



ACADEMY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIA

# Dialogue

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## 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 361 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.

**WEB SITE:** [www.assa.edu.au](http://www.assa.edu.au)

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## President's column

### *Fay Gale*



This is my last column in *Dialogue* as President of this important Academy. I have enjoyed, and been challenged by, my three years as President. It has been an honour to represent you nationally and internationally at this time of great significance for the social sciences. I have also been honoured to be the first woman President of the Academy.

These three years have been very interesting, encompassing many changes. We have reorganised the committee structures and guidelines, established an operational finance committee, acquired delightful new independent premises and extended our international linkages and influence. I have been very appreciative of the Fellowship, especially the members of the Executive and the Academy staff, in making all these advancements possible.

I should like to congratulate Professor Leon Mann, elected at the recent Annual General Meeting to be the incoming President. I wish him well. If he is supported as strongly and loyally as I have been in that role, as I am sure he will be, he will find a demanding job made very rewarding.

Because much of the time the affairs of the Academy seem to run relatively smoothly, it is difficult to give a sense of the level of support provided to its office bearers. Not only do numerous individual Fellows assist in a variety of ways, sometimes stepping into the breach at the last minute, but the staff in the Secretariat provide services which go well beyond those which might be expected of employees.

It is with considerable regret that we accept Barry Clissold's retirement after more than eleven years with the Academy. We lose not only his tireless dedication, but also a wealth of corporate knowledge. He has overseen a great deal of change in the structure and program of the Academy. The difference between the Academy as it was when he joined the office - under Executive Director Bruce Miller, with the assistance of Wendy Pascoe, joined shortly after by Peg Job - and the present, is dramatic. On behalf of the Fellowship, I wish Barry a leisurely and satisfying retirement, with ample time to enjoy his first granddaughter, his long-standing interest in war history, his voluntary commitment to the War Memorial and the golf course.

I would also like to express my enormous appreciation of the work carried out by Ian Castles, whose three year term as Vice President also comes to an end with my term. He has been extremely supportive, always reliable and ready to step into any situation at short notice. So often he has answered difficult correspondence or attended meetings on my behalf, with great professionalism. He has generously agreed to stay on a further year in a voluntary capacity to

assist the new Executive Director, whose appointment we hope to announce very soon.

I'm very appreciative of the work of Pam Shepherd. Her efficiency, attention to detail and support in areas such as the restructuring of the membership process have been outstanding. I wish Kylie Johnson well as she leaves early in 2001 to pursue motherhood. Kylie has managed the website and helped us move into a new era.

Peg Job, editor of all our major publications, deserves a special thanks. During recent years she has revamped our image by changing the old Newsletter into *Dialogue*, and produced the *Annual Report* and Occasional Papers. Ensuring contributors produced material on time has been no mean feat.

Nineteen new scholars were admitted to our Fellowship in November 2000. The annual dinner at which new Fellows are welcomed and presented with their Testamurs is always a joyous and celebratory occasion. Those so honoured are listed under 'Academy News'. I welcome them, and hope that they will not only share the prestige accorded to the Academy, but will make an ongoing contribution to the advancement of the social sciences in Australia, through the auspices of the Academy. The dinner is also an opportunity to recognise young social scientists and each year we give the Academy Award for Younger Scholars to the scholar who has won that recognition under very stiff competition. Congratulations this year to Dr Andrea Whittaker.

I have represented the Academy at a number of national and international meetings this year. It is increasingly clear that Australian social scientists are highly respected. Evidence of this is the number of invitations I, as President of the Academy, received to attend international discussions, with, for example, the British Academy in London, UNESCO Social Science Branch in Paris and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. Unfortunately urgent surgery prevented my attendance at Beijing for a major conference organised by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in early November on 'The Prospect of Social Sciences and the Humanities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. Professor Sue Richardson attended in my place, and her report is included later in this edition, under 'Academy News'. Interestingly, one of the issues raised at the Beijing conference was the way in which our ability to alter nature in the twentieth century has outstripped our management of that power, and a major task identified for the social sciences and humanities was an examination of the moral and ethical dimensions of such management. The first edition of *Dialogue* in 2001 will focus on the theme of 'Morality' in the social sciences.

The current edition takes up some of the vexed issues in a region which has figured prominently in the headlines of the past year or so – the South Pacific.

These international connections have shown me even more clearly how poorly funded our Academy is in Australia in contrast with all

other areas I have visited in Europe, Asia and North America. The contrast with grants for the British Academy is simply ridiculous, indeed our grant is infinitesimal in comparison and yet we are expected to represent the social sciences at all levels. The Asian countries seem to be more supported by their governments than we are and dismay was expressed at the low level of grants we receive in what is perceived as a 'wealthy nation'.

The Review of the Academies was very disappointing in this respect. Clearly the government expects greater public representation of the social sciences on a whole range of issues but does not offer any suggestion as to how we will fund such activities. For example the Academy was unable to subsidise any of my international visits. These were made possible only by the generous offers of the host countries and my own financial commitment.

We earn more than fifty percent of our income from the Fellows' subscriptions and competitive research grants. Indeed the establishment of the Research Committee, ably chaired by Professor Sue Richardson and guided and serviced by Dr John Robertson, has made it possible to extend our activities and effectiveness well beyond the limits of our annual grant. Similarly the Workshop Committee, supported so well by Sue Rider and chaired by Professor Peter Saunders, enables us to stimulate important interactions between scholars with many beneficial results. These activities also tend to receive external subsidies once the Academy has endorsed the importance of the particular issue being considered. Some indeed have been run entirely with outside finance based on the imprimatur and initiation of the Academy. I thank Professor Jill Roe, the former Chair of the Workshop Committee, who did so much to develop the role and significance of our workshops.

Our influence on our society thus goes well beyond the capacity of our small grant, thanks to the scholarly activities of our Fellows and the high standing of the Academy in the intellectual community. I am sure that under Professor Mann's leadership these many initiatives will be greatly enhanced.

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## New President for the Academy



**Professor Leon Mann** has been elected President of the Academy for a three year term. He is a graduate in Psychology from the University of Melbourne and Yale University. Professor Mann taught at Harvard University (1968-1970), the University of Sydney (1971) and the Flinders University of South Australia (1972-1990) before taking up appointment at the Melbourne Business School in the University of Melbourne in 1991. He chairs the Postgraduate Research Committee in the School.

Professor Mann is a Fellow of the Australian Psychological Society and has held visiting professorships at Stanford University (1975) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1976). He was awarded a Senior Fulbright Scholarship (1975) and a Japan Foundation Fellowship (1984). From 1991-1995 he held a Senior Research Fellowship from the Australian Research Council to support his research in the area of leadership and decision making.

Professor Mann is co-author, with Irving Janis, of the well-known book *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice and Commitment* (Free Press: 1977).

He is completing a longitudinal study of project leader effectiveness in four Australian Research and Development organisations. The findings will be reported in a book *Leadership, Management and Innovation in R&D Project Teams*, to be published by Quorum Press in 2001. Recently, he was awarded an ARC SPIRT grant with Andrew Pirola-Merlo for a project 'Building effective and innovative R&D project teams'.

He is the author of five books, twenty five chapters in edited volumes and over eighty articles.

He teaches courses on Leadership, Managing for Creativity and Organisational Behaviour to MBA students at MBS and has taught in executive courses and advanced management programs for Australian companies and public sector organisations.

He was Chair of the South Australian Government Inquiry into the Delivery of Community Welfare Services (1979-1980) and of the Business/Higher Education Round Table Leadership Task Force (1993-1994). Professor Mann holds the Pratt Family Chair of Leadership and Decision-Making at the Melbourne Business School.

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## **DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS**

### **WHY?**

Because the Academy has a vision and plan for the future, and is enlarging its programs to fulfil its mandate more fully. In particular, a broadened revenue base will enable the Academy to:

- ◆ Expand its program of workshops, stressing involvement of younger researchers
- ◆ Provide subsidies for publication and dissemination of workshop outcomes
- ◆ Support major new research initiatives on matters of national concern

### **HOW?**

- ◆ Donate for a specific purpose, or to be used at the Academy's discretion
- ◆ You can make a bequest to the Academy in your Will
- ◆ Establishment of an Academy Foundation will involve donors in Academy activities

### **WHEN?**

- ◆ Donations are needed now to enable the Academy to expand its activities. Donations have tax exempt status
- ◆ Bequests are a longer-term commitment. The key is to amend your Will now to ensure that the Academy will benefit.

### **FURTHER DETAILS**

For confidential advice on making a donation or bequest, contact the Academy's President, Professor Leon Mann, or Honorary Treasurer, Professor Gavin Jones, through the Academy office.

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**Vice President's note**

## **Ian Castles**



On 16 November the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) published on its website the report *An Assessment of the Statistical Criticisms made of the Human Development Report, 1999 - Prepared by the Friends of the Chair of the United Nations Statistical Commission*.<sup>1</sup>

The document was produced by the 'small group of statistical experts' which, pursuant to a UNSC resolution of 3 March 2000, was appointed to prepare 'a report on the accuracy of the statistical information in the HDR, focusing on the points raised in the room document authored by Mr Castles'. As explained in this column in *Dialogue 1/2000*, this 'room document' was based on material presented in the paper that I presented to the Academy's Annual Symposium in Canberra in 1999.<sup>2</sup>

The group of experts was chaired by an officer of Statistics Canada and included professional statisticians from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, India, Senegal (representing Afristat) and Switzerland (representing the International Statistical Institute). The experts considered a written response to my criticisms from the Human Development Report Office (HDRO)<sup>3</sup> and 'benefited from further discussions and additional written material provided by all concerned, including feedback on the group's draft report'. I provided all members of the group with copies of the Academy's Occasional Paper *Facts and Fancies of Human Development*.

The most important point of the paper I presented to the Academy's Symposium and in the 'room document' was that the HDR presented erroneous statistics on the distribution of global output (and, therefore, of global income). These statistics and the accompanying commentary were reproduced uncritically by the global media and thereby gave the world a distorted picture of a fundamental aspect of 'human development'.

At the Symposium I circulated copies of reports about the HDR which appeared in Australian newspapers on 13 July 1999, with headlines such as 'Massive wealth divide exposed' and 'Globalisation brings further world injustice'. An article from a *Guardian* (London) correspondent claimed that the world was 'ever more starkly divided between those for whom globalisation delivers and those for whom it does not' and that 'the gap between rich and poor widens inexorably'. It was headed 'The vacuum at the heart of the new world disorder' in one Australian newspaper and 'Putting morality into the globalisation equation' in another, which also reproduced a *Chicago Tribune* article on the HDR under the headline 'Rich getting richer as poor nations struggle on fringes of the global village'.

In their report to the UNSC, the experts make the following comments on the statistics of global income distribution upon which these headlines were based:

59. Errors of all types can be divided into material and non-material errors. Material errors are those which leave the reader with a fundamentally distorted picture of the phenomenon being described . . . Several of the errors identified by Mr. Castles, and confirmed by us, were material errors. For example, the use of PPPs rather than US\$ conversions would show that the fifth of the world's people living in the highest income countries have 60% to 65%, not 86%, of the world's income, and that the gap in per capita income between the countries with the richest fifth of the world's population and those with the poorest fifth is not 74 to 1, but 16 to 1, and that the gap is not unequivocally widening but moderately fluctuating.

Soon after last year's Symposium I wrote to a leading Australian newspaper to point out that statistics on global income distribution which had been cited by one of their overseas-based journalists were 'wrong'. Another journalist from the same newspaper found my statement 'offensive' because the journalist's report of UNDP findings was 'perfectly fair'. In correspondence with me, he argued that it was 'absurd to expect mainstream journalists to be experts in measurement of economic development: they do not pretend to be'.

I responded that I was 'confident that my conclusion that the rapid global economic growth of the past 40 years has been achieved without any significant increase in inequality between countries can withstand the scrutiny of experts', but that 'Unfortunately, it is easily knocked over by journalists pretending to be experts!' If the report of the Friends of the Chair of the UNSC had been available at that time, I would have drawn the attention of both journalists to the following paragraphs:

49. The HDR is an influential policy document that may be unrivalled among UN publications in terms of the media and popular attention it receives. Its messages appear to influence national and international policy activities. Its techniques and its statistics are replicated widely and inspire national development reports.

50. It is also a statistical document. . . In many instances, policy advice and conclusions are based, or presented as being based, on the statistical evidence.

51. The HDR readership is large, diverse, and, in many instances, lacking in either the experience or the technical knowledge to critically assess the statistical evidence contained in the document. This creates, however unintentionally, a situation of dependence and, as a consequence, also of trust. Many users of the HDR, who have a need for the data or the data-based information it contains,

must take it on faith that the information and the data are precisely what they purport to be.

52. In summary, considerations of popularity, effect and trust impose a special burden on the HDRO to adhere to the highest standards of good statistical practice.

