G & L Verhoeven (eds) (1998), *Bilingualism and Migration*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

[4] EuroStat (1997). Migration statistics 1996. Statistical document 3A. Luxembourg: EuroStat. See also EuroStat (1996), *Statistics in focus. Population and social conditions 2*. Luxembourg: EuroStat.

[5] CBS (1995). *Allochtonen in Nederland*. Voorburg/Heerlen: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek.

[6] See also Broeder, P & G Extra (1998b), Language, ethnicity and education. Case studies of immigrant minority groups and immigrant minority languages. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

[7] See Coulmas, F (1991), A language policy for the European Community. Prospects and quandaries. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

[8] See Baetens Beardsmore, H (1993), *European models of bilingual education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

[9] Directive 77/486 (1977), Directive of the Council of the European Communities on the schooling of children of migrant workers. Brussels: CEC (dated 25 July).

[10] See Reid, E & H Reich (1992), *Breaking the boundaries. Migrant workers' children in the EC*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters; Fase, W (1994). *Ethnic divisions in Western European education*. Münster/New York: Waxmann.

[11] See also Broeder & Extra (1998b), *op cit.*

[12] See eg, Clyne, M (1991), *Community languages: the Australian experience.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[13] Lo Bianco, J (1987), *National policy on languages.* Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

[14] Clyne, M (1995), 'Education for multiculturalism in multicultural Australia' in D Cunningham & M Candelier (eds), *Linguapax V*, Melbourne, Australia: 85-89.

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2000 Calendar

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28	July	Meeting of Workshop Committee
30	July	Closing date Australia-China Program
31	July	Closing date Australia-Vietnam Program
15	August	Closing date Australia-Netherlands Program
16	August	NAF Symposium: 'Australia's Information Future: Securing the Infrastructure for Research & Development'
1	September	Closing date for nominations for election to Fellowship
9	October	Meeting of NAF Executive Committee
11	October	Meeting of Finance Committee
27	October	Meeting of Workshop Committee
1	November	Deadline for _Dialogue_ 3/2000
5	November	Meeting of Executive Committee
6	November	Annual Symposium
7	November	Annual General Meeting