Ironically, my contention that there had not been 'any significant increase in inequality' in the past 40 years, and the experts' conclusion that 'the gap is not unequivocally widening but moderately fluctuating', have already been overtaken by the findings of another study by scholars of unimpeachable integrity. Some weeks ago I was advised that the Norwegian delegate to an OECD meeting had referred to the fact that my work on the HDR had been cited in a report on global inequality produced by the Norwegian Institute for International Affairs (NUPI) and published by that country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>4</sup>

To my satisfaction but not to my complete surprise, I found that the findings of the Norwegian report relating to income distribution challenged those of the HDR even more strongly than I had done. Moreover, the authors had broadened their study to include inequalities in health and education as well as in income, and in the latter context had cited Professor Jack Caldwell's 1999 Cunningham Lecture 'Pushing back the frontiers of death'<sup>5</sup> as its authority for the view that there are complex functional relationships between income, health and education. The key conclusions of the report are:

1. '...contrary to statements frequently heard in the public debate, . . . international inequality has on the whole been **reduced** since the 1960s' (p 1).
2. 'With some minor variations, international income inequality has **decreased continuously** from the last part of the 1960s until 1997' (p 2). This applies whether the comparison is made on the basis of the ratio of income of countries in the richest quintile to those in the poorest quintile, or on the basis of statistical measures of inequality such as the Gini coefficient or the variance of the log of income.
3. Data limitations pose problems in making allowances for changes in within-country inequality, but 'rich countries have less inequality' (p 4) and some studies have shown that 'economic growth (weakly) promotes equality. . . An implication of the weak relationship between growth and inequality is that changes in between-country inequality over time are not likely to be systematically biased due to the neglect of within-country inequality' (p 22).
4. The Human Development Index (HDI) reported annually by the UNDP 'provides a picture of trends in international inequality that is even more positive than the one we have obtained based on income data alone'. This indicates that the picture derived from purchasing power-adjusted income data

is not 'too positive' (p 5). In fact, 'it is a paradox that the UNDP maintains that global inequality has increased, based on . . . crude income measures . . .', when its 'own calculations . . . indicate that inequality . . . when measured by the HDI, has been strongly reduced over time' (p 30).

5. 'Global average life expectancy has . . . increased from 55 years [in 1962] to 67 years [in 1997], . . . and inequality [in life expectancy] between countries has been considerably reduced' over the period (p 25). The Gini coefficient between countries with respect to life expectancy decreased from 0.237 in 1962 to 0.114 in 1997 (p 24).

6. '. . . the message from the analysis of school enrolment is roughly similar to the one we have seen for life expectancy. . . International inequality with respect to school enrolment has decreased over time' (p 26).

7. According to the FAO, the share of the undernourished in the developing countries' combined population was reduced from 37% in 1969-71 to 18% in 1995-97. Nutrition data thus 'leave a slightly more favourable impression with respect to global poverty than the figures based on income data alone' (p 32).

8. 'This report provides knowledge that should have been provided long ago. Instead the popular belief has spread that global inequality has risen. By correcting this perception, we hope to contribute to a more balanced approach to these issues' (p 37).

It is depressing to report that the myth that global inequality is rising inexorably is so deeply entrenched that this hope of the Norwegian authors shows no signs of being realised.

Even the World Bank referred to 'rising disparities between rich countries and the developing world' in the blurb on the back cover of its *World Development Report 2000/2001*, and the Bank's President, Australian-born James Wolfensohn, asserted in the 'Foreword' to the *Report* that 'Widening global disparities have increased the sense of deprivation and injustice for many'.<sup>6</sup> In an interview for the *Australian Financial Review* (AFR), Mr Wolfensohn made the same 'material error' in relation to global income distribution as has been identified by the expert committee to the UNSC. I drew attention to this error in a letter to the AFR, which the newspaper published under the heading 'Wolfensohn had wrong figures'.<sup>7</sup> To the best of my knowledge, there has been no reply by or on behalf of Mr Wolfensohn, who repeated the erroneous claims a fortnight later in an interview with *L'Express* (Paris).<sup>8</sup>

In an address to the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Racism on 1 May last, Mrs Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, claimed that 'The gulf between the rich and the very large numbers who live in dire poverty is widening

all the time'. At the end of the following month, as the global media gave massive coverage to the assertion in HDR 2000 that 'Global inequalities in income increased in the 20th century by orders of magnitude out of proportion to anything experienced before',<sup>9</sup> Mrs Robinson launched the publication in Paris with the statement that this was 'a balanced report'. She predicted that it would 'be a reference point for years to come, with its wealth of data, examples and background material on human rights and human development'.

Addressing the Conference of the World's Scientific Academies in Tokyo in May 2000, Brian Heap, FRS, Foreign Secretary of the Royal Society of London, invoked HDR 2000 in support of his views about the prospects of global sustainability:

In 1998, the UN Human Development Report highlighted the contrast between the 20 % of the world's richest people who account for 86 % of private consumption and the poorest 20 % who account for only 1.3 %.

This was in fact one of the 'material errors' in the HDR to which I have drawn the attention of the Expert Group. The world's scientists are among the users who (in the words of the Group's report) are 'lacking in either the experience or the technical expertise to critically assess the statistical evidence contained in the document'.

Among professional economists and statisticians, there is little confidence that 'a more balanced approach' will make headway against the statements of high-profile figures such as Mary Robinson, James Wolfensohn or Brian Heap. One of Australia's leading economists, whose principal field of research interest is in the integration of economic and social policy, wrote to me:

Just a quick note to thank you for your tireless work to try and get to the facts regarding the international distribution of incomes. The irony is that we have enough real challenges in the world without having to invent fake ones, especially as the fake ones undermine the credibility of governments and the UN agencies to be able to achieve solutions. I fear, however, that there is still much work for you ahead before you will obtain acknowledgment of the facts so long as statistics are seen as an element in a propaganda campaign.

Another Fellow of the Academy, with strong interests in world economic history, made the following comment:

Thank you for the material on the HDR matter. I have long been persuaded that the HDI is phoney and intended for political use. . . The questions that now follow are: how can you spread your message to unwary consumers of the HDI . . . ; and can you anticipate what line of retreat those involved in constructing and endlessly boosting the HDI will follow and block it in advance? You may surmise from this that I doubt the aims of the perpetrators are in fact scientific . . .

And a leading statistician in an international institution - a national of one of the world's poorest countries - wrote:

Thanks for continuing to send me your correspondence on the HDR. The Report of the Friends of the Chair should go some way to redressing the situation but the use of statistics for awareness raising as against objective statistical reporting will not go away so easily.

A continuing element in the 'awareness raising' propaganda which has been a feature of successive HDRs has been a comparison of the **wealth** of the world's richest people with the **income** of its poorest. I pointed to this error in my critique of HDR 2000 in *Dialogue 2/2000*.<sup>10</sup>

Since the publication of HDR 2000, I have received a letter from Partha Dasgupta, Professor of Economics at the University of Cambridge, drawing my attention to criticisms he made of similar comparisons in HDR 1998 in a lecture he gave at the World Bank in that year.<sup>11</sup> Professor Dasgupta's comments were as follows:

Some time ago, while preparing a Plenary Lecture at a World Bank conference on Valuation, I came across Box 1.3 (p 30) in HDR 1998 where, in drawing attention to the enormous inequality in today's world, the authors of the report observed: 'New estimates show that the world's 225 richest people have a combined wealth of over 1 trillion US dollars, equal to the annual income of the poorest 47 percent of the world's people (2.5 billion).

This is, of course, a meaningless comparison, and so is sheer rubbish. Wealth is a stock, while income is a flow. To compare magnitudes which differ in dimension is to make just about the most elementary error one is capable of making in an intellectual exercise. My guess is that by the end of the academic year, all but the least able of first year economics undergraduates in my department (or, for that matter, **any** department) would avoid making the mistake evident in the sentence quoted above . . . (incidentally, the error was committed several times in the box in question, and was repeated in HDR 1999).

And, as I have now advised Professor Dasgupta, the error was repeated yet again in HDR 2000. The underlying point that the authors of the HDR are seeking to make is valid: there is indeed an enormous disproportion between the highest and lowest incomes, and it is a matter for profound concern that it persists. But, as Dasgupta points out, the danger in making good points with bad arguments is that this may disguise the fact that there exist good arguments that would have served the purpose. Instead, the authors of HDR 'went for an overkill and ruined an argument'.

No competent first year engineering student would compare the size of two dams by relating the volume of water in one with the rate of

flow into the other. Nor would any competent first-year student in economics attempt to compare the affluence of two groups of people by relating the stock of wealth of one group with the annual rate of income flowing to another. Yet this elementary mistake is made repeatedly in successive issues of the policy document that is seen by expert statisticians as unrivalled among UN publications in terms of the media and popular attention it receives.

Formally, it will be for the Statistical Commission to decide what action (if any) should be taken in response to the report of the group of experts appointed by its Chair. Those who see it as important that research outcomes in the social sciences be applied to the resolution of global problems should press for the widest possible dissemination of the conclusions of the report - and (especially) of its observations on the need for information and data published by organisations such as the UNDP to be 'precisely what they purport to be'.

Members of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia have a special interest, because this Academy's 1999 Symposium provided the forum in which the concerns about the HDR which had been held by economists and statisticians were brought to the notice of many scholars from other fields of the social sciences.

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<sup>1</sup> UNSC (2000). <http://www.un.org/Depts/unsd/statcom/statcom.htm> The report is the 'Un-numbered document' on the 'Statistical Commission 2001' page of the 'Documents of Statistical Commission Meetings' section of the site.

<sup>2</sup> Castles, Ian (2000a). 'Reporting on Human Development: Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics' in Castles, Ian (ed) (2000b) *Facts and Fancies of Human Development*, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia Occasional Paper Series, 1: 55-82.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP. Human Development Report Office (2000). <http://www.undp.org/hdro> In Richard Jolly (2000) 'False Attack' in *World Economics*, July-September: 1-15, the response of the HDRO is described as a 'rebuttal of [the] exaggerated charges' made by David Henderson in 'False Perspective: The UNDP View of the World' in *World Economics*, January-March 2000 (originally published in Castles, Ian (ed). (2000b), *op cit*: 23-46.

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- <sup>4</sup> Melchior, Arne, Kjetil Telle, and Henrik Wiig (2000). *Globalisation and Inequality: World Income Distribution and Living Standards 1960-1998* in Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Studies on Foreign Policy Issues, Report 6B, October. This English language version of the Report is at <http://odin.dep.no/ud/engelsk/publ/rapporter/index-b-n-a.html>
- <sup>5</sup> Caldwell, JC (2000). 'Pushing back the frontiers of death' in Castles, Ian (ed) (2000b), *op cit*: 120-138.
- <sup>6</sup> World Bank (2000a). *World Development Indicators*: vi.
- <sup>7</sup> *Australian Financial Review*, 29 September, 2000.
- <sup>8</sup> World Bank (2000b). *World Development News*, 13 October ('An Unjust World is a Dangerous World: Wolfensohn').
- <sup>9</sup> UNDP (2000). Human Development Report 2000: 6.
- <sup>10</sup> Castles, Ian (2000c). 'Vice President's note', *Dialogue*, 2: 14-15.
- <sup>11</sup> Dasgupta, Partha (2000). 'Valuation and Evaluation' in O Feinstein and R Picciotta, (eds) *Evaluation and Poverty Reduction* (World Bank).
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## ***Troubles in Paradise: the South Pacific***

### ***Dilemmas in Pacific Island Land Tenure***

***R Gerard Ward***



Land tenure issues are becoming increasingly important politically in many Pacific Island countries. They are a key factor underlying the major upheavals which Fiji and the Solomon Islands experienced in 2000. They drive some of the main forces leading to political and social unrest in countries such as Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Tension is common between the 'rules' of customary tenure and current practice. In countries where indigenous land tenure 'rules' have been codified, the written law is often ignored in current practice. This paper outlines some common features of land tenure systems which co-exist in Pacific Island states, and suggest why they are amongst the causes of recent unrest.

Customary tenure is not unchanging, and never has been. It is adjusted pragmatically in individual communities as, for example, population grows or declines relative to the available land. New technologies, new crops, and economic and social changes, from subsistence farming to commercial production for instance, frequently demand adjustment of land tenure practices. Many of the difficulties facing Pacific Island communities today arise because practice has changed to meet pragmatic needs, but what is commonly regarded and described as traditional custom has lagged behind. With the speed of recent socio-economic change, the gap between practice and custom has widened. Meanwhile social and political elites continue to use the rhetoric of custom to equate customary land tenure rights and conventions with national or ethnic identity. In so doing they seek to bolster their own status and power by advocating maintenance of customary forms of social interaction and authority. At the same time they often promote socio-economic developments which lead to modifications in land tenure practices, and to social changes which have or will undermine their status and power.

Under most indigenous land tenure systems in the Pacific Islands, 'ownership' of or, more strictly, control over land lies with a group of kin or a residential community. One or more leaders in the group may act as land controllers, and approve or sanction the use of specified plots by farmers. Within a community's territory, those who cultivate or plant plots hold rights of usufruct. Normally these rights of usufruct are secure as long as the holder continues to use the land or, if it has been allowed to revert to bush fallow, intends to re-use it after a fallow period. It is a common misconception that indigenous land tenure systems in the Pacific Islands are forms of common property with open and equal access for all members of the community. This is rarely the case where land is in use, or has been used in the remembered past. In such areas complex sets of

overlapping residual rights, held by individuals or the descendants of individuals, stem from earlier periods of use for particular purposes. Exclusive rights to establish new gardens, collect firewood or bush produce, hunt, or take water from a spring may all be held by specific people over particular areas. Nevertheless, it is a core characteristic of these tenure systems that all members of the descent group will have some right of access to land within the group's territory, at least for subsistence purposes, whether through patrilineal, matrilineal or bi-lineal principles. Land controllers may also accord rights to use land to newcomers who are recognised as having some kinship or other ties, or even to others with no prior attachment to the community. While justifiable by custom, this practice may create later problems when applied in non-traditional contexts.

The security of continued use of land is a vital feature of most indigenous systems in the region but problems have emerged in recent decades because of this right. In former times the need for land to revert to bush fallow to regain fertility after quite short periods of cultivation meant that scope existed for reallocation of a plot if a household no longer wished to re-use it. The changing size and needs of different households or groups could thus be accommodated. With the introduction of long-lived commercial tree crops, or of pastoral farming, some farmers and their immediate families have tended to retain exclusive usufruct rights for much longer periods – up to 60 or 70 years in the case of coconuts, or indefinitely in the case of pastoral use. Use of fertiliser or other technologies in new systems of agriculture can eliminate the need for fallowing. In these circumstances use rights may be inherited over two or more generations. Thus, the principle of security of use has been stretched to allow what is close to permanent control over land by individuals or nuclear families. At the same time, commercial farming and other commercial activities have given new value to land and this has accentuated the desire of many to retain long term control of plots. In this situation traditional mechanisms are used in new contexts for non-traditional purposes, leading to *de facto* privatisation of land. This trend is now widespread in a number of island countries.

Parallel to the trend towards privatisation is a tendency for individual holdings to become larger. Whereas a family of eight may gain a good subsistence living by cultivating one hectare of root crops and vegetables, a much larger area is needed to gain a living from commercial tree crop farming or pastoralism. These more permanent forms of farming need to be located close to roads or other modes of transport, and to use areas with better soils or gentler slopes. The combined result of such changes can be to lock up relatively large areas of a community's more accessible and better quality land in the hands of a few people. Other community members may be left with inadequate land for subsistence purposes, be forced to use more distant or poorer quality land, or

may even become virtually landless. Such changes can all take place under the umbrella of customary conventions.

Although in most Pacific Island countries only a small proportion of the total land area has been alienated and is now held under freehold or some form of leasehold, such land often includes a significant proportion of a country's most accessible or most fertile land. Land with such characteristics was the most sought after by early European planters, who needed access to points of export, and soils that would support permanent crops. In the post-independence era the alienated land has often become a source of political tensions, especially as rising indigenous population increased pressure on the unalienated land. This is also true of land which colonial governments declared to be state land on the grounds that it was 'waste and vacant' at the time colonial rule was imposed. Uniquely, Vanuatu's independence constitution declared that all alienated land was to revert to the traditional owners, but this left a number of questions unanswered. These include issues of compensation, how to deal with the needs of urban areas, and the identification of the traditional owners and the boundaries of a century earlier. Similar questions arise in other countries whenever alienated land, including state land, is considered for reversion to customary forms of tenure.

Colonial (and subsequent) governments assumed that when land had been alienated or declared state land, the interests of the original indigenous owners or occupiers in that land had been totally extinguished. This concept rarely matched those of the former indigenous owners. As noted above, different people or groups might hold different and overlapping rights over the same area of land. In many cases, when people 'sold' their land to planters, missionaries or others it was thought that what was being transferred were occupation rights or usufruct rather than outright ownership. The original owners might well believe that they still held some residual rights over the land. It is not surprising therefore that disputes still arise many decades after the original transactions. In Samoa, disputes and some civil unrest have recently arisen over land sold to German planters in the nineteenth century and held since 1918 by the government-owned Western Samoa Trust Estates Corporation or its predecessor. When WESTEC wished to subdivide and sell valuable areas near the capital, Apia, groups whose ancestors sold the land claimed that it should revert to them now that WESTEC no longer wished to use the land for the original plantation purposes. Such an argument could well accord with older custom, if not with the codified law. Rather similar cases have occurred in Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

In some countries, such as Fiji and the Cook Islands, customary land tenure has been codified in the written law, and the holdings and membership of each owning group surveyed and recorded. The previous uncoded traditional arrangements and allocations were essentially flexible, always changing, and with members moving out

of as well as into the landholding groups. The territories claimed by groups could also increase or decrease over time. Survey and recording ended this process, replacing it with a fixed pattern of ownership of specific areas of land by named groups and their individual members. Registration of group members tends to retain all descendants as registered holders of land rights, and to preclude additions or subtractions. Formerly, the land rights of descendants of those who married out of the community and lived elsewhere, or left for other reasons, would grow weaker over time, unless they were explicitly maintained or reactivated by active participation in the community. Today, registration may record people as claimants through several generations of absentees. In this circumstance people living overseas with little direct involvement with the home area may have the power to prevent those who do live in the home area from taking necessary steps to ensure effective allocation and use of land. Furthermore, if alienation is banned, as it commonly is, registration may remove the legal possibility of readjusting land allocation to meet the changing size or needs of different groups. Legislation permitting leasing of registered customary land may ameliorate this problem, but experience in countries such as Fiji and Samoa indicates that this mechanism often operates only with difficulty.

Fiji is sometimes cited as an example where leasehold arrangements operate effectively, but this is far from an accurate portrayal. The Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB) has the task of issuing all leases over 'Native Land' in Fiji. Contrary to the belief of most Fijians, the NLTB legally 'owns' all Native Land, and has the power to lease such land without consulting with the registered 'owners'. Direct dealing between registered 'owners' and those seeking to lease or rent land is illegal, but is widely practised. Sharecropping and other informal rental arrangements are widespread, often under the guise of *vaka vanua* (the way of the land or people) or customary practice. Thus flexibility is obtained through extra-legal mechanisms which receive social if not legal legitimacy from customary principles.

The major problem today in much of rural Fiji stems from the fact that a high proportion of NLTB leaseholds will expire within the next few years. Land owners are often reluctant to see leases renewed. Under the current terms of NLTB leases, 25 per cent of the rent is retained by the NLTB; the three highest ranking chiefs in the owning group receive 22.5 per cent between them; and the remaining 52.5 per cent is shared by all other members of the owning *mataqali* or clan. *Mataqali* members are often resentful about this division. It clearly sustains the power of individual chiefs (and the NLTB) in contexts where the old reciprocity between chiefs and people has greatly weakened, and some of the elite view rent as personal income rather than as something to be used in strengthening the reciprocal relations within their *mataqali*, as custom would require.

As most of the leaseholders whose future is uncertain are Fiji Indian farmers, the issue readily takes on a strong ethnic element. Fiji Indians do not have the possibility of gaining legal access to the use of Native Land except through NLTB leases. Informal arrangements are unlikely to provide sufficient opportunities for those whose leases terminate. In any case, no way has yet been found to bring such arrangements within the legal framework.

Some of the most pressing land tenure problems arising from divergence between custom, practice and the law occur in and around urban areas. In many Pacific Island towns there is insufficient state or alienated land to cater for growing urban populations swollen by migration from rural areas. Furthermore, regulations designed to maintain good town planning principles may inhibit legal allocation of land to the poorest in-migrants. As a result, informal settlements, often with very poor living conditions, are found in and around many towns. Those sited on state or other alienated land without permission may be correctly described as squatter settlements. Others are located on customary land and here the term 'squatter' is rarely appropriate. Most such settlements began when an individual or small group of migrants used kinship, trading or friendship ties with one or more of the customary owners to gain permission to live on the land. This is usually in accordance with custom. When the incomers are joined by relatives, or others from their place or origin, such settlements may grow far beyond the size the landowners envisaged when they originally gave their permission. But it may be difficult in customary terms for the landowners to revoke their original agreement. In and around towns like Port Moresby, Lae or Honiara the basis for future clashes of interests is established.

It is difficult for governments to step in to solve the land problems in and around towns. The purchase of hitherto unalienated land by governments to provide for in-migrants is extremely difficult politically, even where powers of compulsory purchase exist. Organising leasehold arrangements may be equally difficult. For example in Fiji, the rents paid through the NLTB are generally based on unimproved values and are unlikely to satisfy registered landowners who are aware of the monetary value of land in or near towns. Although sale of land is illegal in Tonga, an active extra-legal market for land exists in the urban area of Nuku'alofa. The extra-legal avenues of informal sales or rentals are often much more attractive than adherence to the law. But these may leave the tenants or purchasers without security, dependent on the whim of others, and without incentives for property improvement.

Unease between people of the original communities and the in-migrants can be accentuated by competition for jobs. In earlier times the original landowning groups often continued to depend to a large degree on farming, supplemented by some urban wage employment. The in-migrants tended to be dependent almost solely on wage employment. But when significant proportions of their land

is held by in-migrants the landowners can easily feel resentment because their own land resource has shrunk, often for little return, while the in-migrants may appear to have monopolised wage jobs or positions in business and government. The argument that in-migrants should 'go home' has been common in recent decades despite the fact that, if the detailed circumstances of their original occupation of land are examined, their presence has had some sanction from custom. Furthermore, some have resided in or near the towns for two generations, and the younger ones scarcely have a rural 'home' to which to return. Both sides in the dispute may claim the sanction of local custom when they argue over rights to use the land on which the migrants live, leaving the local landowners with a serious dilemma. It is easy to see how the problem can erupt into strife such as that seen recently in the Solomon Islands. This is an extreme case of the type of tensions that have arisen in a number of Pacific Island towns in last two decades. Frequently disputes with other immediate causes circle back to, and gain force from, the emotive issues of land.

Landownership may be intimately linked with cultural, local or national identity. In most Pacific Island societies, local and national, social organisation is closely related to structures of land tenure, and status within the community is linked to a person's role in the management of land allocation. For example, in Samoa leading adults will hold titles related to the communities of their birth and upbringing, and in which their families have rights to land. At least the leading titles will customarily carry the power to influence land allocation. Modern practice may in fact not follow this customary practice as new forms of more individualised tenure are used *de facto* if not *de jure*. Nevertheless the rhetoric of custom still links status and identity with land. The starkest example is in Fiji. Only some of its citizens can be 'Fijian'. The common ethnic Fijian view is that to be a Fijian, one must be registered member of a landowning *mataqali*. Some who are descended from ethnic Fijians through the maternal line are unable to claim Fijian ethnic identity because they are not registered as *mataqali* members and hence owners of Native Land. One may be a citizen of Fiji, but not a Fijian. That is the situation for Fiji Indians. This matter was seriously considered by the last Constitutional Commission and in the 1997 constitution the name of the country was changed to Republic of Fiji, with its citizens to be called Fiji Islanders, regardless of ethnicity. But at a more personal level the link between land rights and being Fijian is still widely and deeply felt. Thus any threat, real or imagined, to the exclusive and inalienable rights of ethnic Fijians over Native Land is loaded with threats to perceived identity, and is likely to be resisted with deep emotion.

It is unfortunate that in Fiji, as in other Pacific Island countries, there are many widely held beliefs about land, which in fact are myths. One mentioned above, is that Fijian *mataqali* members own the land registered in their name, whereas in law ultimate control and ownership rests with the NLTB. Another is that control over Native

Land could be lost to Fiji Indian interests under a constitutionally elected Fiji Indian led government. In fact all three constitutions under which Fiji has been ruled since independence have given very strong protection for Native Land, and the land clauses of the constitutions could not be changed without support from the majority of ethnic Fijian leaders. It is ironic that the first constitution, which was never translated into Fijian until after the 1987 coup, gave stronger protection than did the post-coup constitution. Yet that coup was fuelled in large part by a wish to avert perceived threats to Fijian supremacy over land. Today, as then, in many Pacific Island countries knowledge of the legal facts about land is often limited; a major gap exists between custom and actual practice in the allocation and use of indigenous land; and practice and the written law are often divergent. It seems likely that land issues will continue to be a potential source of uncertainty and even social unrest for years to come.

Note: This paper draws heavily on material in RG Ward and E Kingdon (eds), *Land, Custom and Practice in the South Pacific*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995.

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## ***Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Pacific: Regional Dimensions***

**Greg Fry**



The overthrow of democratic and constitutional government in Fiji and Solomon Islands in mid 2000 prompted some commentators to describe the South Pacific islands region as an eastern extension of the 'arc of crisis', originally identified as stretching from Aceh, through Timor, Ambon and Irian Jaya (and in some versions, Papua New Guinea). Other observers have found their analogy, not in island Southeast Asia, but in the Balkans or Africa<sup>1</sup>. Whatever the political analogy, the general message is the same: the 'new' South Pacific is to be seen in Kaplanesque terms: island states at various points on a path to the 'coming anarchy'<sup>2</sup> of ethnic conflict, state breakdown, gun culture, violence, fragmentation and economic collapse. Solomon Islands and Fiji are seen as having already arrived at this state, Papua New Guinea to be teetering on the edge, and the other eleven Pacific island states to be developing the symptoms of deep instability.

Like the crisis imagery of the 1980s and the 1990s, this new depiction of the South Pacific is generated by the experience of a few societies and the assumption that others are on the same trajectory. In particular, it exaggerates the likelihood of the deep problems of Solomon Islands and Fiji becoming the Pacific norm. To challenge the aptness of this new regional depiction is not to devalue the gravity of the deep crises within those countries. On the contrary, it is the tendency to put the tragic developments in Suva and Honiara alongside a grab-bag of events supposedly demonstrating crisis-proneness in the rest of the island Pacific, that undervalues the seriousness of the breakdown of democracy and public order in Fiji and the Solomon Islands. Such a 'framing of the islands', which imposes a homogeneous picture of a region in deep crisis, misrepresents the complexity and diversity of the Pacific. It also has a tendency to obscure the way in which a different kind of regional frame can be relevant to understanding conflict, to supporting meaningful conflict resolution, and to maintaining peaceful political communities in the islands region.

### **The crises in Solomon Islands and Fiji**

It was the events in Suva in May 2000 which first prompted commentators to refer to the Pacific as a whole as an extension of the 'arc of crisis' or as a 'region of instability'. The hostage crisis quickly turned into a much deeper political crisis about the future governance of the country. The Fijian ethno-nationalism evident in the removal of the Chaudhry Government, the abrogation of the constitution, and the installation of a government dedicated to Fijian 'paramountcy', quickly gave way to sometimes violent conflict between different Fijian groupings: between 'east' and 'west',

between Viti Levu-based Fijians and 'islanders', between the three Fijian confederacies - Burebasaga, Tovata and Kubuna - and between some constituent *vanua* within these confederacies. There has been a breakdown of shared understandings about the legitimacy of the elected government, of the 1997 constitution, of democratic principles, of Fijian traditional leadership, and even of the idea of Fiji as an ongoing unified entity (with serious reassertion of 'western' separatism). The Indian community has become disenfranchised both in terms of representation in the military-backed Interim Government and in relation to participating in the processes of determining a new constitution. The rule of law has been undermined and the economy seriously affected. The gravity of the situation is accentuated by the fact that this is the second major breakdown in the governance of post-colonial Fiji and that there had been an enormous effort by all communities to come back from the divisive, unjust and ineffective governing arrangements of 1987-97.

The so-called 'copy cat coup' in Honiara two weeks after the hostage-taking in Suva, perhaps understandably, provoked editorials, comment and political cartoons that portrayed the Pacific as a series of vulnerable island societies ready to follow suit. This after all was another hostage-taking, and again led by a civilian, Andrew Nori, and with the support of elements of the state forces, as in Fiji. Again, the hostage crisis quickly revealed a wider ethno-nationalist claim, this time on behalf of Malaitans. A new government was subsequently formed in dubious circumstances and was seen as backing the Malaitan Eagle Force (MEF), the militant group behind the hostage-taking. The conflict between Guadalcanal militants, in the Isatabu Freedom Movement, and the MEF escalated until peacemaking efforts produced an agreement in October 2000. As in Fiji, the government of the day was removed, democratic procedure ignored and the very future of a unified state was threatened. The Solomon Islands also took a step closer to all-out civil war, a possibility not ruled out in Fiji but fortunately contained.

The common threads in these crises go beyond shared features; they also relate to the main contributing factors<sup>3</sup>. At the heart of each crisis is the development of ethno-nationalist identities as a result of the impact of 'development' processes under colonial and post-colonial rule and the perception by such groups of uneven treatment under that development process. These are 'modern' identities, created by processes of development: education, urbanisation, internal migration, resource extraction, and plantation agriculture for export. In the case of Solomon Islands, for example, the violent conflict between militants of Malaita and Guadalcanal prior to the hostage-taking was sparked by perceptions on the part of Guadalcanal people of a series of injustices under the development process concerning land ownership, the presence of off-island settlers, relative access to wage employment, and returns to landowners of resource extraction. The post-war decision by the British to build the capital of their territory on Guadalcanal, and decisions to develop a gold mine and plantations on the fertile

Guadalcanal Plains made this island attractive for the migrants from overcrowded and less fertile Malaita. The large-scale settlement of Malaitans and their dominance in the wage sector created a Guadalcanal identity in opposition to these developments. It also created a Malaitan identity.

In each case these new island identities brought together disparate traditional ethnic groups to form new identities in the context of life in the main island of Guadalcanal. The tensions between them came to a head in the 12 months prior to the hostage crisis when Guadalcanal youth formed a militia and expelled, by threat of force, an estimated 20,000 Malaitans from their homes on Guadalcanal. The Malaitans responded by establishing their own militia. By the time of the MEF 'coup' around 50 people had been killed in battles on Guadalcanal. For both sides there is a sense of injustice about how they have fared in the development process and a strong feeling that the government had failed to redress these wrongs.

### **Resonance in the wider region**

The multiple issues at the centre of the Solomons and Fiji crises - ethnic identity, uneven development, resource extraction, internal migration and urbanisation, land use, unemployment, the lack of legitimacy of centralised models of governance, the legacy of colonial rule in boundaries, practices and laws, and the tension between 'traditional' and 'modern' sectors - obviously have a wider regional resonance. This is, after all, a region of post-colonial states. They all inherited unfamiliar systems of governance that were very different from the system under colonialism or in traditional settings. It is also a region of extreme cultural diversity; of strong traditional sectors, and of strong commitment to customary land tenure. Development in each country and the institution of a modern state, has brought migrants from outer islands and villages to the capital or to the main island and this often creates tensions with local landowners, as in the Vila riots of 1988. Whether such tensions and issues are handled within existing democratic governance arrangements or threaten its very underpinnings depend on such matters as the colonial history, economic organisation, resources, ethnic structure, leadership and size of the island state concerned. In the Polynesian states (Tonga, Samoa, Tuvalu, Niue and Cook Islands), for example, the chiefly system, shared language and cultural understandings, the lack of mineral resources, and the safety valve of emigration for fast growing populations, all help to ensure that the tensions associated with development do not translate into a crisis of legitimacy in the overall form of governance. In a system where everybody has a relationship through the cultural system to others in that society the capture of the state by the ballot box does not lead to very large disaffected out-groups as it has in Fiji and Solomon Islands.

This has also been the case in Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea, but for different reasons. Here, rather than one ethnic group, the existence of many ethnic groups has been a defence against the

sort of them-us politics between large groups that has occurred in Fiji and Solomon Islands. This has protected the longstanding democratic systems of these countries from fundamental challenge. But the Solomon Islands experience suggests that it is possible for the development process to create new modern identities and for 'them or us' politics to challenge the legitimacy of the system of governance. As large scale resource extraction is one of the key aspects of development which can create tensions and new identities (as in Bougainville and Irian Jaya), Papua New Guinea would be the most likely candidate for such a development.

### **The hidden regional story: coming back from violent conflict**

The tendency to characterise all Pacific island states as crisis-prone not only excludes those that are experiencing a more peaceful existence in this diverse region; it also excludes the experience of peacemaking and conflict resolution in Pacific societies which have come through violent conflict and a crisis in the fundamentals of governance of the severity of that currently being experienced by Fiji and Solomon Islands. This definition blinds us to the advantages of viewing the region in a comparative frame, thinking about conflict and conflict resolution experienced through various stages of development of differently constituted societies. It also blinds us to the reality that the whole of the South Pacific is not moving on a shared trajectory.

At the end of the 1980s three major crises prompted observers to see the South Pacific as a region of instability and conflict. One was the Bougainville War that began in 1989; another was the overthrow of democratic government in Fiji and the installation of a military-backed government from 1987; and the third was the continuing, often violent, struggle between those favouring independence and the French Government in New Caledonia (Kanak). Each of these involved ethno-nationalist claims (Bougainvillian, Fijian, Kanak) built around relatively new identities created by the colonial and post-colonial development experience. What had to be explained in the 1990s (and was not) was the move back from these deep and violent conflicts to peace (Bougainville), constitutional democracy (Fiji) and an accommodation between independence supporters and the *caldoche* (anti-independence local French) in a Government of National Unity (New Caledonia). If we generalised from two or three cases then we could characterise the South Pacific of 1998 as an 'arc of peace' or 'region of stability' and our task would be to explain this extraordinary achievement in a world where such resolution is highly unusual after violent conflict and deep division.

All three cases provide inspiring stories of local communities involved in peacemaking, restorative justice and conflict resolution throughout the 1990s. They remind us of Pacific islander agency in promoting resolution to conflict, a spirit very evident in the actions of the churches and women's groups in the recent Fiji and Solomons crises. In the current media image of a region of instability, Bougainville is more usually invoked as part of the 'arc of crisis'.

Bougainville is interesting because it came back from a deep conflict that claimed around 10,000 lives. While the conflict is intertwined in important ways with the later problems in the neighbouring Solomon Islands, its restoration and conflict resolution processes have much to teach to the post-conflict restoration task in Solomon Islands.

### **Regional norms and deep conflict resolution: governance, democracy and development**

As we have seen, development processes and the conceptual assumptions underlying them, together with the legitimacy of the governance system, have been central to the conflicts in Fiji and Solomon Islands (and those previously in Bougainville and New Caledonia). It is important to question fundamental assumptions underlying the structures and practices of government if the roots of conflict are to be addressed. In particular, there is need for a region-wide debate about the expectations and presumptions concerning development, democracy, and 'good governance'. Such a debate would revisit arguments first debated in the 1970s when regional intellectuals proposed a 'Pacific way' and reflected on the appropriateness of various forms of development and governance for their new states. Such a debate would now have the advantage of 20-30 years of experience, with the agenda guided more by the people in these countries rather than by outsiders.

There is a danger that the necessary questioning of fundamental assumptions will not occur. The dominant regional understandings of good governance and appropriate development are still seen by those in powerful international agencies as unproblematic, and indeed as part of the way out of serious crisis and conflict. To understand this we need to revisit the earlier crisis imagery of the 1990s, which pictured a region of poorly governed states with weak institutions, insufficient transparency, hamstrung by customary land tenure and bloated public sectors. Such a perception predicted a 'doomsday' or 'Pacific nightmare' if island societies did not open themselves to global economic forces, institute neo-liberal structural reforms, and free up their land for foreign investment<sup>4</sup>. Seen in this light the new crisis imagery refers to the predicted 'doomsday' and the good governance and neo-liberal economic 'opening to the world' is still seen as the answer.

While the advocates of this approach would say that their views are vindicated by the current crises, the evidence from Fiji and Solomon Islands suggests that the crises arose out of the very sort of development process advocated by this school of thought. There is no doubt that the various processes associated with development - land alienation, unemployment, urbanisation, internal migration, and uneven access to the benefits of development - were central to the crises. This suggests the need to question assumptions left over from the 1970s regarding both the 'benefits' and 'inevitability' of development processes.

The assumptions underlying the other part of the 1990s policy frame, the promotion of 'good governance', also should be questioned. Although many of the policies associated with this concept are laudable - such as institutional strengthening, transparency, and accountability - it is in essence a conceptual frame that does not examine the more fundamental problems concerned with the legitimacy of governance systems. As nearly all Pacific island states are democracies it has been assumed that this is the starting point and all that is needed is to make government work better. The Solomon Islands and Fiji crises have opened up a deeper debate about the form of governance. It is not a debate outside democratic parameters but considers what form of democracy is appropriate. The basic elements underlying such debate are that an elected government deliver services to the people, that the people feel that the system is legitimate, and that the process of winning the vote does not exacerbate ethnic tensions.

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- <sup>1</sup> Sheridan, Greg (2000). 'Breaking up brings no benefit: we are witnessing the Balkanisation of the region', *The Australian*, 9 June: 13; and Ben Reilly, 'The Africanisation of the South Pacific', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, November.
  - <sup>2</sup> Kaplan, Robert (2000). *The Coming Anarchy*, New York, Random House.
  - <sup>3</sup> I develop this argument in 'Political Legitimacy and the Post-colonial State in the Pacific: Reflections on some common threads in the Fiji and Solomons Islands coups', *Pacifica Review*, 12, 3, October 2000.
  - <sup>4</sup> See, for example, Rowan Callick (1993). 'Pacific 2010: A Doomsday Scenario?', in Rodney Cole, (ed) *Pacific 2010: Challenging the Future*, Canberra, National Centre for Development Studies, ANU.
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## Some Thoughts on Restorative Justice and Gender in the Pacific

*Margaret Jolly*



**Restoration and retribution in a Pacific context** Sinclair Dinnen<sup>1</sup> has recently portrayed restorative justice as a large and capacious concept, a broad reform movement aimed at achieving more effective and sustainable solutions to conflict. It includes reconciliation ceremonies, truth tribunals, peace processes, family group conferences, victim-offender mediation, restorative probation, reparation and reintegrative shaming schemes. Restorative justice is contrasted with the adversarial practice of the Western criminal justice system, which pits a victim against an offender in the context of a judicial search for the truth of guilt or innocence and which stresses control, punishment and incarceration. Justice is rather sought through the active participation of the several parties – the victim, the offender and other stakeholders, the imagined ‘community’ – be it an evanescent healing circle or a more perduring group of neighbours or kin. Dinnen suggests that the ‘emphasis on dialogue and participation necessarily involves a process of deliberative democracy’<sup>2</sup>.

John Braithwaite similarly talks of restorative justice, after Marshall, as a ‘process whereby all the parties with a stake in a particular offense come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offense and its implications for the future’<sup>3</sup>. He stresses how in the historical development of Western criminal justice, conflicts were ‘stolen from ordinary people’ by the intervention of the crown or the state in pursuit of abstract and uniform justice, and how, arguably, the barbarism of personalistic blood feuds was supplanted by the barbarism of the state. Moreover, there is much evidence that the predominant stress on retribution in the criminal justice system has neither failed to reduce crime (at present the United States has about two million prisoners) nor rehabilitated offenders. For him restoration entails the restoration of victims, offenders and communities. It encompasses not just restoration of injury to a person or the loss of property but the restoration of human dignity, of freedom and compassion, of empowerment and peace.

Both Braithwaite and Dinnen warn that restoration and retribution are ideal types since most legal systems entail the co-presence of both restorative and retributive principles (although the emphasis may vary). Braithwaite also notes that restorative justice often prevails in contexts where parties are connected or intimates, while retribution often prevails where the parties are disconnected or strangers. Moreover, we should be wary of unduly associating retributive justice with its emphasis on guilt, control, punishment and incarceration with Western justice and restorative justice with its emphasis on reconciliation, restitution and harmony with Melanesian or Pacific ways. The history of the European legal system yields rich evidence

of restorative traditions, prior to and beyond the formation of centralised states and the associated notion that certain kinds of offences were so heinous as to be not only offences against other persons (the victims) but to be crimes against the crown or the state<sup>4</sup>. Pacific societies too have rich traditions of restorative justice, of resolving conflicts through talk which generates consensus and reconciliation through the exchange of valued goods (pigs, mats, shells, betel, kava) and sometimes the exchange of people (women in marriage, children through adoption). But these restorative traditions of the Pacific co-existed with the retributions of warfare and with punitive sanctions for those who flouted the authority of the powerful or transgressed the ways of the ancestors.

So, 'best practice' in contemporary restorative justice in the Pacific entails not so much a recuperation of pre-colonial forms of conflict resolution but the creative connection of indigenous and introduced forms. So John Tombot, an important and talented mediator in contemporary Bougainville, has stressed not just the power of the chiefs to adjudicate and reconcile conflicts as in the past, but the power of mediators to transform conflicts into peace through new techniques of resolution – talking with the victim, talking with the offender, meeting with both parties, discussions with each group, reaching a decision with both parties, achieving an act of conciliation, signing an agreement and follow up<sup>5</sup>. The mediators involved in these processes are importantly not just older men or chiefs, but include younger men and women. John Tombot speaks of the 'marriage' of customary techniques and introduced skills in the practice of contemporary restorative justice in Bougainville.

Unfortunately the conjugation of the indigenous and the introduced is not always such a happy marriage. I now want to consider the particular challenges which confront both indigenous and introduced traditions by those conflicts which entail the different or divergent interests of men and women. I am not suggesting that the interests of men and women are irrevocably opposed. Indeed, there is often a local rhetorical stress on the complementarity or mutuality of male and female interests in the construction of Pacific 'communities' as against the antagonistic individualism imputed to the 'West'. Yet, many Pacific women have highlighted the deficiencies of *both* the criminal justice system and of village courts or traditional chiefs (*kastom jifs*) in dealing with those cases which most graphically embody conflicts between men and women – rape and domestic violence<sup>6</sup>.

#### **Gender and justice – domestic violence and rape**

Echoing the much earlier work of the Law Reform Commission in Papua New Guinea<sup>7</sup> there has been much disturbing recent evidence from across the Southwest Pacific of the failures of *both* the criminal justice system and of customary law to deal with domestic violence and rape in a way which delivers both peace and justice. Here I refer primarily to some recently published research on Vanuatu and the Highlands of Papua New Guinea<sup>8</sup>.

A recent study of domestic violence in Port Vila, based on a selection of cases of women who presented to the Vanuatu Women's Centre, found that the police and the judicial system failed to deal with domestic violence – and especially with husbands' assaults on their wives – as a criminal matter<sup>9</sup>. Despite the fact that it *is* a criminal offence in Vanuatu law, it was still seen by police too often as a domestic or private matter and as something which should be reconciled rather than a matter of court resolution. This was despite the fact that all these women had expressly chosen to pursue legal solutions rather than a path of counselling or conciliation. Women's legal rights of 'security of person against intentional assault' and 'equality before the law' were thus negated. Moreover the women most likely to be assaulted were younger women between 25 and 34. They were at even greater risk if they had young children and if they were in paid employment, and especially if their husbands were unemployed. They were greatest risk if their husbands were policemen or members of the Vanuatu Mobile Force (about three and a half times the rate for other men). This analysis raises troubling questions about the relation between domestic violence and public violence and about those who exert the state's legitimate monopoly on force.

But, we might ask, do systems of customary law yield better outcomes for women who are the victims of domestic violence or rape? In Vanuatu the decisions of *kastom jifs* have also often been faulted for laying undue stress on reconciliation and the harmony of the 'community' at the expense of the wronged woman<sup>10</sup>. Similarly Sarah Garap, writing on Simbu province Papua New Guinea presents a very grim picture of customary law in the region where she lives. In her view village courts do not redress wrongs against women but are 'the worst offenders in terms of the way they deal with cases involving women'<sup>11</sup>. She believes that village courts are intimidating to women who feel they cannot speak freely and who, when they do speak, have their voices regularly discounted. In several judgements in cases of adultery she discerns a tendency to discipline the woman and not the man. Moreover, in cases of sexual violence and rape there is a tendency to blame the victim. In rape cases, it is often the male relatives of the woman who are compensated rather than the woman. Domestic violence is often, as in Vanuatu, treated as a domestic affair rather than a criminal matter, and is thus thought undeserving of police action. Again, police themselves pose a particular danger not just to their own wives but other women - female inmates have been assaulted and raped while in prison, she avers.

Such gloomy stories of women as victims are of course not the only ones. We can read some positive accounts of women as vocal agents in peace-making, about the power of women to stop conflict – in the Nebilyer Valley of Papua New Guinea as recounted by Alan Rumsey<sup>12</sup>, in many regions of Bougainville, as Ruth Saovana-Spriggs has attested<sup>13</sup>, and in the ongoing bloody conflicts in Fiji and the Solomons. There is a promise in new forms of restorative justice

for Pacific women but only if this becomes a transformative justice which not only deals with women more fairly as victims (and offenders!) but acknowledges women's particular capacities as peacemakers and mediators.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion then, I think there is a need to think about justice in the way Hannington Alatoa, the Ombudsman of Vanuatu has suggested: not just as justice in terms of the restorative resolution of particular conflicts but the proactive process of creating peace and harmony in a way that is wedded to a deep desire for justice, through fairness for all – men and women, old and young. Such challenges for transformative justice are ever greater as people move from the seemingly more certain places of villages into the more evanescent congregations of urban settlements and where hopes for the future are continually subverted by the divisions created by social and political injustices, not just within nations but between nations.

There are of course huge and dangerous new challenges to peace in the southwest Pacific – especially in Fiji and the Solomons at present. Both conflicts entail not just the spectre of lives lost and bodies mutilated, but the that of not being able to repair these large tears in the fragile fabric of imagined communities of these new nation-states. The divisions, as I understand them, are not just those of race or place, between the first people of the land and the immigrants (the Fijians versus Indo-Fijians, the people of Gaudalcanal versus those of Malaita). Such ethnic divisions are also entangled with other complex differences – the transformed indigenous hierarchies of rank, seniority and gender and the introduced inequalities generated by capitalist development and new forms of education, and the very structures of the nation-state in a globalising world system. These national political conflicts will likely have serious consequences not just in lives lost but in lives ruined by increased poverty, the deterioration or loss of services and resources and the heightened sense of chaos and confusion which threatens to exaggerate pre-existing differences – including those intimate familial differences between young and old, men and women.

These larger conflicts echo at the level of the imagined communities of nations, those hard questions restorative justice must confront at the more intimate level of families and villages, where Pacific communities are more usually imagined. There is a relation between justice in the narrower legal sense - of adjudicating conflicts in a way which delivers both fairness and harmony - and justice in the broader political sense of redressing inequalities. But, as we all appreciate, the balance between peace and justice is often very hard to find.

*Professor Margaret Jolly is Head, Gender Relations Centre, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University.*

This is an abridged version of a keynote address to conference on Conflict Management and Restorative Justice in the Pacific Islands Port Vila, Vanuatu, 19-21 June 2000. The full version will appear in conference proceedings being edited by Sinclair Dinnen for the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University.

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- <sup>1</sup> Dinnen, S (1998). 'Criminal justice reform in Papua New Guinea', in P Larmour (ed) *Governance and Reform in the South Pacific*, Pacific Policy Paper 23, National Centre for Development Studies, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra: 253-272; and, Dinnen, Sinclair (nd). Concepts Paper. Prepared for the conference on *Conflict Management and Restorative Justice in the Pacific Islands*, Port Vila, Vanuatu. 19-21 June 2000.
- <sup>2</sup> Dinnen (nd), *ibid*: 3.
- <sup>3</sup> Braithwaite, John (1999). 'Restorative Justice: Assessing Optimistic and Pessimistic Accounts', in *Crime and Justice: A Review of Research*, 25: 5.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid*: 1-3.
- <sup>5</sup> John Tombot, in his presentation to this conference (see above for details of forthcoming publication).
- <sup>6</sup> This was the clear message of papers presented at this conference by Rita Naiviti from Vanuatu and Edwina Kotoisuva from Fiji. It is also the unfortunate conclusion of other recent research.
- <sup>7</sup> See for example Toft, Susan (ed) (1985). *Domestic Violence in Papua New Guinea*, Law Reform Commission of Papua New Guinea Monograph 3, Law Reform Commission, Port Moresby.
- <sup>8</sup> Mason, Merrin (2000). 'Domestic Violence in Vanuatu', in Sinclair Dinnen and Allison Ley (eds) *Reflections on Violence in Melanesia*. Hawkins Press/Asia Pacific Press, Sydney and Canberra: 119-138; Garap, Sarah (2000). 'Struggles of women and girls – Simbu Province, Papua New Guinea', in Dinnen and Ley *ibid*: 159-171. See also, Jowitt, Anita (1999). 'Women's Access to Justice in Vanuatu' in Tess Newton (ed) *Legal Developments in the Pacific Island Region*. Proceedings of the 1999 Conference, 6-7<sup>th</sup> September, Emalus Campus, USP, Port Vila, Vanuatu: 111-118.
- <sup>9</sup> Mason (2000). *op cit*.
- <sup>10</sup> See Jolly, Margaret (1996). 'Woman Ikat Raet Long Human Raet O No?: women's rights, human rights and domestic violence in Vanuatu', in A Curthoys, H Irving and J Martin (eds) *The World Upside Down: Feminisms in the Antipodes*. *Feminist Review* 52:169-90. (Updated and expanded version in A-M Hilsdon *et al* (eds) (2000). *Human Rights and Gender Politics in Asia-Pacific*, Routledge, London.
- <sup>11</sup> Garap (2000). *op cit*:163.
- <sup>12</sup> Rumsey, Alan (2000). 'Women as peacemakers – a case from the Nebilyer Valley, Western Highlands, Papua New Guinea', in Dinnen and Ley, *op cit*: 139-155.
- <sup>13</sup> Ruth Saovana-Spriggs, Ruth (2000). 'Bougainville women's role in conflict resolution in the Bougainville peace process', paper presented to conference on *Conflict Management and Restorative Justice in the Pacific Islands*, Port Vila, Vanuatu, 19-21 June 2000.
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## Academy News



Nineteen new Fellows have been elected to the **Academy**. They have been honoured for having achieved distinction, in the opinion of their peers, in one or more of the social sciences.

**Professor Dennis Altman**, School of Sociology, Politics and Anthropology, La Trobe University, has combined academic work with an influential role as public intellectual and writer. He has also made an important contribution to AIDS policy-making, both at the national and international levels. He is the author of nine sole-authored books, which have been translated into a number of languages and published in five continents.

**Associate Professor Carol Bacchi**, Department of Politics, University of Adelaide, is recognised for her capacity to move women's concerns into the mainstream of political theory. She is a profoundly thoughtful and original scholar who has been especially effective at moving women's experience from a special to a central place in contemporary political philosophy.

**Professor Tony Coady**, ARC Senior Research Fellow and Professorial Fellow, University of Melbourne, is an established international figure in philosophy. He is also very well known in Australia and around the world for his publications on the political thought of Thomas Hobbes, and on public ethics.

**Dr Harold Crouch**, Department of Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, ranks high among the world's foremost political scientists working on Southeast Asian countries and is widely regarded in Australia as our best-informed analyst of Indonesian politics. He has also played an active part as a public intellectual in press and policy discussions in Australia, Indonesia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

**Professor Anne Edwards**, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Sociology, Flinders University of South Australia, has made a foundational contribution to sociology. A continuous thread of her work has been the theoretical refinement of approaches to the study of gender relations. Her work on sex role theory and the sex/gender distinction is highly acclaimed and much cited nationally and internationally. Since moving into university administration in the 1990s, she has pursued her scholarship by facilitating and encouraging social research by others.

**Professor Cynthia Gallois**, Professor of Psychology, University of Queensland, is internationally recognised as a leading figure in research on the nature of communication. She is known for her conceptual insights, her experimental flair, her broad knowledge, and her ability to combine attention to both the theory and the application of social psychology. Professor Gallois was editor of the international journal *Human Communications Research* (1994-1998).

**Professor David Goodman**, Institute for International Studies, University of Technology, Sydney, has been active in the promotion of international studies for the last thirty years. His major interests lie with different aspects of social and political change in contemporary China. He is best known for two major research projects which he pioneered: the study of 'The New Rich in Asia'; and the continuing project to examine *China's Provinces in Reform*.

**Professor Ian Harper**, Professorial Fellow, Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne, is a leading scholar in the areas of money and banking and financial economics. His expertise and abilities were recognised in his appointment as a member of the Financial System Inquiry (The Wallis Inquiry) convened by the Federal Treasurer reviewing the Australian financial system.

**Emeritus Professor John Holmes**, Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland, has been prominently involved for over 40 years in the application of social science to Australian affairs. Some of his most influential contributions have been made in the past decade in interdisciplinary issues connected with Native Title and Rangeland development. Professor Holmes has consistently played a leading role in the expansion and consolidation of human geography in Australia, and he is also held in very high esteem as a robust public commentator on regional and environmental issues.

**Emeritus Professor Laksiri Jayasuriya**, School of Social Work and Social Policy, University of Western Australia, is a respected international scholar with expertise in several interrelated spheres of the social sciences, spanning social psychology, sociology, social policy and the comparative study of migration and citizenship. He has been an active member of the Immigration Advisory Council, the Committee of Community Relations, and the National Multicultural Advisory Committee. In 1999, he was one of fifty Australians honoured by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**Professor Amarjit Kaur**, School of Economic Studies, University of New England, has a considerable international research reputation in the economic history of Southeast Asia, especially the economic development of Malaysia. She has promoted the study of the regions of Sabah and Sarawak, and also produced studies of three significant topics: transport, the environment, and labour. Professor Kaur has also published significantly in national and international refereed journals.

**Professor Clive Kessler**, Department of Sociology, University of New South Wales, has played a significant role in the development and teaching of anthropology in Australia and in Malaysia and an active role in the development of the discipline in the United Kingdom and the United States. He is acknowledged internationally as a major authority on Southeast Asia, particularly with reference to

Malaysia, and is highly valued as a commentator on social and political events in Malaysia and for the region more generally.

**Professor Susan Kippax**, National Centre in HIV Social Research, University of New South Wales, is currently an Australian leader, and a significant international figure, in empirical social-scientific sexuality research. Since the mid-1980s her principal research focus has been sexuality and the social dimensions of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The research team she leads (now as director of the national centre) has conducted a sophisticated and increasingly diverse program. Professor Kippax has made a formidable contribution to public policy as an adviser to governments.

**Dr Simon Marginson**, Reader, Faculty of Education, Monash University, is one of our leading sociologists of education. Widely recognised for his role as a public intellectual, he continues to cross fields in scholarship from education to sociology and political economy. His work is exemplary in its combination of theory and evidence, and he is a leading contributor in research into Australian university culture in general.

**Associate Professor Keith McLaren**, Department of Econometrics, Monash University, is well known internationally for his contributions at the 'high theory' end of research into investment, consumption and other economic behaviour. Parallel with his major theoretical contributions in the world's best journals has been a steady stream of novel econometric applications in microeconomics and in finance.

**Professor Belinda Probert**, Director, Centre for Applied Social Research, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, is a leading scholar in the field of work and employment studies in Australia. Her scholarly reputation is reflected in the number of keynote addresses she is invited to give to national conferences as well as recent invitations to international conferences. Professor Probert is widely acknowledged as a major contributor to public debate and the development of social policy relating to employment equity.

**Professor Michael Smith**, Research School of Social Science, Australian National University, is a moral philosopher of world renown. His book *The Moral Problem* was accorded the honour of an 'Author Meets Critics' session at the American Philosophical Association annual meeting and has been the subject of a featured 'Symposium' in *Ethics*, the leading international journal in the field. Professor Smith is unusually adept at bringing his meta-ethical reflections to bear on practical problems in applied ethics, politics and the law.

**Professor Chin Liew Ten**, Personal Chair, Philosophy Department, Monash University, is an internationally recognised figure on Mill and in the philosophy of law, especially but not only in relation to the issues that connect most closely with the justification of punishment. A notable feature of his work is that it is very highly regarded by both philosophers and lawyers.

**Dr Elspeth Young**, Reader and Director of Studies, National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University, is one of Australia's leading authorities on remote Australia and its Aboriginal population. Applying her fieldwork skills in remote Australia, she produced unique data for the first major modern study of the Aboriginal economy of this region. Later she expanded her studies to encompass social, population and land issues. Her continuing work with remote communities has made important contributions to such issues as sustainability, population mobility, and rangeland and wildlife management.

The Academy Award for 2000 has been presented to **Dr Andrea Whittaker**. As a medical anthropologist Dr Whittaker studies cultures of health and illness. She studies the meanings of health and illness, what people do when they are ill, their understandings of how the body works, and how they interact with health care systems. In doing so, her research is necessarily cross-disciplinary, working with public health practitioners, demographers, historians, and sociologists. 'There is a constant challenge in working across different disciplinary boundaries, to bring the insights that anthropological perspectives provide to a variety of fields and topics.'

Dr Whittaker completed her doctorate at the Tropical Health Program at the University of Queensland in 1995. A University medallist, her Honours thesis was based upon research at a community-based AIDS organisation. This formed the basis of her first academic publication in the prestigious journal *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, dealing with the stigmatisation of AIDS and the politics of health and illness for people living with HIV/AIDS. Her doctorate involved eighteen months conducting ethnographic field research in an isolated rural village in North-east Thailand. It forms the basis of her recently published book *Intimate Knowledge: Women and Their Health in North-East Thailand*.

My thesis focuses upon women's experiences and subjectivity with regard to their reproductive health. But it places their experiences within a broader theoretical framework that explores the inter-relationships between gender, class, and ethnicity within Thailand, and the relationships between the State, national identity and discourses of modernity and tradition. It is a strongly empirical work that speaks to broader theoretical questions.

Continuing her work in Thailand, Dr Whittaker has moved to the controversial topic of abortion. This research was supported by an ARC Postdoctoral Fellowship held at the Gender Relations Project at the Australian National University.

Abortion is illegal in Thailand, except under very restricted circumstances. However, many women have illegal abortions, some conducted in illegal clinics by doctors, others conducted

through massage techniques or injectionists. As in other parts of the world, the issue of abortion has led to fierce public debate. I am hoping that my work will highlight the voices of women who have illegal abortions, their subjective experiences and perceptions of abortion, and place these women's stories in a broader analysis of gender and the power relations that structure sexuality and women's reproductive health decisions in Thailand. State policies, institutional religion, traditional and modern constructions of gender and the material conditions of women and men's lives all influence reproductive health decisions.

To further develop this work Dr Whittaker currently holds an ARC Large Grant to complete a social history of abortion in Thailand. Shortly she will travel to Bangkok to conduct further interviews and sift through archival material to document the changing representations of abortion and the politics surrounding various attempts to amend abortion legislation. She will complete a book on this research next year.

Apart from her work in Thailand, Dr Whittaker continues to undertake Australian-based research. 'Although traditionally associated with 'exotic' cultural settings and healing practices, the work of a medical anthropologist is equally important 'at home' in Australia. Examples from my research include how people manage *diabetes mellitus*, the range of self-medications used by people to treat illness, and their decisions about when they will have a family. Villagers in rural Thailand and Australian suburbanites have more in common than you may think'. In her first job after her doctorate she worked for a multidisciplinary team at the University of Newcastle on a Commonwealth funded project. 'Like my work in Thailand, this research investigated how residents of a suburban community perceive health and illness and make health care decisions. This study involved a collaboration between anthropology and general practice'.

Dr Whittaker is currently employed as a Research Fellow at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University. She will continue her international work but is also involved in joint research projects in Australian public health. These include a project on the experience and management of *diabetes mellitus* in Western Sydney, and a consultancy in a small rural community. In addition she is co-investigator on a recently awarded ARC Large grant for 2001-2002 to examine family formation in Australia. 'In many ways the work on family formation in Australia complements my work on reproductive decision-making in Thailand. This project will combine the quantitative rigour of demography with the explanatory depth and theoretical perspectives of anthropology'.

The Academy continued its tradition of inviting fellows to attend a **Colloquium** on a topic relevant to the social sciences on the evening preceding the Annual Symposium. This year's topic focused on inequality in Australian society. Over 40 fellows and guests attended the colloquium on 5 November to hear Professors Ruth Fincher and Peter Saunders discuss the issues covered in their forthcoming book (to be published by Allen & Unwin, January 2001) entitled *Creating Unequal Futures? Rethinking Poverty, Inequality, and Disadvantage in Australia*.

Professor John Nevile was in the Chair for the presentation and the spirited discussion which ensued, including some of the future policy settings which could be adopted to guide us 'to a future characterised by less inequality'.

*Professor Bob Holton* has been appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Trinity College, Dublin.

*Professor Frank Castles* has been appointed Professor of Social and Public Policy at the University of Edinburgh.

*Professor Stephen Castles* has been appointed Head of the Refugee Studies Centre at the University of Oxford.

*Professor Max Neutze* AO, formerly of the Australian National University, has died.

His obituary will appear in the Annual Report.

## Research Projects



### Special Research Project 2001

The ARC has announced project funding to the Academy of \$134,000 for the Learned Academies Special Project 2001 entitled *The Sustainability of Australian Rural Communities*. The Academy is particularly pleased that this research venture will be undertaken in conjunction with the Monash Regional Australia Project, under the direction of Professor Chris Cocklin and assisted by Dr Jacqueline Dibden.

The project will bring together a multi-disciplinary team, including Academy Fellows, from six Australian universities with established expertise in rural studies, namely Monash, Charles Sturt, Edith Cowan, Central Queensland, Adelaide, and New England. The research team will collaborate to consider the factors which underpin the sustainability of rural communities in Australia. Specific objectives are:

1. To develop a conceptual model of the factors influencing sustainability of rural and regional communities, with particular attention to:
  - The respective roles of social, cultural, economic and environmental factors in sustainability at the community level;
  - The influences on community sustainability of processes operating at spatial scales ranging from the farm to localities, regions, the nation and globally;
  - The relationship between sustainability at the community level relative to sustainability at other geographical scales (eg, what is sustainable at the regional scale may not be so for specific individual communities); and
  - The multiple interpretations and discourses of sustainability (eg, policy, lay/community, professional, academic discourses).
2. To develop an integrated interdisciplinary research methodology for the investigation of sustainability in rural and regional communities by:
  - Identifying appropriate methodological frameworks drawn from a number of disciplines;
  - Generating a common set of research tools to enable comparative study of rural communities; and
  - Testing and refining the methodology by applying it to a number of case studies of rural and regional communities across Australia.
3. To identify recommendations for public policy directed towards maintaining and enhancing the sustainability of rural and regional communities.

A set of case studies will explore the nature and dimensions of rural socioeconomic change and community sustainability. The case studies have been chosen to represent examples of communities from across Australia that are faring well in the face of change and those that appear to be in decline.

### **Social Costs of Water Degradation**

The four Learned Academies and the Business Council of Australia have had a number of meetings to consider a research project which would attempt to develop a coherent and comprehensive position on the social impacts and costs of managing water issues in Australia as well as those of ignoring the issues.

Each Academy prepared a background brief on the project with recommendations on possible ways to move forward, including the usefulness of a feasibility study and a workshop including environmentalists, social scientists, natural scientists and other scholars with relevant expertise.

Representatives nominated by the Academies are meeting at the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering on 12 December to consider the topic and how to develop it as a research project.

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

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## Academy Workshops



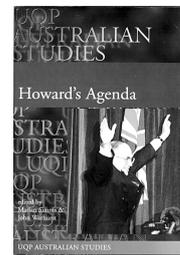
At its July meeting, the Workshop Committee agreed to promote the Workshop Program more widely. A call for workshop proposals for 2001 was circulated throughout the Fellowship and to Australian university research offices. Over 30 requests for the *Workshop Guidelines* were received, with 13 written proposals submitted for consideration at the Committee meeting on 23 October. Three were approved at the meeting, and several others referred back to the convenors for revision.

The Program for 2000/2001 is:

- *Ethical, social and legal implications of the Human Genome Project*, to be convened by Professor Riaz Hassan, in Adelaide on 30 November - 1 December 2000;
- *The future of work and employment relations in Australia*, to be convened by Professors Russell Lansbury and Ron Callus in Sydney on 1-2 December 2000;
- *Mutual Obligation and welfare states in transition*, to be convened by Professors Bettina Cass and Moira Gatens in Sydney in April 2001;
- *The Genocide Effect: new perspectives on modern cultures of destruction*, convened by Dr Simone Gigliotti and Dr Dirk Moses in Sydney on 7-8 July 2001; and
- *Litigation: Past and Present*, to be convened by Professor Wilfrid Prest and Dr Sharyn Roach Anleu in Adelaide in September 2001.



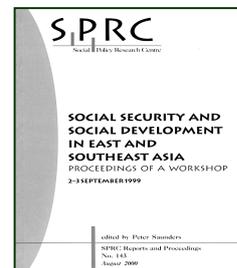
Publications arising from recent workshops include ***Howard's Agenda: The 1998 Australian Election***, edited by Marian Simms and John Warhurst, University of Queensland Press Australian Studies, 2000. This study of the 1998 election, by academic commentators and party officials, reveals how diverse are the interpretations of the recent political past. This applies both to the reasons for the election result – for John Howard's victory – and the significance that ought to be attached to it.



In his launch of the book on 6 October 2000, political commentator, Laurie Oakes, warmly congratulated the editors, Marian Simms and John Warhurst on putting together 'a very useful book – and an interesting one if you're into politics'. He further commented: 'two things (that) stand out in the 1998 election. One is the way the Liberals managed to hold on to so many of their marginal seats, despite a massive swing against them, and the fact that Labor got 51 per cent of the two-party preferred vote nationwide. The other is Labor's failure to win more than a couple of seats in NSW. . . (T)he contributors provide a wealth of information and some insights concerning both matters.'

Recently published too, was ***Social Security and Social Development in East and Southeast Asia, Proceedings of a Workshop***, edited by Peter Saunders, SPRC Reports and Proceedings, No 143, August 2000.

The Workshop Program is also involved in a no cost sponsorship of a workshop in December on **The 1901 Election study** which will be convened by Dr Marian Simms and funded by the Centenary of Federation Grants Scheme. A small group of specialists will examine the First Australian General Election.



In 2001, the Workshop Program will liaise with Dr Simms on an *Occasional Papers Series* publication as a tribute to Professor Paul Bourke, acknowledging his commitment and dedication to the Academy. Entitled ***Enfranchisement of Australia's Women***, the volume will include a 'finished' version of the work Professor Bourke had done in draft on this subject, a re-publication of Chapter 3 of Norman Mackenzie's 'Women in Australia' which was originally published in 1962 as the outcome of the Academy's first major project, a contribution from Dr Simms on the contemporary political culture, and other appropriate material agreed by the Workshop Committee. It is anticipated that the volume will be published in early 2002 to celebrate the centenary of the vote for Australia's women.

Members of the 2000/2001 Workshop Committee are Professors Peter Saunders (Chair), Barbara Gillam, John Elkins, Peter Beilharz, and Ann Curthoys. The next Workshop Committee meeting will be held in March 2001. Copies of the *Workshop Guidelines* are available on the Academy's website, [www.assa.edu.au](http://www.assa.edu.au) or email [Sue.Rider@anu.edu.au](mailto:Sue.Rider@anu.edu.au)

## International News



### The Prospect of Social Sciences and the Humanities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

In early November 2000, the Academy participated in a 'Summit of World Think Tanks' organised by the Chinese Academy of the Social Sciences, in Beijing. There were 25 foreign participants, mostly representing learned academies. It was pleasing to see that our Academy was among this select group. The theme of the conference was the future of the Social Sciences and Humanities in the 21st century. Papers from the conference are available in the Academy office, including the one presented by ourselves.

Fellows might be interested to know that the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has 4,000 research staff across the social sciences and the humanities. In the last 18 months or so, they published 900 books and 10,000 articles. All told, there are about 250,000 social sciences academics in Chinese universities.

A wide range of topics was covered in the papers presented at the conference. Some of the themes which I identified were:

- Understanding and guiding the social and cultural implications of developments in information technology and biotechnology are likely to be high on the social sciences agenda in the coming century. There was a call for a deep, multi-discipline examination of the history and impact of IT.
- Social sciences to date has been a Western intellectual development: to avoid the colonial possibilities of this, other cultures need increasingly to create their own developments.
- In the face of the growing homogenisation of world experience, there is a need to take care of non-economic spiritual and cultural needs, including preservation of languages and other dimensions of cultural 'biodiversity'.
- There is a need to apply all the powers of the social sciences and humanities to a deep understanding of what is happening to scholarship and to universities.
- In one large American university (the University of Maryland), there has been a big growth in both the number of students and the level of grants attracted to the behavioural and social sciences (they received grants of \$53m this year)
- They have focused their research themes on those identified by the Carnegie Commission in 1994, namely:
  - The quality of life, health and knowledge
  - Building a resilient, sustainable economy
  - Maintaining a resilient, sustainable environment
  - Ensuring personal and international security.

The paper presented by our Academy drew heavily on the scholarship which has been promoted as a result of Academy work in recent years. It was thus a child with many parents. It drew on

recent thinking on the impact of the internet on the nature of scholarly work; on the use and abuse of statistics; post-graduate training across the social sciences; creating unequal futures; the social and economic costs of unemployment and pushing back the frontiers of death. Much of this work has been done under the auspices of the Academy's research program, which has been quite well funded in recent years by grants from the ARC and has been a major development in the Academy's activities. The opening section the Academy's paper focused on the broad theme of the conference, namely the future of the social sciences, and this was the section which was emphasised in the 15 minute oral presentation.

It argued that the twentieth century was the century of the social sciences. Intellectually, the social sciences have developed depth, structure and power and established a firm place in the intellectual firmament. Practically, the social sciences have become the instrument which modern governments, interest groups and scholars use to understand the major developments in national and international life, the tools drawn upon to develop and shape policy. It is difficult to imagine government without economics, statistics or law; a functioning society without the application of demography, geography, sociology or psychology; or a vigorous intellectual life without history, politics or philosophy.

The human significance of the technological, political and environmental changes now confronting the world cannot be understood, nor evaluated, without the social sciences. The social sciences stand between the sciences, which seek to know the truth, and the humanities, which seek to know what is good. The social sciences aspire to do both. But although the social sciences are essential to understanding many of the key issues of our times, they are not omnipotent. Indeed, the task of building better intellectual constructs and better empirical tools and better notions of the good, will occupy us for as much of the new century as we can foresee.

The social sciences rest on the foundation that the fundamental motivations of people are discernable. The question of why people do what they do is an eternal one. The social sciences have provided systematic, coherent, empirically supported explanations of human motivation. They have gone further - to use these explanations to predict the collective human response to changes in the external world, and to evaluate the impact of such changes on human well-being. The challenge for the social sciences in the twentieth century was to understand the behaviour of people acting as relatively free agents, without detailed moral commands and external agency to enforce them. This challenge arose from the political movements of the preceding several centuries, away from authoritarian rule of the people by church and state, toward government as servant of the people and people as free to set their own moral reference map. If a world of freely acting individuals is not to be anarchic, there must be regularities in aggregate human

behaviour and self-ordering social systems. The social sciences seek to understand these regularities and self-ordering characteristics, and use them to predict and evaluate. Will this continue to be useful work in the new century? The answer is clearly yes, provided it is done with humility about what we do not and cannot know and an explicit debate about the values that we seek to promote.

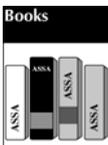
The twentieth century also saw the emergence of women's voices in the social sciences, albeit in muffled form. This has had a powerful effect on the way we do social science and the insights which it produces in most, if not all, of the disciplines. The amplification of women's voices, until heard with a clarity which is equal to those of men, is part of the agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

One of the most striking outcomes of the twentieth century has been the extraordinary power which the human race has acquired to alter the course of nature - through environmental change as a by product of other activity, through biotechnology and through medicine. Our ability to do large scale harm or good in this way has fast outstripped the development of behaviours and a moral framework for managing this power. It will be a major task for the social and moral sciences in 21<sup>st</sup> century to learn how to use this power cautiously, wisely and fairly.

**Sue Richardson**

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## Books



*Death in Balibo; Lies in Canberra.* By Desmond Ball and Hamish McDonald. Allen & Unwin, St Leonards: 2000.

For 25 years, despite wide popular support and sympathetic treatment by journalists such as McDonald, the struggle of the East Timorese against Indonesian invasion was regarded by many intelligent Australians as a lost cause. No wonder! From the corridors of government to the groves of academe, the top people inveighed against the Timorese independence movement and their Australian supporters. Some suffered. Jim Dunn nearly lost his job as a parliamentary researcher. ASIO filed details about many attending demonstrations and forums. As late as this year a member of the Australian Federal Police was considered 'too soft on Timor' (ie, could reveal the AFP's pre-1999 links with Indonesia) and eased out of the service. The major pain – as with the Vietnamese in earlier decades – was carried by the East Timorese.

Much has changed on the East Timor issue in a quarter of a century. Following the massacre by the local militia controlled by the Indonesian army after Timorese had the courage to overwhelmingly vote for independence last year, John Howard did what Malcolm Fraser briefly considered doing and what Hawke, Keating and Whitlam would never have done. He sent in troops as part of a UN operation. Before all this there was the Balibo incident in late 1975. The unvarnished facts of Balibo are admirably set out by Desmond Ball and Hamish McDonald.

On 16 October 1975 five newsmen were killed in Balibo by Indonesian special forces. This was part of a secret war waged by the Suharto regime under the pretence of being a 'civil war' against the Fretilin de facto government in Dili. Australia's Prime Minister Whitlam had previously given a shadowy commitment to Suharto to stay neutral during any takeover of East Timor by Indonesia. The first Australian casualties of this policy were Malcolm Rennie, Tony Stewart, Gary Cunningham, Brian Peters and Greg Shackleton. They were followed later by journalist Roger East in December during the full scale Indonesian invasion. The culprits, as the book's title suggests, were in Canberra and Jakarta.

While Generals Murtopo and Murdani, working closely with their operatives at Jakarta's Centre for Strategic and International Studies, massaged a reluctant Suharto into secret and later open war, Colonel Dading gathered the miniscule anti-Fretilin forces into the Javanese-dominated special force. The secrecy of these operations was endangered by newsmen not subject to the censorship Indonesia's press had become used to since 1966.

In Canberra, Whitlam – pressured by opposition leader Fraser's destabilisation on the one hand and the paranoia of the US CIA and its local Defence Department epigones on the other – did not want

any pressure to 'do something' about saving the fragile democratic regime in the island immediately north of Darwin. TV reports from Shackleton were building a public opinion at least prepared to give Fretilin the benefit of the doubt in what was shaping up to be a David and Goliath confrontation. The Prime Minister of Australia had what he saw as a 'special relationship' with the President of Indonesia; part mystical, part commercial/diplomatic. He hoped for a quick, surgically deft takeover of East Timor by his friend and possibly a half-Senate election. He got neither.

Binding Jakarta and Canberra were many complicated and supposedly 'secret' communications networks.

Ball's expertise in the area of intelligence coding and decoding is evident. He has the fluency of a good teacher who makes complex matters seem obvious. There is a description of the restive JIO community being lectured by Defence head Sir Arthur Tange on not giving way to emotion but maintaining the 'integrity of the signals intelligence source' (the US link?). There are the tense messages streaming into Canberra of the dangers faced by the newsmen - days before their tragic deaths - when lives could have been saved, but no actions taken. There are also the manipulations by Richard Woolcott, Australia's Ambassador in Jakarta, to bury the issue. There is Gough Whitlam's unilateral treatment of Balibo without reference to Cabinet. The prose is tight, fact-filled and controlled.

News of the deaths at Balibo got out at the time and created only slightly less furore than did the full scale Indonesian invasion two months later. As Ball and McDonald show - people in the Canberra diplomatic, bureaucratic, military and political circles talked and the 'secret' was soon out. Those who were around at the time remember the rage on the left of politics and the forensic skill with which several journalists translated the arcane sophistries of diplomacy into realpolitik and drew conclusions which stand the test of time. Others with more ideological fervour saw Fretilin as the successors of the Viet Minh and the Chinese on the Long March.

The book is well indexed, with excellent maps, photographs and a list of sources. Though due citation is given to the Munster/Walsh 1980 *Documents*, the role of Denis Freney of the Campaign for an Independent East Timor (whose papers at the National Library of Australia await future researchers) is not. The diligent journalism of John Waddingham (now in Perth) is also unused. MPs Ken Fry and Gordon McIntosh are mentioned briefly.

With the recent publication of the 1974-1976 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Timor *Documents* and the plethora of post 1999 monographs, *Death in Balibo* is a reminder that a full official investigation (after the sham ones of 1976 and 1996) of the affair is long overdue. As the book implies, other questions arising from 25 years of genocide (of up to 300,000 people) could lead to further reports.

**Bill Tully**

*The Making of Modern Intellectual Property Law: The British Experience 1760-1911.* By Brad Sherman and Lionel Bently. Cambridge University Press: 1999.

Sherman and Bently's *The Making of Modern Intellectual Property Law* is a well written, impeccably researched and nicely argued monograph on an extraordinarily dense topic. Whether or not we have a taste for the subject, social scientists need to think both harder and more often about intellectual property law – including our own rights and obligations – than most of us are inclined to do.

At a time when universities are increasingly claiming more rights over the ideas and products of their staff, it is incumbent on individual staff members, the Federal government (still the primary funding agency), and our students (with their HECS contributions) to contemplate design, copyright and patent issues. All universities now have ethics committees and growing ethics bureaucracies to protect themselves, their staff, their students and even the public from intrusive or unethical research. No Australian university has, to my knowledge, devoted anywhere near as much care or staff resources to intellectual property issues. Sure, we are bombarded with emails about off-air copying, photocopying, using images on the web without permission and the evils of plagiarism, but faced with students whose only bibliography is a webliography, and whose notion of quoting is an instant download, we need to rethink the attribution and ownership of ideas, concepts, software, even old style inventions. All universities are now saying they want to capitalise on their intellectual property, and most seem to see this in much the same manner as selling off bits of the ABC. Very few universities have yet made explicit statements about what their public information charter is, let alone what they will put out as free to air data and analysis.

This is where Sherman and Bently enter the fray, even for those of us not immediately drawn by the subtitle of the book, *The British Experience 1760-1911*. If you didn't know about the Statute of Monopolies (1624) or the Statute of Anne (1710) at the start of the book, you will by the end. The authors argue that these two statutes are part of a 'foundational narrative' (yes, there is a touch of cultural discourse in this legal study), which underestimates 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century developments in Britain, and is inclined to ignore French and American influences. While the early British notion of patents saw them as an 'act of Royal Bounty', the French were seen as substituting this for the democratic view that an inventor had an inherent right in his own ideas.

The principal rationale for the book is that its starting date, 1760, marks the height of the literary property debate in Britain while 1911 saw copyright law in the UK codified. The authors explain the gradual move away from a system where the book trade was controlled by Stationers and regulations over printing presses, creating a perpetual monopoly over the publication of particular works, to one where authors could claim common law rights in their

own literary property. So a great deal of the book revolves around how one can define and legislate for intangible property, the product of mental labour, and also how to assess how the interest in a literary property might be harmed. Opponents of the literary property notion argued that this was all too difficult, especially distinguishing one person's rights from another's.

For the non-lawyer, much of the interest in this book is Sherman and Bentley's explanation as to how and why patents, designs, copyright and finally trademarks 'were carved out as separate and discrete areas of law.' Copyright in the 19th century was granted for expression rather than ideas, while patents had more to do with a contract between the inventor (who had had the idea) and the state, with a particular pressure on inventors to be the first to communicate their discovery to the public and promptly patent it.

Reading this book helped me understand why there is no copyright in book titles, why literary property will always be hard to defend, and why some senior university bureaucrats will never be able to legally assert their dream of owning and capitalising on the ideas and words of 'their' workforce unless we enter a world of draconian contracts where all our utterances are immediately digitised and available for use to our e-commerce customers. Students with intellectual pretensions might still be allowed to borrow from the library.

**Peter Spearritt**

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## Opinion

**Frank Jackson**



It is hardly news that scholarly publication practice is affected by the financial rewards attached to publication. This means that when we think about future directions in scholarly communication, one important thing to think about is the influence of the rewards for publishing which are built into the system.

In the not so distant past, the only factor determining the rewards for publishing were the appointment and promotion policies of universities (with the exception of those very few academic books that earn substantial royalties.) These policies varied from university to university but, by and large, what mattered was how many papers you published, combined with some kind of quality measure on those publications. Originally, the quality measure was largely through peer review of publications and places of publication; more recently, various citation measures have come to play a role.

The current situation is different in one very substantial respect: what matters is greatly influenced from outside universities through government/DETYA funding arrangements. So we need to think both about the influence of impending funding arrangements - by which I mean the White Paper - and about the influence of possible changes to these arrangements, on publication practice.

In the White Paper, publications appear in both the Institutional Grants Scheme (IGS) and Research Training Scheme (RTS) formulae, weighted at 10 per cent in each.

The fact that they appear in both formulae together with the fact that the total sum of money in the IGS and RTS is substantial means that each publication is worth a significant sum of money, significantly more than their worth in the current Research Quantum (RQ) arrangement. And if you are wondering at the effect this will have, let me remind you that universities across the country are here and now calculating the dollar value of each book, article, chapter, etc under the White Paper and will make sure their staff know these figures. Also, the way the funding model works is on a share of a total basis. The role of the 10 per cent weighting in the two formulae will be to earn a university a fraction of a total in an essentially zero sum game. This means that if you don't play, you lose; you don't merely miss out on potential extra dollars.

There is a weak quality constraint in that in order to be counted a publication must appear in a 'kosher' place, but there is no attempt to rank places of publication, reward impact or take account of peer evaluation of the publications.

This is a concern for two reasons. The first is that we already publish too much. Just as there are too many run of the mill research PhDs and MAs being written, so there are too many run of the mill papers

and books being published. We have to worry about a system that rewards volume when we know we already have too much volume. Why do I say that too many papers and books are being published? One reason is that it is common knowledge among academics. A second is that figures on citations bear this out. Here is a table giving the average citations per publications in a recent five year window, all in kosher journals. You will see that the strongest performer's citation per publication (CPP) rate is below five and that the norm is a little over three - and remember this is for a five year window. It also includes self-citations, so that many papers get a single cite for free so to speak. Of course, citation and readership are different; nevertheless, there is a definite message for us here. Secondly, it is much easier and involves much less of an investment in time to publish in low impact journals than in high impact ones. We have to worry about a system that actively encourages publication in places it is easy to get into and which takes no account of the standing of a place of publication. Indeed, a number of studies show that when there is a reward for volume of publication, researchers publish more in less noticed journals.

In any case, as far as our planning for the future goes, we should allow for a very substantial increase in the volume of publications unless and until there is a change in the way publications earn dollars for a university.

We now come to our second issue. What changes might we hope for?

There are three ways of introducing a quality measure into the assessment of publications—impact as measured by citations, peer review, and place of publication, where place of publication may itself be assessed by the average citation rate of papers that appear in it or by peer review.

A great deal of valuable work has been done by the Research Evaluation and Policy Project at ANU on citation analysis. And some universities are using bibliometrics as a factor in their internal allocation processes. However, it is unlikely to be used in the near future in DETYA funding formulae. One reason is that there are an enormous number of journals, a correspondingly larger total number of papers in these journals, and a correspondingly larger again number again of citations in these papers. Extracting citation figures is a major data mining exercise. The Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) has done some of this work for us but the ISI does not cover all the major journals, and it does not cover books, a major outlet in the humanities and social sciences. Also, in my judgement, there is very little chance of getting the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee to support the use of citations in the allocation of funds.

A more realistic prospect is the introduction of peer review of publications. An individual or a department or an area of study puts forward a selection of publications for evaluation by experts. In the case of an individual, it might be that person's best three to five

papers in the last five years. The numbers would be higher in the case of a department or an area of study but they would still be relatively modest.

There are a number of advantages to this approach:

- It keeps the reading task of assessors within clear bounds.
- It puts the focus very much on quality - any academic will tell you that it can be a bracing experience to be asked to pick your five best.
- We know it works. At the individual level, it has been in operation in leading overseas universities in one form or another for many years. At the departmental level, it is a central part of the Research Assessment Exercise in the UK in which each department is asked, among many other things, to nominate its active researchers and their best four papers over a five year period for peer review.
- It allows for the rapid recognition of new areas of research. It is a relatively simple matter to introduce peer review of selected papers in a designated new area. By contrast, because of the massive investment in the required data mining, bibliometric approaches can be very slow to recognise new areas.
- Finally, because the principle of peer review is so widely accepted by academics, there is a chance that it might get through the political minefield that attends the introduction of new funding instruments.

So I hope that when we look at the future of the scholarly communication process, we will be looking at a future where academics and their institutions care more about the results of selective peer review of publications than about volume *per se*.

*Professor Frank Jackson is Director, Institute of Advanced Studies, Australian National University.*

This comment was part of a forum on **Australia's Information Future: Securing the Infrastructure for Research and Innovation: Outcomes** held on 16 August 2000, and hosted by the Coalition for Innovation in Scholarly Communication, with support from the National Academies Forum, the Australian Research Council and the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee. Reproduced with permission of the author.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

<i>Occasional Paper Series</i>	
<b>Wealth, Work, Well-Being Cunningham Lecture and Symposium 1997</b>	<i>Occasional Paper 1/1998</i>
<b>Shared Space – Divided Cultures. Australia Today Cunningham Lecture 1998</b>	<i>Occasional Paper 1/1999</i>
Fay Gale	
<b>Reconciliation. Voices from the Academy Annual Symposium 1998</b>	<i>Occasional Paper 2/1999</i>
<b>Pushing Back the Frontiers of Death Cunningham Lecture 1999</b>	<i>Occasional Paper 3/1999</i>
John C Caldwell	
<b>Facts and Fancies of Human Development Annual Symposium 1999</b>	<i>Occasional Paper 1/2000</i>
<b>Thinking Peace, Making Peace Annual Symposium 2000 (forthcoming)</b>	<i>Occasional Paper 1/2001</i>
<i>Arising from Academy workshops</i>	
<b>Contesting the Australian Way: States, Markets and Civil Society</b> Edited by Paul Smyth & Bettina Cass, Cambridge University Press: 1998	
<b>Standing Against the Stream: Women, Religion and Social Action</b> (various papers published in <b>Australian Feminist Studies</b> and <b>Women's History Review</b> (UK and USA) 1998.	
<b>The ESD Process: Evaluating a Policy Experiment</b> Edited by Clive Hamilton & David Throsby. Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and Graduate Program in Public Policy. Canberra: 1998.	
<b>Contemporary Perspectives on Social Work and the Human Services</b> Edited by Ian O'Connor, Paul Smyth & Jeni Warburton, Addison Wesley Longman: 1999.	
<b>Howard's Agenda: The 1998 Australian Election</b> Edited by Marian Simms and John Warhurst, University of Queensland Press Australian Studies: 2000.	
<b>Social Security and Social Development in East and Southeast Asia</b> , Proceedings of a Workshop. Edited by Peter Saunders. SPRC Reports and Proceedings, No 143, August 2000.	

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### Panels:

**A** *Anthropology, demography, geography, linguistics, sociology.*

Chair: Prof Michael Pusey

**B** *Accounting, economics, economic history, statistics.*

Chair: Prof Peter Saunders

**C** *History, law, philosophy, political science.*

Chair: Prof Stuart Macintyre

**D** *Education, psychology, social medicine.*

Chair: Prof RAM Gregson

## 2000-2001 Calendar

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12	December	<i>Social Costs of Water Degradation</i> : Round Table of Learned Academies, ATSE
12-13	February	<i>Sustainability of Rural Communities</i> Workshop: Academy Research Project 2001
1	March	Deadline for <i>Dialogue 1/2001</i>
	March	Meeting of Workshop Committee Meeting of International Relations Cttee
	April	Academy Workshop: <i>Mutual Obligation and welfare states in transition</i> , Sydney.
14	April	Meeting of Executive Committee
1	July	Deadline for <i>Dialogue 2/2001</i>
	July	Meeting of Workshop Committee
7-8	July	Academy Workshop: <i>The Genocide Effect: new perspectives on modern cultures of destruction</i> . Sydney
30	July	Closing date Australia-China Program
31	July	Closing date Australia-Vietnam Program
15	August	Closing date Australia-Netherlands Program
	September	Academy Workshop: <i>Litigation: past and present</i> . Adelaide.
	October	Meeting of Workshop Committee
1	November	Deadline for <i>Dialogue 3/2001</i>
4	November	Meeting of Executive Committee
5	November	Annual Symposium
6	November	Annual General Meeting

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